



CITY OF VANCOUVER  
COMMUNITY SERVICES GROUP  
City Plans

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# NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE DELIVERY PROGRAM

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

Approved by City Council  
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This document contains Terms of Reference for a Neighbourhood Centre Delivery Program (NCDP) that will implement the adopted Community Visions Directions for Shopping Areas and New Housing Types. It describes the generic Program, and will be augmented by Additional Terms of Reference for each area that will include items such as the study area location, the relevant Vision Directions, etc.

### 1.1 Background: CityPlan and Community Visions

In June 1995, Council adopted *CityPlan: Directions for Vancouver* as a broad, long range plan for the city as a whole. In July 1996, Council approved the *CityPlan Community Visions Terms of Reference*, together with funding and staffing. The Community Visions Program is designed to bring CityPlan Directions to the local level in all the predominantly single family areas of the City, most of which have never had any local planning. As of June 2002, Community Visions were completed and adopted in four communities (Kensington-Cedar Cottage, Dunbar, Sunset, Victoria-Fraserview Killarney) and underway in two (Renfrew-Collingwood, Hastings-Sunrise).

The relevant Directions from CityPlan are as follows:

- The CityPlan Direction on Neighbourhood Centres is to:  
"..create neighbourhoods that provide residents with a variety of housing, jobs and services; create neighbourhood centres that become the civic, public heart of each neighbourhood; and plan the centres with local people to meet the current and emerging needs of residents and local businesses."
- The CityPlan Direction on Housing Variety is to:  
"...increase neighbourhood housing variety throughout the city, especially in neighbourhood centres..." by "involv(ing)...the City and neighbourhoods in planning the types, appearance, and location of new housing best suited to each neighbourhood..."
- The CityPlan Direction on New and More Diverse Public Places is to:  
"...ensure that the number and quality of the city's public places matches the needs of a growing and increasingly diverse population (and more specifically), promote lively neighbourhood shopping streets where it is comfortable to buy, sell, stroll, relax and perform.."

Community Visions have given these a more specific shape in each individual community. Each Vision locates the important local shopping areas, and describes what types of improvements are needed to make them more attractive and viable. Each Vision also notes which types of new housing are supported, and which locations are preferred. The NCDP will implement these Vision Directions in a concrete way.

## 1.2 The Term "Neighbourhood Centre" and the NCDP

A comment is necessary here about the term "neighbourhood centre". It was invented in CityPlan to describe bringing together housing, jobs, shopping, services, and a public "heart" in a geographic location--noting that there was no one prototype, and that each community would customize the idea.

The four completed Community Visions do identify key local shopping areas on arterial streets, and contain Directions for their improvement. These shopping areas already have new housing potential in their mixed-use C zoning, which was accepted by the Community Visions as a given<sup>1</sup>. However, when it comes to new housing variety, the completed Community Visions vary in the preferred locations. One community supported it clustered around several shopping areas; two have supported linear locations along main streets, including extending from the shopping areas; and one supports spreading new housing opportunities broadly throughout the area, including near the shopping area. It is important to note that the NCDP is intended to implement all the Directions on new housing types, whether they are geographically nodal, linear, or scattered.

<sup>1</sup> Vision Direction to improve the design and neighbourliness of the C-2 mixed use projects is being implemented through a citywide C-2 Zoning Review, currently underway.

## 2. PRINCIPLES

The following principles set the expectations for the content and process of the Neighbourhood Centre Delivery Program.

The Program will:

- 2.1 Address primarily the adopted Vision Directions on Shopping Areas and New Housing Types, but also take into account related Vision Directions as appropriate and feasible. Vision Directions classified as "uncertain" may be revisited during the NCDP if appropriate.
- 2.2 Undertake work on the Shopping Areas and New Housing Types at the same time. This will help maintain the relationship between improving shopping areas and adding new residents in new housing. It will also make efficient use of community participation time, and optimize the use of staff time.
- 2.3 Accomplish a range of concrete outcomes, including physical improvements to the public realm, new zoning, and explicit strategies to guide future actions (Refer to Section 3).
- 2.4 Recognize the varying physical and economic conditions, levels of organization, ethnic and demographic makeup of different communities, and seek to adapt the Program appropriately.
- 2.5 Provide a variety of ways for the range of residents, property owners and businesses to participate in creating and reviewing proposals; and ensure that the opinions of both those in the directly-affected area and those in the wider community are sought.
- 2.6 Be coordinated with, and build upon, other City initiatives and programs (e.g. street furniture program, anti-graffiti program). Generally work within established Council policies (e.g. heritage policies, social and affordable housing policies), while recognizing the possibility of change or exceptions, if justified.
- 2.7 Recognize City Council's responsibility for approval of proposed physical improvements, the Housing Area Plan, zoning changes (or rezoning policy), guidelines, capital spending, etc.
- 2.8 Ensure that City Council, before making decisions, is made aware of the range of community opinion, technical information, and any other necessary information.
- 2.9 Be completed within the approved program staff, time, and budget limits.

### **3. PRODUCTS**

The Neighbourhood Centre Delivery Program will produce the following outcomes. Some variation may occur in different areas, depending on their existing state of improvement and organization.

Delivering these products will involve many City Departments and Boards besides the City Plans Division and Engineering Services who will be most responsible: Park Board, Social Planning and Cultural Affairs, Housing, Police, and Library will all be interested in some aspects. For the sake of brevity, their areas of responsibility are not specifically detailed in the list.

#### **3.1 Shopping Areas**

##### **3.1.1 Retail and Service Strategy**

- identification of the current and future retail and service role of the shopping area in relation to its market; suggestions for improvements to the retail and service mix, business operations, security, marketing, parking or other aspects to enhance the area's viability.

##### **3.1.2 Parking Strategy**

- review of existing parking, identification of problems and opportunities, and recommendations for change where necessary. This might include revising street parking regulations, better signage of private parking, establishment of common merchant parking, etc.

##### **3.1.3 Special Sites Development and Rezoning Policy (where applicable)**

- for certain key sites, Council-approved rezoning policy. This would be based on feasibility study of different use, density and form of development options, and community review.

##### **3.1.4 Public Realm and Pedestrian/Traffic Management Plan**

- development of a Plan that includes:
  - possible changes to better balance the pedestrian and shopping area function with commuter through-traffic
  - a variety of public realm management improvements. These might include landscaping, sidewalk repair/replacement, banners, public art, bulges, medians, crossings, greenways connections, new street furniture, etc.
- Council adoption of the Public Realm and Pedestrian/Traffic Management Plan

##### **3.1.5 Public Realm and Pedestrian/Traffic Management Improvements Implementation**

- detailed design, detailed costing, Local Improvement or Local Initiatives, and construction/installation of improvements as per adopted Plan

### **3.1.6 C-2 Minor Zoning Revision and Area Guidelines**

- minor amendments to C-2 zone, e.g. to specify where auto-oriented uses are not appropriate
- area-specific character guidelines (voluntary or adopted; optional)  
(Note: The C-2 Zoning Review - Part 1, to improve design of mixed use and all-commercial development, is being done separately. C-2 Zoning Review: Part 2, to look at the questions of where to permit all-residential development and other significant use issues, will be done separately, on a city-wide basis, when resources are available.)

### **3.1.7 Self-Help/Organizational Development**

- encouragement of business owner organization through access to current City BIA program, and participation in NCPD, possibly leading to a BIA
- encouragement of area residents and business owners to organize area clean-up and crime prevention, including creating linkages with current City programs, Crime Prevention Centres, etc.
- advice to, and involvement of, business owners in improving the appearance, cleanliness, and maintenance of shopfronts, parking areas and other private premises

## **3.2 New Housing Types**

### **3.2.1 Housing Area Plan**

- several Housing Area Plan options that:
  - indicate types and locations for new housing. At least one option will maximize the housing outcome under the adopted Vision Directions.
  - include related measures dealing with: traffic, parking, and/or utilities impacts; improved appearance and greening of the public realm; additional demands on parks and city facilities (e.g. daycare, community centres, libraries, pools, rinks). These will take into account the existing zoned housing capacity (mainly C-2), as well as proposed new housing.
  - include any specific measures for affordable/social housing beyond current city policies -include Vancouver School Board commentary on schools
- Council adoption of a Housing Area Plan

### **3.2.2 Housing Zoning Implementation**

- based on the adopted Housing Area Plan, any or all of the following:
  - drafting of any zoning and guidelines required
  - Council approval of city-initiated new zoning for some locations
  - Council approval of rezoning policies to guide future privately initiated rezonings
  - if possible and needed, a new type of "available-off-the-shelf" zoning for small, privately initiated rezonings (optional: to be investigated)

### **3.2.3 Traffic, Parking, and Utilities Action Strategy**

-based on the adopted Housing Area Plan:

- installation of any traffic calming or parking measures warranted by existing or immediately anticipated problems
- action strategy to monitor and address future traffic and parking impacts as change occurs
- installation of utilities immediately needed, and/or strategy for future installation as needed

### **3.2.4 Parks, Greening, and Greenways Action Strategy**

-based on the adopted Housing Area Plan:

- design and installation of appropriate immediate improvements (e.g. mini-parks, greenways, improvements to existing parks)
- action strategy for future improvements, related to timing of development. This will include a strategy for funding (capital funds, DCLs, CACs etc) and timing for implementation, taking into account demands placed on resources by needs in other areas of the City.

### **3.2.5 City Facilities Action Strategy**

-based on the adopted Housing Area Plan:

- action strategy to address any additional demands falling on City facilities (e.g. daycare, community centres, libraries, rinks, pool) due to growth in the area. This will include a strategy for funding (capital funds, DCLs, CACs etc) and timing for implementation, taking into account demands placed on resources by needs in other areas of the City.

## 4. PROCESS AND SCHEDULE

### 4.1 Overview

The chart on the following page shows the main components of the Program, and a summary schedule.

### 4.2 Program Components

The Program will begin with preparation and start-up steps, and then split into streams that will focus on Shopping Area Improvements and New Housing Types.

#### *Pre-Program Preparation*

As a first step, staff will complete most of the data gathering and initial analysis. This will include compiling demographic and land use data; analysis of existing streetscape, housing stock, and neighbourhood character; and technical and economic background studies.

#### *Initial Outreach*

This step will include initial outreach to community groups and businesses; an initial newsletter; and recruitment and briefing of the two working groups: one for Shopping Areas and one for New Housing. A kick-off event of some kind will be held to increase community awareness of the program, its scope, and the opportunities to participate.

#### *Shopping Areas Improvements*

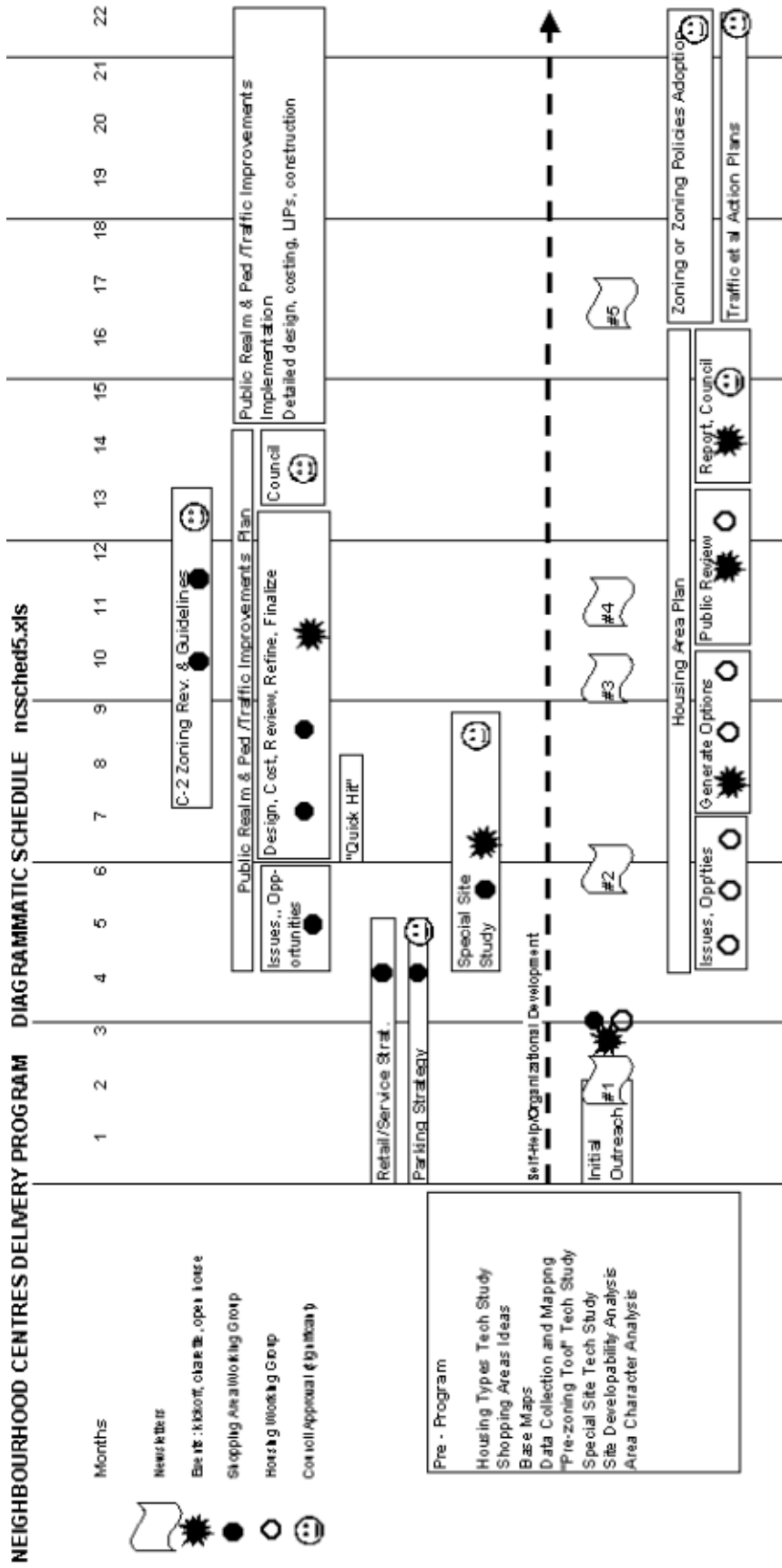
The Shopping Areas Improvements part of the program will consist of a number of work streams to create the products noted in Section 3. First to be undertaken will be the Retail and Service Strategy and the Parking Strategy, mainly through the work of consultants. If the area contains an identified special site, then the work on the Special Site Development and Zoning Policy would be included at this point.

These three components will become input to the Public Realm and Pedestrian/Traffic Management Plan, which is the biggest component of Shopping Area Improvements.

This component would include:

- analysis of issues and opportunities
- pursuit of an initial improvement in the public realm, if appropriate
- design and costing of draft Plan (options), in consultation with the working group; broader public review of the draft Plan (options)
- revision and finalization of the Plan, and submission to Council for approval

NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES DELIVERY PROGRAM DIAGRAMMATIC SCHEDULE ncsched5.xls



Implementation of the Plan would follow, including detailed design and costing, Local Improvements or Local Initiatives, construction, and a maintenance plan.

Amendments to the C-2 zoning and the development of (optional) local character Guidelines will occur during the same period as the Public Realm and Pedestrian/Traffic Management Plan is done.

The Self-Help/Organizational Development stream will be ongoing through the process. In some areas there will already be organized business groups, residents' groups, and crime prevention groups. The Program will help them connect with the available City programs. In other cases, it will be necessary to encourage business organization through the efforts of the City's BIA coordinator.

### *New Housing Types*

The focus of this part of the program will be the development of an integrated Housing Area Plan.

The main steps will be:

- discussion of housing needs, challenges and opportunities;
- generation of several Housing Area Plan Options based on Vision Directions. These will include types and locations for new housing; as well as associated aspects such as design, traffic and parking, parks, greening, greenways, and facilities;
- public review of the Options, leading to possible refinements;
- staff recommendations regarding the Options; and
- Council adoption of a Housing Area Plan based on one or more of the Options

Based on the adopted Housing Area Plan, the next steps will include:

- writing and adoption of new zoning and guidelines; or adoption of site-specific policies to guide future rezonings; or approval of some form of "available-off-the-shelf" zoning
- finalization of Action Strategies for traffic, parking and utilities; parks, greening and greenways, and city facilities; as well as installation of projects identified as immediate

### **4.3 Public Involvement**

Residents, property owners, businesses, community groups and others will be interested in participating in the NCPD to different degrees. The program will include diverse opportunities for participation, geared to levels of interest and roles in the process (see Section 5).

A key element will be two Working Groups, one focusing on Shopping Area Improvements and the other on New Housing Types. They will meet throughout the process. For the broader public, a kick-off event, housing design charrette, and open houses will be held at various times. There will be approximately five newsletters

delivered to all households, property owners and businesses in the study area, providing updates on different components and in some cases incorporating mail-in surveys. There will also be a random telephone survey on the Housing Area Plan Options.

DIFFERENT PUBLICS	HOW INVOLVED
<p><b>Study Area residents, property owners, and businesses</b>            -those whose home, property or businesses may be directly affected by the changes coming out of the NCDP</p>	<p>-reps on working groups            -attend kick-off event &amp; housing charette            -receive newsletters            -mail-in survey; random telephone survey</p>
<p><b>Future Study Area residents, property owners, and businesses</b>            -those who will be directly affected in the future</p>	<p>-working group members will help articulate this point of view            -staff may need to represent future resident interests, at times</p>
<p><b>Broader community residents, property owners, and businesses</b>            (including residents' groups such as e.g. KCC CityPlan Committee; CeCONA, community associations, crime prevention groups)            -who will be indirectly affected by change</p>	<p>-reps on working groups            -attend kick-off event, housing charette, open houses            -staff will attend groups' meetings to review proposals            -random telephone survey</p>
<p><b>Non-City Interests and Service Providers</b>            (E.g. Neighbourhood Houses, housing advocates, development industry)            -not themselves affected by change, but with a related interest</p>	<p>-attend kick-off event, housing charette, open houses            -staff will attend groups' meetings to review proposals</p>

## 5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 5.1 Overview

There will be many actors involved in the Neighbourhood Centre Delivery Program, and this section describes their roles. The summary table is followed by more detail on actors and roles.

	Study Area Res., P.O.s, Businesses	Broader Community Res., P.O.s	Working Groups	NCDP Staff Team	Non-City Interests, Service Prov.	Other City Staff	CITY COUNCIL*
Manage the process				✓			
Watchdog the process			✓	✓			
Outreach			✓	✓			
Organize and produce events, meetings				✓			
Facilitate events, meetings				✓			
Research, provide information				✓		✓	
Generate ideas and concepts	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Create design or plan options			✓	✓			
Technically evaluate design or plan options				✓		✓	
Express preferences on design or plan options	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Refine/revise design or plan options				✓			
Advocate design or plan option to public or Council	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Make recommendations to Council				✓			
Approvals							✓

\* Local Initiative funding would require approval of the affected shopping area property owners.

## 5.2 Actors

*Study Area Residents, Property Owners, and Businesses and*

*Broader Community Residents, Property Owners, and Businesses*

Residents, property owners and businesses both within the Study Area and in the broader community will have three key roles: to suggest ideas and concepts at workshops and open houses; to express opinions and preferences about design or plan options while in progress; and to advocate a design or plan option to Council, when they are considering recommendations of staff.

It is anticipated that the level of interest among people within the Study Area will be higher than in the broader community, and also that there will be divergent opinions within both groups.

### *Working Groups*

There will be two Working Groups made up of community volunteers who meet and provide input throughout the process. One will focus on Shopping Area Improvements and the other on New Housing Types. With respect to content, they will assist staff in generating, evaluating, and narrowing the range of options. With respect to process, they will advise staff on outreach, and will assist in "watch dogging" the process to ensure it stays within the Terms of Reference.

Working Group members will be sought in the categories noted below. The Groups will be a microcosm of the range of interests in the community, and will provide input from those various perspectives. It is not intended that members need to agree with each other. The numbers shown are illustrative of intent--the actual numbers may vary depending on the area, recruitment success etc.

	Shopping Area W G	New Housing Types W G
Study Area residential property owners and tenants	2 - 4 members	7-11 members
Study Area commercial property owners and business tenants	7-11 members (mainly from 4 block Shopping Area)	2 - 4 members
Broader community property owners and tenants*	2 - 4 members	2 - 4 members
<b>Total</b>	<b>11 -18 members</b>	<b>11-18 members</b>

\*through reps from established community organizations, if possible

### *NCDP Staff Team*

The NCDP staff team will be responsible for overall management of the process, and for organizing and producing all outreach and consultation. On the content side, with the collaboration and input of the community as noted above, staff will be responsible for research, providing information, and running consultant studies; generating, documenting, technically evaluating, and revising design concepts and plan options, in consultation with the community; and for making recommendations to Council, including providing Council with information on community opinion. Staff will also "watchdog" the process to ensure the terms of reference are followed.

The NCDP staff team will include a senior planner (part-time), an urban designer (part-time), 2 planners and 2 planning assistants from the City Plans Division. There will also be a Civil Engineer and an Engineering Assistant from the Engineering Department, both about half time. Advice and assistance will be available as needed from other Engineering, Housing, Park Board and other City departments and boards. Communications and event production assistance will be provided by consulting expertise.

This team will report to the Director of City Plans and the General Manager of Engineering Services.

### *Non-City Interests and Service Providers*

The NCDP will be of interest to a number of non-City groups who see it as an opportunity to promote their cause: housing advocates, developers and builders, environmental and transportation advocates. In addition, it may be of interest to non-City service providers such as neighbourhood houses, the regional health board, and Provincial service providers delivering services to existing and future residents of an area. Post-secondary students are also often interested in planning programs as an adjunct to their studies.

Participation of these interest groups will be limited, compared to the role of community members. They may provide information through staff; assist in generating ideas and concepts by participating in events or workshop on an invited basis; and may express opinions of design concepts or plan options. While, like any member of the public, they may wish to advocate for an option to Council, their opinions will not form an integral part of the staff report to Council in the same way as the community input will.

### *Other City Staff*

Beyond the NCDP staff team, other city staff will provide research and information, assist in generating ideas and concepts, and in technically evaluating plans. While the NCDP staff will be responsible for making recommendations to Council, and these may

reflect opinions of all staff, the option remains open for other city staff to advocate for a design concept or plan option that is not recommended by the NCDP team.

### *City Council*

Council allocates resources to undertake the NCDP, and also has final responsibility for approving the Public Realm and Traffic Improvements Concept, the Housing Area Plan, any resulting capital spending, zoning changes, rezoning policies, action strategies, and any other items that normally fall within their mandate. In making these decisions they will be fully informed about the options, and about the various community opinions regarding them.

### 5.3 Roles

The following notes elaborate on the different roles.

*Manage the program* - organize all aspects, manage staff and resources

*Watchdog the program* - ensure the Terms of Reference are respected, including the diverse input from the various sectors of the community

*Outreach* - tailor participation opportunities to the community segments, and perform outreach tasks

*Facilitate events, meetings* - ensure meetings and events are effective and neutrally run

*Research, provide information* - obtain needed information and provide it in a form appropriate to the occasion

*Generate ideas and concepts* - invent, design, or suggest various ideas and concepts for Shopping Area Improvements and New Housing Types products (as described in Section 3)

*Create Design or Plan Options* - integrate ideas and concepts into coherent overall design concepts or plan options for the products (as described in Section 3), and record/package/illustrate these for review.

*Technically evaluate design or plan options* - calculate the costs, economic or physical feasibility, housing units, demands on services, etc associated with proposals

*Express preferences on design or plan options* - reflecting on the information provided, choose options or rank preferences, and provide reasons

*Refine/revise design or plan options* - based on community input and technical analysis, amend options as necessary

*Advocate a design or plan option to public or Council* - based on personal, group, or professional opinion, advocate for or against an option to the public or to Council

*Make recommendations to Council* - based on community input, technical analysis, and Vision and CityPlan Directions, make a recommendation to Council.

*Approvals* - formally approve the Public Realm and Traffic Improvements Concept, the Housing Area Plan, any resulting capital spending, zoning changes, rezoning policies, action strategies, and any other policy changes.