



# RESIDE VANCOUVER

An Anti-Displacement Plan

*thread*  
community planning





*Welcome to*  
**Vancouver**





# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## Indigenous Territory Acknowledgment

In order to meaningfully and authentically practice anti-displacement work, one must respect and honor the histories, traumas, and resilience of the communities who first experienced displacement in the region as their cultures and lands on which they thrived were colonized. To begin, Thread Community Planning would like to respectfully acknowledge that Vancouver, Washington is located within the ancestral territory of the Chinook, Klickitat, and Cowlitz People, among other Tribes – all of whom have a rich and enduring relationship with the Columbia River and surrounding forests, coasts, and plains regions.

Please note that while the intent of this acknowledgment is centered in justice, if any First Nations group is missing from this acknowledgment – or if any vital information is missing or misrepresented, Thread takes accountability.

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- Evergreen Habitat for Humanity
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
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- Vancouver Public Schools
- Workforce Southwest Washington
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### Local Residents

- “Ana”
- “Naomi”
- “Erik”
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- Zach Dishongh
- Patrick Kraft
- Miguel Viveros
- “Anonymous 1”
- “Anonymous 2”
- “Anonymous 3”
- “Anonymous 4”



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Cover Photo courtesy of Visit Vancouver USA





Photo by Thread Community Planning



# CONTENTS

**i. Executive Summary**

---

**1 Project Context**

---

**11 Community Stories**

---

**23 The Four P's**

---

**31 Recommendations**

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Photo by Thread Community Planning



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



“I think everyone knows about gentrification... I think even in the poor community, that word is understood. That means you’re getting rid of us.”

— Carol, local advocate & resident

Cities are places of opportunity – to find a job, make a home, get an education, build a family, be a part of a community – and places to prosper. Vancouver has been that place of opportunity for many people over time. However, with each new wave of people migrating to the area, there is a tension over who is able to seize those opportunities and who is excluded, over who is displaced and who can remain.

This pattern goes back hundreds of years to when colonists arrived in the area and displaced and excluded indigenous populations, such as the Chinook and Cowlitz Nations. Today, as in-migration and growing public and private investment in Vancouver shape the city, some are positively impacted by these changes, but others are not. Vancouver, as a dynamic and changing city, faces a choice: perpetuate this inequality or intervene to mitigate it.

This report offers recommendations as to how the City can help to stabilize vulnerable communities—such as renters, people with lower incomes, and people of color—and support them as they move towards financial self-sufficiency over time. Included are stories of community members who love their homes, neighborhoods, and community, but fear they will lose them because of increased housing costs. Also included are the experiences of those who have seen this fear become a reality. As more people are drawn to Vancouver in the future, it is important that the City learn from these community experiences and from best practices, and work toward more equitable outcomes for its residents.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Report Goals

### GOAL 1

Provide policymakers and planners with an understanding of the needs of vulnerable community members, and demonstrate how the City can mitigate displacement and exclusion associated with population growth and accompanying public and private investment.

### GOAL 2

Provide options that the City and local stakeholders can utilize to ensure that development projects support and uplift the most vulnerable communities to displacement, so that residents struggling with cost of living increases are able to stay in their neighborhoods and enjoy the benefits of new public investments.



Mural in central Vancouver. Photo by Thread Community Planning



## Findings

Through best practices research and a robust community engagement process, Thread Community Planning (Thread) constructed a strategic framework to meet the goals of this report. This framework is comprised of four broad anti-displacement strategies of which the individual recommendations provided are categorized. Thread tailored recommendations to be context-sensitive to Vancouver by engaging with local residents, advocacy groups, service providers, and policy experts. Thread also developed and applied an equity lens to all recommendations to ensure that those most vulnerable to displacement were prioritized. This iterative and inclusive process allowed Thread to produce impactful, equitable, and contextual recommendations.

The four broad strategies include:

### PEOPLE

Extend legal protections for renters and expand programs aimed at helping people remain in place or to better afford a move if they face displacement.

### PRESERVATION

Preserve the existing stock of affordable housing to secure the availability of housing options for residents of lower economic means.

### PRODUCTION

Produce context-sensitive affordable housing that includes community members vulnerable to displacement in meaningful ways through all stages of development so these new projects address their needs.

### PROSPERITY

Catalyze and support long-term economic prosperity efforts for un(der)employed residents by ensuring that existing workforce and economic development programs are accessible as well as providing new pathways to prosperity for workers and local small business owners.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Recommendations

Through a synthesis of the community engagement results, case study analysis, and best practices research, Thread has developed two ‘recommendation packages’ that each include 8-10 individual recommendations. Each package provides individual recommendations that address the four broad strategies – people, preservation, production, and prosperity. The purpose of these packages is to provide the City with sets of recommendations with different impact levels and expected barriers to success that also encompass an array of community needs.

### Aspirational Package

**High-impact programs and policies that do not currently exist in Vancouver, but could address unmet community needs. These recommendations likely face more significant barriers to successful implementation.**

- Community Investment Trusts
- “Qualified” Local Small Businesses in Public Procurements
- Joint-Labor Management and Job Training Partnerships
- Right of First Refusal
- Manufactured Dwelling Parking Zoning
- Anti-Displacement Impact Assessments
- Rental Registration Program

### Capturing Momentum Package

**Provides options to expand or improve existing policies and programs to better align them with community needs. These recommendations likely face less significant barriers to successful implementation.**

- Tenant Protection Enhancements
- Affordable Housing Fund
- Land Acquisition and Management Strategy
- Community Land Trusts
- Multifamily Tax Exemption
- Emergency Rental Assistance Program
- Expand Fourth Plain Forward’s Recommendations Citywide
- Utilization of Existing Job Training Services
- Fund Fourth Plain Forward
- Energy Conservation and Utilities Assistance



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## Conclusion

The purpose of this report is to provide policymakers with an understanding of the housing and economic development needs of the communities situated in central Vancouver. Doing so illustrates the need for an anti-displacement plan, and how implementing such a plan can benefit residents.

This report shares community stories, connects those stories to observable trends that are occurring in the area, provides recommendation packages to address the needs of community members, explains potential barriers to successful implementation, and identifies potential partnerships that could be utilized in order to implement recommendations effectively and equitably.

The City of Vancouver has an opportunity to implement anti-displacement strategies in advance of public investments and market changes that often trigger widespread involuntary displacement of vulnerable residents. Frequently, anti-displacement plans are created after significant displacement has already occurred. While it is clear that some displacement is already occurring in central Vancouver, the City has the ability to implement policies and programs to address and mitigate displacement on a larger scale, particularly as future planned developments are implemented over the next decade. By addressing this issue thoroughly, Vancouver can set a positive example for other cities both regionally and nationally.



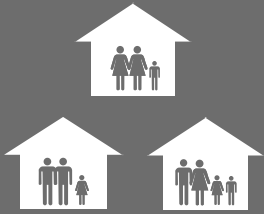
An intersection in central Vancouver. Photo by Thread Community Planning



# DEFINITIONS



**Residential displacement** occurs when households physically relocate voluntarily or involuntarily from their homes. While there is debate over the types of relocation that are “involuntary”, one defining population are those that are vulnerable to displacement due to rising costs of living or by being forcibly removed through formal eviction processes.



**Community displacement** occurs when culturally-significant aspects of neighborhoods decline or disappear, such as the closure, relocation, or decline of community-oriented businesses and community centers, public facilities and support services, and/or neighbors.



**Residential gentrification** is the process of neighborhood change predominantly in residentially segregated areas (e.g. communities of color and/or communities with lower incomes) that leads to reinvestment into deteriorating housing and infrastructure. These changes are implemented by public and private stakeholders to improve physical and economic conditions in historically disinvested areas by increasing amenities and services. The defining outcome of gentrification is the shift in socioeconomic composition of neighborhoods due to the in-migration of higher income, in-migrants leading to displacement of lower income residents and residents of color.



**Anti-displacement** is a set of goals and strategies used to mitigate the negative impacts of changing economic and physical conditions in neighborhoods with high concentrations of residents vulnerable to displacement.



**Vulnerable communities to displacement** are communities that meet one or more of the six vulnerability indicators. The six indicators are: people of color, residents with low educational attainment levels, residents in poverty (especially those with children), residents with lower incomes, renters, and communities that live areas with currently lower rents compared to the city as a whole.






FORT VANCOUVER HIGH SCHOOL  
CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES







The background image shows a white gazebo with a wooden deck and stairs on a green lawn. In the distance, there is a white tent with "Clark Public Utilities" written on its side. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds.

# SECTION 1: PROJECT CONTEXT



# PROJECT CONTEXT

## SECTION SUMMARY

This section includes a brief introduction to the history of Vancouver and explains population, housing, and economic trends over time. The study area – central Vancouver – was chosen due to the concentration of residents who are at a higher risk of displacement and who are in close proximity to sites of future public investment projects.

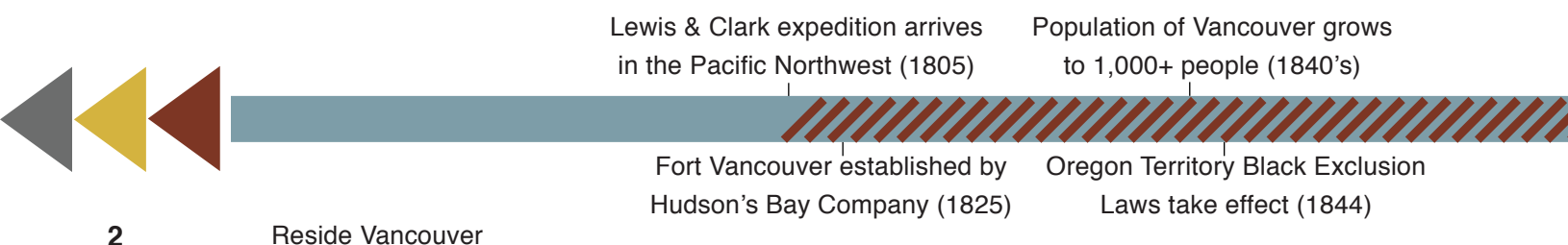
### History and Geography

The city of Vancouver, Washington sits on the state's southern border and is separated from Portland, Oregon by the Columbia River. Originally, the Chinook Nation inhabited this area for over 10,000 years prior to the arrival of Spanish explorers in 1602. The Chinook people were prolific traders and benefited from the area's abundant natural resources, situating their home at the confluence of the Willamette and Columbia Rivers. They had large settlements throughout the region, but their population was decimated by the Euro-American incursions, disease, and forced assimilation. The many transgressions against them and other tribes in the region have had intergenerational impacts and their numbers have never fully recovered.<sup>1</sup>

By the early 19th century, the city became a popular fur-trading hub and later became the predominant commerce center in the Pacific Northwest region. Its proximity to the Columbia and Willamette Rivers attracted the British-Canadian fur-trading corporation, the

Hudson Bay Company, and as the area's largest employer at the time Hudson Bay established Fort Vancouver in 1821. By the 1840s, the city's population grew to approximately 1,000 making it the largest city on the west coast, which led to its nickname the "New York of the Pacific".

Economic activity in Fort Vancouver grew throughout the early- and mid-20th centuries due to the quality and volume of Sitka spruce trees in the region (important for the development of European aircraft during World War I) along with the introduction of the railroads, and the creation of the 1917 bridge connecting Vancouver to Portland. The city's lumber mill was a significant economic driver during the first World War and during this same time, two shipyards and an aluminum plant also opened their doors, becoming the city's largest employers. However, once the war ended the shipyards, lumber mill, and aluminum plant went into decline or were dismantled altogether. The wax and wane of population growth and economic activity in the region continued





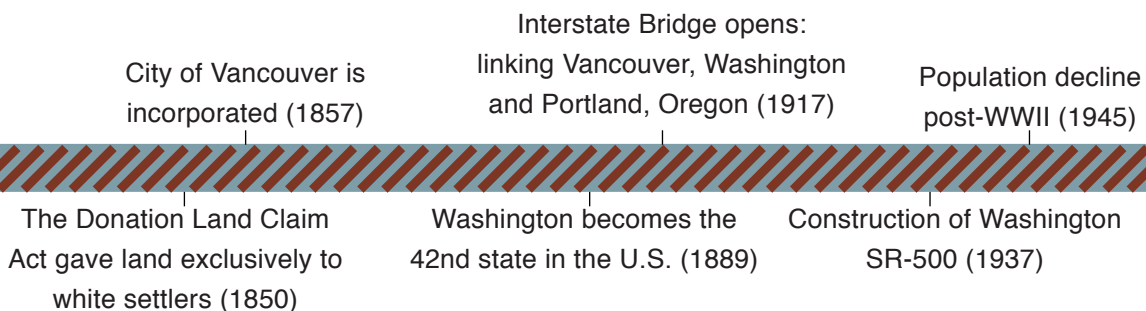


Businesses along Fourth Plain Boulevard. Photo by Thread Community Planning

through the second World War, which led to significant population growth from 18,000, peaking at over 80,000 and resting at 41,000 by the war's conclusion.<sup>2</sup>

The study area of this project – central Vancouver – is located upon four of five plains regions within Vancouver's city boundaries, which were historically used for agriculture by the Chinook people. The majority of the population growth that occurred during World War II was concentrated in central Vancouver. This significant population increase led to a housing shortage which the Vancouver

Housing Authority (VHA) addressed through the construction of six housing developments within the plains. This led to the development of Bagley Downs and Fourth Plain Village, among other neighborhoods. Unlike many cities and jurisdictions around the country, the VHA chose not to segregate housing developments by race. However, the collapse of the population after the war – along with the construction of highway SR-500 – led to significant and ongoing neighborhood deterioration that has continuously impacted the area's residents of lower economic means and residents of color through the present day.<sup>3</sup>





# PROJECT CONTEXT

## Present Day

Separated from Portland's city limits only by the Columbia River, the effects of the close geographical relationship between Vancouver and Portland are notable. Portland's widespread popularity as an attractive place to live and work has overshadowed Vancouver's own unique character and identity, a phenomenon which negatively impacts the city economically and undervalues the city's unique history. This issue, known as the "second city phenomenon"<sup>4</sup> is evident as approximately one-third of Clark County's labor force and resident retail purchases take place in Portland.<sup>5</sup>

However, Vancouver has experienced an influx of new residents in recent years with a population growth of 19.3% since 2000.<sup>6</sup> As the cost of living has escalated throughout the region, people have migrated further from Portland's urban core in search of more affordable places to live.<sup>7</sup> Of the seven counties in the Portland Metro region, Clark County's population is growing the fastest.<sup>8</sup> A large portion of Vancouverites commute to Portland for work and recreation, suggesting that Vancouver's lower cost of living has remained a factor in people's choice to reside there. Inevitably, the growth in population during this period has corresponded with increases in housing costs across the city, and Vancouver's residents of lower socioeconomic means have suffered as a result.

Vancouver residents are facing a difficult situation when trying to remain in place. For example, at the end of 2010, the vacancy rate in Vancouver was just 3.8% and was as low as 2% by 2014. Between October 2014 and October 2015, the increase in median rent for a 2-bedroom, 1-bath unit in Vancouver was the

highest in the nation at 15.6%. As of 2017, the vacancy rate was 5.0%, while the state vacancy rate was 9.0%. This high demand for housing is putting upward pressure on housing costs, and many households are being forced to increase the share of their incomes spent on housing or move in search of more affordable locations. Compounding this issue is the fact that wages have remained relatively stagnant in the region. Between 2009 and 2014, Vancouver's median household income (MHI) rose only 3.1% while rents spiked by 38.3%. Even more concerning, between 2014 and 2017, MHI rose a mere 10%, while rents increased by nearly 60%.<sup>9</sup>

The most stark illustration of the housing challenges residents face is the number of cost-burdened renters (those who spend more than 30% of their incomes on housing related costs), which affects approximately half of all renters in the city. Further, nearly 23% of renters spend over half of their income on housing, most of whom are renters with lower incomes.<sup>10</sup>

**As of 2017, the vacancy rate was 5.0%, which was lower than the state vacancy of 9.0%.**

**Between 2014 and 2017, MHI rose a mere 10%, while rents increased by nearly 60%**

**Between October 2014 and October 2015, the increase in median rent for a 2-bedroom, 1-bath unit in Vancouver was the highest in the nation at 15.6%**



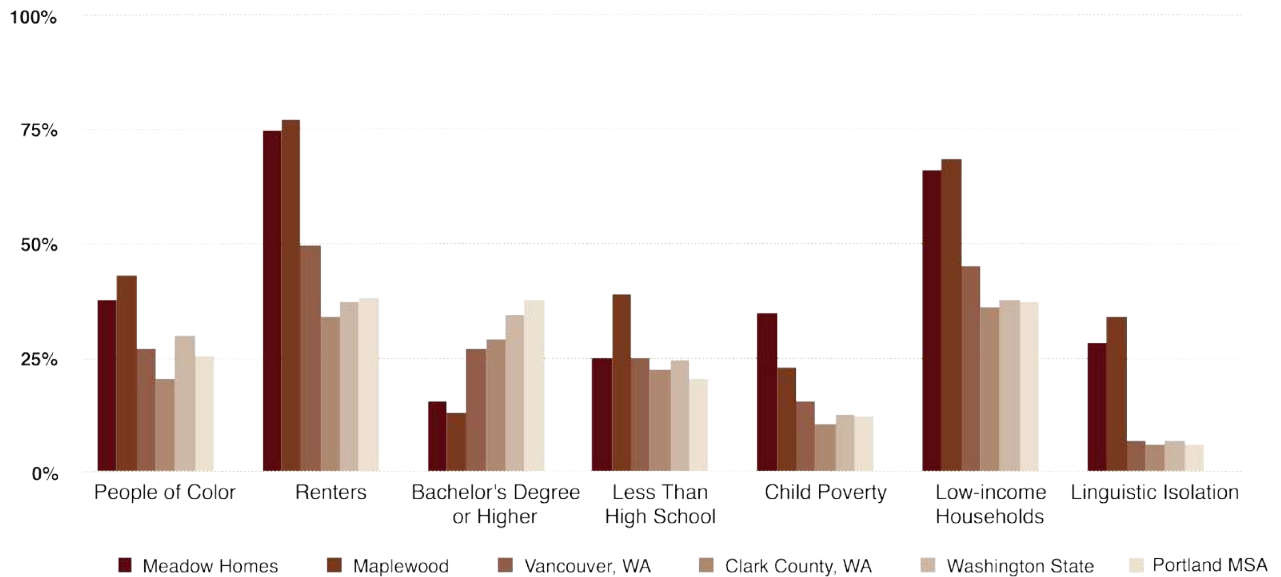
# Choosing Central Vancouver: Maplewood and Meadow Homes

Policies and programs implemented to mitigate displacement and uplift communities are not one-size-fits-all and therefore must be tailored to Vancouver residents' specific needs and values. Through the use of a vulnerability assessment,<sup>11</sup> Thread identified the city's most vulnerable census tracts. This was done in order to focus engagement with community members most vulnerable to displacement and related service providers, which allowed Thread to formulate recommendations that were contextual to the needs of residents most vulnerable to displacement.

## The vulnerability indicators include:

- Highest proportion of people of color
- Lowest proportion of people who hold a bachelor's degree or higher
- Highest rates of child poverty
- Highest proportion of households with lower incomes
- Highest proportion of renter households
- Lowest median gross rents
- Highly linguistically isolated households
- Highest proportion of people who have less than a high school education

### Vulnerability Indicator Comparison, 2017



**Source:** American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2017

**Notes:** Maplewood and Meadow Homes have high concentrations of people of color, renters, low-income households, linguistically isolated populations, elevated levels of child poverty and limited educational attainment.



# PROJECT CONTEXT

From this assessment, Thread gleaned that central Vancouver is the most vulnerable district, with the Meadow Homes and Maplewood neighborhood areas – Tracts 416 and 427 respectively – being the most vulnerable communities throughout the city. Thread also found that these neighborhood areas are more vulnerable to displacement when compared to the city overall, Clark County, Washington state, and the Portland-Vancouver-Hillsboro Metropolitan Statistical Area.

In addition to the vulnerability assessment, which focused on socioeconomic factors and

patterns, an additional spatial indicator was considered when choosing a study area. Central Vancouver has a number of public investment projects that will be implemented in the near future that could increase property values in nearby areas. These public investment project sites overlap with the areas containing the highest concentrations of residents vulnerable to displacement, which further affirmed the study area chosen for this project.

For more information on the vulnerability assessment process, please refer to Appendix B: Vulnerability Assessment.

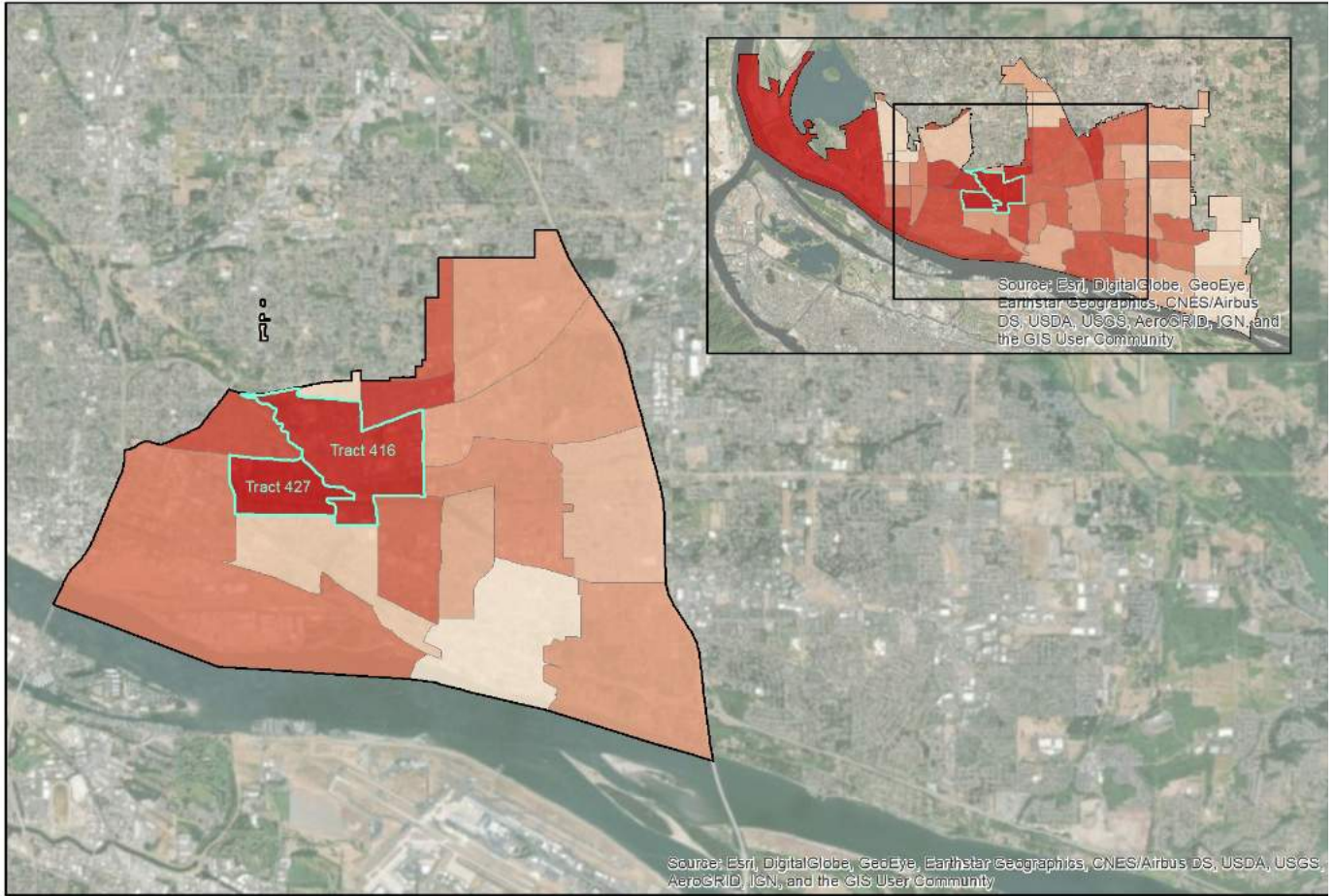
## Vulnerability Indicator Comparison

|                                    | Meadow Homes | Maplewood | Vancouver, WA | Clark County, WA | Washington, state | Portland MSA |
|------------------------------------|--------------|-----------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| <b>People of Color</b>             | 37.9%        | 43.2%     | 27.1%         | 20.6%            | 30.2%             | 25.7%        |
| <b>Renters</b>                     | 74.7%        | 77.4%     | 49.7%         | 34.2%            | 37.3%             | 38.5%        |
| <b>Bachelor's Degree or Higher</b> | 15.7%        | 13.2%     | 27.3%         | 29.1%            | 34.5%             | 37.9%        |
| <b>Less Than High School</b>       | 25.0%        | 38.9%     | 25.0%         | 22.5%            | 24.5%             | 20.4%        |
| <b>Child Poverty</b>               | 34.8%        | 22.9%     | 15.7%         | 10.6%            | 12.8%             | 12.5%        |
| <b>Low-income Households</b>       | 66.1%        | 68.9%     | 45.1%         | 36.1%            | 37.7%             | 37.4%        |
| <b>Linguistic Isolation</b>        | 28.4%        | 34.1%     | 7.1%          | 6.0%             | 6.9%              | 6.2%         |
| <b>Median Gross Rent</b>           | \$823        | \$793     | \$1,055       | \$1,094          | \$1,120           | \$1,118      |
| <b>Median Home Values</b>          | \$173,100    | \$165,800 | \$238,300     | \$272,400        | \$286,800         | \$312,500    |

Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2017



# Central Vancouver Vulnerability



## Vulnerability



Study area (Central Vancouver)

Most vulnerable tracts



Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2017

# PROJECT CONTEXT

## Current Planning & Development

In line with the City's Comprehensive and Strategic Plans, as well as Clark County's Economic Development Strategy, the City of Vancouver has taken the growth in tax base and has converted the funds into new and proposed public projects. For example, there has been significant public investment in the Waterfront and Downtown areas in recent years, and private investment has followed in the form of new multi-family housing, retail, and commercial spaces.<sup>12</sup>

### Active Projects

- CITY OF VANCOUVER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
- VANCOUVER STRATEGIC PLAN
- CLARK COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
- FOURTH PLAIN FORWARD ACTION PLAN
- AFFORDABLE HOUSING TASK FORCE ORDINANCES
- AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT FUND

### *THE FOURTH PLAIN FORWARD ACTION PLAN*

Specific to the study area and in line with the City's Fourth Plain Corridor Subareas Plan published in 2007, the City of Vancouver has used the 2015 Fourth Plain Forward Action Plan as a guide to stabilize the Fourth Plain corridor and uplift the corridor's diverse, international communities. Most notably, plan implementation led to the creation of Fourth Plain Forward (FPF), a community-based nonprofit that acts as a resource hub for existing businesses in the area that are in need of assistance and networking. FPF also serves as an advocate for community needs, and helps with district marketing to encourage more economic activity in the corridor. It has taken on a multitude of projects that benefit

both local businesses and the residents in the area, including hosting the Summer of Murals, the annual Fourth Plain Multicultural Festival, and a Movie-in-the-Park event in Evergreen Park.<sup>13</sup>

### *UPCOMING PROJECTS IN CENTRAL VANCOUVER*

In addition to the ongoing planning efforts in central Vancouver, there are a number of public investment projects in the pipeline that could transform the social, economic, and cultural landscape of central Vancouver and the city at large.

### Anticipated Projects

- HEIGHTS DISTRICT PLAN
- COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS STRATEGY
- MILL PLAIN BUS RAPID TRANSIT PROJECT
- REDEVELOPMENT IN THE INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT: OPPORTUNITY ZONES
- PARKS REDEVELOPMENT – DAVID DOUGLAS, ET. AL.
- PUBLIC WORKS OPERATIONS CENTER REDEVELOPMENT
- PUBLIC SCHOOL RENOVATIONS

Central Vancouver has the Portland metro region's first bus-rapid-transit (BRT) line, which runs along Fourth Plain Boulevard, connecting residents to Vancouver's downtown. C-Tran has declared the project a huge success, as it has led to increases in ridership, decreases in late arrivals, and has contributed to the economic growth along the corridor. Another BRT line is schedule to go in on Mill Plain Boulevard which runs parallel to Fourth Plain Boulevard and will connect even more central



Vancouver residents to resources via high capacity rapid transit.

**Conclusion**

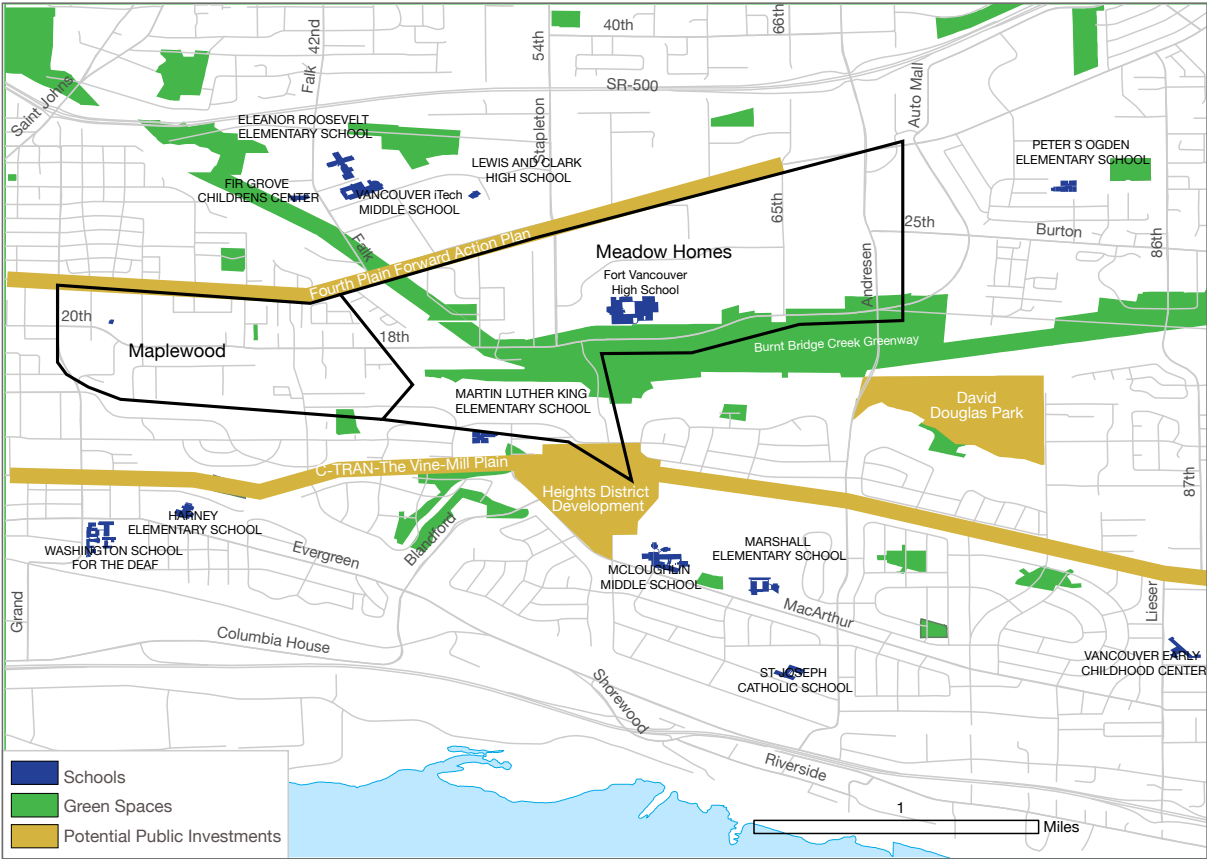
The City recognizes that anticipated investments in the Heights Redevelopment Project, the neighborhoods' commercial corridors, and significant improvements to David Douglas Park may increase surrounding property values, and potentially eliminate some transit-accessible, lower-cost housing options in the city that many residents rely on. Now that the City is reintroducing public investment in various forms to these neighborhoods, it is important to stabilize affordable housing options so

that households of lower economic means can enjoy the benefits of infrastructure and amenity improvements.

Public investments carry opportunity for both positive and negative outcomes for residents. By learning from past examples and thinking about the issue holistically, the City of Vancouver can reach community and economic development goals that are equitable, and attend to the needs of those who need the most support.

For more details on context see Appendix A: Existing Conditions.

*Maplewood & Meadow Homes Development*



**Source:** City of Vancouver, Washington  
**Notes:** Map showing city investment and developments.



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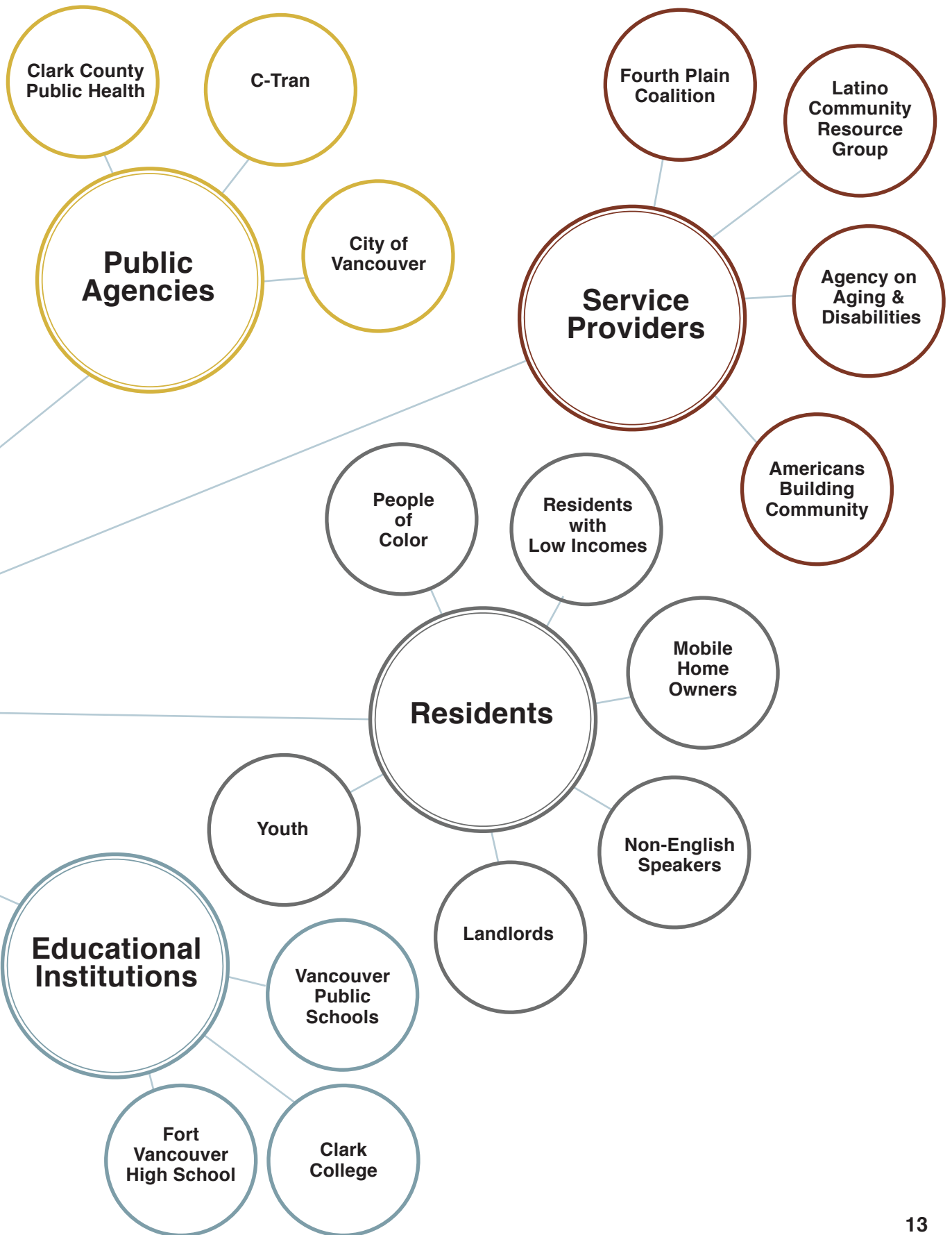
SECTION 2:  
**COMMUNITY  
STORIES**

# COMMUNITY STORIES

During the community outreach process Thread engaged many different stakeholders to determine what concerns the community has, and what policies could help to address these concerns.







# COMMUNITY STORIES

## SECTION SUMMARY

During the community engagement process, Thread met with a multitude of residents and stakeholders from central Vancouver who shared their experiences related to housing and displacement. The purpose of the engagement process was to identify key community concerns, and ensure that the plan's recommendations would be relevant to the people most impacted by rising housing costs, as well as the community partners that will be advocating for, and implementing these recommendations.

Thread used a variety of methods to get to this end – including stakeholder interviews, attending community events, door-to-door surveying, focus groups, informal interviews, and consultant interviews. The stories in this section convey the human impact of involuntary displacement and illustrate ways the City and other related parties could intervene to help residents remain in place. Likewise, these individual stories encapsulate broader trends in the community that affect many Vancouver residents.



\*\*For detailed information on the process and findings of the community engagement strategy, please see Appendix C: Community Engagement Report.





**Ana, a resident of central Vancouver**  
*Photo by Thread Community Planning*

**ANA** is a Latinx woman in her mid-thirties, and she has lived in central Vancouver for over a decade. She does not speak English, but her niece helped translate during the interview process for this project. Ana explains that her favorite thing about her neighborhood is that she can walk just a few blocks to David Douglas Park. She takes her kids there often, and will sometimes take the neighbor's kids with them so they can play together – Ana is close with her neighbors and likes the community that exists in her apartment complex.

She is excited to hear about the nearby public projects that will improve the park, and enhance her ability to get around the city through the new bus-rapid-transit system on Mill Plain, which is a few blocks away. She shares her ideas about how the park could be improved to better accommodate young children like her own. It's easy to see that these public improvements would benefit her and her family immensely.

Ana has been living in her apartment for over a decade with her husband, and they have raised their two kids there for the past four years. She says that when they first moved in they used

to see small increases in the rent – say \$50 – every two to three years. However, each year for the past few years the rent has increased by \$100 every year without any physical improvements to her unit in that time. The consistent increase in rent has put a significant financial strain on them, and she worries that if the rent continues to rise in this way, they may have to move somewhere more affordable. If she were to return to work, they might be able to make ends meet, but with the high cost of childcare and increased rent costs, she's not sure if she would be able to earn enough to keep the family in place.

When asked about what it would be like for her to have to leave her home, she hesitates before responding, choosing her words carefully. Ana responds that it would be extremely difficult for her, but that she would do what she had to in order to make it work for her family.

**She goes on, saying that this is where her community is, this is where she and her husband chose to raise their children; this is her home.**

She explains that one of her neighbors recently had to move because they could no longer afford to live there, and that they didn't have any luck finding a place nearby they could afford. That neighbor now lives in Gresham – far from the community she had built in Ana's neighborhood. Ana knows that moving will only get harder the older her children get, as they build friendships and create unique connections to their home and broader community. She worries a move could be extremely disruptive for them. She hopes that it won't come to that.

**NAOMI** is a black woman in her mid-forties who lived in Vancouver for most of her life. She grew up in the Rose Village neighborhood during her early childhood before moving to the Heights area later on. Naomi was always surrounded by a large, close-knit family and felt a strong connection to Vancouver. She recalls that she always had a network of support that allowed her to feel safe and secure in her home. Multiple generations of her family lived in Vancouver and she imagined that she would live there for the rest of her life.

Naomi had a few short stints living in other parts of Washington as she pursued higher-paying jobs after graduating from Clark College. However, she repeatedly returned home to Vancouver, as she missed the close ties she held there. It was this sense of belonging and community that ultimately led her and her partner to decide that Vancouver was where they wanted to raise their children. Upon their return to Vancouver, they started their family and re-established their connection to the local community, finally feeling at home again. They rented a home in the city, where they lived with their five children and Naomi's father – who needed support as he was no longer able to live independently. They felt secure in their housing situation, and lived in the home for years.

In 2014, as housing prices in the area escalated rapidly, Naomi's landlord informed her that her rent would be doubling the following month. She had five days to decide whether she wanted to stay and come up with the money for the new rent, or provide the mandatory three-week notice that she would leave at the end of the month. She thought about whether her and her partner would be able to feed the family if they decided to stay, and what it would mean to uproot her children from their schools, their friends, their communities if they had no choice but to move. Naomi and her partner frantically tried to pull finances together to make it work, but ultimately decided it wouldn't be

sustainable long-term, even if they did manage to cobble together enough for the next month.

Naomi couldn't find a home they could afford nearby and couldn't afford to rent any home big enough to comfortably house her family within Vancouver city limits. They had to start over in a small town outside of the city, and left behind not just their house, but also their community support network that had been instrumental in allowing them to build a life of meaning and relative security. The transition was difficult, and in particular one incident stands out to Naomi as one that changed her forever.

A few weeks after her family moved into their new home, Naomi opened her mailbox to find an envelope that had been addressed to "the Current Resident" in handwriting she didn't recognize. Inside were pages of hateful, racist, and threatening language aimed directly at Naomi and her family. Naomi recalls that as a person of color in the Pacific Northwest she was cognizant of racism that she could encounter outside of her home, but her home had always been a safe place for her where the threats of the outside world were at bay. However, this letter brought that hate inside of her home, and she was deeply shaken by the fear she felt for her family's safety.

**Naomi felt isolated and disconnected, as there were no organizations in her new town that she could lean on for support.**

Her community network was in Vancouver, and without those connections she struggled with depression and anxiety as a result of the compounding experiences of displacement and overt racism. She eventually received support through regional organizations, but it took years after this event for her and her family to feel safe and confident again.





**Erik, a resident of central Vancouver**  
*Photo by Thread Community Planning*

**ERIK** is a 60-year old man who has been in Vancouver throughout his life – the majority of which he has spent living in the Heights neighborhood. Multiple generations of his family still reside in the area, and he feels a strong sense of community there. His ties to the neighborhood have been particularly important to him due to his disability, and having family and friends nearby to lend a hand has been instrumental in allowing him to remain independent in recent years. He’s not sure what his life would be like without their support. Erik has lived in the same apartment for the past fourteen years, and during most of that time he shared the space with one other roommate. However, they recently had to divide their living room with a curtain and bring in a third roommate so that they could afford the rising rent, which has been increasing about 10-15% annually for the past few years.

Erik has witnessed the neighborhood change in many ways during his life, but the recent growth stands out in his memory distinctly. Some of the recent changes have been positive – violent crime has decreased in the area and he now feels safer in his neighborhood, which he recalls had frequent shootings in the past. The accessibility of the neighborhood has also

improved over time, which is something that Erik greatly appreciates. He is now able to get to places more easily, and if he were forced to move he worries that wherever he could afford wouldn’t be as close to the basic services he utilizes regularly. However, all of this positive change has been accompanied by evictions of some of his friends and the higher costs of living are eating into the savings he had built up prior to becoming disabled. Erik is unemployed and receives disability payments from the federal government, but his fixed-income status has limited his ability to withstand housing cost increases.

Erik is hoping to find a part-time job that would help him to remain in his apartment and allow him to have some extra money to put towards retirement while also enjoying a higher quality of life along the way. He feels that he can be an asset to his community, and would like to find a job that permits him to be involved in the local economy in some way.

**However, Erik is uncertain if he has the skills that local employers are looking for, and is unaware of how to go about finding jobs that he is qualified for.**

He continues to ask around for work from people he knows, but worries that if he doesn’t find something soon he will be in an even more tenuous position than he already is. Finding a new place to live where he would likely be disconnected and far from his network of friends and family, would be extremely challenging for him.

# COMMUNITY STORIES

## How these stories connect to broader themes

Through the community engagement process (see Appendix C: Community Engagement Report), themes emerged, some of which reflect Ana, Naomi, and Erik's priorities, concerns, and hopes for the future. From these themes, Thread identified recommendations that would be most effective in helping to mitigate displacement for people experiencing a variety of displacement threats.

Each of these stories illustrates the need for a multifaceted approach to addressing the causes of displacement as well as expanding efforts to mitigate its negative impacts. For some residents, having access to housing that is subsidized and shielded from drastic rent increases is needed. Others may already live in low-cost housing, but rents, property taxes, or utility bills might be increasing rapidly, so preserving that affordability for existing units could be most beneficial. Still other residents could benefit from outreach campaigns run by community-based organizations, which inform them of their rights as renters and provide them opportunities to influence development processes in their neighborhoods. Finally, many residents could benefit from the expansion of existing job training and workforce development programs targeted to growing industries such as health and technology.

Ana's story is one that shows the hope that these public improvement projects can bring to residents, but it's possible that these same improvements could be the thing that forcibly

drives her away. Ana's landlord might not know a new BRT line is about to go in nearby, or that the neighborhood park is scheduled to be renovated – in which case her rent increases may become even more drastic in the future. If the rents have been increasing just to keep up with the market, it's possible they will increase even more drastically as the desirability of the neighborhood improves.

Naomi's story illustrates some of the damage that can be caused by racist acts, but it also touches on some of the broader themes that were drawn from the community in regard to fear of displacement. Drastic and sudden increases in rent have the potential to uproot residents from their home, from their community, and force them into places that are potentially hostile and resentful of newcomers. Naomi feels that by expanding the resources available to residents in her situation, the impacts of displacement could be reduced.

Tenant protections have been enhanced in Vancouver since Naomi's displacement occurred – including the provision that landlords must alert their tenants with a 45-day notice of rent increases of 10% or more. However, she believes that if there were more support for a community-based organization whose mission is to assist those who are at-risk of (or are experiencing) displacement, that she would have more easily accessed the information she needed as she was displaced from Vancouver.



While there are existing organizations and resources to support renters and homeowners that are vulnerable to displacement, it seems there is a disconnect between those who need the services and those who provide them – which could be especially true for non-English speakers like Ana.

Erik’s story demonstrates the connection between workforce and economic development and displacement risk. Residents living on fixed incomes or those who are unable to find jobs are less able to absorb housing cost increases due to a lack of financial flexibility. In Erik’s case, he has dealt with the issue by adding a roommate, which could result in

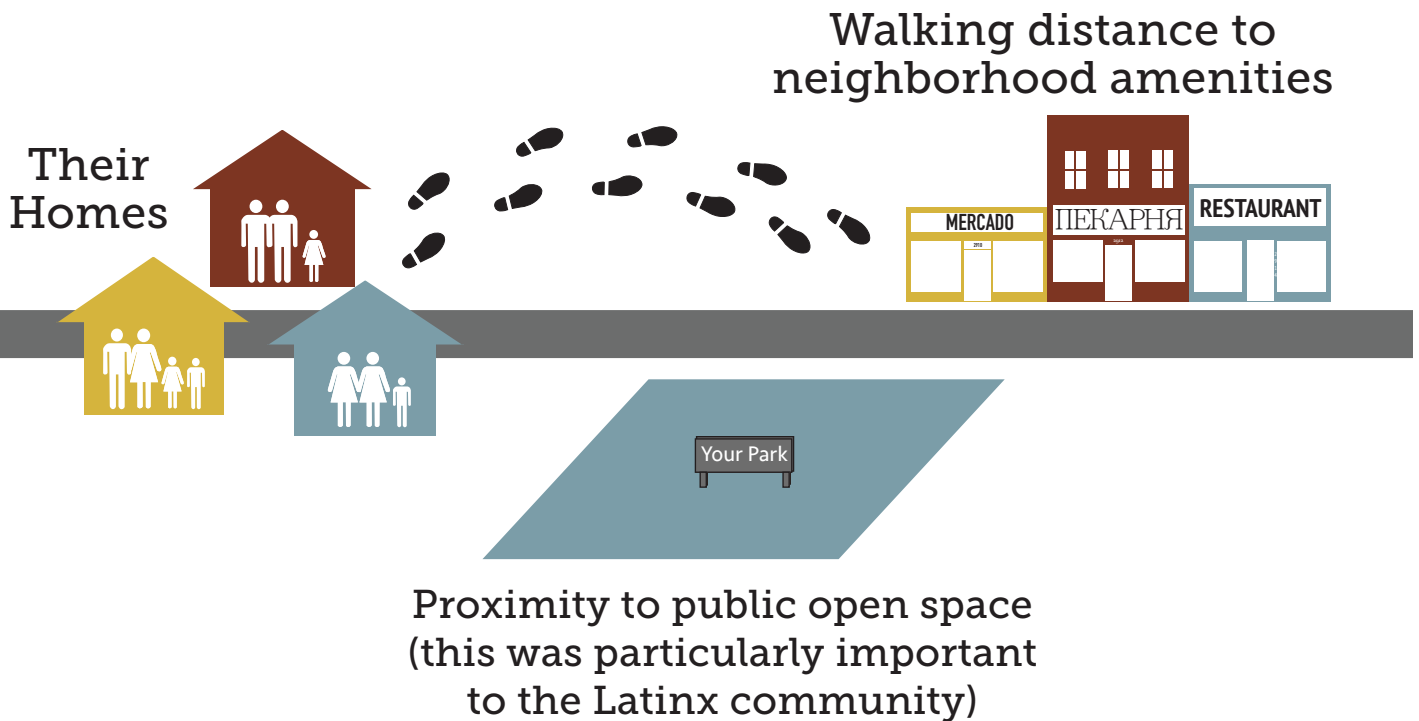
overcrowding. The issue of overcrowding was mentioned by focus groups, services providers, and other interviewees as a potential health hazard and a violation of a lease agreement if not approved by the property manager – which could result in eviction or negatively impact rental history. Making sure that residents have the skills and avenues to find and retain employment could mitigate displacement in the long-run by allowing residents to increase their earning potential and build savings.



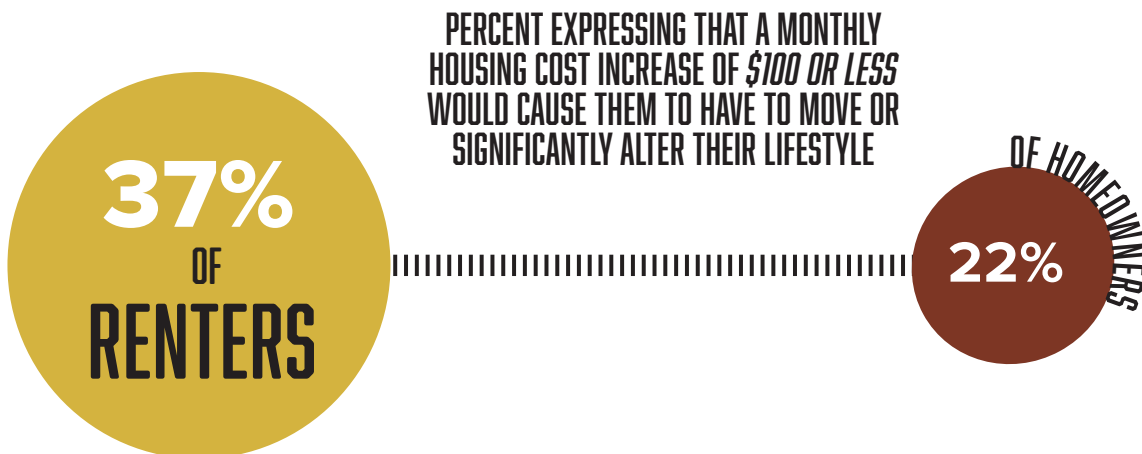
A community engagement focus group with local residents. Photo by Thread Community Planning

# Engagement Themes

Maplewood and Meadow Homes residents indicated that the most likable aspects of their neighborhood were:



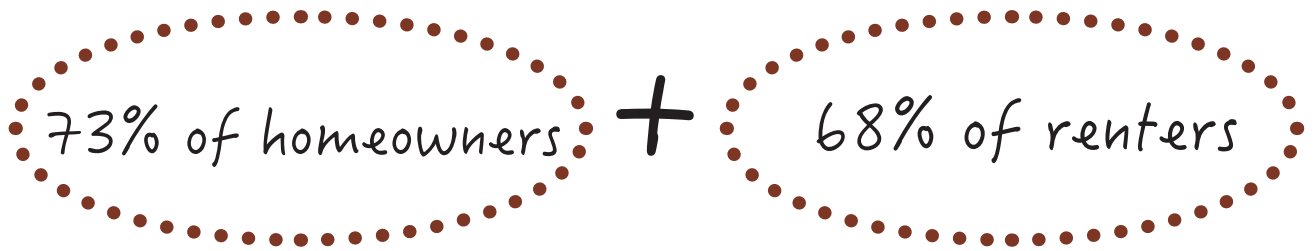
## RESILIENCY: RENTERS VS. HOMEOWNERS





**Renters with lower incomes, people of color, and those with lower educational attainment levels in central Vancouver are most concerned about rising housing costs.**

This housing insecurity is not an unjustified fear, as Thread's community survey results show that



experienced increases in their housing costs during the past year.

## STRATEGIES TO HELP THE COMMUNITY FEEL MORE SECURE

IMPROVED  
WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT  
INITIATIVES

INCREASED  
AFFORDABLE  
HOUSING OPTIONS

UTILITY PAYMENT  
FINANCIAL  
ASSISTANCE

SHORT-TERM  
RENTAL ASSISTANCE









# SECTION 3: THE FOUR P's



# THE FOUR P's

## SECTION SUMMARY

The four strategies – people, preservation, production, and prosperity – were developed through a synthesis of community engagement findings, case study analysis, and best practice research. Together, these four strategies aim to address various needs of the community with both short-term and long-term implications – on the spectrum from immediate stabilization to long-term economic resiliency and prosperity.

Both of the recommendation packages in the following section will contain specific recommendations that are categorized as one of the four “P’s”. By implementing recommendations that cover all four of the strategies, the City can better ensure that it is addressing a variety of possible solutions to mitigate displacement.



A community engagement focus group with local residents. Photo by Thread Community Planning



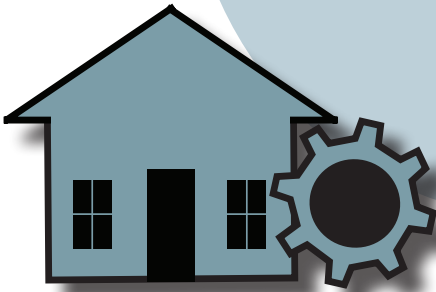


PEOPLE



PRESERVATION

**THE  
FOUR  
P'S**



PRODUCTION



PROSPERITY

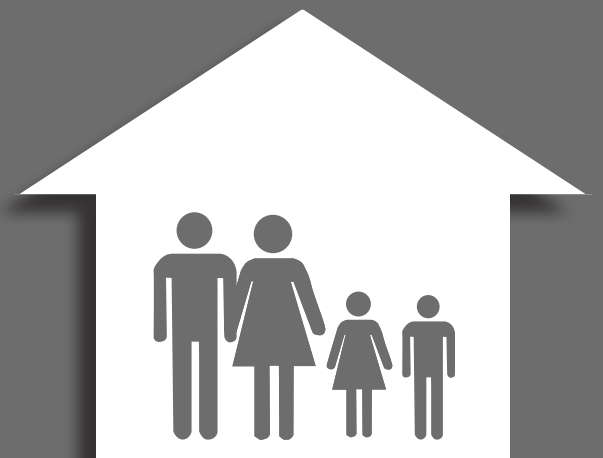
# PEOPLE

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**The unifying purpose of recommendations encompassing this strategy is to enhance universal protections granted to residents in order to prevent them from experiencing displacement and to provide community members a chance to influence development in their neighborhoods.**

“I’ve heard on multiple occasions of landlords discriminating against people on Section 8 vouchers. That’s against the law and I think that some landlords really just don’t know that. I’ve even seen it posted on Craigslist ads where it’ll literally say ‘No Dogs. No Section 8 Vouchers’. That’s not allowed. There needs to be some kind of awareness campaign, education, and accountability.”

– Ruby, local advocate





# PRODUCTION

Production recommendations aim to increase the supply of newly-constructed affordable housing. These subsidized units are instrumental in allowing residents to either return to or remain in high-opportunity neighborhoods as market-rate housing costs increase.

“When it comes to the preservation of existing stock... we don’t have enough [affordable housing] to begin with. We should focus on producing housing. It’s why we have homeless issues.”

– Mary, local advocate



# PRESERVATION

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**These recommendations aim to preserve the existing stock of affordable housing by directing funding towards maintaining housing affordability and the physical condition of housing. Preservation is one of the most cost-effective methods of keeping residents in place.**

“There are people that do have homes that can’t afford to maintain them and they’re falling apart. It becomes a health hazard so there needs to be more places for them to turn so that they can get the help that they need.”

– Amos, local resident





# PROSPERITY

**While addressing housing affordability and tenants' rights are pillars to anti-displacement work, more is needed to uplift residents from a life of subsistence to a life where they thrive. These recommendations are focused on providing ways for residents to attain long-term financial prosperity to better withstand shifts in the housing market in the future without the need to rely on finite resources offered by the City and local nonprofits.**

“When we look at programs that are providing opportunities to train, we need to consider the pipeline to better jobs. They need to have an endgame that’s going to work so that once people complete the training, they’re given a job versus being trained in a sector that either doesn’t exist or isn’t currently hiring.”

– Wyatt, local advocate







# SECTION 4: RECOMMENDATIONS



# RECOMMENDATIONS

## SECTION SUMMARY

This section will highlight key recommendations for the City that address community needs to help mitigate displacement in central Vancouver. Final recommendations were informed through a synthesis of the community engagement results, case study analysis, and best practices research. Once a master list of recommendations was compiled, an equity framework was created and implemented to prioritize recommendations based on their equity strengths (See Appendix D: Equity Framework for details on Thread’s methodology).

The equity framework includes the four following criteria:

1. *Fostering Opportunity*

Goal: Bolster current and future residents’ ability to freely obtain, retain, and/or improve their housing situation and economic status.

2. *Practicing Redistributive Justice*

Goal: Identify and recommend strategies that redistribute power, land, wealth, and/or needs-based resources that results in more equal distribution of opportunity and privilege across the community.

3. *Instituting Accountability*

Goal: Build means of accountability in the effectiveness of programs for intended outcomes and the dissemination of those results to relevant stakeholders and the general public.

4. *Centering Community Voices*

Goal: Incorporate community interests and concerns into final policy recommendations, focusing on the interest and concerns of those most vulnerable to displacement.

Thread has developed two recommendation packages containing individual recommendations categorized by the four broad strategies – people, preservation, production, and prosperity. The purpose of having two recommendation packages is to provide the City with options so that feasibility can be assessed internally based on resources – including time, staff capacity, and funding.

For more details on recommendations see: Appendix E: Package Recommendation Details

### Organizational Acronyms

NAACP – National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

VPS – Vancouver Public Schools

LULAC – League of United Latin American Citizens

ABC – Americans Building Community



# Aspirational Recommendation Package

**This package contains high-impact programs and policies that do not currently exist in Vancouver, but could address unmet community needs. These recommendations likely face more significant barriers to successful implementation, but have the potential to be highly effective if implemented successfully.**

- Manufactured Dwelling Park (MDP) Zoning
- Right of First Refusal
- Anti-Displacement Impact Assessments
- Rental Registration Program
- “Qualified” Local Small Businesses in Public Procurements
- Joint-Labor Management and Job Training Partnerships
- Community Investment Trusts



A manufactured dwelling park. Photo by Thread Community Planning

# ASPIRATIONAL PACKAGE



**Goal** Extend legal protections for renters and expand programs aimed at helping people remain in place or to better afford a move if they face displacement.

Community outreach and engagement efforts identified a need to create resident stability efforts in Vancouver that focus on individuals regardless of where they live within the city. This includes efforts to help residents who are vulnerable to displacement feel more secure in their housing situation regardless of housing unit type or location within Vancouver. These recommendations will increase homeownership opportunities, reduce negative impacts of new development, offer chances for public input into development processes and outcomes, improve health and safety outcomes related to housing, and allow public agencies and service providers to utilize new data sources when making programmatic and funding decisions.



**Goal** Preserve the existing stock of affordable housing to secure the availability of housing options for low-income residents.

Central Vancouver has housing options that are affordable to residents with low incomes, but housing costs have been increasing substantially and average have not kept pace. Taking steps to stabilize the existing affordable housing options is necessary, and preserving those options is a cost-effective way of assuring residents can remain in their homes and neighborhoods. These recommendations will increase homeownership opportunities, secure geographic areas that already have low-cost housing options, offer chances for public input into development processes and outcomes, improve health and safety outcomes related to housing, and allow public agencies and service providers to utilize new data sources when making programmatic and funding decisions.



**Goal** Produce context-sensitive affordable housing that includes vulnerable community members in meaningful ways through all stages of development so these new projects address their needs.

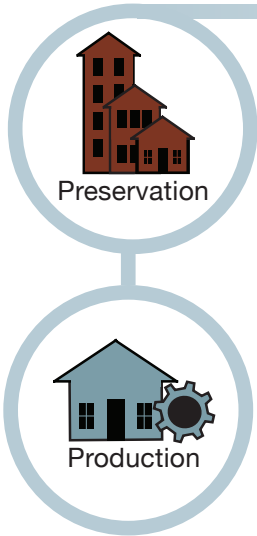
Discussions with residents, advocates, and service providers highlighted the need to increase affordable housing options in central Vancouver as housing costs rise rapidly. Subsidized affordable housing is expensive to construct, so these production strategies aim to increase density of low-cost housing, utilize deed restrictions and density bonuses to incentivize and secure housing affordability, and provide new homeownership opportunities for residents with low incomes.



**Goal** Catalyze and support long-term economic prosperity efforts for un[der]employed residents and provide new pathways to prosperity for workers and local small business owners.

Findings from the engagement process indicated that there is a need for increased opportunities for residents to increase their incomes and build wealth. These recommendations will provide options for residents to improve their job skills in living wage sectors, buy-in to local economic development opportunities, and become more competitive in the public procurements process for those that own small businesses.





## Manufactured Dwelling Parks (MDP) Zoning

### Goals

Preserve low-cost housing options and prevent displacement by modifying the zoning code to prohibit conversion of mobile home parks to other uses.

### Potential Partners

ABC, LULAC, Proud Ground, and Evergreen Habitat for Humanity

### Description

Thread recommends creating a new zoning area in Vancouver to be implemented beneath existing mobile home parks. This would limit the allowed uses on the properties to be solely for mobile homes and manufactured units. Mobile home park owners can receive transferable development rights (TDRs) and affordable housing density bonuses in exchange for permanently affordable units, and also benefit from an increase in allowed density of manufactured units on their property.

### Equity Strengths

*Centering  
Community  
Voices*



*Fostering  
Opportunity*



## Right of First Refusal Program

### Goals

Increase the number of properties owned by nonprofits or Community Land Trusts.

### Potential Partners

LULAC, Kinship Navigator, Evergreen Habitat for Humanity, VPS

### Description

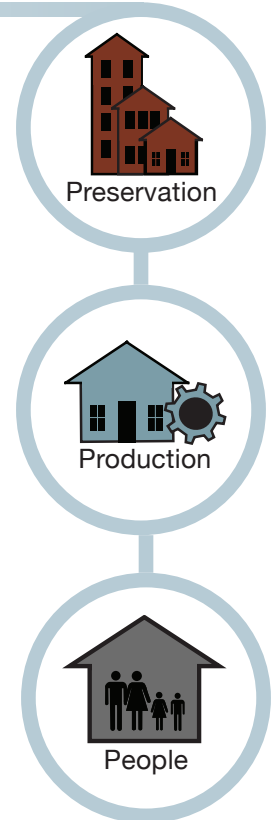
Thread recommends creating a City Ordinance and program that provides community land trusts (CLTs) with the right of first refusal to allow them to purchase single-family rental homes when the property is sold by the property owner. This would allow the CLT to purchase the property at full market value initially, but maintain it at affordable levels in perpetuity and provide homeownership opportunities to households with low incomes. Funding for this program could come from the Affordable Housing Fund.

### Equity Strengths

*Centering  
Community  
Voices*



*Practicing  
Redistributive  
Justice*



# Anti-Displacement Impact Assessments

## Goals

Reduce displacement by analyzing the potential for projects to bring unintended consequences, and then develop mitigation strategies.

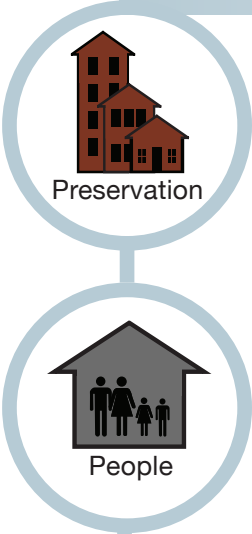
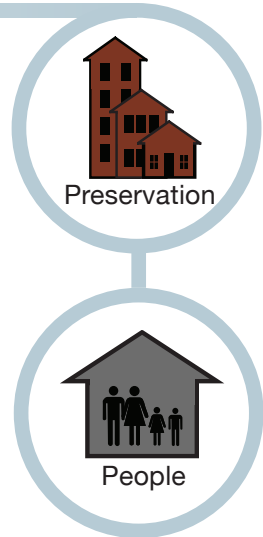
## Potential Partners

LULAC, NAACP, The Noble Foundation

## Description

Thread recommends creating a City Ordinance that requires developers and public agencies to create and utilize an anti-displacement equity lens – similar to the King County Equity Impact Review – in order to analyze how proposed developments, zoning changes, public investments, or infrastructure projects could impact communities. This necessitates the creation of a follow-up mitigation strategy, which should be negotiated through a community benefits agreement (CBA) process.

## Equity Strengths



# Rental Registration Program

## Goals

Create a database of all rental properties in Vancouver.

## Potential Partners

LULAC, NAACP, The Noble Foundation

## Description

Thread recommends the City create a City Ordinance requiring all rental properties to register with the City to receive a permit demonstrating each unit's habitability and code compliance prior to tenant occupation. This ordinance could be modeled after the City of Seattle's Rental Registration and Inspection Ordinance. A rental registration program can help create a database of rental properties, which allows the City to assess where renters are living and assure that landlords are providing and maintaining units that comply with health and building codes.

## Equity Strengths







## “Qualified” Small Businesses in Public Procurements

### Goals

Encourage local business growth and stability for Vancouver’s minority- and women-owned businesses by giving them preference to specified public procurements. Retain and attract businesses within the five driving industries in Clark County.

### Potential Partners

SW Washington Procurement Technical Assistance Center, LULAC, NAACP

### Description

Thread recommends the City reforms its Procurement Services practices and designate preferences for “qualified” businesses so that local, minority- and women-owned businesses are prioritized for public contracts and purchases. Thread also recommends two supplemental actions to reduce barriers in the public procurements process for small businesses:

- Identify gaps in service and existing needs for small businesses by partnering with the local union representative that facilitates current procurement assistance workshops
- Revise the existing public procurement process application process by providing applications in multiple languages and reforming eligibility requirements to reduce barriers to compete for bids.

### Equity Strengths

*Practicing  
Redistributive  
Justice*

**1.5**  
out of 2

*Fostering  
Opportunity*

**1.5**  
out of 2

## Joint Labor-Management and Job Training Partnerships

### Goals

Utilize sector-based joint partnerships to design programs that can improve worker skills, provide apprenticeships and job opportunities, and/or improve the quality of low-wage jobs.

### Potential Partners

Workforce Southwest Washington

### Description

Thread recommends the City partner with workforce and economic development leaders in the region to bring together employers, labor representatives, workers, job training partners, funders, and workforce development boards that specialize in a specific industry to address local workforce needs.

### Equity Strengths

*Centering  
Community  
Voices*

**2**  
out of 2

*Fostering  
Opportunity*

**1.5**  
out of 2



# Community Investment Trust (CIT)



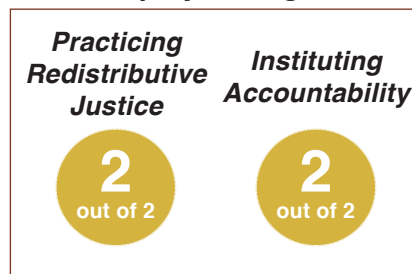
## Goals

Give local small businesses collective ownership over their physical location and provide an investment opportunity for individuals with low incomes.

## Potential Partners

Mercy Corps Northwest

## Equity Strengths



## Description

CITs offer local residents in a specific geographical area an opportunity to build wealth by investing small amounts of money – minimum \$10 per month – into a trust associated with a specific commercial property near their homes. At the end of the fiscal year, shareholders earn a dividend on their investment. They can then opt to reinvest their money and dividends for another fiscal year. Continued investment helps the businesses to purchase the building.

Thread recommends partnering with Mercy Corps Northwest to identify properties within the city that would be strong candidates for this model, taking into consideration resident density, the demographic and socioeconomic status of an area, and the current tenancy rate of the building.



# Capturing Momentum Package

**This package provides options to expand or improve existing policies and programs to better align them with community needs. These recommendations likely face less significant barriers to successful implementation.**

- Emergency Rental Assistance Program
- Tenant Protection Enhancements
- Affordable Housing Fund
- Land Acquisition and Management Strategy
- Multifamily Tax Exemption (MFTE)
- Community Land Trusts
- Expand Fourth Plain Forward's Recommendations Citywide
- Improve Utilization of Existing Job Training Services
- Fund Fourth Plain Forward
- Energy Conservation and Utilities Assistance



David Douglas Park. Photo by Thread Community Planning

# CAPTURING MOMENTUM PACKAGE



**Goal** Extend legal protections for renters and expand programs aimed at helping people remain in place or to better afford a move if they face displacement.

Community outreach and engagement efforts identified a need to create resident stability efforts in Vancouver that focus on individuals regardless of where they live within the city. This includes efforts to help residents who are vulnerable to displacement feel more secure in their housing situation regardless of housing unit type or location within Vancouver. These recommendations will improve or expand existing programs and policies already in place in Vancouver in an effort to increase equitable outcomes for residents vulnerable to displacement. These recommendations will close legal loopholes and increase transparency in tenants' rights ordinances, mitigate financial costs of displacement for tenants, offer chances for public input into development processes and outcomes, and secure funding for emergency rental assistance and other resident services.



**Goal** Preserve the existing stock of affordable housing to secure the availability of housing options for low-income residents.

Central Vancouver has housing options that are affordable to low-income residents, but housing costs have been increasing substantially and average incomes have not kept pace. Taking steps to stabilize the existing affordable housing options is necessary, and preserving those options is a cost-effective way of assuring low-income residents can remain in their homes and neighborhoods. These recommendations will lead to the acquisition and rehabilitation of existing affordable housing, provide land and homeownership opportunities for low-income residents, offer chances for public input into development processes and outcomes, and secure funding for future preservation efforts.



**Goal** Produce context-sensitive affordable housing that includes vulnerable community members in meaningful ways through all stages of development so these new projects address their needs.

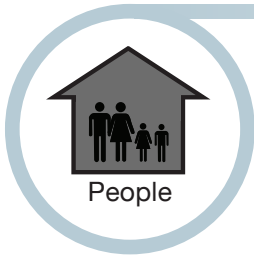
Discussions with residents, advocates, and service providers highlighted the need to increase affordable housing options in central Vancouver as housing costs rise rapidly. These production strategies aim to increase the supply of subsidized affordable housing, secure funding sources for the production of affordable housing, reallocate surplus public land for the development of new affordable housing, provide new homeownership opportunities for low-income residents, and incentivize market-rate developers to offer chances for public input into development processes and outcomes.



**Goal** Catalyze and support long-term economic prosperity efforts for un[der]employed residents by ensuring that existing workforce and economic development programs are accessible as well as providing new pathways to prosperity for workers and local small business owners.

Findings from the engagement process indicate that existing programs to help Vancouver residents improve their economic situations could be reformed to better achieve their missions. These recommendations build on existing programs in order to increase economic prosperity outcomes for employees and small business owners through reform of City incentives programs and capacity building for economic development and workforce development organizations.





## Emergency Rental Assistance Program

### Goals

Prevent eviction of renters who are facing a temporary financial emergency.

### Potential Partners

LULAC, VPS, Evergreen Habitat for Humanity, Organizations already receiving funding

### Description

Thread recommends that funding for the existing Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) programs be expanded and secured. \$1.25M is allocated annually from the Affordable Housing Fund (AHF) to organizations that operate ERA programs, but the AHF sunsets in 2023. Stable funding from the General Fund could supplement the existing ERA programs while the AHF is still operating, and help reduce the negative impacts if the AHF is not renewed. If the AHF is not renewed by voters, the ERA programs will be underfunded. Additional funding is needed to support the ERA programs because there is greater demand for the ERA program than the current funding supply can accommodate.

### Equity Strengths

*Centering  
Community  
Voices*

**2**  
out of 2

## Tenant Protection Enhancements

### Goals

Expand legal protections for renters to reduce and mitigate high costs of displacement.

### Potential Partners

LULAC, NAACP, Noble Foundation, Evergreen Habitat for Humanity, VPS

### Description

Thread recommends expanding VMC 8.47 – a City Ordinance that requires landlords who own five or more units to provide tenants a 60-day notice to vacate (“no cause eviction”) prior to terminating tenancy. The expansion would include all landlords – not just those who own five or more units – to reduce legal loopholes available to landlords. In order to accomplish this, the City would also need to implement another City Ordinance creating a renter registration program (see separate Renter Registration recommendation).

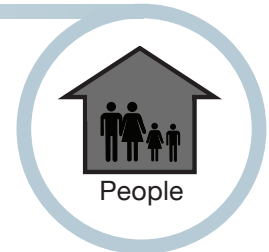
Thread recommends creating a City Ordinance that stipulates legal reasons (just-cause) for eviction to more clearly define what constitutes a legitimate reason for eviction, and would also offer stronger legal protection against retaliatory actions from landlords.

Thread recommends creating a City Ordinance that mandates Renter Relocation Assistance be provided to renters with low incomes in Vancouver who are served a no-cause eviction, have rents increased over 10% over a 12-month period, or if the renter receives no option to renew their lease.

### Equity Strengths

*Centering  
Community  
Voices*

**2**  
out of 2





# Affordable Housing Fund (AHF)

## Goals

Renew and/or expand Vancouver’s Affordable Housing Fund.

## Potential Partners

LULAC, Evergreen Habitat for Humanity, VPS, ABC

## Description

In 2016, Vancouver voters passed a ballot measure to create a \$42M AHF that expires in 2023. This fund can be used to build and preserve long-term affordable housing, provide shelter to people experiencing homelessness, and provide rental assistance and services to households at risk of eviction. Thread recommends the following:

1. *Renew the existing AHF prior to its 2023 sunset, as it provides funding for a number of essential AHF programs that help prevent displacement of low-income residents in Vancouver*
2. *The City accept and review applications to the AHF on a rolling basis to make the process easier for developers and nonprofits so they can access funds as needs arise and change*
3. *A portion of the AHF should be earmarked for the purpose of providing counseling to low-income renters who need help relocating while experiencing displacement*

## Equity Strengths



# Land Acquisition and Management Strategy

## Goals

Increase the land available for the development of affordable housing

## Potential Partners

LULAC, Evergreen Habitat for Humanity

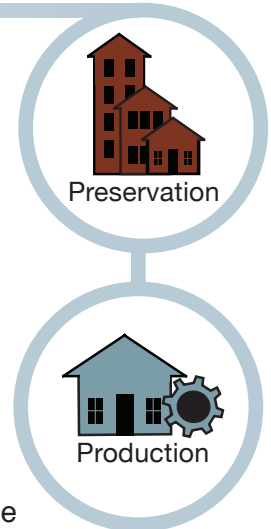
## Description

Thread recommends the City develop a strategy to acquire and redistribute land. By operating as a land bank, the City can purchase properties for resale, holding, or redevelopment – with the purpose of increasing the land available for new affordable housing. Funds for the purchase of land could be drawn from the Affordable Housing Fund.

Thread recommends the City, County, and Public Utility Companies transfer surplus, publicly owned land to affordable housing developers, removing land acquisition costs associated with development.

Thread recommends the City of Vancouver commission Enterprise Community Partners to create a database of all surplus public lands in Clark County held by the City, Public Utilities, and the County –which was previously done in King County.

## Equity Strengths





# Multifamily Tax Exemption (MFTE)

## Goals

Restructure the MFTE to leverage tax benefits in exchange for community benefit agreements

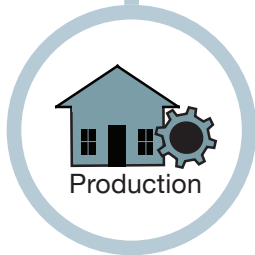
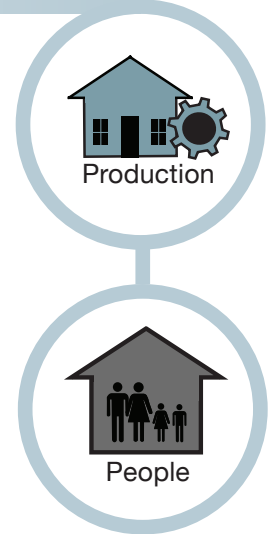
## Potential Partners

LULAC, NAACP, The Noble Foundation

## Description

Thread recommends amending the MFTE program to require developers seeking the 8-year property tax exemption through the 'Development Agreements' route to instead form Community Benefits Agreements (CBAs). CBAs allow community organizations and residents to have input in the outcomes and processes involved in new development and permit a negotiation between community members and developers.

## Equity Strengths



# Community Land Trusts (CLTs)

## Goals

Increase affordable homeownership opportunities.

## Potential Partners

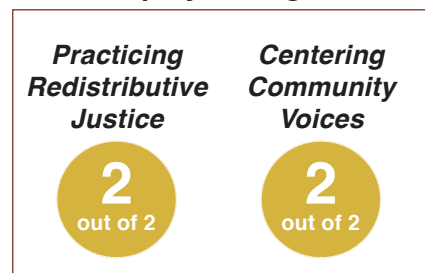
ABC, LULAC, Proud Ground, and Evergreen Habitat for Humanity

## Description

CLTs are most often run as nonprofit organizations, and while there are many variations on how specific CLTs are funded, structured, and operate, they are all based on the same principle of using a land lease to maintain housing affordability in perpetuity.

Thread recommends expanding the City's support for Proud Ground and other community organizations that are interested in operating CLTs, including Evergreen Habitat for Humanity. The City can support the creation of additional CLTs in areas that have high concentrations of residents who are at-risk of displacement using funds derived from the Affordable Housing Fund.

## Equity Strengths



# Expand Fourth Plain Forward Action Plan Recommendations Citywide



## Goals

Expand the recommendations offered by Fourth Plain Forward (FPF), with a prioritization of Goals 2: Stabilize and Grow Small Businesses and Goal 3: Create a Growth Pipeline for Food Entrepreneurs to encourage business start-ups and growth.

## Potential Partners

Fourth Plain Forward, Fourth Plain Coalition

## Description

The recommendations from the Fourth Plain Forward Action Plan for communities based in the Fourth Plain Corridor can be expanded to assist the needs of minority-owned, low-income, or women-owned businesses throughout the city. Thread recommends the following:

- Engage and support formal and informal micro-businesses and home-based childcare businesses
- Promote asset and capital building
- Activate publicly-owned space [such as vacant lots, public parks, rights-of-way, etc.] for commercial use (e.g. by extending the City’s food truck pilot program, allowing for weekly or monthly events like Saturday Market or a Farmer’s Market, etc.)

\*Highly dependent upon implementation strategy

## Equity Strengths\*



Prosperity

# Improve Utilization of Existing Job Training Services

## Goals

Increase access to existing job training and entrepreneurial services for non-native English speakers.

## Potential Partners

VPS, Workforce Southwest Washington, WorkSource Southwest Washington, LULAC, NAACP

## Description

Existing job training and workforce development programs in and around Vancouver that provide are currently being underutilized by harder-to-reach communities. Thread recommends three approaches to improve the use of these services:

- Build local partnerships between job training organizations with culturally-specific community groups
- Ensure that all materials are readily accessible in other languages
- Provide more flexibility for parents to bring children to job-training offices and events where they are not currently allowed or otherwise prepared for

## Equity Strengths\*







## Fund Fourth Plain Forward

### Goals

Support neighborhood-scale business stabilization and community-driven economic growth.

### Potential Partners

Fourth Plain Forward, Fourth Plain Coalition

### Description

Currently, Fourth Plain Forward (FPF) acts as a hub for business assistance, networking events, and cultural resilience through arts and events programming. This program – modeled after the Neighborhood Prosperity Initiative in Portland – does not currently receive funds to propel their economic development efforts.

Thread recommends the City leverage the local share of sales tax revenue to fund FPF and catalyze community-planned and implemented economic development efforts including – but not limited to – stimulating local job growth and fortifying neighborhood businesses.

### Equity Strengths

**Practicing  
Redistributive  
Justice**

**2**  
out of 2

**Instituting  
Accountability**

**1.5**  
out of 2

## Energy Conservation and Utilities Assistance

### Goals

Reducing energy consumption in the homes of residents that are low income to lower utility costs.

### Potential Partners

TBD

### Description

Thread recommends assisting residents in reducing energy consumption by creating pathways to weatherize their homes and learn sustainable energy use techniques. Two approaches can be used:

- *Develop a nonprofit organization that provides housing-related weatherization materials and workshops to residents*
- *Partner with an experienced nonprofit to educate City and community leaders on how to engage with their constituents and conduct workshops themselves*

### Equity Strengths\*

**Practicing  
Redistributive  
Justice**

**1**  
out of 2



\* Highly dependent upon implementation strategy

# THREAD STAFF



**Jihyeon Kim**  
*Data Analyst*

Jihyeon is a leader in research/data analysis with diverse knowledge and experiences based on Bachelor's and Master's degree in Urban Planning and Landscape in Korea. Based on his experiences as a research assistant in Korea, he is familiar with collecting and analyzing data, utilizing Arc GIS and design software. In the U.S., he focuses on environmental planning and urban design, and he has been exploring the relationship between environmental injustice and community development in terms of sustainability. He tries to expose himself to various environments to solve a lot of urban problems with an equity lens.



**Malia Knapp-Rossi**  
*GIS Lead &  
Public Outreach*

Malia is an environmental planner and facilitation practitioner who supports community development and placemaking projects and programs. With a B.A. in Environmental Sociology and Sustainability and professional experience coordinating government and nonprofit environmentally-focused and community building programs she is experienced in and passionate about facilitation modalities, community outreach, collaborative methods, and project/program coordination. Her work strives to facilitate inclusive engagement platforms that lead to the co-creation of equitable, sustainable, and cohesive communities.



**Jeff Lane**  
*Policy Analyst &  
Research Lead*

Motivated by socioeconomic equity principles, Jeff thrives in collaborative and iterative policy-making processes. His focus is on housing policy and affordable housing real estate development, and he works to prioritize marginalized communities at all stages of the planning and development process. His background in writing, community development, affordable housing, and public policy enable him to distill complex topics and ideas to create unified project narratives. Jeff finds inspiration in the work of activists and writers like Majora Carter, Colson Whitehead, and Junot Díaz and hopes to forward social justice goals by fostering dialogues between marginalized communities, development professionals, and public policy experts.



**Joseph Meyers**  
*Project Design Lead &  
Policy Research Support*

Joseph is an up-and-coming Environmental Planning professional focusing on issues of environmental justice, resource management, and equity in urban design. He earned his B.S. in Justice Studies with a minor in sustainability and a strong focus on urban-environmental relationships. Joseph's interests range from environmental issues to more diverse issues of housing, workforce development, disaster resiliency, and urban design. He seeks to using his skills to help communities impacted by climate change to recover and become resilient. Joseph interned at the Urban Design & Planning Institute of Shenzhen, China to study environmental planning strategies.



**Aster Moulton**  
*Community Outreach*

Aster is an emerging public engagement professional with ample outreach experience ranging from grassroots nonprofit initiatives to large public projects. They have a B.A. in Environmental Studies and have spent their professional career exploring the intersection of equity and environmental issues. As a planning student, they have created their own "anti-displacement" track, with a focus on affordable housing, workforce development and equity planning. With a wide-range of planning interests, they look forward to applying their community engagement experience towards enhancing equity initiatives in the Portland – Vancouver region.



**Tay Stone**  
*Project Manager*

With a B.S. in Communications Studies and a minor in Sustainable Urban Development, Tay has centered their post-graduate and professional endeavors on finding holistic approaches to addressing society's complex environmental and social justice problems. In the classroom, Tay has spent most of their time focusing on equitable, sustainable development and economics. Working under the guidance of changemakers in the Portland Metro region, they have gained professional experience in project management, program development, data analysis, community engagement, and administration that they plan on using in their future career.



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