



**Civic Innovation Lab**

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**2022-2023  
Annual Report**

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An aerial photograph showing a city skyline in the distance, a dense urban area in the middle ground, and a university campus in the foreground. The campus includes a large green field with a red running track, several multi-story buildings, and a large forested area. The sky is clear with some light clouds.

The Civic Innovation Lab acknowledges that it carries out its work on the ancestral and unceded homelands of the x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əy<sup>ə</sup>m (Musqueam), Škwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), səliłwətaʔɬ (Tsleil-Waututh), and k<sup>w</sup>ik<sup>w</sup>əłəm (Kwkwetlem) Nations.

# Land Acknowledgement

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# Introduction

Incorporated in 2022, the Civic Innovation Lab embodies many years of collaboration between the City of Burnaby (CoB) and Simon Fraser University (SFU). These partnerships have, in recent years, included:

- Migration Stories Project;
- Burnaby Festival of Learning;
- Urban Resilient Futures Initiatives; and
- Mayor’s Task Force on Community Housing.

The Lab accelerates these collaborations by establishing a formal research partnership between CoB and SFU. Through the Lab, the expertise and resources of Simon Fraser University and the City of Burnaby are combined to advance practical solutions for challenges and

issues affecting cities, from building inclusive communities to sustainable growth and environmental challenges caused by climate change.

The Lab has offices – generously contributed by the City of Burnaby – located at Christine Sinclair Community Centre. Projects of the Civic Innovation Lab take place throughout the City and on SFU campuses.



**CIVIC INNOVATION LAB**

# Message from the Chair

In 2022, the City of Burnaby and Simon Fraser University co-founded the Civic Innovation Lab. Our two entities have worked closely together since SFU's founding in 1965 – more than half a century of partnership – and the Lab embodies and strengthens our unique relationship.

In its first year, the Lab made impressive strides in fostering connections between City staff and SFU researchers, supporting 16 research projects across different areas, including climate change mitigation, mobility, and equity. The enthusiasm with which this work has been received highlights the need the Lab fulfils – acting as a site to centralize, sustain, and accelerate the many different collaborations occurring between the City and SFU.

Operationally, with strong staff support from both SFU and the City, the Lab is establishing administrative policies and procedures, developing a website (slated to launch this year), as well as standardizing project selection and researcher-matching processes. These, and

other ongoing administrative functions, are ensuring that the Lab is set up for long term sustainability as a site for community-engaged, urban-focused research.

The Civic Innovation Lab is a successful example of the things we can achieve when we work together. We look forward to another year of research and community engagement in 2023.

## **Leon Gous**

Chair

Civic Innovation Lab



# Mission

The Civic Innovation Lab's mission is to:

- Advance education through the provision of collaborative learning and research opportunities; and,
- Contribute to the economic, social, and environmental well-being of Burnaby citizens through the study of civic innovation challenges.

# Guiding Principles

To inform our work, the Lab has adopted the following guiding principles:

- **Advance** community-engaged research and learning within Board-identified priority areas (see page 7).
- **Foster** innovation in the research topic, approach, and/or application.
- **Implement** the strategic plans and priorities of the founding partners, the City of Burnaby and Simon Fraser University.
- **Enhance** community economic, social, and environmental well-being.





# Priority Areas

The Board-approved priority areas below reflect both the ongoing work of the Lab and the work we anticipate furthering in 2023/2024:

- **Climate Action:** GHG emission reduction, adaption, and mitigation.
- **Mobility:** Accelerating the shift to sustainable transportation options.
- **Smart Data Collection:** Harnessing data collection methods and feedback loops.
- **Equity and Intersectionality:** Advancing social justice and inclusion.
- **Truth and Reconciliation:** Furthering the ongoing process of reconciliation and decolonization.



*Above left: image of fieldwork in a stream; Above right: image of two people reading; Left: image of community members at UniverCity.*

# Financials

## ***Message from the Treasurer***

2022 was the inaugural year of the Civic Innovation Lab, a non-profit society co-founded by partners the City of Burnaby and Simon Fraser University. The Lab's first year has been a busy one, with an enthusiastic and energized response from both City staff and SFU researchers, and an impressive slate of research projects being supported and accelerated.

The Lab's activity is reflected in its financial statements. Co-founded in partnership, the Lab's revenues are provided in equal proportions by the City of Burnaby and Simon Fraser University. In 2022, these expenses included staff compensation and operational costs associated with establishing the Lab's offices at Christine Sinclair Community Centre. The Civic Innovation Lab's financial information is proportionately consolidated within each of the City of Burnaby and Simon Fraser University financial statements.

In addition, other in-kind contributions have been provided by both the founders. These generous contributions have helped to ensure the Lab has the support it needs to be successful.

The Board looks forward to another year of growth for the Civic Innovation Lab, including a potential diversification of its revenue sources via directly awarded research grants.

### **Noreen Kassam**

Treasurer  
Civic Innovation Lab



# Financials

## CIVIC INNOVATION LAB

### STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION (unaudited)

For the year ended December 31, 2022

	2022 Actual (\$)
<b>FINANCIAL ASSETS</b>	
Accounts Receivable - COB	22,905
Accounts Receivable - SFU	54,463
<b>TOTAL FINANCIAL ASSETS</b>	<b>77,368</b>
<b>FINANCIAL LIABILITIES</b>	
Accounts Payable - COB	54,463
Accounts Payable - SFU	22,905
<b>TOTAL FINANCIAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>77,368</b>
<b>NET FINANCIAL ASSETS</b>	<b>-</b>

Approved by the Board of Directors

Digitally signed by Gous, Leon  
 Leon  
 Date: 2023.06.29  
 11:04:20 -0700

Gous, Leon  
 Director

Digitally signed by Kassam, Noreen  
 Noreen  
 Date: 2023.06.29  
 11:28:02 -0700

Kassam, Noreen  
 Director

## CIVIC INNOVATION LAB

### STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS (unaudited)

For the year ended December 31, 2022

	2022 Actual (\$)
<b>REVENUES</b>	
Grant Revenue - COB	77,368
Grant Revenue - SFU	77,368
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>154,736</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Management Fees	125,172
Operating Expenses	29,564
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>154,736</b>
<b>NET REVENUE FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>-</b>

Note: The financial statements are to be read in conjunction with the *Notes to the Financial Statements*. For a complete set of Financial Statements and Notes, please email [cil@burnaby.ca](mailto:cil@burnaby.ca).



# Highlighted Projects



# SWAN - Access and Inclusion

The Stakeholders' Walkability/Wheelability Audit in Neighbourhoods (SWAN) project is led by Dr. Atiya Mahmood in SFU's Department of Gerontology. The project engages individuals with disabilities to learn more about their lived experiences navigating urban environments and conducts joint accessibility audits of their communities. This work empowers individuals to advocate for themselves using evidence-based data – raising awareness about how cities can improve urban accessibility and, consequently, participation in civic life. Results of this project are used to inform City of Burnaby Engineering and Transportation Planning (pedestrian realm) functions and capital planning with the goal of improving community accessibility and inclusion.

For more information about the SWAN project, and the overarching Mobility Access Partnership of which it is a part, visit [www.inclusivemap.ca](http://www.inclusivemap.ca).



*Above: Image of SWAN team and participants.  
Reverse: Image of chemical samples.*

# Urban Resilient Futures

Urban Resilient Futures (URF) is an academic-, industry-, and community-led initiative to co-create narratives of a climate resilient future. In partnership with SFU's Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue, the City of Burnaby, and Vancity, the initiative offers a proof-of-concept model for how municipalities can engage their urban populations in their work to mitigate the climate crisis.

URF is focused on the following areas of work:

- Zero Emissions Buildings Retrofit Task Force
- Neighbourhood Climate Action Projects and Awareness Campaign
- Citizens' Assembly on

- Livable and Resilient Neighbourhoods; and
- Participatory Approach to governance, learning, and evaluation.

Click [here](#) to view the final report of recommendations of the Building Retrofit Task Force.

URF's focus this year is on its Neighbourhood Climate Action and Awareness projects, including the launch of a Climate Action Fellowship, which seeks to co-empower Burnaby residents and institutional leads to become climate champions in their communities.



Above: Screenshot of Urban Resilient Futures' website.

# Community-Centred Climate Innovation (C3I)

The City of Burnaby and the Civic Innovation Lab are key partners in SFU's critical research priority Community-Centred Climate Innovation (C3I) – specifically in exploring how environmentally-friendly hydrogen power can be leveraged within existing municipal infrastructure to diversify the City's energy resources.

In partnership with local industry and SFU's Dr. Sami Khan, an expert in sustainable energy engineering, work is currently in development to investigate the capacity of existing infrastructure within Burnaby to safely and efficiently accommodate the

storage and transfer of environmentally friendly hydrogen, using interfacial material phenomena. This work is key to accelerating a sustainable energy shift and supports the City's implementation of its Climate Action Framework and Energy Strategy. The City of Burnaby is also participating in the founding of key hydrogen-related infrastructure work with Simon Fraser University and PacifiCan.

Visit <https://www.sfu.ca/partnershipshub/partner-with-us/community-centred-climate-innovation.html> to learn more about C3I.



*Above: Exterior image of School of Sustainable Energy Engineering, SFU.*

# Building Safer Communities

The Civic Innovation Lab is supporting the City of Burnaby to develop and implement a strategy to reduce gun and gang violence, as part of Public Safety Canada's Building Safer Communities Fund.

Through the Lab, faculty members at SFU's School of Criminology have been engaged to embed evidence-based, data-informed research into this strategy.

Specific lines of inquiry include understanding pathways into youth gang involvement, mitigating upstream risk factors, and investigating the impact of current municipal and school-based prevention and intervention programming.

This work will take place over a four-year period, pending funding approval from Public Safety Canada.



*Above: Image of Burnaby RCMP Crime Prevention Unit pop-up tent.*

# REACH-Cities

In 2022, Burnaby City Council approved the City's participation in the Research and Action for Health Cities (REACH-Cities) project, led by Dr. Meghan Winters in SFU's Faculty of Health Sciences. Funded by CIHR (Canadian Institutes of Health Research), Dr. Winters' REACH-Cities project explores how cities can accelerate intersectional gender equity in their urban planning.

By participating, Burnaby joins the City of Surrey as a municipal partner on this federally funded work. The Civic Innovation Lab is supporting implementation of the project within City operations, including the identification of specific, strategic policy focuses.

Visit <https://chatrlab.ca/projects/reach-cities/> to learn more about the REACH-Cities project.



*Above: Image of REACH-Cities logo.*

# Deer Lake Ecosystem Remediation

Deer Lake, a 'jewel' of the City of Burnaby, is a lake and wetland area of ecological and cultural significance. The area is a vital ecosystem location for a wide variety of flora and fauna, and also connects to salmon bearing streams.

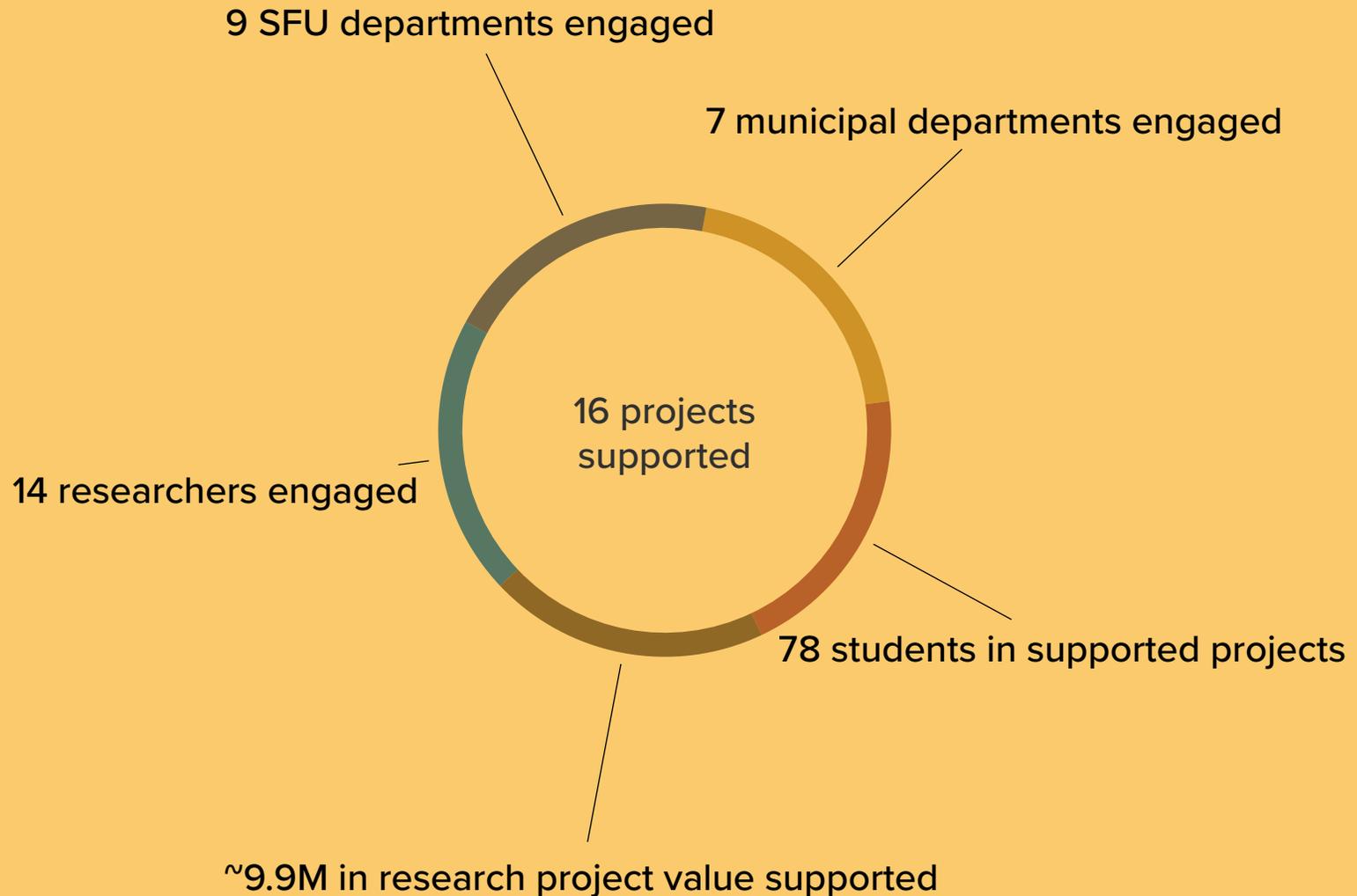
Deer Lake is often turbid and nutrient rich as a result of urban run-off and natural aging. The lake is also often overrun with Canada geese and other waterfowl whose droppings contribute to poor water quality.

The City, via the Civic Innovation Lab, is working with Dr. Leah Bendell, a marine ecotoxicologist from SFU's Department of Biological Sciences, to conduct an analysis of Deer Lake's current state and to develop an initial strategy to encourage its remediation. In a related piece of work, efforts have also been initiated to more fully explore the importance of the area from an Indigenous Food Systems perspective.



*Above: Image of Deer Lake.*

# Lab by the Numbers



*Funders (including those applied to or for whom applications are in progress) include the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), PacifiCan and Public Safety Canada, among others.*

# Board of Directors

Our Board of Directors consists of representatives from our founding partners, the City of Burnaby and Simon Fraser University.

## **Leon Gous, Chair**

Chief Administrative Officer  
City of Burnaby



## **Noreen Kassam, Treasurer**

Deputy Chief Administrative Officer  
and Chief Financial Officer  
City of Burnaby



## **Dugan O'Neil, Secretary**

Vice-President, Research and  
International  
Simon Fraser University



## **Joanne Curry, Member at Large**

Vice-President, External Relations  
Simon Fraser University



# Lab Staff

Our staff are seconded from our two founding partners, the City of Burnaby and Simon Fraser University.

## **Rebekah Mahaffey, Executive Director**

Civic Innovation Lab  
City of Burnaby

## **Abdul Zahir, Research Project Manager**

Civic Innovation Lab  
Simon Fraser University

## **Laurence Meadows, Strategic Partnerships Manager**

Civic Innovation Lab  
Simon Fraser University

Additional support has been graciously provided by the following City of Burnaby personnel:

**Erika Balabanoff**, Policy and Administrative Coordinator

**Robbie Lowden**, Financial Analyst

# Looking Ahead

The Civic Innovation Lab looks forward to continuing to implement its many projects and to collaboratively exploring new opportunities with SFU faculty and City of Burnaby staff. The CIL is also excited to embark on more focused work to develop a public relations plan and community engagement strategy, as well as continuing to strengthen its administrative processes.



*Image of Burnaby Mountain Park.  
Reverse: Image of UniverCity.*