

CityShapers in schools



2022-2023

**PILOT YEAR
PROGRAM REPORT**



CityHive



"Historical Vancouver pre-contact" - A mural on the wall of Capers Organic Foods Store depicting the shores of Burrard Inlet just before the arrival of George Vancouver" by Flying Penguin; "Vancouver | Emily Pauline Johnson (Tekahionwake): How lost lagoon got its name", August 3, 2023, <https://designkultur.wordpress.com/2010/08/31/vancouver-emily-pauline-johnson-tekahionwake-how-lost-lagoon-got-its-name/historical-vancouver-pre-contact/>

CityHive recognizes the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷə́yəm (Musqueam), the Sk̓w̓k̓ x̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), and the sə́lilwə́taɁ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations on whose lands we work, learn and engage with youth.

We also recognize and honour the Katzie, Kwantlen, Kwikwetlem, Qayqayt, Semiahmoo, S'ólh Téméxw (Stó:lō), Stz'uminus, scəwaθenaɁ təməxʷ (Tsawwassen), and all Coast Salish peoples across whose lands we do our work.

This acknowledgement recognizes our ongoing commitment to exploring better avenues to decolonize and Indigenize our approaches to civic education. We recognize that the systems of power we explore in our programs (municipal government, civic institutions) are inherently colonial and that the urban issues we tackle in classroom workshops (Climate & Sustainability, Housing & Affordability, & Public Space) often stem from settler colonial contexts. We look towards Indigenous stewards, organizers, and leaders for ways of knowing, engaging, and growing in an effort to engage youth in new ways to cultivate urban communities rooted in truth, equity, and justice.

This is only the beginning of our ongoing organizational and programmatic work and we invite you to join the process of unlearning and relearning together.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For six years, CityHive has successfully engaged youth ages 13-30 in knowledge-to-action programming to address and amplify their voices on the most pressing current urban issues facing society today. Building civic literacy and a stronger sense of civic agency is important to start at a young age, since the younger a person is involved in civic processes, the more likely they will remain engaged throughout their lifetime.

This is why, in September 2022, CityHive launched its first classroom-based civic education pilot program: CityShapers in Schools. This experiential, locally-rooted, and hands-on classroom workshop series was developed and piloted across Metro Vancouver public school districts from October 2022 to June 2023 to address two critical systemic gaps: (1) The BC K-12 curriculum fails to teach students about cities, local government, and how to be active, engaged residents, and (2) youth, especially those facing additional systemic barriers to participation, aren't engaged by local decision-makers and don't see themselves represented in positions of power.

Informed by two years of research, the final CityShapers in Schools program was developed and delivered by the CityShapers program coordinator – a BC certified teacher, with the support of an advisory group of expert practitioners in the fields of education, culture, planning, and governance. The classroom program explored how cities work, how young people can get involved, and went further in hands-on explorations of one of four urban issues. Students applied their newly acquired knowledge in a final action project chosen by the teacher from a menu of offerings. Throughout its pilot year, CityShapers in Schools also supported a number of direct youth engagement projects in partnership with the City of Surrey, the Squamish Nation, the Society for Children & Youth of BC, and wrapping up the school year with a field trip to Vancouver's City Hall, the very first of its kind.

The following pages include details on the pilot program's format, impact, and reach, as well as program highlights, testimonials, key learnings and next steps. We greatly appreciate the generous financial support of our funders, as well as the support of our program advisors, expert speakers, and youth facilitators without whom this program would not be what it is today.

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*Such a valuable program. This is dynamic
and so needed in our culture right now.
People agitate for change, yet feel powerless
about how to direct their energies.*
-Social Studies Teacher, Vancouver

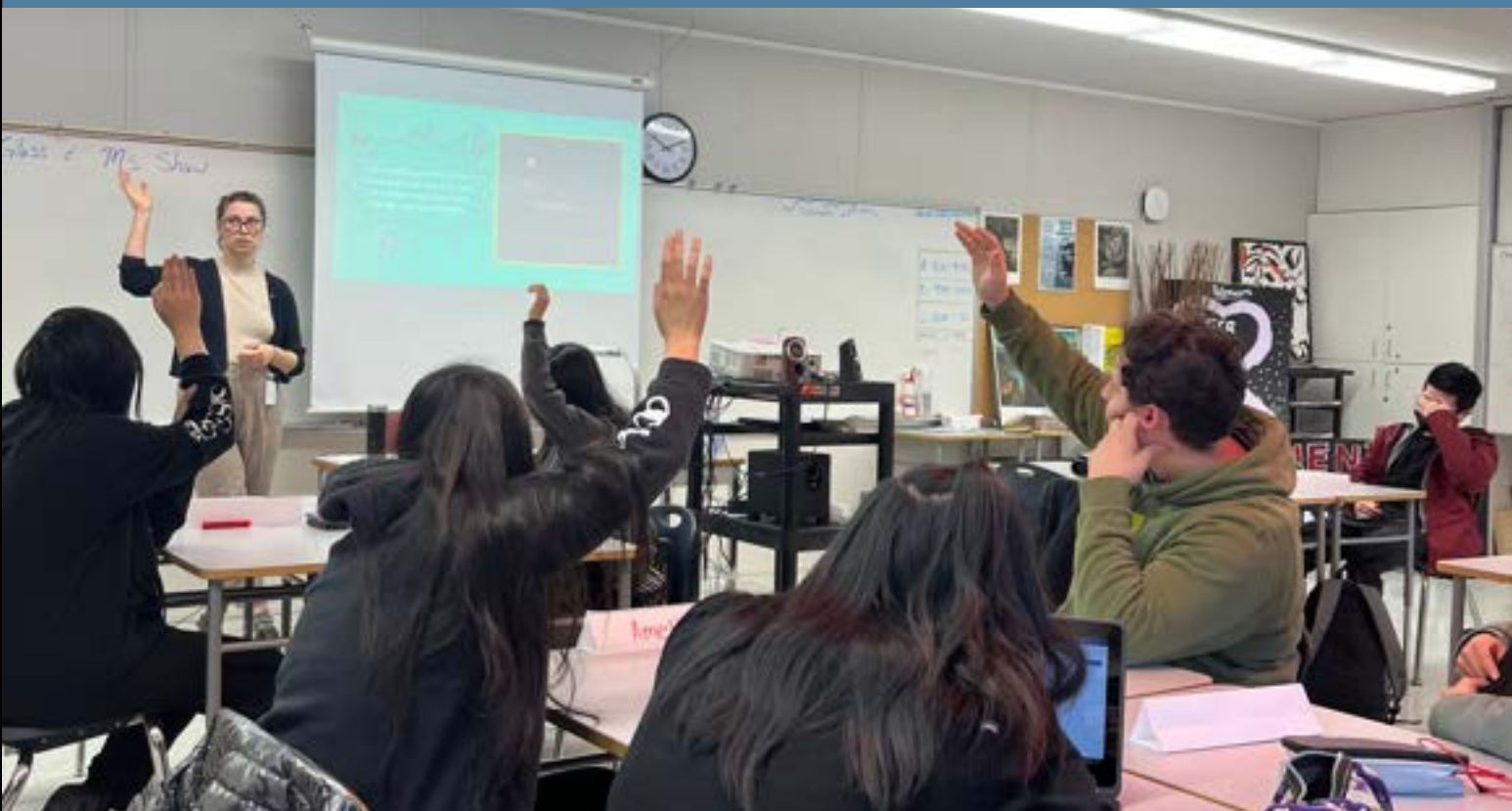
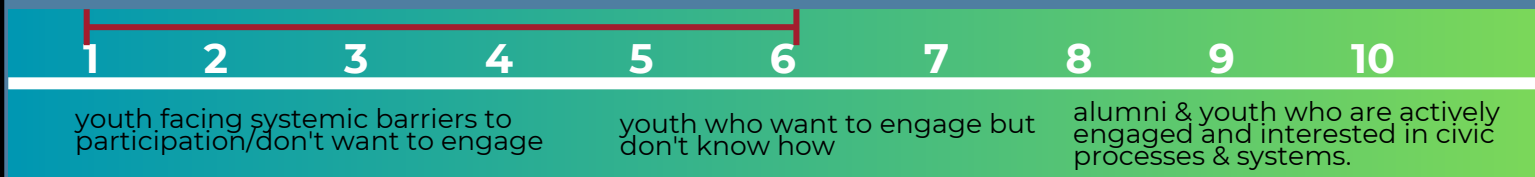
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PROGRAM CONTEXT

When decisions about the future of our cities are being made, youth are rarely at the table. **Young people lack the knowledge, skills and agency to affect meaningful change in their communities and the civic decisions being made are inherently less resilient and sustainable as a result.** In BC, the K-12 curriculum fails to teach students about cities, local government, and how to be active, engaged residents.

CityShapers in Schools bridges the gap in youth engagement and civic literacy knowledge by meeting youth where they're at, in spaces they know and trust -- their classrooms. The continuum of youth engagement represented below describes different stages of youth engagement, and points to the need for differentiated approaches to support youth in strengthening their capacity for civic engagement and to ultimately move up the engagement continuum.

Supporting youth 1-6 on the Youth Engagement Continuum



PROGRAM CONTEXT

2020

RESEARCH:
Environmental
Scan & Curriculum
Connections

2021

RESEARCH:
Equity in Civic
Education
RESEARCH:
Civic Education in
Schools - Teacher
Outreach

2022-2023

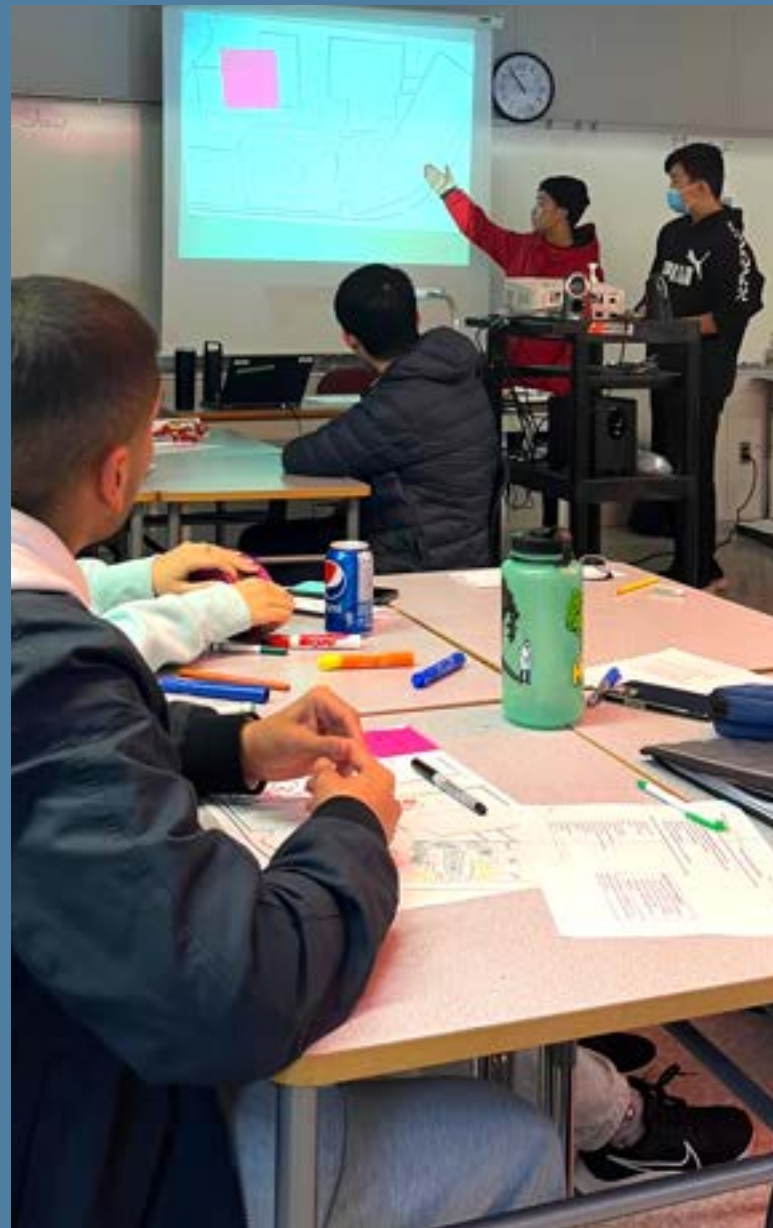
**PROGRAM PILOT &
EVALUATION:**
CityShapers in 30-
40 grade 6-12
Classrooms

2023-2024

**OFFICIAL
PROGRAM
LAUNCH**

To design and deliver civic education programming for youth 1-6 on the engagement continuum, it was important to understand the programming landscape and educational climate CityHive was entering into. **Two summers of research were carried out** to explore the state of civic education for school-aged youth, studying best practices in equitable civic education programming, and assessing the curricular and workplace needs of teachers across Metro Vancouver.

September 2022 saw the launch of the CityShapers in Schools pilot program in public high school and elementary classrooms. Rooted in CityHive's knowledge-to-action framework and developed according to principles of universal design for learning (UDL), CityShapers delivers **relevant and hands-on civic education workshops** that are tailored to the school's local context, with a priority given **to schools that serve equity-deserving communities.**



PROGRAM DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Grounded in CityHive's framework of Justice, Equity, Diversity, Decolonization, and Inclusion (JEDDI)

Embeds trauma-informed practices

Guided by principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

Place-based & Learner-centered

Engaged through story

Intergenerational and interdisciplinary

Hands-On and Interactive

— “ —

"Equitable civic education is inclusive, representative, and relevant; it promotes diverse voices and draws on students' lived experiences and perspectives in order to engage them in understanding social issues, the power dynamics that cause them, and the power that young people have to bring change." (Icivics)

— ” —



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Base: Civics 101

Cities, Power & Justice

Cities & Systems (75min)

Exploring Power & Place

Civic Agency (75min)

Show me what democracy looks like!

+

Deep Dive

**with Expert Guest Speaker*

Choice of theme

Housing & Affordability
Mobility & Transportation
Climate & Sustainability
Public Space
(75min)

+

ACTION

Choice of project

Knowledge-to-Action
Project (75min)

CityShapers in Schools is a 2- to 4-part workshop series designed for grade 6-12 classrooms. Students explore the complex challenges and opportunities in city planning and governance and uncover the multiple pathways to exercising their own civic agency within their community.

Participants critically engage with civic and urban planning concepts through the lens of justice, equity, and personal identity. They apply their learning through dialogue, simulations, and mapping to articulate and shape the urban futures that reflect their needs and dreams.

Throughout the CityShapers in Schools pilot program 2022-2023, teachers booked workshops from a menu of thematic and project options displayed above according to their students' curricular needs and interests.



PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

CIVICS 101

Cities, Power & Justice

1

Cities & Systems (75min) Exploring Power & Place

2

Civic Agency (75min) Show me what democracy looks like!

- A clearer understanding of what a city is, how it operates, and by whom
- A stronger awareness of responsibilities held by different levels of government
- Stronger reference points, sense of curiosity and personal investment in local urban challenges and how they impact daily lived realities
- A more tangible awareness of diverse and accessible pathways towards civic engagement
- Critical awareness of the intersecting barriers towards civic engagement

DEEP DIVE **with Expert Guest Speaker*

Choice of thematic focus session (75min)

3



Housing & Affordability

- Awareness of basic economic forces affecting property value
- Practical awareness of intersecting factors affecting personal rental budgets and housing access.
- Introduction to neighbourhood design assets, market housing options, and non-market housing solutions.



Mobility & Transportation

- Social, economic and environmental costs and benefits of diverse transportation modes.
- The intersections of identity, geography, history and policy in determining mobility and access, affordability, urban density, community well-being, and sustainability.



Climate & Sustainability

- Review of climate change impacts and solutions within urban and rural contexts.
- Intersection of climate issues and other social/political struggles + role of local government
- Systems- and community-based climate action solutions



Public Space

- Review of public versus non-public space.
- Exploring the diverse meanings, politics, and possibilities of public space and their design.
- Stronger reference points of public spaces near and far and their design intentions.

ACTION

Choice of knowledge-to-action mini project (75min)

4



Case Study Design Studio

- Identify common values and design intentions as a team for an urban space blueprint
- Apply imaginative and aspirational thinking and drawing to explore possibilities for the local built environment
- Practice public speaking



Letter-Writing Campaign

- Practice synthesizing new knowledge and personal perspective on one urban issue related to a local urban policy or plan
- Apply persuasive writing techniques and letter-writing format and etiquette for an authentic readership.



Neighbourhood Asset Mapping

- Apply urban planning knowledge to the study of assets and needs in the local built environment
- Collaboratively geo-locate, photograph, and comment on features in the built environment that help or hinder the urban experience.

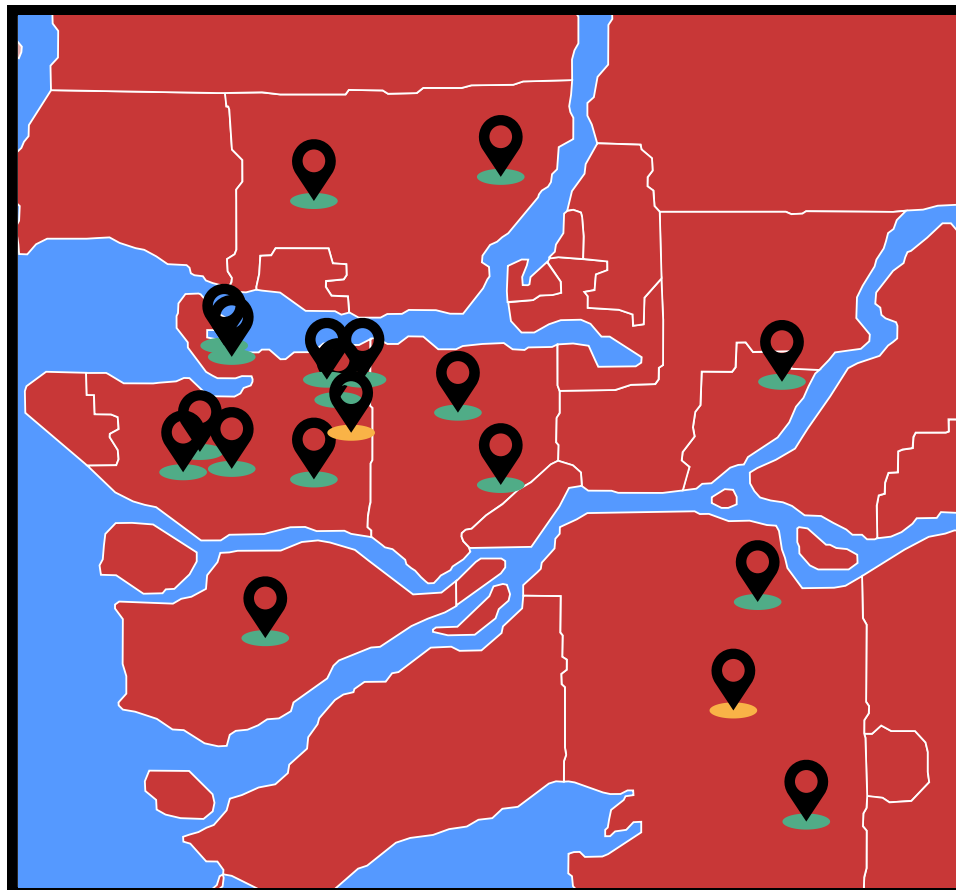


Public Hearing Simulation

- Experience the public hearing process and how it guides municipal decision-making
- Practice perspective-taking and public speaking about a theoretical urban development project

PROGRAM REACH

41 Classrooms | 19 Schools | 6 Municipalities/School Districts



North Vancouver - SD 44

Sutherland Secondary
Carson Graham Secondary

Vancouver - SD 39

Templeton Secondary
Britannia Secondary
King George Secondary
Vancouver City School
Sir Winston Churchill
Secondary
Magee Secondary
Prince of Wales Secondary
David Thompson
Secondary
Vancouver Technical
Secondary
Lord Selkirk Elementary

Burnaby - SD 41

Cariboo Hill Secondary
Burnaby North Secondary

Port Coquitlam - SD 43

Terry Fox Secondary

Surrey - SD 36

Fraser Heights Secondary
Ecole Salish Secondary
Green Timbers Elementary

Richmond - SD 39

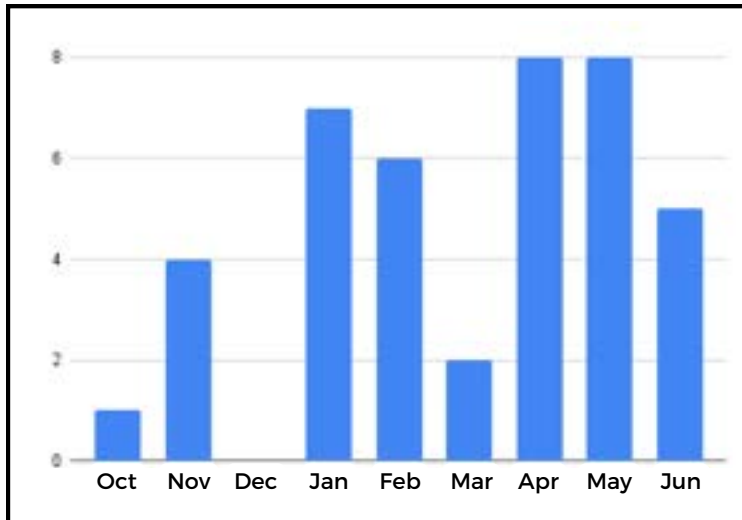
R. C. Palmer Secondary

1,025 STUDENTS

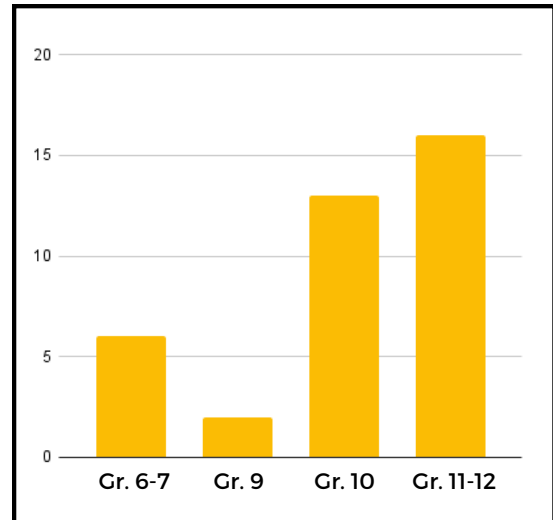


PROGRAM REACH

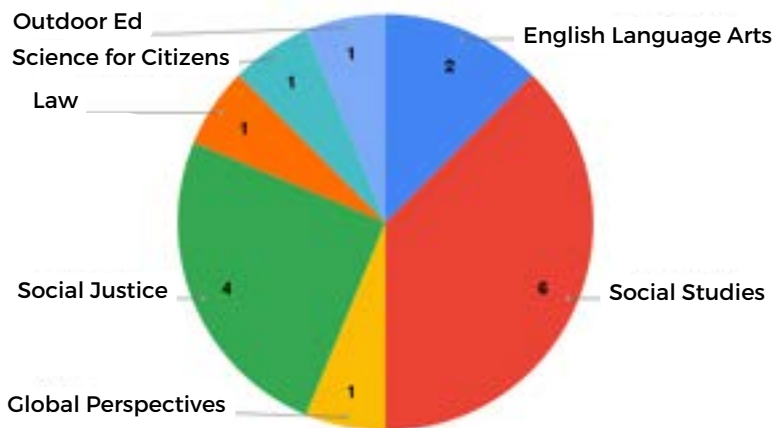
Programs per Month Oct 2022-June 2023



Grades



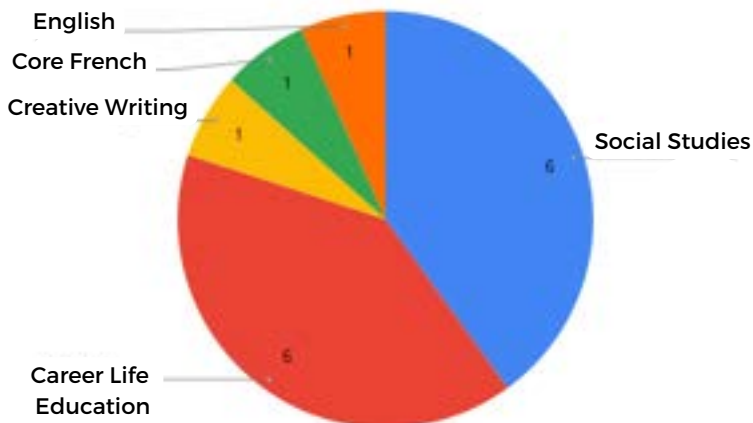
Classroom Subjects (Gr. 8-10)



Program bookings became more and more numerous as the school year progressed thanks to the power of *word of mouth* amongst teachers.

Most programs were booked by teachers teaching Social Studies and Social Justice for grades 10, 11, and 12 due to the strong curriculum alignment CityShapers content has with these subjects.

Classroom Subjects (Gr. 11-12)



The interdisciplinary nature of the issues explored through CityShapers programming enables multiple points of entry into any curricular subject and for any grade ranging from 6-12.

Whether they taught English, French, Science or Career Ed, teachers were able to integrate CityShapers content into their own classroom programming.

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

I loved how it was filled with interactive activities. The facilitators were very knowledgeable and nicely filled the gaps in our discussions. :)

Thank you for taking time to share about how our city work. You guys gave us many ways we can act upon these social problems and making us read others' stories, makes me feel that it's not as hard to speak up.

The format was really good, as it was engaging and gave me a much better understanding of civic action, democracy, and urban planning.

I love the focus on both systemic and individual action and how the onus doesn't need to fall on one person to create change. I think the content of the workshop illustrates greatly how civic engagement is not as far as we think and we as youth have a plethora of ways and resources to get involved.

TEACHER TESTIMONIALS

“
Went beyond expectations--I very much appreciated their inclusion of all voices and global perspectives/alternatives. [...] Would love to continue this collaboration in the future.
”

-Alternate Ed Teacher

“
I had a class that was particularly challenging in regards to engagement and CityShapers had them invested! I was blown away.
”

-Social Studies Teacher

“
This City Shapers experience made such a positive impression on the students. Olivia and her team provided students a further understanding of how cities are formed, a toolkit of resources and expert advice, and most importantly, they instilled a sense of confidence in them to make a stand for the change they want to see in their neighbourhoods.
”

-English & Outdoor Ed Teacher

“
Thank you so much for leading our students through such an interesting investigation of urban policy decisions and civic engagement!
”

-Social Justice & Urban Studies Teacher

EXPERT SPEAKERS

The program's impressive list of in-kind expert speakers is an asset to the CityShaper workshop experience. As the program's network of advisors and partners continues to expand across diverse city-shaping disciplines, so has the program's community of experts who volunteer a few hours of their month to connect directly with students on urban issues they specialize in.

Whether it's a deep dive exploration of public space in Surrey, or a session on housing & affordability in East Vancouver, more often than not, these thematic workshops were enriched by the expertise and career stories of on-call professionals who joined our facilitation team in the classroom to share their insights with students.



17 in-kind expert guest speakers joined classroom programs this pilot year, including:

- City Staff (Climate Action Planners, Community Planners, Housing Policy Planners)
- Planning & Housing Experts & Storytellers
- Architecture & Planning Professors
- Planning Engagement Specialists



ACTION PROJECTS

28 CASE STUDY DESIGN STUDIOS

Design a Climate-Resilient
School Campus

Design a Housing Complex
that meets your stakeholders
needs

Design a youth-friendly public
space in your school
neighbourhood

2 LETTER WRITING CAMPAIGNS

Artistic rendering of the 2019 Britannia East Vancouver Master Plan. (City of Vancouver)

Visions for a youth-friendly
Britannia School Campus

Prioritizing ambitious
climate action in PoCo

1 PUBLIC HEARING SIMULATION

Participate and deliberate
on a complex rezoning
issue.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Student Survey Results

These workshops helped me understand how municipal government decisions impact people and places in different ways.

No



Yes

These workshops improved my understanding of how I can get involved in my community, & take civic action.

No



Yes

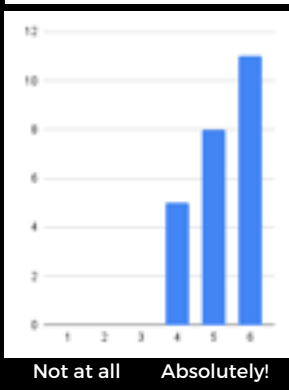
I found these workshops valuable & informative

No



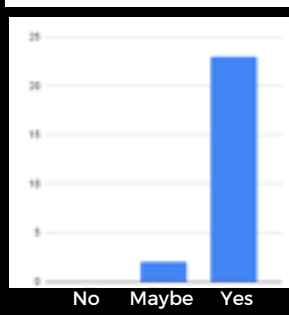
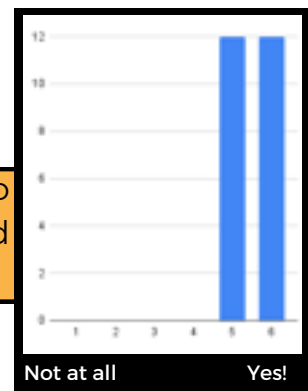
Yes

Teacher Survey Results



My students were engaged throughout the CityShapers session

Learning formats were multimodal and students were able to engage with the content across their diverse learning needs and styles.



I would recommend this current workshop program to my Teacher colleagues.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

Identified by Students

I enjoy this workshop as it inspires and teaches me about topics I think are valuable to get involved in. **I think there should be more discussion on how to be more confident to take civic action.** (Gr. 11)

I enjoyed the energy and relatability of the presenters. **I wish the presentations were more in-depth rather than general.** (Gr. 12)

I would like to learn about the steps one might take to create clubs or actions for a problem.

What exactly are things I could start and how can I create them? I know the actions but how do I start? (Gr. 10)

Identified by Teachers

Maybe make a third, even easier, level for reluctant readers/ELL students

Perhaps **sharing some of the questions ahead of the session** so students have a chance to think about them, to encourage whole class sharing on what were very interesting questions.

Its not your fault re: **the content being a bit too complex at times** as I think that even gr 10's struggle with political and social issues, especially after two years of pandemic learning.

ONGOING BARRIERS TO CIVIC ACTION

Identified by student participants

When asked what might prevent a young person from taking action on an issue they care about, youth across Metro Vancouver had a lot to say:

Social anxiety

Fear to speak out; fear of judgement

Hesitance from the idea that I might not be educated enough

Lack of resources

Not being informed or aware of the problems around my community

Feeling like my opinion doesn't matter

PARTNERSHIPS

The CityShapers format and approach to youth engagement was channelled and tailored towards direct youth engagement projects in collaboration with local civic institutions.

OCT '22

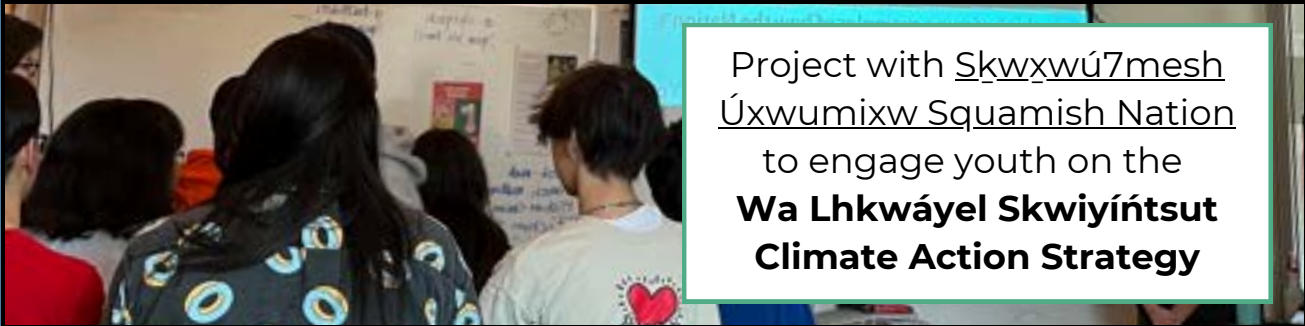
Youth engagement collaboration with Society for Children & Youth of BC on the **West End Waterfront**



WEST END WATERFRONT MASTERPLAN Project Approach, Park Board Committee Meeting, <https://parkboardmeetings.vancouver.ca/2019/20190708/PRESENTATION-WestEndWaterfrontMasterplan-ProjectApproach-20190708.pdf>

APR '23

Project with Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw Squamish Nation to engage youth on the **Wa Lhkwáyel Skwiyííntsut Climate Action Strategy**



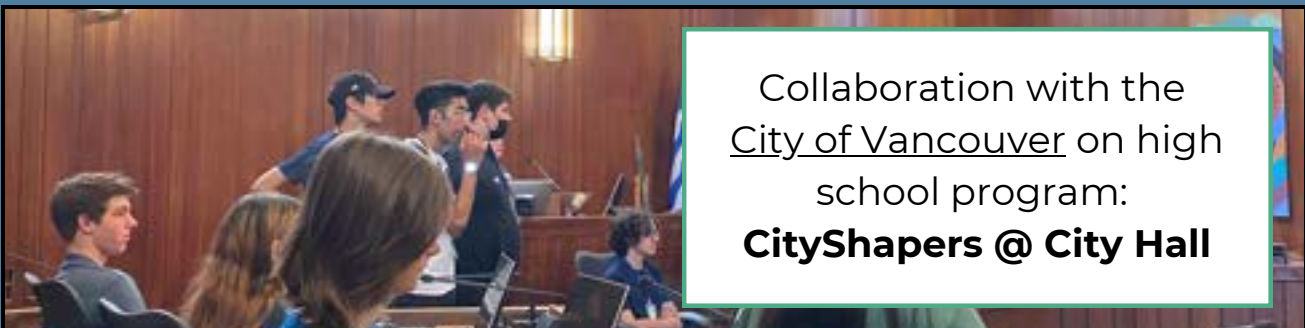
APR '23

Youth engagement collaboration with the City of Surrey on the **Clayton Corridor Plan**



JUNE '23

Collaboration with the City of Vancouver on high school program: **CityShapers @ City Hall**



WHAT'S NEXT



UPDATE current program materials to reflect student and teacher feedback as well as input from the CityShapers advisory group, and CityHive Youth Advisory group.



DEEPEN program session material with the guidance of the program's Indigenous cultural advisors regarding Indigenous governance systems, Indigenous climate action and community stewardship practices, as well as continuing to integrate decolonial approaches to civic literacy and civic engagement programming at large.



EXPAND CityShapers operational capacity by continuing to develop strategic partnerships with local civic institutions.



EXPLORE new innovative and collaborative ways to leverage youth engagement in the classroom in connection with direct institutional engagement efforts across the region.

2020



RESEARCH

2021



RESEARCH

2022-2023



**PROGRAM PILOT &
EVALUATION**

2023-2024



**OFFICIAL PROGRAM
LAUNCH**



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Program Coordinator - Olivia Shaw

Youth Facilitators

- Jacob Ereshefsky
- Liana Glass
- Abbas Hassan
- Vinitha Kaliraj
- Helena Lin
- Carlos Eduardo Lopez Sandoval
- Joaquin Mercado
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- Claire Shepansky
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- Molly Steeves
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- Kiera Vandeborne

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- Eleanor Wong

Expert Guest Speakers

- Anna Anastasiou
- Amelia Bowden
- Craig Busch
- Alison Gu
- Scot Hein
- Albert Huang
- Markus Kischnick
- Uytae Lee
- David Sadler
- Jessie Singer
- Tru Taylor
- Lise Townsend
- Kiera Vandeborne
- Emma Watson
- Scott Walmsley
- Serena Yang


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THANKS TO OUR WHOLE COMMUNITY!
...the advisors, facilitators, partners,
staff, teachers, and especially
thanks to the STUDENTS who made
this pilot year possible.

Want to learn more about how to get involved?
Email civics@cityhive.ca or connect with CityHive
through our [socials and newsletter!](#)

  @CityHiveVan

 sign up for our monthly newsletter