



WRITTEN BRIEF FOR THE HOUSE OF COMMONS STANDING COMMITTEE ON
FINANCE'S PRE-BUDGET CONSULTATIONS IN ADVANCE OF THE 2021 BUDGET

SUBMITTED BY
FOR OUR KIDS VANCOUVER
FOR OUR KIDS NORTH VAN
SURREY FOR FUTURE

August 7, 2020

What do you want the world to be like when you grow up?

"Magical. And I want snow."
Maelle, Age 2, Vancouver

"I want less pollution and more
nature friendly ways... reducing
CO2 and greenhouse gases."
Oona, Age 8, Vancouver

"I want the planet to stay
the same and animals only die
because of old age."
Norah, Age 6, North Vancouver

"The police should not be hurting
other black people. I know it's
a good idea to stop the police
from doing that."
Indigo, Age 5, Vancouver

"I want a world without pollution."
Yula, Age 10, Coquitlam

"I want everyone to stop using
plastics, recycle properly, and
clean-up trash in oceans and other
waterways to save our marine life."
Noor, Age 13, Coquitlam

"I don't want the ice to disappear
because I want polar bears
to survive."
Dominic Age 8, North Vancouver

"I want less bad things in the
world: less garbage, less pollution,
and less using trees and things made
of trees like paper...no more cutting
trees."
Kenneth, Age 7, New Westminster

"I want animals to be safe."
Ruby, Age 7, Vancouver

"I want the world to be healthier
and I want to make it a better
place. No more drugs, no cigarette
butts, and I want there to be
more good people than bad."
Nora, Age 8, Chilliwack

"I want the world to be pink."
Anony, Age 4, Vancouver

"I want to eat cherries,
blueberries and blackberries."
Mila, Age 3.5, North Vancouver

"I want elephants to not be hunted
ever so that they don't be like the
dinosaurs."
Charlotte Age 5, North Vancouver

"I want to see less cans, bottles and
garbage on the sidewalk and streets
and less picking flowers because bees
don't have anything to eat. No bees,
no trees - no more people."
Olivia, Age 5, New Westminster

"...I want it to be like, um,
trees growing and I want to pick
flowers like a bouquet for my
Mom..."
Charlie, Age 4, Chilliwack

Recommendations

1. Prioritize the urgency of the climate crisis by dedicating the 2021 budget to a Green and Just Recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.
2. Apply to the 2021 budget, and require all governments receiving federal funding to apply, the following Green and Just Recovery lens:
 - meeting climate commitment of net zero by 2050
 - advancing reconciliation with Indigenous people
 - inclusivity to ensure no one is left behind
 - spreading stimulus across the country
 - building a modern, diversified and sustainable economy
 - dismantling systemic racism
3. Shift the economy away from fossil fuel dependencies into the economy of the future.
4. Stop relying on fossil fuel income as part of the transition to the low carbon economy.
5. Stop subsidizing and investing in fossil fuels.
6. Stop building new fossil fuel infrastructure.
7. Invest in clean energy projects and related infrastructure.
8. Invest in public and social services for people.
9. Develop Canada's domestic manufacturing capacity.
10. Allocate budget to provide adequate protection and restoration of intact forests, old growth forests, marine ecosystems and the coast.
11. Establish mechanisms to ensure natural resources are managed in partnership with Indigenous Peoples.
12. Fund the full implementation of UNDRIP and FPIC on all laws.
13. Build social resiliency by ensuring the well-being and basic needs of all Canadians are met, including food security and affordable housing:
 - Stop subsidizing the wealthy and corporations.
 - Support community and non-profit groups that provide collective support and action to communities during the Pandemic.

- Develop a national housing strategy that provides affordable homes and houses the homeless.

14. Fund the establishment of just and green transition agencies for each province with joint governance from all levels of governments, indigenous people, youth, scientists, academics, business, industry labour, environmental organizations, non-profit service providers and leaders of racialized and marginalized all at the table.

15. Invest in mass public electric transit systems across Canada.

16. Invest in widespread retrofit programs to retrofit all existing buildings and homes in Canada for energy efficiency and to transition from fossil fuels to clean energy.

17. Empower municipalities with the financial capacity to build sustainable communities and invest in regional and land use planning processes.

The Urgency of the Climate Crisis Requires the 2021 Budget be Dedicated to a Green and Just Recovery

We urge the Committee to unequivocally recommend to the Government of Canada that the 2021 budget be dedicated to implementing a Green and Just Recovery from the Pandemic to address the urgency of the Climate Crisis.

Our request comes supported by a number of policy options solicited through direct engagement with federal, provincial, local and indigenous government representatives in a series of Town Halls that our groups recently hosted on the topic of a Green and Just Recovery.

There is increasing support across civil society to use the economic recovery of the Covid-19 to turn things around on the Climate Crisis:

- Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment: A Healthy Recovery¹
- David Suzuki Foundation: A Just and Sustainable Recovery²
- Group of 50 academics called for “future proofing against climate crisis”.³
- Task Force for a Resilient Recovery⁴
- The Pembina Institute for Green Stimulus⁵
- Clean Energy Canada: A Resilient Recovery⁶

We join this widespread call for a Green and Just Recovery.

*We can do this. If there is political will to step forth and there is political pressure... We can do this.
We can make the change to move away from fossil fuels.*

- Steven Pettigrew, City of Surrey Councillor (Surrey Town Hall)

¹ <https://cape.ca/healthy-recovery/>

² <https://davidsuzuki.org/action/green-recovery/>

³

<https://www.nationalobserver.com/2020/05/07/news/use-pandemic-future-proof-against-climate-crisis-academic-group-urges>

⁴ <https://www.recoverytaskforce.ca/>

⁵ <https://www.pembina.org/pub/green-stimulus-principles-and-recommendations-2020-economic-stimulus-package>

⁶ <https://cleanenergycanada.org/a-resilient-recovery-an-open-letter-from-canadas-clean-energy-sector-2/>

Who We Are

Surrey For Future

Surrey for Future is a group of citizens working cooperatively who are passionate about climate action and focus on supporting change in Surrey. Started in the spirit of the youth-led Fridays for Future movement, Surrey for Future is now a community action team within the Force of Nature Alliance, a network of climate-focused community action teams across Metro Vancouver. Although our focus is on Surrey, we also encourage every level of government to create change for climate justice.

For Our Kids Vancouver and For Our Kids North Vancouver

We are two local chapters of the national For Our Kids network located in Vancouver and North Vancouver, British Columbia.

We are parents united by our fears of the severity of the climate crisis and the effects it will have on the quality of life for our children. We are committed to take action to find solutions for a sustainable future for all young people.

Virtual Town Halls on a Green and Just Recovery

We organized three separate non-partisan Green and Just Recovery Town Halls in June and July 2020 in British Columbia. This involved direct engagement with our federal, provincial, local and indigenous government representatives with the objective of meaningful dialogue on what our governments need to do for a Green and Just Recovery. Just over 600 people registered to attend our events and nearly half were in attendance.

Town Halls were also held in Cowichan, Rosedale and London and can be viewed here:

https://www.forourkids.ca/parents_host_politicians_talking_green_just_recovery

Participants consisted of the following:

1. Surrey, BC - June 25, 2020

- Ken Hardie, Member of Parliament for Fleetwood-Port Kells (Liberal)
- Jinny Sims, Member of Legislative Assembly for Surrey-Panorama (BC NDP)
- Steven Pettigrew, City of Surrey Councillor

2. North Vancouver, BC – July 16, 2020

- Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Member of Parliament for North Vancouver and Federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change
- Bowinn Ma, Member of Legislative Assembly North Vancouver-Lonsdale, Parliamentary Secretary Translink (BC NDP)
- Jessica McIlroy, City of North Vancouver Councillor

3. Vancouver, BC – July 17, 2020

- Jenny Kwan, Member of Parliament (NDP)
- Chief Leah George-Wilson, Tsleil-Waututh Nation
- Honourable George Heyman, Member of Legislative Assembly and Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
- Christine Boyle, City of Vancouver Councillor

**“If we don’t change the current course of climate change and the global loss of biodiversity, the effects are going to be far more devastating than what we have seen from Covid-19.”
- Honourable John Wilkinson (North Van Town Hall)**

The UN has described the Covid-19 Pandemic as “the greatest challenge” since World War II.⁷ However, in the words of Mark Carney, “[u]nless we act now, the climate crisis will be tomorrow’s central scenario and, unlike Covid-19, no one will be able to self-isolate from it.”⁸

Even during the pandemic we continue to see the devastating impacts of global warming:

- Peat fires rage in Siberia while the same is predicted for Canada;⁹
- Quebec wildfires rage under heatwave;¹⁰
- Canada’s Great Lakes (arguably the world’s most important freshwater resources) are dangerously warm for plant life and human well-being¹¹
- Excessively dangerous heat waves of temperatures of 53 degrees are being felt in the middle east¹² and California and parts of the world are predicted to be too hot for human life;¹³

The Government of Canada has yet to commit to a Green and Just Recovery. The pandemic offers a once-in-a-life-time opportunity to address the climate crisis. It is our recommendation, expectation, and ultimately deepest hope, for our children and young people of this country that the Committee’s pre-budget consultation recommendations marks a clear departure from the government’s current approach.

We have the resources. We have the need to stimulate the economy as we come out of the Pandemic” for a [“Green New Deal”]. Now is the time for Government to step back in.

- Ken Hardie MP for Fleetwood-Port Kells

⁷ <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/coronavirus.html>

⁸ <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/jun/05/world-climate-breakdown-pandemic>

⁹

<https://www.cbc.ca/radio/whatonearth/peat-fires-like-those-raging-in-siberia-will-become-more-common-in-canada-1.5670662>

¹⁰ <https://montreal.ctvnews.ca/forest-fires-continue-to-rage-in-quebec-amid-heat-wave-1.4993457>

¹¹

<https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2020/07/29/the-great-lakes-are-warmer-than-theyve-been-in-three-decades-heres-what-that-means-for-fish-plant-life-and-you.html?fbclid=IwAR04lNdIjbSZ6oHTzYk1zN54w2smu0vviAAFL8qD8l5lcafzNa2bjAkVQE>

¹²

<https://www.severe-weather.eu/global-weather/deadly-heat-deathvalley-kuwait-mk/?fbclid=IwAR2tzEvvjxo--ypnOw3YU9eUlmYB-RZej7cu4ZHr7Xg9So3taf2DtTaFYtw>

¹³

https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-53415298?fbclid=IwAR0g6eeleKvohph0tjXX_nfK-FwZECCioJksoKNytPIEurDXWrWnKToM4Do&utm_content=buffer7a18&utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook.com&utm_campaign=buffer

**“The Fight for Social Justice, Environmental Justice and Climate Justice is the Same Fight”
- Greta Thunberg**

Sparked by the murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis Police on May 25, 2020, millions across the world including in Canada¹⁴ have risked their health, safety and even lives to call for the breakdown of the systems of entrenched racism.

We have learned only of a small percentage of police violence occurring against racialized populations in Canada: 62 year old Ejaz Ahmed Choudry killed by police during a mental health check; Regis Korchinski-Paquet fell to her death during a police mental health check; Chief Allan Adam beaten by a RCMP officer; and an Indigenous man and his mother beaten outside of a Walmart after being falsely accused of shoplifting by Vancouver Police.

Racialized populations have been the most severely affected by Covid-19.¹⁵ A key recommendation of Black Lives Matters is to “defund the police” by redirecting police resources to address non-criminal social and economic issues. As illustrated below, this policy option aligns with the needs of a Green and Just Recovery.

¹⁴ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/emancipation-day-vancouver-march-1.5671884>

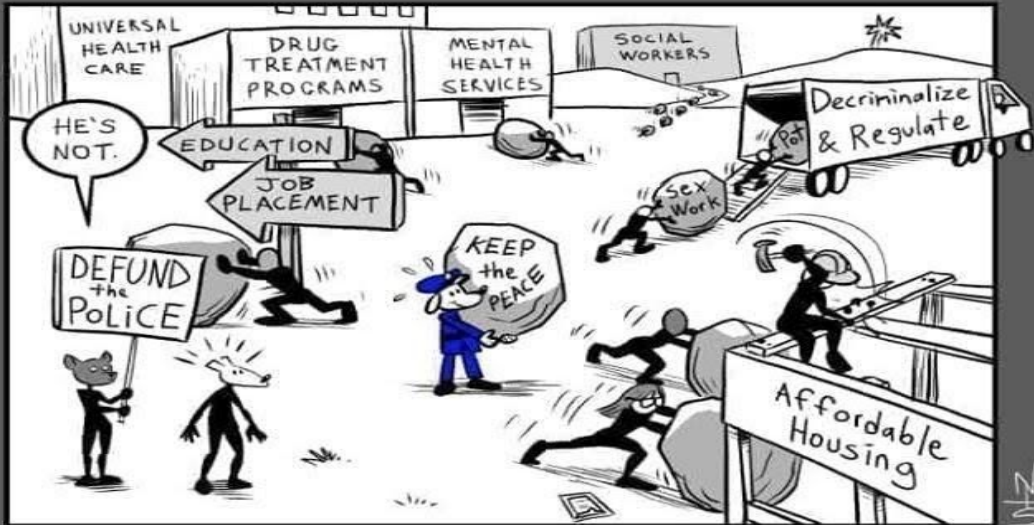
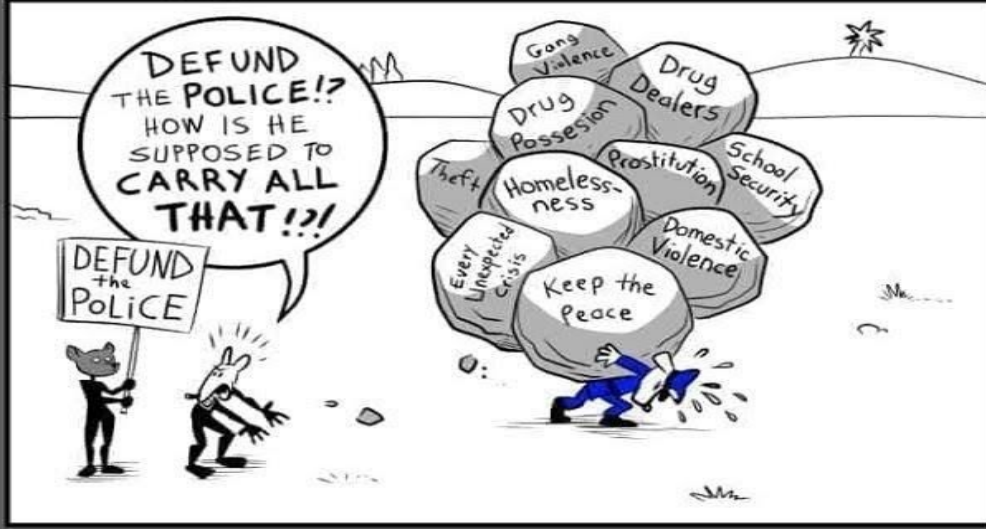
¹⁵

<https://www.newyorker.com/news/annals-of-a-warming-planet/racism-police-violence-and-the-climate-are-not-separate-issues> ;

https://www.vogue.com/article/why-every-environmentalist-should-be-anti-racist?fbclid=IwAR0YdBZlr3yHUy2SKtUWAoVH9KZi6ILAAmNZOFoQoXp5nWCd5M_8GE1w8O8

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/toronto-covid-19-data-1.5669091>;

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/race-covid-19-montreal-data-census-1.5607123>



Summary of Town Hall Discussions in Support of Our Recommendations

1) Urgency of Climate Crisis Requires a Climate Lens to the 2021 Budget

[Climate] is a crisis. There is urgency. There is no question about that.

- Honourable John Wilkinson (North Vancouver Town Hall)

We heard we need to:

- get on with the work of climate action now.
- acknowledge that a Green and Just Recovery can be done; it just requires political will.
- put climate and people at the forefront of every decision at all levels of government.
- abandon climate as a partisan issue.
- look to BC, which has established a set of green and just values to apply to stimulus funding decisions.

2) Shift the Economy Away from Fossil Fuel Dependencies to the Economy of the Future

We are building the economy of the future so we can transition out of the economy from the past.

- Honourable George Heyman (Vancouver Town Hall)

We heard we need to:

- shift our economy from heavy reliance on extractive resources and extraction of resources from Indigenous lands.
- build up the low carbon areas of our economy so that we can move away from the high carbon areas of our economy.
- change the nature of consumerism and build a circular economy.
- acknowledge that deregulation, tax cuts and trickle-down economics have been colossal failures and have deepened inequality and environmental destruction.
- restart our economy to value people, services and mother earth.

3) Act in True Partnership with Indigenous People

Rather than ask what we can do to support Indigenous people, it is really about how we can work in partnership...

- Jinny Sims, MLA for Surrey-Panorama (Surrey Town Hall)

We heard we need to:

- recognize Indigenous Peoples' ownership of lands and natural resources by empowering Indigenous People to manage their lands and natural resources.
- commit to true shared decision-making on all of Canada's laws.
- Implement UNDRIP.

4) Build Social Resiliency – Meet the Well-being and Basic Needs of Everyone

If we don't help bring everyone to a healthier state of social resilience, then we can't bring everyone towards a sustainable future.

- Jessica McIlroy, North Vancouver Councillor (North Vancouver Town Hall)

We heard we need to:

- address the impacts felt most significantly by certain groups not only by the pandemic but those in our pre-pandemic way of life – women; young people; seniors; Indigenous People and racialized people.
- acknowledge that decisions based on pocket book issues rather than climate is a symptom of the great inequality in our society.
- account for the political and legal structures imposed on vulnerable communities like Indigenous communities.
- address that there are too many people in our population overburdened by the stress of just providing for their own basic needs.

5) Build the Structures Necessary for Meaningful Dialogue that Leads to Consensus Based Decision-Making

We will need ideas from Canadian, of all ages... from environmental organizations, industry and Indigenous leaders. We will need active collaboration from all levels of government.

- The Honourable John Wilkinson (North Vancouver Town Hall)

We heard we need to:

- look to BC's Climate Solutions Council, which successfully built consensus among young people, labour, industry, business and Indigenous people for clean investments.
- build structures in decision-making that allow for meaningful dialogue among all stakeholders, including young people.
- allow for early dialogue and not after the fact engagement.
- listen to young people.

- align policies of all levels of government and actively collaborate without technical concerns over jurisdiction.

6) Invest in Mass Public Electric Transportation Systems

*If we don't get people out of their cars, we are not going to affect climate action in a real way....
the investment will pay dividends in the here and now and into the future.*

- Jenny Kwan, MP (Vancouver Town Hall)

We heard we need to:

- acknowledge that transportation is a top GHG emitter in Canada (25%).
- acknowledge that public transit is the most effective way to address transportation emissions and is equitable because it does not subsidize those who can afford personal vehicles.
- acknowledge that public transit is the responsibility of all levels of government.
- address regions in Canada, like Surrey, that have been neglected over the past few decades from public transit investments.
- acknowledge that building mass transit systems offer huge job opportunities.

7) Invest in Retrofits of All Existing Buildings and All Homes

Housing retrofit incentive programs need to not only let the wealthy and middle-class think about energy efficiencies in their homes, but everyone including landlords so that renters can live in energy efficient homes.

- Honourable George Heyman (Vancouver Town Hall)

We heard we need to:

- acknowledge that our existing buildings and homes are one of the largest GHG emitters in Canada.
- ensure we are not just retrofitting private single family homes but also retrofitting social housing and existing affordable rental buildings.
- not just make retrofits about energy efficiency but instead change the source of our energy needs in our homes and buildings.
- get fossil fuels out of our homes and imagine solar panels on every house.
- acknowledge retrofitting programs provide huge job opportunities.

8) Empower Municipalities to Build Sustainable Communities

Local governments are so hands tied in terms of financial tools and we know that austerity only makes recovery from these types of crises worse.

- Vancouver Councillor Christine Boyle (Vancouver Town Hall)

We heard we need to:

- acknowledge our greatest emissions come from areas within the jurisdiction of municipalities, yet they have limited fiscal tools to implement programs necessary to build sustainable, transit-oriented communities and healthy communities.
- acknowledge that often developers plan cities by building rows of homes, resulting in urban sprawl without regard to necessary infrastructure.
- fund a National Housing Strategy.
- rely on regional and land use planning to build sustainable communities.

"I want all the animals to be safe and the earth to be a happy place, not like it is right now."
Oliver Aged 7, North Vancouver

"I want to ride my bike in the forest."
Aiden, Age 3.5, North Vancouver

"I want it to get more colder in Antarctica because ice is melting and temperature is getting hotter and the fish that are used to cold water are starting to die."
Olivia, Age 5, New Westminster

"I don't want to take away the cheetahs homes because I love cheetahs, I also really want to be able to see a spirit bear"
Katie aged 5, North Vancouver

"I want the animals to answer me."
Rocket, Age 3, Vancouver