Indigenous Resilience: Learning How to Build Relationships and Collaborate in the Uplifting Era

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Cover photo by Ernesto Yerena (Xicanx, Yaqui), "We The Resilient."
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Executive Summary:

The Greenest City Scholars Program offered by the University of British Columbia and the City of Vancouver is a program in which graduate students work with the City of Vancouver to research, learn, and discuss concepts surrounding sustainability, resilience, and urban planning. The following report began as an initial project proposal titled "Recommendations for Incorporating Indigenous Concepts & Ways of Knowing Related to Sustainability, Adaption, Resilience, and Land Management into the Policy Development Phase of the Vancouver Plan Process'. The research proposal included a literature review of key Indigenous documents and data to define/illustrate Indigenous sustainability, adaption, resilience, and land management practises, concepts, and ways of knowing. The concluded findings were to inform the Resilience and Ecological & Sustainable City streams of the City of Vancouver's citywide planning process (the Vancouver Plan).

A key background document is The Resilient Vancouver Strategy (Resilient Vancouver). Resilient Vancouver takes a comprehensive approach to addressing shocks, such as earthquakes, and stresses, such as aging infrastructure. The strategy builds the city's capacity to anticipate, manage, and recover from its biggest risks, and aligns work to help residents survive, adapt, and thrive in the face of their greatest challenges. This strategy and the Vancouver Plan process—the development of the City's first citywide plan in 100 years and the second since colonization began— both seek to define goals around reconciliation, equity, resilience, and sustainability, reciprocity, equity, and intersectionality. Both include key acknowledgments and supportive priority towards relationship building between City planning processes, staff and Indigenous communities. Finally, both seek to elevate Indigenous practices and ways of knowing to help achieve transformational change.

This report will suggest recommendations in support of this relationship building, as in line with the Resilient Vancouver Strategy documents and the overall objectives outlined in the Vancouver Plan process. For example, outlined objectives as stated within the Resilient Vancouver Strategy, Objective 2.1 is to "Elevate the voices of underrepresented groups to improve resilience outcomes" (City of Vancouver, 2019, p.8). Within that objective is Action 2.1A: "Elevate and incorporate Indigenous knowledge and culture through resilience work" (City of Vancouver, 2019, p.66). Understanding resilience policy can only occur and create tactile change if all underrepresented communities are heard, the Resilient Vancouver Strategy, acknowledges the unjust colonial systems contributing to social inequalities, acknowledging the necessity to draw on deeper knowledges from community members in order to cultivate a space for understanding and relationship mending with Vancouver's Indigenous peoples. This report will hopefully provide a stepping-stone for just that. What does relationship building look like? How can the Indigenous voice be uplifted for the teaching and mending of present-day injustices that are being served? This outlined commitment to form understanding and relationship with local First Nations and Urban Indigenous peoples, is a core value of the Resilient Vancouver Strategy and the Vancouver Plan process.

The following report will be focused on the following guiding inquiries, these inquires have deviated from the initial project proposal in hopes of providing rooted recommendations in what relationship building between Indigenous and non-Indigenous spaces can look like in the name of resilience and reconciliation:

The initial guiding inquiry: *Research to understand best ways to incorporate an Indigenous lens in sustainability and resilience policy development. Through addressing Indigenous knowledge and concepts of resilience, inform and provide recommendations on how to incorporate them into resilience work for the City of Vancouver's citywide plan policy development process.*

Transformed into: *How can the City of Vancouver collaborate and work alongside the Indigenous communities, on whose unceded land it is located, to address and support social and environmental resilience? Can the City collaborate and foster relationships that uplift the Indigenous voice, protecting sacred knowledge, for the combined goal of environmental and social resilience for futures to come?*

While answering the above inquiry, this report will also be a journey of learning as Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities enter what I call the 'Uplifting Era'. The 'Uplifting Era' is a term I am using, to address the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities and institutions. By utilizing the 'Uplifting' tool, we move away from assimilation and integration of shared knowledge, and into uplifting and collaborating when knowledge is consented to be used. This report will aim to work through this relationship – addressing the above inquiries, by working as a literature review, assessing what Indigenous scholars across the globe are discussing around Traditional Knowledge, knowledge sharing, and environmental and social resilience. This will include a scan across climate change, environmental/social resilience and land-use planning public documents completed by the xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səl ílwətaʔ/ Selilwitulh (Tsleil- Waututh) Nations to assess and understand their outlined environmental and community-based steps forward around climate change and other hazards and risks (e.g., flooding and housing damage) and mentioned stresses (language loss and culture revitalization). To accomplish this, this report will aim to answer the following questions:

1. **What does resilience mean to Indigenous communities? Are Indigenous communities tired of being 'resilient'?**

2. **Can non-Indigenous peoples understand Indigenous teachings? Should they?**

3. **Is it Indigenous peoples' responsibility to educate and provide knowledge around resilience, environmental and social based hazard/risks/shocks, and stresses? Who does the teaching?**

4. **What does this knowledge transfer (if consented) look like? What should this collaboration between the City and xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səl·ílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil- Waututh) Nation look like?**

Answering these questions will help develop a rooted understanding of what Indigenous and non-Indigenous collaboration and knowledge sharing can look like and will inform the recommendations for future collaboration between the City and xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səl̓ílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil- Waututh) Nations.

Lastly, as this is purely literature/theoretically based, it has a level of position bias, and does not include the opinions and beliefs of the First Nation communities outlined. Speaking within my positionality as an Iroquois woman and academic, all teachings and opinions shared within this report, are related to my relational and personal teachings from the land. As I am not a member of the xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), or Səl̓ílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, I cannot speak to their teachings as my own. As will be outlined in the recommendations section, future reports should include the voices from these communities themselves, for true understanding of their sacred knowledge and to foster relationships--as these are their stories and their knowledge to share, if consented. In conclusion, I hope this report outlines the beautiful capacity of human connection, and how by uplifting the Indigenous voices around us, we can continue to learn alongside one another building a more resilient city for all.

Part 1: Resilience: the language breakdown

What words we choose to use in discussions around resilience and reconciliation can dictate the direction in which community and relationship building goes. Language is powerful and can cultivate narratives that either contribute to current social inequalities faced, or it can be used as a tool to break these boundaries. Does the language we use risk perpetrating harm? Can alternatives be used instead as we work towards relationship building and uplifting the marginalized voice? This section will address the power of language, answering the question 'Are Indigenous communities tired of being called resilient?' discussing the breakdown of 'resilience' as a term used and its various meanings.

1. **What does resilience mean to Indigenous communities? Are Indigenous communities tired of being resilient?**

The City of Vancouver defines resilience as, "…the capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, businesses and systems within a city to survive, adapt and thrive, no matter what kinds of chronic stresses and acute shocks they experience." (City of Vancouver, 2019, p.12). For individual communities, however, this term may be understood differently. Understandings of what it means to survive and what specific chronic stresses are felt may differ based on a variety of individualized circumstances and belief systems. For example, do Indigenous communities who have been defined as 'resilient' for decades, define it the same way? Do they agree or disagree? And most critically, are they tired of being associated with resilience and being called resilient?

"Stop calling me resilient….
Because every time you say, 'Oh, they're resilient,' that means you can do something else to me. I am not resilient." (Washington (as cited in Srivastava, 2021).

As mentioned above, every community is unique. My positionality and lived experiences as an Iroquois woman have led to certain understandings and feelings around the word 'resilience.' As a result, I feel it is a word we need to move away from (as will be outlined below). However, other Indigenous peoples may disagree, for example, xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam) deploys its use quite often in their reports. In their 2018 "Sustainable Community Development Plan Update", they quite frequently utilize the word to embody empowerment and community.

They define themselves as resilient, addressing the many obstacles faced since early colonization to present today colonial policies. They also acknowledge the importance of their cultural programming to teach resilience to youth, for generations to come (Musqueam First Nation, 2018).

Language, terms and their understandings depend on the community; therefore, the term 'resilient' cannot be understood as a universally adopted negative term. However, I argue that these terms and what they embody continue to support and contribute to colonial agendas vs. working as a term of empowerment for Indigenous communities when being used by non-Indigenous communities. Could we perhaps start to use different terms to ensure we do not continue the trajectory of colonial settler narratives, for true equality and reconciliation in the name of resilience moving forward?

When using the word 'resilient' to describe a group of people, there a risk of not acknowledging the structures that are assigning those people into that category in the first place. Perhaps by calling a group of people resilient, without changing the underpinning structures we are working within, we contribute to colonial narratives around the issues. Being called resilient (at times) works as a backhanded compliment, as in, thank you for applauding my hard work, but insinuates the hardships are still to come, and doesn't acknowledge or provide solutions. This understanding is broken down differently by various Indigenous scholars and community members, as well, with potential replacement terminology:

a) Ford et al., (2020) suggest, it is not our (Indigenous communities) job to be resilient. We are resilient out of force and out of an exploitation of our belief system and relation with the land. We, therefore, want to avoid creating resilience narratives and actions that make others vulnerable.

b) Some communities however propose we should *celebrate* resilience vs. *label* communities as resilient (Don't Call Me Resilient, 2021)

c) Where others, prefer to be labelled resilient, as are empowered by its meaning and definition (Don't Call me Resilient, 2021).

d) Indigenous Professor and member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, Robin Wall Kimmerer (2013) uses the term "Colonial Inclination" to refer to the necessity of placing things into a box, associating names and spaces to things.

I believe, to celebrate resilience is powerful, but the labelling is where the direction of change needs to occur.

Alternatives:

a) Alanaise Onischin Goodwill – Ojibway Sandy Bay First Nation (Registered psychologist Simon Fraser University) suggests **survivance** as coined by Anishinaabe scholar Gerald Vizenor (as cited in Sjuberg, 2021). Here, we give space to the strength and endurance that is associated with resilience, but also acknowledge and pay respect to the traumas of colonization.

b) Whyte, Caldwell & Schaefer (2018) use the term **continuance** to refer to Indigenous survival and flourishing in the face of change, including change stemming away from oppression.

c) **Indigenous planning** (Whyte, 2017) refers to how Indigenous peoples continue to sustain and maintain under conditions of settler colonial oppression. Within dominant narratives of resilience and collaboration with Indigenous communities, the common question asked is *what lessons can your culture teach?* However, by asking this question,(while at times may be full of positive intent and potential relationship building), we ignore the colonial histories, and barriers in place around Indigenous peoples even accessing the sacred knowledge, from which non-Indigenous communities seek to learn from. Does this contribute to Indigenous sovereignty and governance? Planning thus becomes a way to bring self-determination into the conversation. This will be further broken down as governance value (Whyte, 2017) in planning and collaboration in the sections to follow.

Resilient Community or Abuse of 'Heart-Work':

Certain frameworks of resilience, adaption, and sustainability tend to categorize Indigenous teachings into settler ideological frameworks. What are coined actions of resilience are actions present within the moral 'heart-code' of relationality and reciprocity Indigenous peoples can hold. The Indigenous moral 'heart-code' involves a moving *with* the environment and the land as an active agent deserving of careful stewardship and teachings. I feel this understanding has been lost within discussions of resilience. If one is categorizing a community as resilient, there must be <u>an acknowledgment of why they are resilient in the first place</u> and the sacred obligation some Indigenous communities may feel as environmental stewards. We need an acknowledgment of colonial/settler historical trauma and a consented understanding of the moral 'heart-code' Indigenous peoples have written into their souls. Therefore, we can't box the title of 'resilient' onto Indigenous communities, placing urgent burden onto sharing their teachings, especially if it defends the status quo. There must be a new distinction made: one in which supports an acknowledgment of the heart-code and an uplifting of Indigenous communities' own agendas first as the top priority.

What makes Indigenous communities resilient should not be a fixed in space definition. The ability to relocate and adapt alongside the land shows the resilience of Indigenous communities but also simultaneously shows us how desperately things need to change environmentally and socially.

Ford et al., (2020) identifies this as the 'improvisational nature of TK (traditional knowledge)'. This is a key teaching and observation. Do we plan with and alongside nature, or force it into our climate change narratives?

> For Indigenous peoples that identify with land-stewardship and relationality, '**Heart-code'** is a term I use to refer to the moral code we have written onto our hearts; this code is one that practises relationality and reciprocity towards our natural environment and everything that inhabits it. Meaning, it isn't just out of necessity to care towards the environment, it is who we are.

In summation, the term 'resilience' can at times operate within different understandings, work as a backhanded compliment, and contribute to current colonial and settler institutions. However, the term 'resilient' has also been shown to be a powerful definition for Indigenous communities, when they are in control of its narrative. Binding together as one, a resilient force with whose heart-code will continue to face whatever is thrown at them, to protect the environment for decades to come. As Indigenous peoples, for those who practice relationality and reciprocity, it allows allows us to practice kinship relationships that react in response to change (Whyte, 2020). While powerful, I believe this cannot be taken for granted. It cannot continue to be the relied upon narrative.

What do we do:

Perhaps, we engage not in the crises and risk language of resilience but rather, coordination, collaboration, and relationship building (Whyte, 2020). Through uplifting the Indigenous voice via relationship building, ecological collaboration naturally occurs (Whyte, 2020). Essentially, we avoid saying, "*Indigenous knowledge will help mitigate climate change and environmental crises.*" Rather, say that by encouraging coordination and collaboration vs. integration and assimilation we begin fostering relationships that will contribute to rooted environmental and social change.

Atlanta's Takeaway: For the most part, based on these purely literature-based observations from the communities I am not from, and my own personal communications and journey within my own identity, the term 'resilience' is a welcomed term for the majority. What I wish to highlight here, is that I do not feel it is serving the Indigenous communities themselves. Applauding resilience without dramatically changing current settler/colonial structures feels misplaced. Resilience can be empowering when communities are resilient in the face of out-of-control change. However, applauding resilience within structures that are causing them to be resilient, seems inappropriate. Let's consider the potential of utilizing an alternative term. For example, if non-Indigenous spaces utilized the term '**survivance' and/or continuance;** *Indigenous communities survivance over the years showcases their strength, to adapt and move with the natural land and social injustices they face daily. However, no community should be required to survive against adversity, especially when their knowledge and collaboration is needing to be highlighted for work within non-Indigenous communities. By acknowledging this survivance, we ensure that the relationship building and knowledge sharing moving forward uplifts what the communities are highlighting needs to change.* By initiating these conversations in what I call the 'Uplifting Era' we acknowledge the survivance mode that Indigenous peoples have been in since the beginning of colonization, ensuring systemic change happens today and the uplifting of the Indigenous voice in sustainability, adaption, resilience, and land management policy.

Part 2: Indigenous Resilience and the 'knowledge sharing' quandary

The knowledge quandary refers to the issue of how non-Indigenous peoples can work with and alongside Indigenous communities, inquiring around their sacred knowledge and heart-code. If social/ environmental resilience and reconciliation can occur, there must be a deepened analysis done of the heart and of how different communities think and engage in the world around them. The key takeaway is this: it is not one's job to understand everything about another culture, nor should you. It is your job when working with other cultures to have a sense and appreciation for how they would like to collaborate. Indigenous scholar Leanne Simpson
(2004) puts it well, stating:

it is not enough to recover certain aspects of Indigenous knowledge systems that are palatable to the players in the colonial project. We must be strategic about how we recover and where we focus our efforts to ensure that the foundations of the system are protected and inherently Indigenous processes for the continuation of Indigenous knowledge are maintained (p. 376).

Meaning, it is not ok to want to engage in Indigenous knowledge only when it works for non-Indigenous spaces. If knowledge is consented to be shared, it must be protected and used for the Indigenous communities themselves, while acknowledging the diversity and difference within Indigenous Knowledge Systems. By pan-Indigenizing Indigenous Environmental Knowledge, there is a risk of 'cherry-picking' the Indigenous voice that suits and/or fits a certain environmental agenda or rather by, '*making it palatable to the players in the colonial project* '. Not all Indigenous peoples agree on every environmental agenda or climate 'solution'. Avoiding the 'cherry-picking' of Indigenous knowledge ensures all Indigenous voices that wish to speak or share knowledge can be uplifted equally.

Disclaimers: this section has generalizations in it, but I'm aiming to avoid 'pan-Indigenizing' (a colonial term that lumps the Indigenous global community into one category) the purpose is to just discuss the general considerations of knowledge sharing/understanding/transferring, while understanding that for every Indigenous community their traditions, oral stories and sacred knowledge, is different and therefore holds specific customary ideals of sharing, and teaching that vary for every community.

Question(s): **Can non-Indigenous peoples and understand Indigenous teachings? Should they? Is it Indigenous people's responsibility to educate and provide knowledge around resilience? Who does the teaching? What does this knowledge transfer (if consented) look like? What does this collaboration between the City and xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səl ílwəta?/Selilwitulh (Tsleil- Waututh) Nation look like?**

When we ask questions about Indigenous resilience we usually say: what are Indigenous communities doing with the environment? Or how are Indigenous people adapting to climate change (shocks, stresses etc.)? What we are really asking is, what is your heart-code? That is, why are Indigenous communities' teachings so interwoven within the land? What does this mean for discussions around resilience and collaboration? This is chalked down to generational teachings present since time immemorial, that teach a code of life rooted in a spiritual and moral belief system of relationality and sacred reciprocity. Once we understand this, the question then actually becomes: *Can non-Indigenous communities understand this? Can non-Indigenous peoples engage in this, actively engage in it, and should they?*

This 'heart-code' rooted in certain Indigenous lessons of relationality and reciprocity towards the land is the understanding that our natural environment is not complacent. It is an active agent, holding knowledge within its own right (Whyte, 2017), engaging consistently with humans as we are cyclically, and through ceremony, reciprocally giving back through thanks and its stewardship (i.e restoring harmony and bringing community and land back into an equal and relational experience, a revitalization of culture). This heart-code and origin of knowledge cannot be categorized quantifiably or separated from the communities from which they originate. They are tied to specific land, places, and traditions that are unique to every community. This is to say, to engage in Indigenous knowledge (whether from an understanding perspective, actively pursuing, or uplifting via institutions) you cannot separate it from the community and heart-code from which it originated. They are interwoven. This is important when building relationships with Indigenous communities; ensure their voice and consent of shared knowledge is the number one priority. This is critical for collaboration as perhaps certain traditional knowledge(s) aren't meant to be shared or learnt. How then, should non-Indigenous institutions and communities engage with Indigenous knowledge?

1. Collaborate and communicate with the specific Indigenous communities with whom we are hoping to build relationships with.

Through the help of Indigenous scholars, we can learn how to engage in this relationship. Potawatomi philosopher and climate/environmental justice scholar Kyle Whyte (2018) addresses Indigenous knowledge within environmental planning. Here, he suggests we want to avoid it as **supplemental value** and approach it as **governance value**. Instead of discussing the integration of Indigenous knowledge into non-Indigenous spaces as a supplemental thing i.e., we have our individual knowledges and epistemologies, but the *addition* of Indigenous knowledge would be helpful/interesting. We should approach it as supporting Indigenous governance, autonomy, and sovereignty first and foremost (Whyte, 2017). What forms of this support and governance could look like, depends on the individual communities themselves. Through relationship building and conversation, specific action-oriented steps will become clear. We should avoid the conversation of knowledge integration and transform the narrative into a partnership and collaboration, in which the communities from which this knowledge originates from are in control/have access of the shared knowledge and their voices are uplifted.

Essentially, we want to **avoid the supplementary value framework**. It should not be to fill a gap in the data. It is a separate bodywork of knowledge with agency, story and is critical for culture and generational teachings. It is its own, not for gap filling, or to supplement the knowledge paradigms used within institutions and non-Indigenous spaces.

It is valuable on its own.
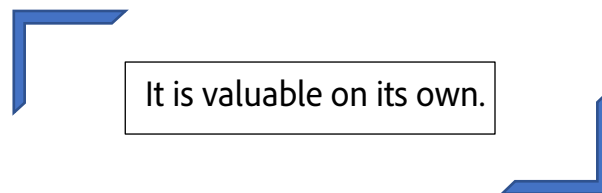
Indigenous planning, leadership, and governance is critical. It ". . .refers to how we as Indigenous peoples endeavor to sustain, revitalize, and continue our social, cultural and ecological integrity under conditions of settler colonial oppression" (Whyte et al., 2018, p.6).

Knowledge within this governance value narrative, may also not look like what Western institutions, and settler spaces imagine it too look like. For example, quite commonly in discussions centered around resilience, climate change, planning etc. we focus on buzzwords (emissions, pollution, decolonization etc.), and urgency narratives i.e., the time to act is now! These are environmental-based issues and words that hold powerful meaning for social transformation. However, is there a risk of ignoring, or misrepresenting knowledge presented if it doesn't fit into these narratives, discussions, or pre-decided policies in planning? Avoiding pushing narratives and therefore controlling an answer to the issues, we will allow for all formats of knowledge (when shared) to be respected and **uplifted in their own right**. For example, Indigenous scholar Kyle Whyte (2017) highlights the importance of potlatch ceremonies as a sacred tool in Indigenous governance and resilience. This is a critical example, as potlatch ceremonies exemplify spaces of sacred knowledge sharing, Indigenous planning and how collaboration is upheld in communities. However, this may not be appropriate in non-Indigenous spaces, and may not be the expected solution to a specific environmental fix, for a specific environmental problem.

Atlanta's Takeaway: Just because it cannot be scientifically categorized, (i.e plant this here to solve problem x) does not mean it does not hold teachings. Listen to what the communities are saying, encouraging their governmental value.

2.When engaging with Indigenous knowledge (when consented and shared) are you causing indirect harm? How this avoided? Do we perpetuate colonial harm in the name of environmentalism/resilience? *This is a sub question to the above but will allow for continued conversation around how non-Indigenous communities engage in Indigenous knowledge.*

For decades Indigenous communities have experienced trauma and ridicule for their culture and ways of knowing. We are now entering the Anthropocene era, a time where human activity has influenced Earth in an irreversible way. The influx in protesting radical change in the name of 'decolonization and reconciliation' has risen, contributing to a rise in institutions and colonial spaces wanting to engage in traditional ecological knowledge (or bio-cultural heritage) and involve Indigenous knowledges for advice/help in mitigating this damage. However, this should be on their terms. Indigenous communities are not meant to be the teachers of all things, nor should they be expected to teach communities who still don't support them. Having non-Indigenous communities and institutions wanting to work towards a positive and fruitful relationship with Indigenous communities is productive but needs to occur in ways that won't perpetuate further colonial harm or continue to support the status quo. The time is now for **listening**. In this Uplifting Era, we should ask Indigenous communities what support they require, what funding they require as they continue to fight, and work within their heart-code as environmental stewards. When this support is requested, or extended, collaboration and relations are entirely possible. When this happens, we as a humanity, all work as one towards better resilience outcomes.

As mentioned above, when we continue to use language such as "crises," "resilient," or 'at "risk" it leaves little room for true change to occur that doesn't involve power dynamics or colonial control over Indigenous autonomy (Whyte, 2020). Current resilience narratives tend to be situated within this risk/crisis framework, an urgency placing pressure on Indigenous communities for the answer that fits into the settler mold. For example, Kyle Whyte (2020) states,

> projects for clean or renewable energy or carbon footprint reduction will repeat the moral wrongs and injustices of the past. Hence the presentist narrative gets caught up in imminence through presumptions of urgency, generating harm and risks that burden Indigenous peoples, and retrench colonial power. Again, we must make careful judgements about the face of kinship when we seek to take action to mitigate and prepare for climate change (p.6).

In lighter terms, in situating inquiries, when extending the hand for relationship building and wanting to learn about Indigenous knowledge(s) we want to avoid doing so in a way that places burden on Indigenous peoples into fixing pressing, urgent, doom-oriented environmental issues. When approaching this relationship around resilience and future shocks and stresses, are we also acknowledging the ways in which current policies/land rights etc. are causing the issues themselves? Or how climate change is impacting Indigenous communities? For example, xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səl ílwəta?/Selilwitulh (Tsleil- Waututh) Nation all have reported, the awareness of rising water levels, causing land displacement, unstable housing, and a housing crisis. So, how does this get solved/dealt with, while also addressing the collaboration, and uplifting of Indigenous knowledge? Can the City ensure these shocks and stresses within the communities themselves, are dealt with firstly, before asking for knowledge assistance for the non-Indigenous communities within Vancouver?

How can non-Indigenous peoples and communities engage in Indigenous knowledges?

Do

Avoid
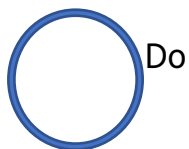
Understand that, for collaboration with the First Nation communities outlined in this report, how they wish to share knowledge is unique and will be dictated and controlled by them. It is important that their stories are shared by them, and for them.

If knowledge is shared, I believe the best approach is to ask, listen (uplift) and support. Ensure whatever policies/initiatives enforced aren't just for humankinds' benefit, but are benefiting and contributing to Indigenous governance, self-determination, and autonomy.

Creating situations in which Indigenous communities are forced to lower their beliefs or are faced with conflicts around their cultural values. For example, perhaps the question(s) become; what forms of resilience knowledge are you unable to practice due to current structures? How could the City support these endeavors? Vs. What practices are best for helping to mitigate climate change?

Who does the teaching? *From my own positionality:*

I hold mixed feelings around if Indigenous knowledge has a space in non-Indigenous communities, as we presently still see how Indigenous people's basic rights are not protected and honoured (land, water, food, culture). However, sharing is consensual. Meaning, if a community with their specific traditions are comfortable with sharing their knowledge, consenting it to be used within certain frameworks, then use it. Ensure that a deeper meaning is understood by it, and that you aren't framing it in means of 'alternative' knowledge or engaging it in ways that contribute to present-day colonial and settler structures. What various academics suggest, is that those comfortable with sharing, will share. For some Indigenous peoples, it is within our Indigenous heart-code to remain stewards to the land. Therefore, it is critical to not abuse this relationship, ensuring the Indigenous voice and governance value are uplifted above all else.

Atlanta's Takeaway:

I understand a large part of this is vague and does not always provide a specific clear answer. What I hope was highlighted is that every community is different, unique with their own traditions and histories. Therefore, what support, what resilience practices, what knowledge shared, will differ. Once this section is digested, the work can then begin within the individual communities, and their specific needs and shared knowledge. Engaging in governance value positionality and action within environmental/social resilience with communities will minimize potential harm. It will also ensure that Indigenous knowledges are being used for Indigenous governance, supporting, and protecting the communities, while simultaneously leaving room for collaboration with the City. Indigenous communities aren't repositories for historical knowledge. Indigenous knowledge is fluid, and through connecting with the voices from the communities, specific ideas for collaboration will be revealed.

So, what do Indigenous knowledges do for Indigenous peoples? Indigenous knowledges have governance-value for Indigenous peoples as an integral part of how our nations and communities plan for the future. The responsibility and right to plan for the future is a key component of collective self-determination and enshrined by important documents such as UNDRIP [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples]. Whereas many scientists and people of other heritages and nations value Indigenous knowledges for their own research—or supplemental value— they also need to reflect on how acknowledging the governance value of Indigenous knowledges for Indigenous peoples may impact their approaches to knowledge exchange. Such acknowledgment should lead scientists to consider how Indigenous peoples interpret the governance value of the scientists' own goals and research approaches (Whyte, 2017, p.15).

Conclusion: Uplift the Indigenous voice:

My personal and main recommendation for this ongoing building of relationship and knowledge exchange is simply to **uplift**. At times, the extended hand of reconciliation, while meaningful and at times positive, tends to encourage narratives of integration, assimilation and the 'want' to understand Indigenous ways of knowing and culture in the name of this mended relationship, and now, most commonly in the name of sustainability and resilience. I believe in a world in which Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities can come together, working alongside one another, to fight for the land. However, change must occur in how the relationship is initiated. I believe this begins around humbled learnings and uplifting *all* Indigenous voices. The difference I wish to highlight throughout this report is that for some Indigenous communities this is not a decision. The stamp on our hearts to fight for the land is who we are and has made it so that our mark is that of a resilient population—our heart-code. We need to begin by uplifting the voices of the xwməθkwəyə m (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səl ílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil- Waututh) Nations ensuring their planning processes aren't hindered anymore, showing gratitude, and protecting future knowledge use and culture preservation. Consider this quote from Whyte et al. (2018),

> whether regarding climate change, biodiversity conservation, or food sovereignty—keeps us aware of how oppression endures as one of the largest threats to Indigenous peoples and many other groups. Whether settler and other privileged populations ultimately can achieve sustainability in the near- or long-term planning horizons is not so much our concern. Regardless of what happens with them, the odds are that Indigenous peoples will continue to face different forms of colonial oppression and must innovate strategies for protecting our continuance no matter what non-Indigenous populations end up doing (p. 23).

As the citywide Vancouver Plan process continues to relationship build in the name of reconciliation, equity, resilience, and sustainability, reciprocity, equity, and intersectionality, outlining goals towards uplifting the marginalized voices, and Indigenous communities around them, I believe these mentioned recommendations, and conversations around knowledge protection provide a hopeful start.

For collaboration and relationship building in our Uplifting Era as the City builds unique relationships with every community, the ways in which the communities choose to be uplifted will differ. The City should start with supportive action items such as supporting cultural protection initiatives by every Nation, ensuring they have every basic human need (safe housing, water, food and knowledge sovereignty) and perhaps implementing conversation forums, in which Elders, Knowledge Keepers are invited to a monthly forum in which the City supports and listens to concerns. Working on engagement protocols and methods that respectfully engage Indigenous peoples of all ages. And by, engaging in the lessons learnt around knowledge sharing, knowledge exchange and Indigenous governance, I believe these relationships will produce strong and meaningful connections. Remembering how this impacts the communities, we respect and understand the 'heart-code' and actively ensure all forms of colonial oppression, barriers, and risks of appropriating or harming knowledge exchange are mitigated. We begin to take lessons from the softness of Earth, feeling the moss below our feet, feathers between our fingertips, and the wind pushing us forward. Approaching these conversations with the openness of the wind, knowing change in the Uplifting Era is among us, if we stay rooted, feet planted firmly on the ground, feeling the heartbeat of the land below us.

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