

Attachment #1

Detailed Session Notes from the In-Person and Virtual Workshops

Future of Committees Discussion

Detailed Session Notes from the In-Person and Virtual Workshops, May 30 and June 1, 2023

Below are the raw notes captured during the discussion portion of each session. Notes have been captured in participants' own words by a staff note taker, and are included as recorded.

Discussion Part 1:

1. What's working well for you in your committee experience?
2. What would you change?

Think about various aspects of your committee experience, from the application process until today.

In-person Session Breakout Group 1:

- I actually have been on two different committees... Was on the multicultural advisory committee for two years and it was an amazing experience for me, I found it very interesting and productive. But I also found you get out of it what you put into it. When I looked at the agenda and came prepared to contribute, I got more out of it. We were also very fortunate that we had a counsellor who was very dedicated and knew how to facilitate. Now I'm on SIERAC.
- Have been sitting on the Accessibility Advisory Committee (in its various forms) and then it got absorbed into FIPRAC. The agenda I have no problem with, I find that the committee becomes this specific committee becomes kind of a personal vendetta to bring your issues about accessibility, personal issues, rather than seeing the whole picture as a City, so I have found that challenging these past few years. I don't recall any feedback on whether things we have brought to Council have been adopted. I've been doing this for ten years—what's happened? We don't get feedback on the ideas that go forward.
- I wonder the same thing, all the times we put the recommendation forward for something to get adopted by Council and it kind of evaporates.
- I've had both experiences—on MAC (it was great but also because of who was chairing the committee—we put forward a lot of motions, lighting up City Hall for Diwali, recommending staff get time off for holidays that aren't

Eurocentric, etc.) It's currently about staff coming to us for feedback and we're not proposing or recommending anything.

- Committees are supposed to work as a counterpart to the task forces, this is maybe a piece missing in the Housing Committee, is not feeling that synergy with the task force structure. Maybe because housing is sometimes very technical... maybe staff need to find a way to be open to our contributions because it is so technical. It's hard to make the community be part of something so technical.
- I'm on the STAC and back a few years ago, until about a year ago, it was very focused on road safety and traffic handling, very practical, but it seems to have gone into a very narrow path and a different kind of consultative model that doesn't seem to be as interactive and strategic as it used to be.
- I've only been on the committee for a year, and it feels like they are ticking a box of public engagement but not actually doing public engagement. An example was the DEIAR framework, which was presented already done, and it would be great if they had come earlier in the process.
- I sit on a grants committee—first on the multicultural/sport/art committee, and because it was sort of a fun, feel-good committee, it was easy to do that. But the need was greater than our ability to help, and it was unfortunate that CNW, which prides itself on its community spirit, isn't able to meet the need. My only criticism (now on SCV) is we are being asked to award grants but there's a lack of understanding or knowledge about the four pillars of truth and reconciliation, and I had to educate some members of the committee on why we should consider it and how it is part of our mandate. The City should do a better job of helping to educate committee members about the four pillars of truth and reconciliation.
- To that point, we are aware of our mandate but I don't think it was driven into us enough. You talk about the four pillars, I know of it but for the Accessibility Advisory Committee, the mandate is very tight right now because every municipality is required to have an accessibility plan by 2023, and I think the consensus is, hand over heart, the City can say, oh we've engaged with the community, but what happens to the ideas that we propose? The City does not have to justify its decision to the committee members, but it just seems to go away.

- I'm on the grants committee and I joined working full time and doing a PhD and wanted to do something that would take less time ... for the capacity I have in the present moment. Would like to see time commitments required elaborated on, more youth on the committees. Within the spirit of doing this work, it also has this ability to build our knowledge of what's happening. Having some sort of ecosystem mapping of what exists, and transparency and accountability of what is linked to what meeting.
- One of the things that's really critical is right at the beginning of a meeting, it's very important for the committee members as well as staff to be very clear about what is going to happen with what we are doing – that clarity sometimes isn't there. I want to know what is my goal. So clarity at the beginning would help a lot for people to understand how this process is going to work. People come in and aren't sure exactly what the process is going to be and how they fit in to that process.
- We don't really know coming into these committee meetings how powerful they can be. As an immigrant sitting on a committee, I didn't know you could suggest a motion and make something happen. I didn't find out that until the last meeting. There is an orientation but it's different for every committee.
- Motion and things have been effectively put on the secondary school, and there's nothing much to obstructing progress to get that thing to happen.
- On STAC, we discuss the bike paths a lot, and it's a big missed opportunity to not have youth representation, because the whole idea of a bike path on sixth street was to go to the high school.
- I brought this up on FIPRAC: I forced my kid into the committee as part of his school committee volunteer work, and he's rolling his eyes. How is the City asking high school students involved? Do we have an Indigenous population here? And if not why don't we go to another city ... and get their feedback? Why don't we seek it?
- It becomes a little complicated because you have the Qayqayt peoples are here, so it becomes a question of what you are looking for. I'm part of the diaspora ... to give some insight into the general knowledge pieces would be good.
- When they are looking for youth, community members, indigenous representation, it feels like check, check, check (checkboxes).

- There are spaces where it is very helpful, but elaborating on what sort of insight from Indigenous communities, and when you say Indigenous you are including Metis and Inuit, so it's everybody.
- On the youth piece, why don't we talk to the student councils of the schools, because they're already elected individuals within their own schools?
- Sit on the AAC. How youth can bring really ideas to the table. I started serving on the committee in 2021, they're all experienced people who (seem) to know everything. I wanted to share, but at the same time it was good to hear everyone else's experience and insight. Having a student on the committee was valuable...
- One of the things I was wondering is there a possibility we could approach Rhonda Larrabee to see if she could arrange for, if there's not enough people from their group, finding some other ways of bringing in other groups associated with the First Nations, so we could put out the call – it doesn't have to be exactly, like the various groups that are at Columbia and 8th, there are two or three other groups we could get involved. It doesn't have to be directly one of the nations we are looking at.
- The other thing in regards to the grants, the City also applies for grants – maybe there's a possibility if people from the grants group find there is something really worthwhile, maybe there's a way of teaching people how to apply for other grants so they can carry that project on. Because we have professional people who apply for grants within the city, maybe they could offer a course.
- Speaking from the SIERAC, I have seen a system that we have been practicing so far is very welcoming to new people, so there has to be a great opportunity for an Indigenous student.
- I only started in 2021 as well. It also felt top-down. Patrick is a great person to have on the committee. Katie was always there. But there was always more staff items than from the public.
- The name of our committee is Social Inclusion AND Reconciliation, which is supposed to be part of our committee, and we are working in that area. So that's really partly what we're trying to do, and I believe we do have a presentation in terms of reconciliation where an Indigenous representative comes in.

- Reconciliation also goes through everything.
- From a disability perspective, my son was the only person using a mobility device. We have someone who is hard of hearing, blind, perhaps for this committee we could have further (specifications) (would like someone who is hard of hearing, etc.)

In-person Session Breakout Group 2:

- I've been on EnCAC for three years. My experience has been really good. I think it started out a little slow, I just didn't know what I was doing and didn't fully understand the structure but once we got going I felt like most of the time we got reports ahead of time so I could pre-read, and if I had questions or comments before or after a meeting staff were really receptive. We put a few motions forward that were accepted by Council. It also allowed me to make connections with Councillors that I have retained. It's been a very good experience. The application was easy.
- I've been on committees for about 20 years now and currently I am still on the CHC and was previously on the Parks and Recreation Committee for a few years as well as the Arts Commission and the and the Museums and Archives Committee. The key thing for people to understand is that as a committee member it can be sometimes frustrating by what goes on and you are there as a representative microcosm of the community to legitimize everything that happens from there on. Because in terms of actually having power to do anything, you don't. Given that, I'd say that one thing I'd like to see is that there be more information back from Council when they've made decisions that we have made recommendations on. For instance I recently came across an article in the Record about a potential hotel/condo tower on Carnarvon Street that came to our committee months before. It would kinda be nice to know when there is something attached to Council, if they say yay or nay to whatever we recommended or suggested rather than seeing it in a newspaper. I would like to know what actually becomes of issues that come to the committee.
- I've lived in New West my whole life and started joining committees when there was the specific transportation one. I like the way the city uses the RAs in committees but did find that the transportation committee was more about complaining but then when it was time to restructure they didn't want

to hear about issues anymore, even though we had really valid problems and issues, or they would put it to another group that we couldn't be a part of. I am on the FIPRAC but we haven't had meetings this year because there has been nothing really to talk about and we also follow Robert's Rules so if something is close to where you live you have to opt out but if I am in a group because I am worried about something in my neighbourhood, that makes no sense. I'm not going to vouch for someone else's area even though we do want to help out everyone in the community. I do want to do more in the city because there is a lot happening and I do worry that there is too much volume of people who want parking but they do not want people driving. I have seen that my whole life living in New West and I don't really understand why because cars are necessary.

- I have been on various committees for about 10-12 years. I sat on the SAC, the Seniors Festival Sub-committee, and then on the first Access Ability Advisory Committee which was dissolved as just prior to Covid. It was one of the committees who looked at different aspects, and the idea was that this committee would be dissolved and then it would be one person who sat on this committee that would then sit on transportation and other committees and so on. Those of us who had been doing it for so long really objected as it would dilute the impact of some of the statements and, also, when you are talking about marginalized people, they want to be in a place where they feel safe and are able to express themselves and that means that they would be working with other people who have similar challenges and understanding. I was very pleased when we were told the Accessibility Advisory Committee was going to be resurrected and I am delighted because I think it is one of the most useful committees and from my own point of view, it's been a very, very, good experience because I have learned so much about how the city works and doesn't work. I know that some of the recommendations we made in our first committee were eventually accepted by Council or at least some of the ideas were incorporated into others. We were fortunate that our Councillor at the time would tell us what had happened but because our committee suddenly stopped, there were a lot of projects that disappeared into nothingness. I also appreciate about the transportation and that sort of thing because it seems that as our population ages, making the City of New

Westminster a walkable community is silly because we can't walk. I'm really glad that we are having the opportunity to talk about some of these things. Part of my experience has been so great because of our really terrific city staff and the committee clerks who do an amazing jobs keeping us informed and sending out the packages.

- I have been on the EnCAC for 4 years and it's been a good experience for me but I think my main thought to share is that it has felt more like I am getting a lot out of it in terms of it is helping me be well informed hearing about all these plans and everything that is going on, but haven't really felt like the function of providing advice and advising the city. I haven't really felt that or seen that too much and I think that has been a function of a couple of things including getting info fairly late in the game, so a lot of it is like "hey, we've got this plan" at the 11th hour, but it feels late to be providing professional advice unless it's pretty token at that point. It has not been a bad experience but has not felt like advising. Also just the space for conversation as often the agenda is really quite full so each person might have a chance for one or two questions, so not a lot of time to have a fulsome discussion or really dig into something or add items to the agendas
- I have been on different grant committees for a long time and I was also on the Arts Committee for one year. They restructured the grants committees about three years ago – they were really tiny committees but lots of them, so they essentially took representatives from all of those committee and jammed them together into a larger committee. That was incredible. Making decisions about these pots of money when it's three people around a table, we just didn't have enough experience between us to even understand what we were talking about so having the larger committees that we have now for the grants, I greatly appreciate. I don't like the process though. Like, right now we get the grant requests and they've all filled out funding request and then in individual silos we make the decision as to what to give money to but often you've got questions. And you can reach out to staff and if you ask a questions they'll send the answer and I find that often in the discussion of the different request, questions will come up because somebody will have something that prompts you to think about something else, though I really think it can be improved. They are trying to respect our time and those

grants meetings could be long and start a 6 pm and get out of there at 10:30 pm – they could be extreme marathons sometimes but sometimes they go pretty well. But it's because a lot of it is talking about it and educating the people that don't know what this group does or what the event is or whether if they have asked for money in a prior year and it's not information that is contained when we are making our initial decisions. A meeting in advance to talk through them and everyone sharing historical knowledge could help us all make a more fulsome decision. I also really struggle with the lack of historical knowledge that is provided to us, especially when the committee changes. Historical knowledge needs to be transferred better and some grants are expected to be approved and if we are expected to take money to do this, then why are you bringing it to us if we are not making the decision on it – why are they wasting our time?

- I am on the grants committees as well. I joined during Covid and I did find the application process difficult and a bit intimidating and I didn't really feel like there was a lot of opportunity for feedback and you kinda forget about it for a few months. There's not really an update on the process. I really enjoy the spirited debates that we have had as we really get into some of the topics and tear them apart so that we can get an idea of what it is that we are funding. Our discussions have been very respectful but animated and it's good to be able to have them without an imposed structure on us. I also agree on the grants as a snapshot in time without anything previous but also without a follow up procedure – did it work or an after action report as to whether or not our available money was spent wisely, what happened, how was attendance, etc. Why is that not part of the process so we can peruse it later on and for new committee members? In our grant committee there is the grant money and the city pool of money – it is very confusing. Things can be funded in cash or in city services and it's so confusing – we need guidelines.
- I have been involved with the city on the EDAC and grants and I think a synoptic wrap up at the end of committee serving time serves to see that you did make a difference. As it is there's not real accountability like that so a synopsis would give you the transparency. You could say "okay, we did this, this, and this" and in fact all it is, is a front and they do whatever they want to

do anyway – you don't know – that is an extreme. When we met in person and could review a history of the grant applications it certainly made a difference as to how we would have applied them. The first year, during Covid, we were all doing it, just trying to get into the program and understand what we were supposed to do. With an intro meeting and background it becomes more efficient. I learned a lot of what goes on. If you have the same app the next year you'll be familiar with it.

- I'm a part of the Restorative Justice Committee and have been since its inception. I have found that the Councillors that chair the Committee exemplify great leadership and they definitely have a very good hold on leading the Committee and the direction in which they want to go, so it has been a pleasure to be a part of knowing that it is going in a very professional direction. The part that can sometimes be a bit frustrating for individuals that may be a bit ambitious, is that when we only meet 4-5 times a year sometimes not everyone shows up and things can get redundant year after year when you have action items that you want to accomplish but you are sometimes unable to reach those, so coming up with a plan to ensure that you tackle these situations would be good.
- I have found it to be very enjoyable and informative being on the EDAC but the first year in, I found it difficult to get into the program and what we were expected to do. A class of what we are expected to do would have been helpful. Staff are great but we just need to know where to go, some direction as to where the city wants us to go.

Virtual Session Whole Group Discussion:

- I was on the Access Ability Advisory Committee first which was made up of various people within the community with different kinds of disabilities, some visible, some invisible, some mobility. I really appreciated having that diversity of experience on the Committee. We also had a Councillor and a few staffers and what I liked about that as well, is that when there was a big project in the city, the staff lead would come and make a presentation to the Committee for our comments. So, we kinda had the opportunity to get in on the planning and the strategic part of any project, which is the best way for a discussion on accessibility to happen. The problem with that Committee,

though, is I don't think we had a strong enough mandate of what our roles and responsibilities were. Sometimes the meetings were just a laundry list of things that people wanted done in the city around accessibility. I think now that every municipality has to have an accessibility committee that is something that really needs to be structured properly to get the most out of the Committee. After the Committee got dissolved, they went to a new concept where they were doing committees by portfolio, so every portfolio had representation from a person with a disability or someone from the youth area, or an Indigenous person, and I thought it was a really good concept because, again, your experience is adding to the very early planning stages. But I found it really difficult as the only person with a disability to represent, sort of, my equity group, in a room where there were other voices that were much stronger than mine. And that was the thing I was worried about when it started. I think it was a really good idea on paper, but when it was practically applied it fell a little short and I wasn't really representing the equity group.

- I have been on city committees since 2010, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee, and found it a very good way to connect with people in the community. When it was chaired by one of the Councillors it was good just to get a bit of sense as to just how the city manages parks and rent space within the city and it was good to be involved with those sorts of things. I then was on the APC and the Parks committee when but then they changed the rules so you could only be on one committee and made it difficult for me to decide which one. So, this year I re-applied for the APC and was accepted and I chair that and that has a very different role because it's more around how the city is densifying and it's been good. I still wonder how effective the APC actually is because we generally rubber stamp what has previously been reviewed and approved by other parts of the city process. I wonder if it really serves a purpose at all in that respect. In my experience there's only ever been one development that we have knocked back or at least advised council to not approve. All the others, literally, just been a rubber stamp of what city staff have reviewed so I really wonder if it actually has a purpose quite frankly or if it's just one more layer of process that could be removed to speed up the review and approvals process of developments in the city. In

terms of how it functions, city staff are just amazing, chairing a committee can be difficult if you don't understand Robert's Rules but staff have been incredibly helpful in my role in it and without them it would be very difficult. It is great to be supported so much by members of our community but also staff.

- When I first was the vice-chair of EDAC in 2017 I found it interesting as well before we changed the nomenclature to alternate chair. But what I liked as far as the experience goes is that we actually had training for the alternate chair position. When I was vice-chair for EDAC there was no training and I didn't know how to chair a meeting but then moving over to the EnCAC where I was able to be the alternate chair there, I felt confident enough to understand what to do when I was chairing a meeting and understood how to lead a conversation which made it a lot easier. As far as what I would change is to have more of a stronger mandate and knowing what is our tactical plan, how do we measure our metrics, and if we are actually doing a good job. One of the challenges I always ran into was also sitting on one of the grants committees as well. And also getting quorum sometimes was a challenge, so there needs to be a system in place because I know the traditional aspects of Robert's Rule, it's not as not as lean as far as organizational structure from what I've seen other corporations do now to make it more flexible. Also, there was times in the grants committee where we couldn't make a decision because we couldn't make quorum every single time and it was not an effective usage of everyone's time. So, probably a little bit more of a flat system of sorts would be good. I understand that we are all volunteers but I wonder if there is a way to measure performance as well. I don't know if there should be a yearly review so you know if you are doing good or not? I'm not sure how everyone feels about that but for me, I like to know if I'm doing well but I have no metric to know if I am giving effective advice or not. I think some form of evaluation would be helpful so that I can also think of ways that I can be more effective. Some members were very brilliant but sometimes did not show up so that so that also takes away from the experience of actually getting the city what it wants where what it needs is the value of the individuals with the expertise. Also, I notice that sometimes in meetings a lot of individuals wouldn't show up and I don't

know why this is acceptable. I understand that we are all volunteers to it's hard to hold accountability for that and I don't know who that would be done.

- I am still relatively new on the committee side, I think I only started about a year and a half ago. For me, as part of the STAC, it's been pretty good in terms of being informed of what's going on in the city, the various initiatives and projects that are starting, the presentations that are given by staff and consultants are pretty good in detail and next steps. Also, within our Committee, I find there's a really good range of diversity and those representing different perspectives, so even though the group is small it does give a pretty good cross-section of the typical users of these various facilities. On the flip side, the spacing of meetings, I guess, especially recently with the elections, it feels very spaced out. I think there was a period of no meetings for six months so it just felt like, is this Committee still happening. Even with the two month gap due to the election it still feels like there is quite a lot of space in between meetings. And, following up on that, we hear these presentation and next steps but there is no feedback as to what actually happened – it would be nice to get more feedback at times. Recently, as well, participation at the meetings has been a little bit spotty in trying to meet quorum. Lastly, decision making – a lot of times it feels like you are listening to a lot of things and you are providing feedback but are we actually providing feedback or just talking? You want confirmation that what you are saying is actually being heard.
- My thoughts immediately went to the onboarding process. I sit on a grant committee and at my first meeting I didn't really know what to expect and I think that was a bit of a problem. It turned out, in my committee specifically, that the staff input turned out to be really valuable and that was underplayed and not really advertised at all. And, so, in the meeting folks were at different levels of knowledge and some folks had read stuff and some folks hadn't and so it felt like we were at different levels of understanding and that really impacted the efficiency of the meeting and the quality of the outcome in terms of coming to an agreement and moving forward. And whether it's just the increase of the knowledge base of the participants, education or greater communication, I think it would be beneficial from my experience. The other

thing I want to add to this is that there have been instances of where our review times have been restricted to a week and half or a couple of weeks and, I think in this example, that did plan into folks coming to meetings with different expectations and understandings of the materials and figuring it out in the moment. More time would help with that preparation.

- I have currently served on two committees, for the first one I was in middle school and high school and sat on the YAC which was a really good opportunity to almost teach youth about how engagement works in the city and then being able to gather their input on projects and have more impact on them, for example the organization of parks or our new recreation centre, and having people come in to talk about our new pool facility was very cool. And it also just allowed everyone to have a better understanding of Robert's Rules of Order, which I became relatively proficient at. As for the committee after that, I was no longer eligible for YAC because I'm an adult now, when I went to join the FIPRAC – that one I really don't have much to say for right now because I was only actually at one meeting, then I had to miss one, it hasn't meet since then. It's been over a year now. That is a little disappointing because I was looking forward to again being able to learn more about city projects and also as a student at SFU I can use it as well for research into my degree and being able to take notes about what is going on in the field of planning around here but I haven't really been able to do much of that because due to lack of quorum or no items on the agenda we have not met for over 12 months now.
- When we showed up at meetings we'd have a huge agenda package and we need the time to review the information to be effective and it was quite heavy. It takes a lot of time to go through some of the large presentations we'd receive in order to provide any feedback or any advice. Is there a way for load management and is there a way to get the information in advance enough to be able to go through the package and take the time to get ideas, do research, etc. to be an effective member.
- I really don't have any criticisms of the committees. I'm on the EnCAC and the RJC and I am really impressed with what the City of New West and all the work they're doing with the environment and it really made an impression on me that there is a lot of stuff going on that the average person out there has

not idea of. I also sit on the Gladue court and did a number of presentations at the RJC and found that there was a bit of repetition from meeting to meeting. In terms of the overall benefits for me it is the overall knowledge of what is going on in the municipality and I gained a tremendous amount there but as far as input I did the best I could with the RJC and as far as the EnCAC, I would was just sort of listening a lot and trying to learn what was going on in the city. Change is good and processes and systems need to be reviewed constantly because we can always make improvements.

Discussion Part 2

1. After hearing about this new concept, what are your initial thoughts / first impressions about the Advisory Assembly idea?
2. Please share any feedback about the suggested parameters:
 - Logistics (meeting frequency, etc.)
 - Role of staff
 - Online component
 - Honorariums
 - Others?

In-person Session Breakout Group 1:

- What I struggle with, is we all sit on different committees and have different ideas, I struggle with the decision on the strategic priorities. Right now we have input on a topic we care about, and I got really choked because right now Accessibility is a mandate, but what if the City says, accessibility is key, but arts?
- When I choose to sit on a committee, I chose that because something that I like or appeals to me and my issues. If I was on something like this advisory board and had a presentation on transportation, I would not know where to start. When I choose a committee I want to be part of, I'm choosing it because I have an interest in it. But if this advisory board will consider everything the City does, not everything the City does is going to interest me.
- The optics of the City right now is we want to hear from everybody and what everyone thinks about their cause that's close to their heart. But with the strategic priorities you're taking away the citizen engagement for all but a select few. From the randomly selected piece, how is that established? ... (People in poverty) have challenges participating.
- Re: joining a committee you're passionate about, and not being passionate about, say transportation, but that idea of transportation does affect a lot of people whether you're passionate about it or not. You may not be passionate about everything that is brought up, but it's good to have input on those other items.
- My worry is that it will just be for New West residents. I'm from Burnaby and have spent more time in New West than in Burnaby. Even on the committee form, there is nowhere to indicate if you are not from New West. There is a

reason for me to want to be on a committee in New West—I love this city and am so close to the city.

- I've run national engagement sessions, and the idea that you're not going to need staff to support in a room with 50 people (is not realistic). I'm not hearing an underlying plan of where these costs are coming from and that gives me pause.
- Re: the Indigenous honorarium, one of the things we had to do was meet people on their own terms. If you're going to do monthly or even quarterly three hour sessions, you are not going to get Indigenous people because we have so many committees we're asked to be on, and it really narrows that margin of participants.
- Number one concern is I guess the idea of doing monthly, it's too demanding for people. I think very few people are able to—people are not going to stop working or having life commitments because they're going to get an honorarium. The spectrum is too broad. ... Housing connects with transportation, etc. But even within the City, people have departments. I appreciate the idea conceptually, and it's very noble to try to capture the everyday City person, and I get people should not have to have a specialty or specific knowledge to participate in City life. The other part is just thinking about human nature—the consensus model is super interesting but might not turn out to be that practical for fifty people. We've heard complaints of people feeling an afterthought after something has already been planned. If we're talking about the average person ... we can't expect that the input is going to change things. It's always going to be the last thought, unless there is an uproar and people think something is absurd, it's really going to be hard (to get that engagement). ... There are other ways to engage, but this is the only way that I've found to put some housing background into discussion. It's hard to be able to really help the City because it's so technical. So it's kind of weird to realize that there are people here who would have no practical ways of being heard by the City. I'm not saying everyone has to be close to the city, I'm just not sure this is going to be it.
- I like the intent, but I'm really worried about the impact. You can have the best intentions, but not the best impact. It sounds so exclusionary—you're going to get the same people you always get in public hearings, and you're

going to get the same kind of rhetoric you get in Facebook groups. You're not going to get people like me, who look like me and sound like me. Especially with in person meetings (the commitment is too large). I am worried that an equity-based parks and rec plan could get shot down because not everyone has the awareness. In that big a group how do you make sure that everyone is on a learning journey?

- There's going to be areas of interest and probably a little more than expertise or knowledge or background or experience on one or maybe two topics. I think that's the key, is that a purely random model may not be the best way to go—there may be a need for a selection of those 50 people, that they have some interest in one or two of the areas that are within the current priorities of the City. So for example, it may be parks and rec, that they have direct expertise or knowledge or interest in that particular area. In a large group like that, they will self-select. You won't be able to keep 50 people, it'll tend to self-select down a little bit.
- I also like the intent of this, and it is a good idea in theory. Listening to the first conversation, one of the bigger issues is who's setting the agenda and how the public can be more involved in these committees, and I don't think this changes that. There is still a top-down approach. How do you allocate the time with 50 people in a consensus based model, how are you possibly going to get consensus on all the items that will be before them.
- Citizen's Assembly was originally the brainchild of Preston Manning; then Gordon Campbell adopted a Citizen's Assembly when the liberals took power in 2001. Their assembly met once, and then never again. I think that the point has been made: if it was one-issue focused, I could see it working, but to have this convergence of so many different pieces, I can't envision that yet. I've got an open mind. Important to consider the role of staff, for example on grant committees, they have the relationships with the grantees. It's nuts to hire a professional facilitator when we have staff that do well that way. Don't like the honorarium as that money should go somewhere else.
- Time privilege – as a single parent it would be difficult for me to come once a month. I was wondering how it will honour diversity and people who are neurodivergent—if you're wanting to contribute but aren't prepared to be in

a group of 50 people. With the KPIs, how do you make it more task-focused and oriented?

- 50 people is a great opportunity for letting people feel included in the community. The purpose of this is belonging.
- I see some pros to having a big group but I see a lot more cons. Some people aren't comfortable speaking in such a large group. A lot of people will get lost in the cracks in such a big group, and voices won't be heard properly. When I'm at the table with my committee, there is plenty of time to talk if I need to.
- If we don't have a Council member at this meeting, what will that mean with our relationship to City Council? Because the idea of having them as our chair is that City Council is part of us, we're advising them. I informally talk to the Councillor and give input so they can take that back to City Council. If we're going to have a facilitator, it doesn't feel like a City committee to me. How can you have a city committee that isn't led by a Council member? The second thing is the 50 group size, which we've seen how large this group is, just imagine how large 50 is.
- The education part – the last thing I want to do after staring at a screen all day is go home and educate myself about rezoning. And if I want to participate fully, I need to educate myself.
- Not a bad idea to have a large group that focuses on one or two specific items per month, then you wouldn't have to go if you aren't informed on those topics.

In-person Session Breakout Group 2:

- Regarding the frequency of meetings, one of the things that I really like about our new meetings is that we've gone from four meetings a year to one a month for the AcAC. Now, I don't know what all the other groups have, but AAC and the AcAC meet monthly so it makes for shorter meetings. There was one committee I sat on where we only had four meetings a year and if we didn't have quorum, there was no meeting so then all of a sudden there's three meetings a year and, with all the months in between, we forgot what we discussed at the previous meetings. There was no continuity and I really think that's important. I think that more frequent meetings usually mean

shorter meetings. I think what is happening here is a very good example of why not to do a 50 members meeting. We have 12 people in this group and not everyone is able to say what they want to say, then they go up to the front and, again, not everyone got to say everything they wanted to say. How are you possibly going to manage that with 50 people?

- I like a lot of the points of the new proposed plan, one of them being the more frequent meetings, on line option, and random selection is a great idea. I have been a member of a couple of committees and what I am noticing is that sometimes I worry that there is a bit of a group thing that happens, a bit of a power dynamic, I feel like people may not feel encouraged to share their true, honest opinions but this model may be better for that. I do agree that a larger group may be more challenging to facilitate but that's also why I like that idea of a professional facilitator and if city staff are present but the facilitator wasn't part of city staff – maybe that could be the balance. Because again, my impression is that an external facilitator will have less of an emotional attachment to the outcome as opposed to city staff. Overall, I see a lot of positives in this model and I wanted to express my optimism.
- I agree to have a staff person versus facilitation as they are supposed to be less biased but they would be guided by the city as to the expectation, so maybe they would not be as unbiased as you would think. My committee didn't have a Councillor, only a staff member and it was great. They answered our questions.
- Overall, I think the 50 people it is a good idea and I think what we have to learn as committee members, is that you have to be succinct, and that there is an unbiased facilitator versus being a member of the city, who can keep it flowing that way, so that when you have your point you state it and its done. It also allows the city staff to not look like they are playing favourites. This keeps it all separate and above board and allows them to accurately report back. The onus goes on to the facilitator to get the most info in the shortest amount of time. It is going to help us make better informed decisions to share with neighbours, etc., and say, "Hey, this this is what's going on" and get the message out throughout New West. It will take stepping stones to be

able to run it but I think we could all adapt because we've made an effective change so far, now we're just gonna make a bigger change.

- Our grant committees are reasonably small and have spirited debates to discuss our way through our issues. I do struggle to see how that would be able to be modelled in a 50 person group; I feel like there would be a problem for people to be heard, especially if there is supposed to be some back and forth – it would have to be a lot more structured and that would stifle debate. Personally, I would be interested in a hybrid model rather than once a month and continue to have some other committees but be able to bring everyone together in a space to discuss these things in a group after we have been able to tease out a lot more of the details. You can get really granular in a small group where we cannot in a 50 person group. I like the idea of an honorarium as it respects people's time. I work with a demographic for which \$1,500 is a lifestyle-changing amount of money. I would like to see a responsibilities document that goes along with that to make sure that there is the required amount of attendance and participation so that the people involved are truly passionate about it and not just volunteering for the amount of money.
- I think the 50 people is scary because, with more people, considering tonight, we could talk all night about things so that's scary. I do see value in each department so I like the idea of having various topics but that many people will have more opinions and may be negative about certain things. It could be good but I just worry that we keep changing every four/five years. The previous transportation group was better structured. I think that the FIPRAC is kinda a made up group that we really have nothing to talk about so we haven't had any meetings this year. We shouldn't be re-inventing the wheel every four years and keep having to adapt to it instead of the structure adapting to us.
- The logistics/meeting frequency is great and people have addressed that really well. The role of staff – I have been to 100 person feedback sessions that were facilitated by a professional and the concerns that people have about not being heard can be addressed and it can actually allow for a much more diverse amount of feedback to happen, so I'm not as concerned about the size of the group. I really do think there is value in the large group and I

think you are gonna hear a lot more perspectives coming to the table. The online component worries me a little bit; I find that people do not have the same filter online as they do in person – people tend to be a lot more respectful in person. When they have to look someone in the eye they are maybe not able to blurt out the insult and try to contain it and think about a productive way to express their displeasure. I'm concerned how that would be moderated and in a way that people don't feel like they are being silenced because when you start to moderate people may start to question why they are there. Honourariums, I think, are necessary. Our current structure ensures that the only people who are participating are those who have the privilege to give that time freely and that's not reflective of the community. My biggest concern is, because it's so broad in scope, I'm worried that losing the special interest groups, I guess that's a good way to describe the committees, their ability because they are so focused and passionate on one issue, to work together as a group to really come up with new ideas that they want to move forward – I think this structure would lose that.

- The passion and experience that people bring – one way to get that in a larger group is to have that on the application so that when you are doing the random selection at least you would know if someone understands the building code or whatever it is because being on the EnCAC I've learned a lot about the building code and zero carbon code and all kinds of things that I thought I'd never know and that I am fascinated by now. I think if you assess that in some way it would be helpful;
- Overall, I really like this idea and I think that having a representative sample of the community is really important and I think that is lacking right now. And I think that having someone who is going to be engaged and interested enough to put themselves forward for this would, I think, dig in and learn and participate and that is more important than having special expertise like with the current committee structure. The city has a team of professional staff that already exists so I think that more passionate engagement of committee members is more important. I also think that as long as it is complemented by other ways for people to engage, for those that are not in that 50 person group – but I am less worried about that because the city has dedicated staff for engagement which not all cities have.

- I think that is a mighty ambitious agenda and, therefore, I am slightly skeptical. For one, I think that getting 50 individuals is almost like getting 50 jurors and all of them will have their perspectives as do I and listening to all of those and getting through them, does take an immense amount of time. Secondly, I think that if it's chaired by someone other than Council or a member of Council, there's gonna be a different approach. Sometimes having Council member present allows you that comfort of knowing that you are delivering your ideas to someone that has political authority and certainly can make that happen. It is a bit different than offering it to someone who does not have that political authority. In addition, the honourarium recognition is absolutely fantastic but my concern with that would be that a lot of individuals now do it because they are intrinsically motivated and passionate about doing something, where when you offer some sort of extrinsic motivation or reward to do something, it definitely does modify things slightly.
- The attempt to redo the whole arrangement that was instigated about four years ago hasn't really worked in terms of getting representation from youth, Indigenous people, BIPOC, hasn't been as effective as the city wanted it to be so they are looking at a way to engage them in something that is not so specific and also to eliminate the requirement for Robert's Rules of Order, which I think puts off a lot of people and is one of the reasons I keep getting called back as my Councillor tends to miss a few meetings and I have to step in. So there have been some failures to change the system to reflect all the people in the community. I see demographics as quotas and I don't like quotas. As far as the facilitator goes, we have much more input when we have a Councillor taking our feedback as first-hand knowledge, rather than somebody who is employed to just gather information and who knows what the agenda might be there. In terms of the power, I'm not concerned about the committee's power, I've seen committee powers erode over the years. On the Parks and Recreation Committee, we found out that we actually had more power than we thought we had and it was made clear to us just as the committee was ending. The honorariums seem to be another measure trying to bring people in with a benefit. I've done it for 20 years and all we ever got,

really, was a dinner once a year for all the representatives involved and we volunteered anyways.

- I like having a Councillor available to us because they can bring an historical background sometimes and we bring up a point and they say “Oh, well, it was already decided...” or something like that. They can provide us with a legal viewpoint.
- The honourariums, for 10 meetings a year, that’s \$150 per person, per meeting – that is a lot of money for the city to be putting out and I would hope that it’s paid at the end of the year because what if someone comes to the first meeting and then doesn’t come to the rest of them? And I think it’s really true that those of us that have been doing it for many years have a passion and a commitment and money is not as important as what we get out of it. And, yes, we did have a nice dinner once a year but the other benefits are meeting some amazing people, first of all, and getting involved in the community, and learning about building codes and accessibility codes.
- The honourarium – I think it’s a very good offering from the city especially with inflation costs and for better representation of different demographics – you can have young families and help them cover costs for babysitters, gas, etc. For the online component, I would think if we could get something to review, so that if you have points that want to bring up from the last session you’d be able to do that. And the other thing is, when looking at applications, consider the experience but don’t rule out inexperience because a blank page is easier to fill than an already full page.
- I think that we have the capacity to try this – enough from the invite list that we could pull together 50 people, have an agenda and try it to see what happens. See what works and what doesn’t. See how people feel about it afterwards. We could have some goals that we would expect to see out of the event and that would also potentially create some rules that we’d expect to see out of that as opposed to setting rules that might not work in practice.
- A couple of concerns are that every time we do this switching when the city is trying to get new voices, which is great, I think that the city is trying to get rid of annoying voices and get in new blood that has no idea what is going on. I also feel like the city words things in a certain way and used a specific vocabulary with us, like tonight, because this is what they wanted to work on

and they could have come with different options for example not just have the group for 50 people.

- I do not think that this would work for grants.

Virtual Session Whole Group Discussion:

- Regarding the APC, if you don't have a planning, real estate, or construction background it is really difficult to add value to that particular committee compared to all the others. For instance, anybody could sit on the parks committee because everyone uses parks. In Sydney, Australia, they are doing exactly what you are proposing – it is not a 50 person group it is 12 but it works really, really, well and every six months the membership changes and it is all volunteer. My advice is that the new model remain volunteer. I don't think any of us join these committees to be paid, we want to effect what goes on in the city that we love.
- \$1,500 x 50 people is a sizable budget, we're looking at \$75K per year whereas now it doesn't cost too much. There are some questions about value and making sure that there are people in the group that have expertise in that specific area.
- I have found that onboarding is important like what was done for the alternative chair training.
- There are aspects of the honourariums and the cost portion, but I'm also thinking that if the economic value behind it reduces more value and more efficiency and more accountability that's when it does really help out a lot. I have been noticing just recently that working in that theme that since we converted to a paid board, everyone show up because no one wants to be seen as just taking money from an organization and not adding any value.
- This is really good idea – hearing some of the deficiencies that are in the advisory committees and trying to address them in this one model. Obviously, I don't think it's perfect in any sense. I do a lot of public engagement and you really have to weed through a lot of the comments to get something you can really use at time and with 50 people versus 12 to actually find things that are actionable may be more onerous. I do like that you'd have the meetings monthly or semi-monthly. The honorarium is a

great idea as well to keep people accountable, it's a mini job if you will. If you are not producing you don't get paid.

- I think that 50 people will be a bit much if you are asking for feedback. I was on the STAC and that was a large committee and every meeting we broke out into working groups and there were facilitators and we had these smaller discussions and I'm thinking of how long that took and how hard it was for the facilitator to manage even a small group. Not sure if there will be multiple facilitators the assembly or if they will break out in to working groups – that is something to consider. Speaking as a person with a disability, and I know other people in my equity group, want to be able to have the opportunity to participate online. It makes a difference for them if they are going to join or not because there is just an inherent challenge that comes with being a person with a disability. For example, if your meetings are too late at night transportation can sometimes become an issue. Weather can become an issue. Wherever the meeting location is can become an issue. So having that option is important for the group just to be considered.
- You may want to consider the optics of having a bigger advisory assembly that feels like it is bringing in more of the public and how the public may respond to their eligibility for that. It's a bit different for the smaller committees and they are very specialized and you have someone with a disability or who is Indigenous, etc., and that is why they are being invited but when it's a cross section, I guess there needs to be a way for people to know if they want to participate and how can they be included. You don't want people in the public to say "How come I didn't get to be a part of this group, I've got something to say."
- Regarding the thought process, this kind of model works for an individual really well if you are a jack of all trades, you can do everything, so you have insights into everything, and it is actually less beneficial for someone who is highly specialized. If you are more of an individual that loves doing everything and you just see everything from different angles and can connect the dots this would work really well for you as opposed to someone who is focused on one specific area and who many not be able to see the other angles.

- I came onto two committees and I volunteered my time, so if you are going to pay someone for a whole year, you may not get the people who just wanted to volunteer. The only reason they may want to come onto the committee is because they think "I'm going to get this amount of money for the year" and you may not get the person that should be on that committee but gets picked because of whatever demographic they are in New Westminster. I chose to be on these committees and I chose to volunteer my time, never expecting to get paid in return so that is the only thing that bothers me about that.
- The role of the staff being replaced by a facilitator - my thought process on that was, that it feels like, as far as effectiveness goes, they'll most likely be breaking into other working groups or task forces because there will be specific aspects that would need to be addressed that would need specific expertise on those components.
- From my understanding because there are some municipal and provincial requirements for some of the committees already existing, this will have to be some sort of hybrid system between the existing committees and then the advisory assembly