

Building INCLUSIVE GARDENS

Applying an Equity Framework to Community Gardens in Surrey



THE ISSUE

Visible minorities are disproportionately underrepresented in community gardens in Vancouver (8).

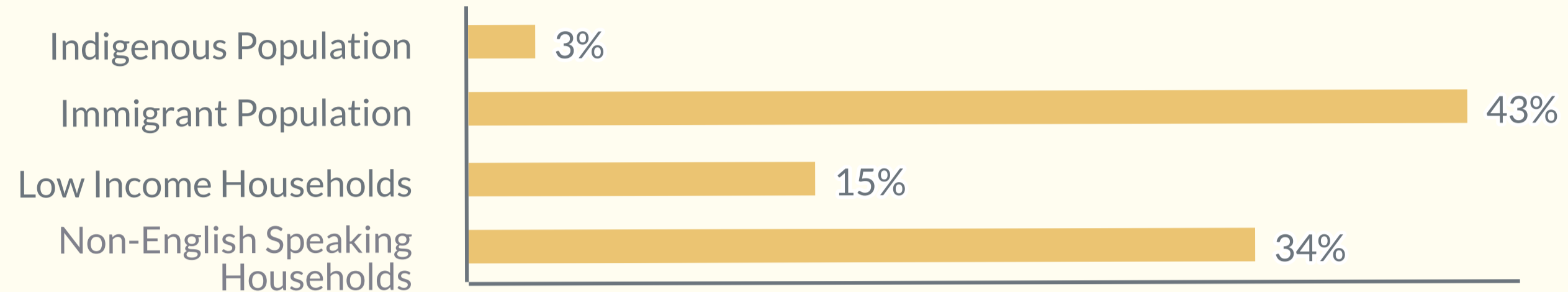
Community gardens are contested sites that often perpetuate structural inequities due to discriminatory neo-liberal policies that govern them (3).

WHY IT MATTERS

Community gardens serve as hubs for community development and may improve community food security if their policies are equitable (3).

The diverse population of Surrey may experience exclusion if its community garden policies are inequitable.

Demographics of Surrey (1)



OUR PARTNERSHIP

The **Public Health Association of BC** is a voluntary, non-profit, non-governmental organization working towards promoting health, well-being and social equity for all British Columbians (7).

Can You Dig It (CYDI) is a community garden initiative that focuses on social inclusion and supporting food security.

Defining Key Concepts

COMMUNITY FOOD SECURITY

Community food security is "a situation in which all community residents obtain a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes self-reliance and social justice" (5).

FOOD JUSTICE

Food justice addresses the oppression that exists in the production, distribution, consumption and the valuation of food (4).

OUR APPROACH

People

Discusses who is affected

Place

Considers barriers within the region of Surrey

Process

The methods and procedures in which inequities are considered & applied

Power

Considers accountability, ownership & epistemic knowledge

Defining an Equity Framework

An equity framework is a theoretical framework that is applied to assess the fair and impartial treatment of participants according to normative ideas of justice (6).



ADOPT EQUITY FRAMEWORK



CONDUCT POLICY REVIEW



SYNTHESIZE REPORT

WHAT WE FOUND

A policy equity review was conducted on a sample size of seven City of Surrey procedural documents and by-laws pertaining to the governance and use of community gardens.

People & Place

- Application forms and policy documents pertaining to the use and creation of community gardens in Surrey are in English only, creating barriers for those who cannot read or write in English.
- Annual membership fees to access gardens encourage exclusivity and impose barriers to those without disposable incomes.
- All community garden documents, as well as the City's COSMOS mapping program require a computer and internet connection to access.

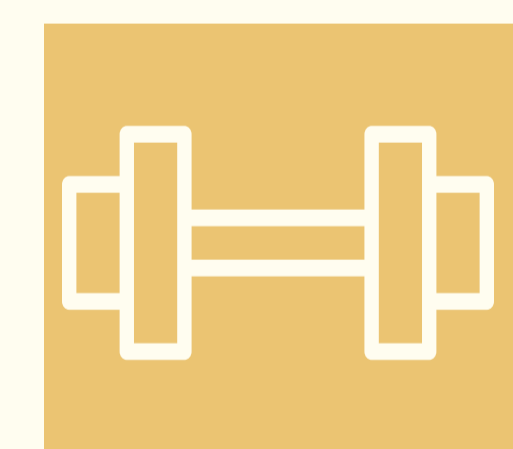
Process

- There are limited opportunities to be involved in decision-making process, and policies are at discretion of city staff (ex. the city can remove any public installation in the gardens at any time).
- There is no appeal process outlined for denied community garden applications.
- Expectations to be met for grant consideration are vague: "community improvement", "beautifying", "strong participation", and "reasonable budget" can be interpreted differently by community members.

Power

- Policies and stated goals highlight Western forms of agriculture (ex. the promotion of 'organic' and 'horticulture'), and centre around white, neo-liberal epistemology
- Policies fail to consider traditional knowledge & agricultural practices of other cultures that represent the diverse demographics of Surrey (ex. the cultivation of Chinese or South-Asian crops).
- Operational and membership fees, along with gentrification contributed by the gardens and the City's "unsightly properties" by-law promote gentrification and neo-liberal values of privatization in the neighbourhood.

NEXT STEPS



PROVIDE EQUITY TRAINING FOR CITY STAFF



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & INCLUSIVE DECISION-MAKING



TRANSLATE CITY DOCUMENTS INTO MORE LANGUAGES



SUBSIDIZE GARDEN MEMBERSHIP FEES

References

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