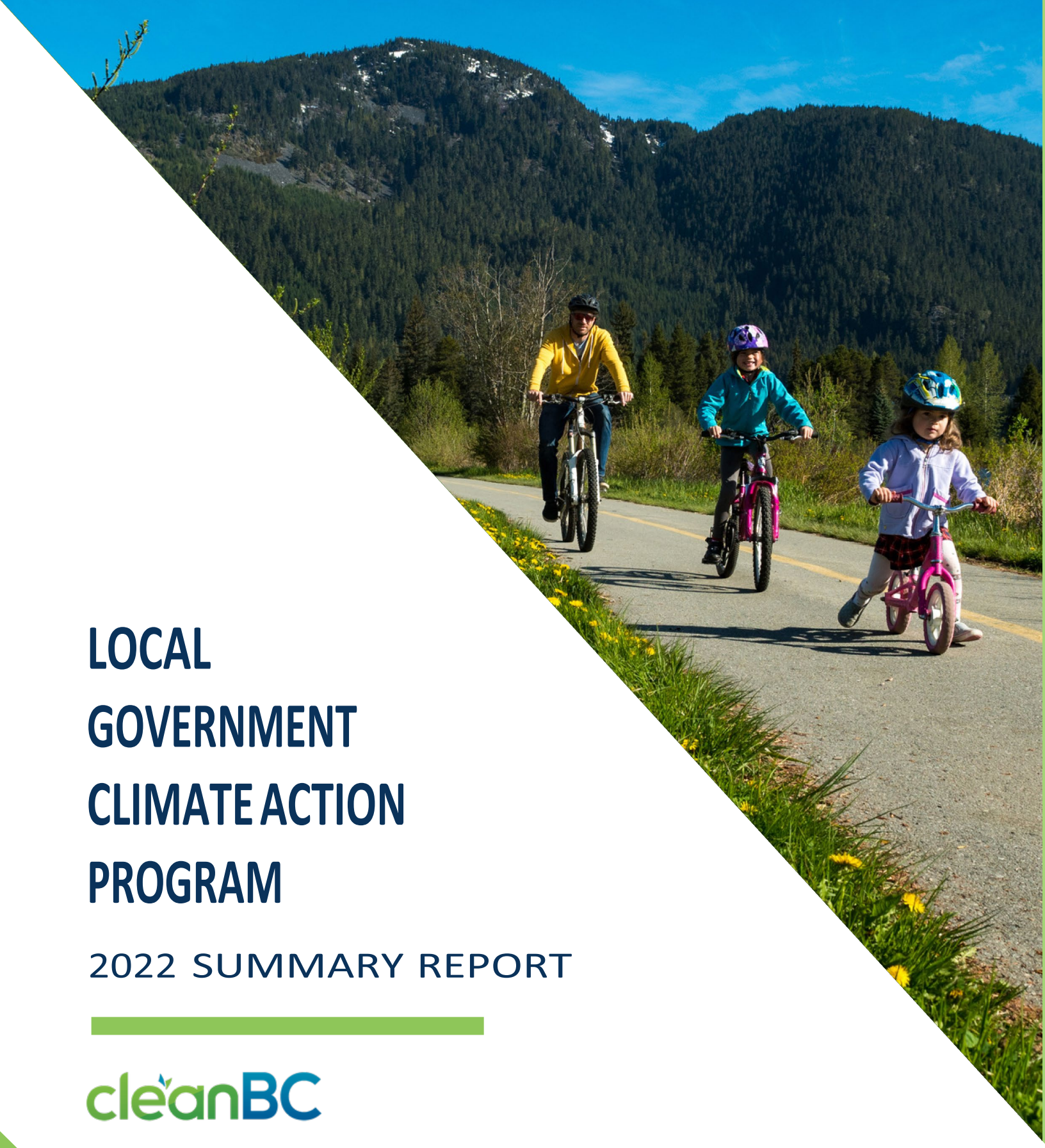


LOCAL GOVERNMENT CLIMATE ACTION PROGRAM

2022 SUMMARY REPORT

cleanBC

JULY 2023

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Contents

Executive Summary

The new Local Government Climate Action Program (the Program) provides local governments (LGs) and Modern Treaty Nations (MTNs) with predictable and stable funding to support climate action related to the CleanBC Roadmap to 2030 (the Roadmap), the Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy (CPAS), and local climate action.

During the first year of the program (2022), there were 193 participating communities who received $24.456 million for projects ranging from increasing building efficiency to adapting to climate impacts. As part of the program, the Province gathers information from participants through an annual survey, with 185 responses received in time to include in this report. This report summarizes data gathered from participants and provides insight into the current state of local climate action including climate planning and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reporting. The primary objective of the first year of reporting is to establish a baseline for climate action across participants, which will allow the Province to track program outcomes and measure progress over time.

Of the 185 survey respondents, 89 have developed climate action plans or strategies. For those who don't have climate strategies, 58 reported they a) are currently exploring the feasibility of developing a climate action strategy, b) intend to develop a strategy within the next 1-5 years, or c) have completed a non-comprehensive climate strategy, such as a local greenhouse gas reduction plan.

In 2019 and 2020, due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the number of communities tracking and reporting corporate emissions decreased significantly. In 2022, only 52 communities reported that they measured and publicly disclosed their corporate emissions, compared to 147 communities doing so in 2018 (the last full year of the Climate Action Revenue Incentive Program[1] reporting).

B.C.'s diverse communities face unique challenges related to climate change. Program participants identified a range of barriers including funding, staff capacity, a need for more collaboration and expertise, and the need to consider equity in climate action. 101 of 185 survey respondents reported that their communities are undertaking climate actions that consider those most vulnerable to climate impacts.

[1] The Climate Action Revenue Incentive Program (CARIP) ran from 2010-2018 and provided grants to local governments equal to the amount of carbon tax paid.

The majority of action taken by participants in the first year of the Program fall into three broad categories: buildings, transportation, and climate adaptation.

Transportation

177 communities reported implementing transportation initiatives from electric vehicle (EV) uptake, to expanding charging infrastructure, and encouraging healthier, more sustainable modes of transportation.

Buildings

169 communities have at least one climate initiative related to buildings, with efficiency measures, heating system improvements and Energy Step Code adoption as the most frequently reported actions.

Adaptation

In the survey, communities were asked whether they had completed risk and vulnerability assessments. 62 respondents had completed an assessment, while most respondents (123) stated they had not completed an assessment. Many communities have made investments to increase their preparedness for current and future climate impacts, but also indicated they require increased staff knowledge, expertise, and data to effectively increase climate resilience. Other barriers identified included a need for increased funding (165), increased staff capacity (151) and more partnerships and collaboration across all levels of governments (92).

Introduction

The new Local Government Climate Action Program (the Program) provides local governments (LGs) and Modern Treaty Nations (MTNs) with predictable and stable funding to support climate action related to the CleanBC Roadmap to 2030 (the Roadmap), the Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy (CPAS), and local climate action.

This first summary report for 2022 documents a range of actions Program participants have taken to reduce GHG emissions and prepare for climate impacts. These actions highlight the ongoing leadership, achievements, and experiences of B.C. communities across a range of areas such as land use planning, climate adaptation, buildings, transportation, waste, water and energy.

The 2022 Summary Report illustrates:

- Progress toward measuring, reporting, tracking, and reducing GHG emissions,
- Local climate priorities linked to the Roadmap, and
- Climate action and resilience initiatives taken by communities in support of CPAS.

How Information Will Be Used

Data gathered through the Program will be published in these annual reports and will enable the Province and Program participants to track progress on climate action through key performance indicators. In addition, corporate emissions reporting data from LGs and MTNs will be included in the annual Climate Change Accountability Report starting in 2023.

Overview of the Program

The purpose of the Program is to support communities in making progress on climate action.

To be eligible for the first year of the Program, communities had to:

- Be signatories to the B.C. Climate Action Charter or be a B.C. Modern Treaty Nation,
- Demonstrate their own climate investments equal to 20% of annual funding received, and
- Report on at least one project aligned with objectives from the Roadmap or CPAS.

The program has been designed to be accessible to all communities, with reasonable administration and achievable reporting requirements. The Province worked with communities to gather feedback to improve program design and requirements for the second year of the Program.

Each participant was assigned base funding of $38,082. The base funding represents approximately 30% of total annual funding for the Program. The remaining 70% was allocated using adjusted per capita population methodology from the COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant (2020 populations from BC Statistics). The methodology ensures small communities receive an equitable share of funding. See the Program FAQs (page 2, Table 1) for an example of how the methodology is applied to adjust base populations.

The primary objective of the first year of reporting has been to establish a baseline understanding of current state with respect to local climate mitigation and resilience.

Program reporting priorities for 2022/2023 include:

- Assessing how the Province can best support communities' climate action,
- Understanding communities' challenges in advancing climate action,
- Collaborating with communities to develop a reporting framework,
- Integrating Program reporting into the Climate Change Accountability Report, and
- Advancing Climate Action Charter commitments.

Engagement

In early 2023, engagement was held in several communities across the province to gather feedback on the Program. Over 200 local staff representing 125 communities attended workshops and webinars, and shared ideas that will inform the Program's strategic direction, reporting requirements and additional support needed to advance local climate action.

Overview of Key Findings - 2022

In 2022, Program participants were required to complete an online survey and attest that all funds received in the Program would be dedicated to climate action. The survey was developed based on feedback from ministerial partners, LGs and MTNs, national and international GHG reporting protocols, and the Carbon Disclosure Project.

185 communities completed the survey in time to be included in this report. For the purposes of reporting, communities have been divided into small (populations under 5,000), medium (populations between 5,000 and 49,999) and large (populations of 50,000 and above).

The table below provides an overview of the state of LG and MTN climate action in 2021, based on Program survey results:

Action Type	**Status**
Climate action plans	89 communities have developed a climate action plan or strategy.
Community-wide GHG emissions	41 communities measured community-wide emissions in 2021.
Corporate emissions reporting	52 communities tracked and reported corporate emissions in 2021 (down from 147 in 2018).
Community-wide initiatives	172 communities reported community-wide actions such as transit-oriented development and waste diversion.
Transportation	177 communities reported transportation initiatives such as electric vehicle purchasing, and coordination of transportation and land use planning.
Buildings	170 communities have building initiatives in place such as heating system upgrades and Energy Step Code adoption.
Risk and vulnerability assessments	62 communities have completed a risk assessment.
Equity and climate action	101 communities have measures in place to address equity.

Measuring, Reporting and Tracking Emissions

Corporate Emissions

Communities reported on corporate emissions, which cover GHG emissions produced from the delivery of traditional services such as fire protection, solid waste management, recreational and cultural services, road and traffic operations, water and wastewater management, and government administration.

In 2019 and 2020, the previous Climate Action Revenue Incentive Program (CARIP) reporting was simplified due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but the number of communities tracking and reporting corporate emissions decreased significantly. This is reflected in 2022 reporting, with only 52 communities reporting that they measured and publicly disclosed corporate emissions. In comparison,

under CARIP reporting in 2018, 147 communities reported that they measured and publicly disclosed corporate emissions.

Community-Wide Emissions

B.C. Climate Action Charter signatories have committed to measuring and reporting their community-wide GHG emissions. Community energy and emissions data are critical inputs to evidenced-based decision making, measuring the impacts of climate action policies, programs and investments, and determining whether course corrections are necessary.

The Community Energy and Emissions Inventory (CEEI) is the provincial platform for tracking and reporting community-wide energy use and emissions for buildings and solid waste. Work is underway to improve CEEI's precision, level of detail, presentation, and scope. The CEEI supports LGs to measure, report and track their emissions and develop effective climate mitigation policies.

The Province provides LGs with community-wide emissions data through the CEEI but there is a two-year lag due to data acquisition, quality assurance and control, and alignment with federal and provincial GHG inventories.

41 communities reported that they measured community-wide emissions[2] and 66 reported that they've been tracking progress on their community-wide GHG reduction targets based on established targets and baselines. Many communities reported barriers to tracking progress such as insufficient funding, staff, expertise, and data timeliness.

Some common responses from communities include:

- They did not publicly report their emissions,
- They reported in the past, but not for 2021,
- They require more timely or additional sectoral coverage in CEEI data (i.e., transportation data),
- They intend to report in the next 1-5 years.

Transportation Pathway

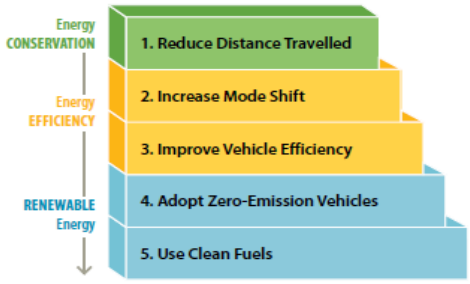
Transportation is the largest single source of GHG emissions, accounting for approximately 40% of our annual total in British Columbia.

Meeting the Province's 2030 sectoral target for transportation (27 – 32% below the 2007) demands aggressive action. The Roadmap focuses on multiple ways to reduce emissions from transportation, including encouraging more walking and cycling, and reducing the carbon intensity of fuels.

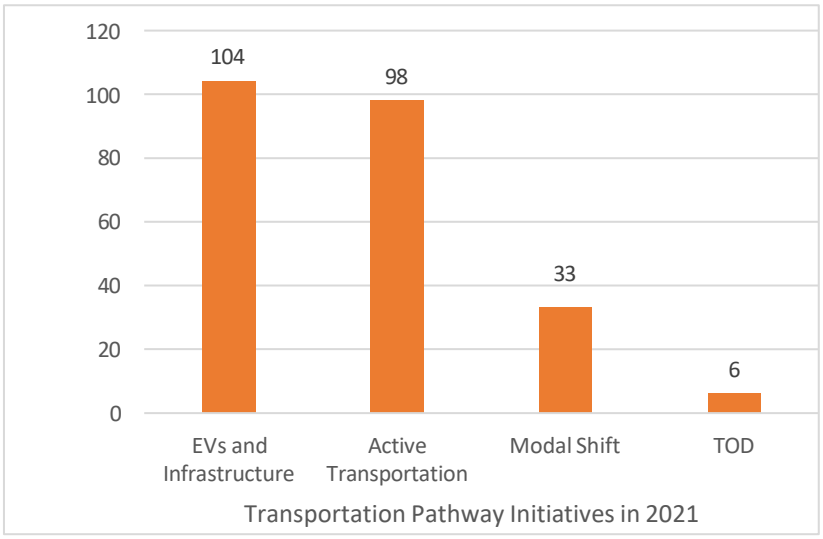
177 communities reported at least one transportation-related initiative in 2022. Common responses included electric vehicle (EV) uptake, expanding charging infrastructure, and encouraging healthier, more sustainable modes of transportation, like walking and cycling, through transportation-oriented development and investments.

[2] Of these 41 LGs, some developed their own unique community-wide GHG emissions inventories, and some acquired the raw Provincial CEEI data prior to public release to conduct their own processing and quality control.

CleanBC Roadmap Transportation Decarbonization Pathway



The diagram below shows the number and type of transportation actions reported such as electric vehicle (EV) purchasing and transportation-oriented development (TOD).

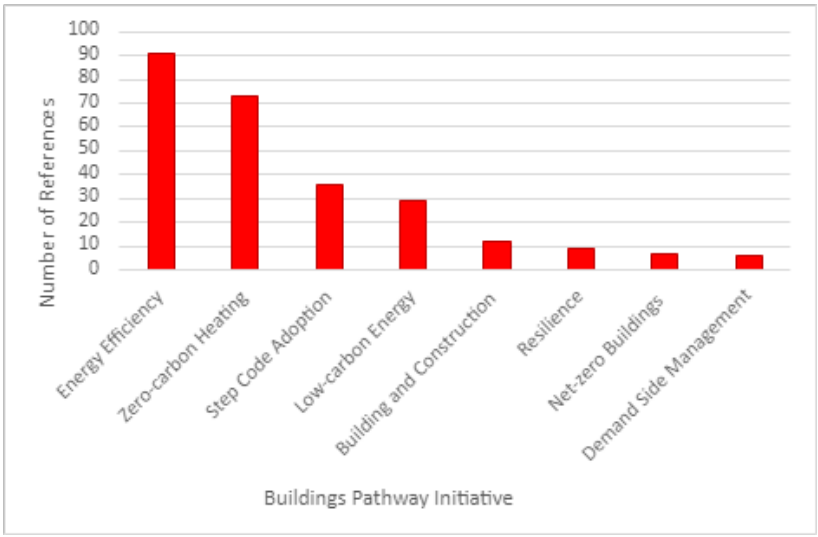


Buildings Pathway

Residential, commercial, and institutional buildings account for 7.3 $MtCO_2e$ or 11% of the province's GHG emissions, mainly due to energy used for heating, cooling and hot water. Key buildings actions in the Roadmap include zero-carbon new construction by 2030, highest efficiency standards for new space and water heating equipment and enhancing energy efficiency programs.

Under the Roadmap, the Province will add a new carbon pollution standard to the Energy Building Code and will support communities in setting carbon pollution performance standards for new buildings through a voluntary provincial regulation. The Energy Step Code provides a path for builders and communities to prepare for and reach energy efficiency standards earlier than basic BC Building Code requirements.

169 respondents to the 2022 survey reported at least one climate initiative related to buildings with efficiency measures, heating system improvements and Step Code adoption as the most frequently reported efforts.



Communities Pathway

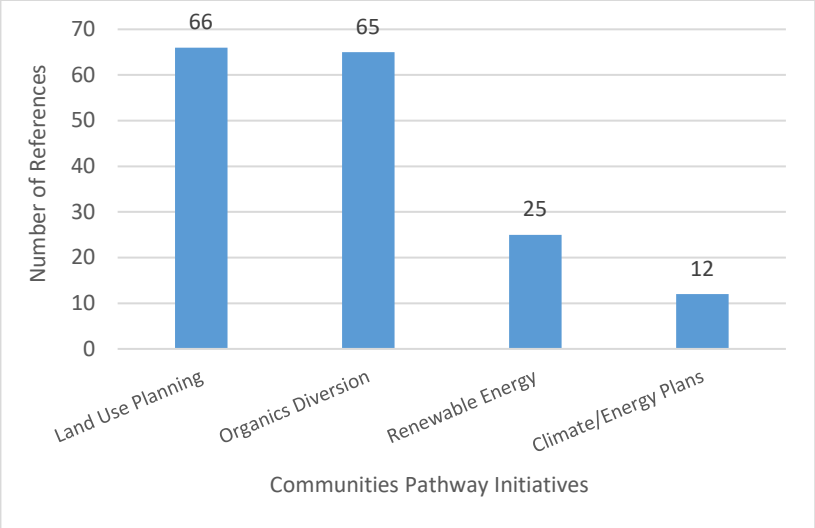
Local governments and Indigenous communities are critical partners in efforts to reduce emissions and build cleaner, stronger communities for everyone.

Community-level transformation pathways are closely tied to actions in land-use and in the transportation, buildings and energy sectors, all of which have significant influence on community GHG emissions and resilience.

When asked to demonstrate local alignment with Provincial climate strategies, 171 communities reported at least one climate initiative linked to the Communities Pathway. Frequently referenced actions include land use planning (e.g., transit-oriented development, diverse housing types, and walkability), waste diversion, clean energy projects and completing climate and energy plans.

Community-Wide Initiatives

Community-wide climate initiatives include activities that span the community such as implementing natural asset infrastructure, organics diversion, climate and active transportation plans. The chart below illustrates the number and type of community-wide activities most frequently reported by communities.



Community Land Use Planning

The B.C. Climate Action Charter includes a voluntary commitment by signatories to create complete, compact, and energy-efficient communities. Complete communities are considered those which support:

- Diverse types of housing to meet identified community needs, accommodate people at all stages of life, and support a wider range of jobs, and
- Amenities and services within a 15 to 20-minute walk from home.

Complete communities are typically more walkable, and more accessible, age-friendly, equitable, and economically resilient. Complete communities also have the potential to reduce community GHG emissions associated with transportation.

Survey respondents demonstrated the commitment to creating complete communities through Official Community Plans, Regional Growth Strategies and Community Development Plans. These initiatives support land use patterns that improve active transportation infrastructure, address housing affordability, and preserve natural assets.

Many communities are focusing on housing affordability and accessibility through allowing secondary suites and smaller lots and providing density bonus zoning for the provision of community amenities. Most actions related to housing involved updates or amendments to zoning bylaws.

Respondents were also asked which types of data would best support the creation of complete communities. The types of information identified include additional and improved transportation data (e.g., vehicle kilometers traveled, percentage of travelers using a particular type of transportation, vehicle ownership and parking demand) and support for modeling infrastructure costs and GHG emissions to compare different types of development patterns (e.g., sprawl compared to infill development).

Equity

Applying an equity lens to climate action enhances climate resilience for everyone. In survey results, respondents consistently indicated that low-income households, seniors, and people experiencing homelessness are the most vulnerable to climate impacts. To address inequitable impacts, 101 communities have measures in place to address equity. For example, many LGs and MTNs are engaging with demographics most impacted by climate change and collecting and analyzing data on the impact of climate actions. Building on these initiatives, communities are ensuring equitable access to climate action opportunities and benefits by designing and implementing climate actions that target vulnerable populations.

Adaptation and Resilience

A critical component of climate action is preparing for the risks and impacts of climate change. As communities plan for impacts, they increase the resilience of communities, economies, and ecosystems. Some communities are leading the way by taking an integrated approach that coordinates and streamlines adaptation and mitigation planning. This enables communities to embed climate-focused decision making into community and regional planning processes.

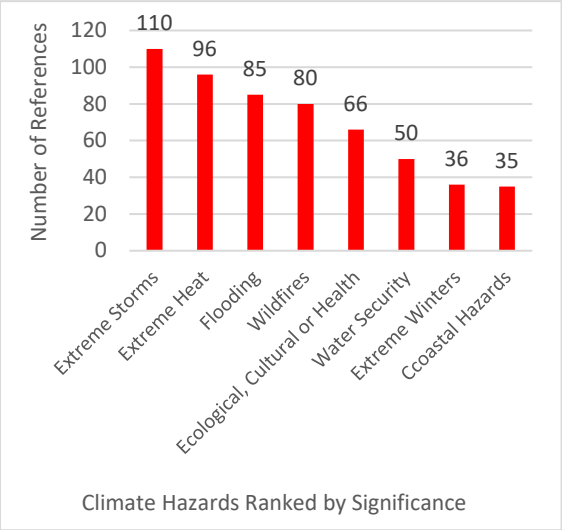
Examples of community-level climate resilience initiatives include assessments of current and future climate risks (e.g., increased frequency and severity of flooding) and plans to address hazards through planning, service delivery, asset management and other measures.

In the 2022 survey, 123 communities reported they had not completed a risk and vulnerability assessment to understand local impacts, with only 62 respondents stating that they had completed an assessment. This is clearly an area where there is more work to be done.

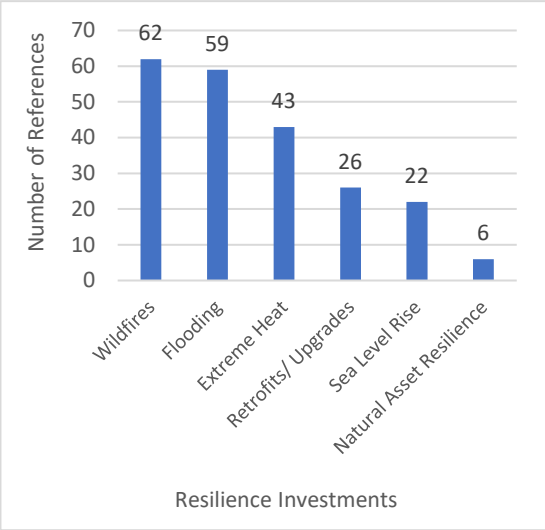
Has Your Local Government Completed a Climate Risk Assessment?	
Yes	62
No	123

To address some of the most pressing climate risks already affecting communities in B.C., the Province is working together with Indigenous Nations and communities, local governments and other organizations to reduce risks from heatwaves, flooding and wildfires, as well as enhance the climate resilience of infrastructure across the province. See the Safe and Healthy Communities section of B.C.'s Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy for information on priority initiatives.

COMMUNITY-LEVEL CLIMATE HAZARDS AND RESILIENCY INVESTMENTS



Climate Hazards Ranked by Significance



Resilience Investments

Resources

For more information on the Local Government Climate Action Program, please visit the Program website where you can find resources, frequently asked questions, methodological guides and webinars. Resources will continue to be updated as we collect input about the Program and receive questions from participating communities.

Questions and feedback about the Program can be directed to LGCAP@gov.bc.ca.

To view the suite of climate funding programs available to B.C. LGs, Indigenous Nations, and Indigenous organizations, please see the BC Community Climate Funding Guide.