

File No.: 04-1000-20-2019-453

August 20, 2019

s.22(1)

Dear s.22(1)

Re: **Request for Access to Records under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (the "Act")**

I am responding to your request of July 16, 2019 for:

**Administrative reports and aggregated survey data of reviews conducted by the City Clerk on the citizen advisory committees particularly for the purpose of informing a new Council, from January 1, 2008 to November 30, 2018.**

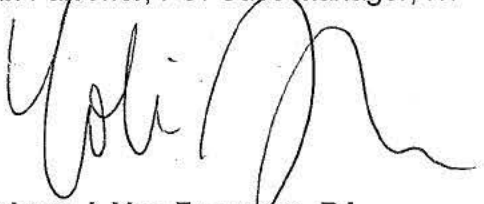
All responsive records are attached. Some information in the records has been severed, (blacked out), under s.22(1) of the Act. You can read or download this section here: [http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws\\_new/document/ID/freeside/96165\\_00](http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/96165_00)

Under section 52 of the Act, and within 30 business days of receipt of this letter, you may ask the Information & Privacy Commissioner to review any matter related to the City's response to your FOI request by writing to: Office of the Information & Privacy Commissioner, [info@oipc.bc.ca](mailto:info@oipc.bc.ca) or by phoning 250-387-5629.

If you request a review, please provide the Commissioner's office with: 1) the request number (#04-1000-20-2019-453); 2) a copy of this letter; 3) a copy of your original request; and 4) detailed reasons why you are seeking the review.

Yours truly,

Cobi Falconer, FOI Case Manager, for



**Barbara J. Van Fraassen, BA**  
**Director, Access to Information & Privacy**

[Barbara.vanfraassen@vancouver.ca](mailto:Barbara.vanfraassen@vancouver.ca)  
453 W. 12th Avenue Vancouver BC V5Y 1V4

\*If you have any questions, please email us at [foi@vancouver.ca](mailto:foi@vancouver.ca) and we will respond to you as soon as possible. Or you can call the FOI Case Manager at 604.871.6584.

Encl.

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# Advisory Committees – Annual Survey of Members

## Introduction / E-mail message

Thank you for volunteering with the City's advisory committees! We invite you to complete this year-end survey, which gives you a chance to tell us about your experience serving as a member. Your feedback will help us evaluate and strengthen advisory committee management. The questions should take approximately 15 minutes of your time and are accessible through this [link](#). The survey will close on December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2017. Your responses are anonymous.

Thank you,

City Clerk's Office

**1. You are currently a member of the: [drop down list]**

- a. Active Transportation Policy Council
- b. Arts and Culture Policy Council
- c. Children, Youth and Families Advisory Committee
- d. Civic Asset Naming Committee
- e. Civic Theatres Board
- f. Cultural Communities Advisory Committee
- g. LGBTQ2+ Advisory Committee
- h. Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee
- i. Public Art Committee
- j. Renters Advisory Committee
- k. Seniors' Advisory Committee
- l. Urban Aboriginal Peoples Advisory Committee
- m. Vancouver City Planning Commission
- n. Vancouver Food Policy Council
- o. Women's Advisory Committee

**2. What is your role on the advisory committee?**

- a. Chair / Co-Chair / Vice-Chair
- b. Member

**3. How long have you been a member on this committee?**

- a. Less than one year
- b. One to two years
- c. Two to three years
- d. Three to four years
- e. More than four years

**4. Based on your experience with your advisory committee, indicate your level of satisfaction with the following aspects of the advisory committee** (Very satisfied – Satisfied – Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied – Unsatisfied – Very unsatisfied – Not applicable):

- a. Recruitment and appointment process

- b. Orientation process
- c. Support received from Council liaisons
- d. Support received from staff liaisons
- e. Support received from your Meeting Coordinator
- f. Reporting relationship between committees and Council
- g. Ease of access to information (e.g., training materials, agendas, minutes, reports)
- h. Structure of the work plan template
- i. Ease of navigation on committee website

**5. Please provide any additional comments for each of your response above (open-ended text):**

- a. Recruitment and appointment process
- b. Orientation process
- c. Support received from Council liaisons
- d. Support received from staff liaisons
- e. Support received from your Meeting Coordinator
- f. Reporting relationship between committees and Council
- g. Ease of access to information (e.g., training materials, agendas, minutes, reports)
- h. Structure of the work plan template
- i. Ease of navigation on committee website

**6. Indicate your level of agreement with the following statements (Strongly agree – Agree – Neither agree nor disagree – Disagree – Strongly disagree):**

- a. I understand my committee's mandates and work plan objectives.
- b. I understand my role on the committee.
- c. I understand the relationship between the committee and Council.
- d. Committee meetings are productive and well-organized.
- e. The committee has made good progress this year on its work plan.
- f. The number of committee meetings is sufficient for our committee to make formal decisions.

**7. Indicate your level of satisfaction with the following events (Very satisfied – Satisfied – Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied – Unsatisfied – Very unsatisfied – Not applicable):**

- a. Members training
- b. Chairs meeting (applicable to Chairs / Co-Chairs only)
- c. Council of Councils

**8. Please provide any additional comments for each of your response above (open-ended text):**

- a. Members training
- b. Chairs meeting (applicable to Chairs / Co-Chairs only)
- c. Council of Councils

**9. Please provide any additional comments on your experience as a committee member.**

# Advisory Committees Review - Draft

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## Recommendations

- Prepare guidelines for
  - creating /dissolving advisory bodies
  - annual reviews of advisory committees and work plan objectives
- Review each committees' terms of reference / (bylaws?) to
  - Clarify mandates, roles and responsibilities for each
  - Clarify reporting relationships with staff and Council
- Review membership composition and appointment process (note appointment policy)
- Review Council of Councils and explore other cross-committee collaboration opportunities

## Summary

At the Standing Committee of Council on Policy and Strategic Priorities on November 30, 2016, Council adopted a motion to place a moratorium on creation of new Type A (advisory to Council) and Type B (advisory to staff) advisory committees pending a review of existing Type A and Type B advisory committees as to how well they are empowering residents that have traditionally been underrepresented in the City's consultative process.

This report provides summarizes the overarching trends of the within the advisory committee program and governance. To ensure that advisory bodies work effectively with Council and staff, this report identifies high level strategies in addressing some notable challenges.

## Council Authority / Previous Decisions

Council has previously, in 2003 and 2006, directed staff to conduct reviews of the City's advisory bodies. These reviews have informed on some incremental modifications to the system:

- January 2003<sup>1</sup>: Following a staff review of the City's advisory committees, Council adopted recommendations on business practices, including implementing terms of appointment and improving member orientation and training. Council also passed a motion to create an Advisory Body Task Force to assess their effectiveness in facilitating civic engagement.
- June 2006: Following a review of advisory committees by the Roles, Relationships and Responsibilities Review Committee, Council adopted the proposed assessment criteria for evaluating advisory bodies and the categorization of civic agencies by types. Council also appointed non-voting Councillor and staff liaisons to Type A and D committees.
- November 2016, Council adopted a motion to place a moratorium on creation of new Type A and Type B advisory committees pending a review of existing Type A and Type B advisory

<sup>1</sup> January 16, 2003 Standing Committee of Council on Planning and Environment ([minutes](#))

committees as to how well they are empowering residents that have traditionally been underrepresented in the City's consultative process.

## Background

The City of Vancouver actively encourages citizen involvement. The City's legislative processes, consultation practices and partnerships aim to engage a broad range of citizens in City governance, operations and decision-making. Advisory bodies play an integral role in the City's public engagement efforts by focusing on a particular issue that has an impact on the City and its people. Committees comprised of members of the public have had an active role at the City for nearly 100 years. They provide recommendations, advice and information to City Council and staff on matters which relate to the mandate of the advisory committee and issues referred by Council or staff.

Advisory bodies may be established under different legislative provisions. Section 159 of the Vancouver Charter enables Council to set up committees as it sees fit and Council may refer any matter to any committees for report. These committees stand discharged immediately before the first Monday after November 1 in the year of a general local election. Council retains the discretion to re-establish some or all of these committees, or establish new committees. Other bodies are established by bylaws and do not stand discharged immediately before a general local election. These include the Vancouver City Planning Commission and Civic Theatres Board.

The City currently has 12 Type A (advisory to Council) and three Type B (advisory to staff) advisory committees involving nearly 300 members of the public. A list of these 15 committees and their mandates are included in Appendix A: Terms of Reference and Mandates. These committees operate under different mandates and have different member compositions. Each committee is assigned at least one non-voting City Council liaison and may also be assigned Park and School Boards liaisons depending on the agency's mandate. A staff liaison is also assigned to provide information and advice on City programs and work that is relevant to the mandate and Work Plan of the committee.

### Past Reviews of Advisory Committees

Recent reviews of the City's advisory committees were completed in November 2002<sup>2</sup> and June 2006<sup>3</sup>. The purpose of the reviews was to evaluate the governance, effectiveness, and role of the public in advisory committees.

The reviews reaffirmed the role of advisory committees as a resource to Council and staff to facilitate communication between the community and the City, provide a diversity of opinions and expertise, and offer feedback early in projects. The reviews also identified recurring challenges undermining committees' effectiveness and productivity, including:

- Unclear and vague mandates and purposes;
- Wandering agenda and work programs outside of committee mandates;
- Duplication of committee efforts;
- Minimal feedback or evaluation of advisory body work, work plans or effectiveness;
- Confusion of role of advisory body members, staff and Councillors;

<sup>2</sup> Review of Advisory Bodies. [Council report dated November 18, 2002](#)

<sup>3</sup> Report of the Roles, Relationships and Responsibilities Review, [Report to Council dated June 2006](#)

- Lack of standards of conduct for advisory body members or advisory body staff;
- Inadequate orientation, training and protocols; and
- Unclear reporting relationships and weak communication with Council.

Following the 2006 review of advisory bodies, staff and Council proceeded with a cursory assessment<sup>4</sup> of each advisory body, and implemented changes to the governance of advisory bodies including:

- Adoption of proposed assessment criteria for the evaluation of advisory bodies<sup>5</sup>;
- Adoption of a procedure whereby mandate letters are issued to advisory bodies at the beginning of their terms and acknowledgement letters are issued to mark the end of their term<sup>6</sup>;
- Establishment of advisory bodies by considering the priorities, established criteria for advisory bodies and available City resources<sup>7</sup>;
- Categorization of civic agencies by Type A / B / C / D committees and clarification of the roles and functions of each type<sup>8</sup>; and
- Appointment of non-voting Councillor and staff liaisons to each Type A and D committee<sup>9</sup>.

## 2017 Review of Advisory Committees

At the Standing Committee of Council on Policy and Strategic Priorities on November 30, 2016, Council adopted a motion to place a moratorium on creation of new Type A and Type B advisory committees pending a review of existing Type A and Type B advisory committees as to how well they are empowering residents that have traditionally been underrepresented in the City's consultative process.

In response to this motion, staff proceeded with a comprehensive review of the current advisory committee system in the context of Type A agencies. The following criteria:

- Relevance and scope of current assigned mandates and terms of reference;
- Clarity and effectiveness of roles and responsibilities for members, staff liaisons and Council liaisons;
- Process of reporting and rules of engagement between advisory committees, staff and Council;
- Satisfaction and experience of members and Council and staff working with advisory committees; and
- Other challenges observed by committee participants.

In addition to a background scan of existing committee products (agendas, minutes, reports), staff have also engaged with advisory committee participants (Councillors, staff liaisons and members) to allow for a more in-depth analysis. These activities include:

- An online survey of Type A committee members (Survey questions and aggregated results included in Appendix B);
- An online survey of Type A committee staff liaisons (Survey questions and aggregated results included in Appendix C); and

<sup>4</sup> Advisory Bodies Review. [Council report dated October 2, 2006](#)

<sup>5</sup> July 20, 2016 Standing Committee of Council on Planning and Environment ([minutes](#))

<sup>6</sup> This may have fallen out of practice.

<sup>7</sup> July 20, 2016 Standing Committee of Council on Planning and Environment ([minutes](#))

<sup>8</sup> November 2, 2006 Standing Committee of Council on Planning and Environment ([minutes](#))

<sup>9</sup> November 2, 2006 Standing Committee of Council on Planning and Environment ([minutes](#))

- Individual semi-structured interviews with members of Council (Discussion topics included in Appendix D).

A summary of the key themes of these consultations are included in Appendix E.

## **Analysis of Findings**

### **Overall satisfaction: Participants**

In general, members, staff liaisons and Council reflect positively on their experience with advisory committees. The majority of the committee members report that this volunteer opportunity has improved their sense of civic engagement and knowledge of local government issues. Many would also agree (82%) that their opinions are considered at meetings and are comfortable with introducing new topics for discussion.

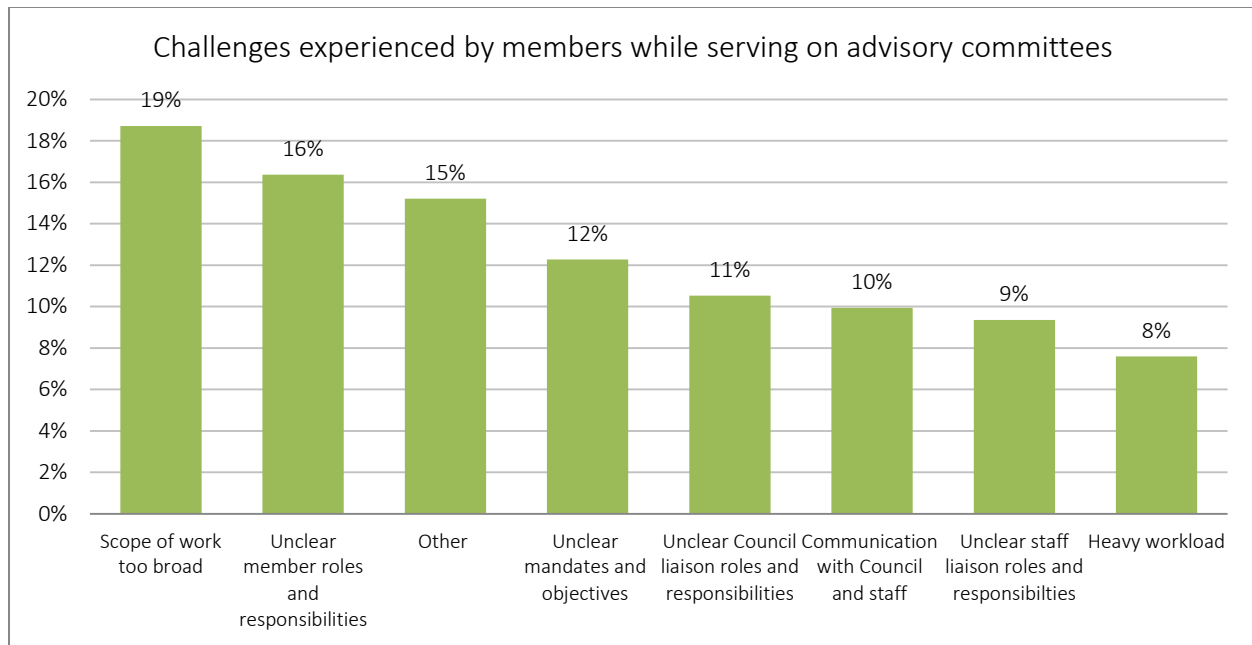
Staff and Council liaisons appreciate committees' efforts, and acknowledging that committees provide a good gauge of public opinion, offer useful expertise and critiques on the City's program and policy development and are keen to alert the City to emerging issues. These input help reaffirm the important role advisory committees play in the City's consultative process.

Detailed responses from participants suggest that various shortcomings referenced in the previous reviews still exist today. Some of Vancouver's advisory bodies are weakened by unclear relationships with Council and staff, vague objectives and mandates, as well as uncertain roles and responsibilities of members, Councillors and staff liaisons. This review has also identified other shared concerns. Noteworthy observations are summarized below.

### **Uncertain roles and responsibilities: Advisory committee members**

The most pronounced barrier identified by members is a lack of understanding of their role and responsibilities, with over a quarter (25%) expressing uncertainty. Results also reveal that nearly one third (30%) of member respondents are not aware of the City's key priorities and how their committees' work impacts Council decisions. Comments from Council and staff liaisons echo a similar observation.





**Figure 1 Challenges experienced by members**

### **Broad scope**

The uncertainty around role and responsibilities may relate to the broad scope of committees' work, a challenge to which many members alluded (see Figure 1). While some committees note good achievements and focused activities, others groups recognize that they are drifting outside of their mandates.

This variance is likely impacted by the committee's terms of reference and the subject matter to which it respond. Some committees are issues-oriented and regularly receive staff requests for consultation. These referrals give committees a definitive timeline and scope, allowing members to work consistently on specific projects. Other committees receive fewer external requests and are given more opportunities to self-direct and tackle a wide range of topics. Sometimes this leads to projects which are too broad or not aligned to Council priorities. In these cases, committees attempt to address a large quantity of wide-ranging issues beyond their scope and available resource. This undermines a committee's productivity and the relevance of its discussions.

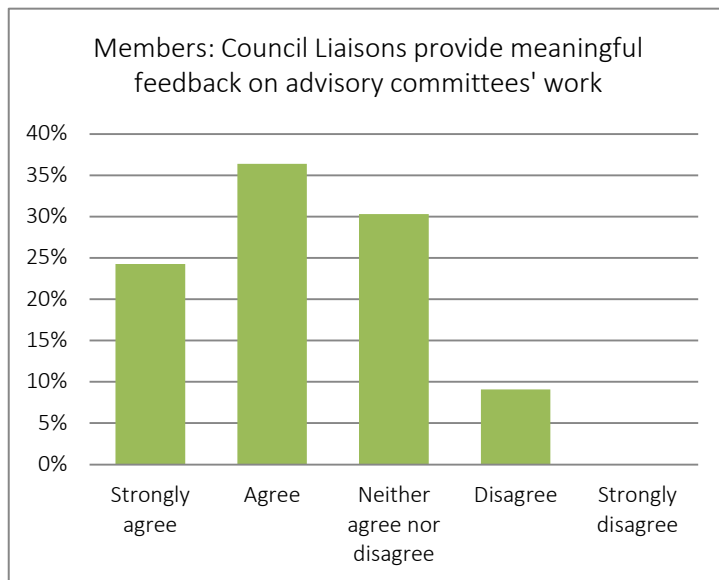
Councillors have varied opinions on the appropriate scope of work for committees. Some are concerned with committees' a lack of focus on Council strategic priorities, resulting in recommendations that are irrelevant to the City's program and policy work. Others, however, would like to see committees explore emerging issues outside of their standard objectives in order to bring forward fresh perspectives.

### **Advice to Council**

Some advisory committee members are unsure of whether their inputs are meaningful to Council work. Around one-in-three respondents (32%) do not feel that advisory committee recommendations are valued by Council and staff, and written comments suggest a general disappointment with a lack of response on committee input.

Although Councillors acknowledge members' efforts, some find motions and recommendations to be ineffective when they direct Council to take specific actions. Instead, Councillors prefer to be given thorough advice and input to a given issue.

### Uncertain roles and responsibilities: Council liaisons



There is no defined set of roles and responsibilities for Councillors serving as liaisons. As each sees their roles differently, the levels of liaison support and participation vary across each committee. Most liaisons perceive their main function as to transmit factual information between committees and City Council. Nevertheless, they remain divided on whether they should provide further support. In practice, some actively engage in committee discussions as an interlocutor and provide feedback and guidance on committee work. Most liaisons emphasize that they cannot be expected to advance all committee motions.

The majority (61%) of member respondents report that Council liaisons provide meaningful feedback to their committees' work. Written comments suggest that members and staff liaisons see Councillors' input as essential to committee success and would like to see increased participation from respective liaisons. For the same reason, Council liaison absence has been cited as a major source of dissatisfaction for committee members.

### Uncertain role and responsibilities: Staff liaisons

Although three-quarter (75%) of members are satisfied with their staff liaisons, nearly half of the liaisons surveyed express some uncertainty with their role. In part, this may be due to the Many Councillors share a strong view that committees function most effectively when staff refer request for input, and would like to see them play a larger role in coordinating advisory committee projects with other staff members.

### Weak reporting between Council and advisory committees

When a committee passes a resolution, the decision is distributed to the relevant parties (i.e., liaisons; Mayor and Council). Unless Council or staff liaison take further action, there is minimal follow-up communication with the committee, especially since meeting minutes primarily facilitate one-way communication (committee-to-Council). As a result, members are frustrated with the limited knowledge of how their recommendations are considered by Council. This creates a sense of uncertainty among members with regards to their work and sometimes leads to a lack of continuity in committee work. The lack of communication between Council and committees may also prevent members from offering pertinent advice on City projects and other issues early on.

Many Council members agree that the current level of reporting between committees and Council has been uneven and insufficient. Some remarked that events such as Council of Councils are too large and infrequent to facilitate in-depth dialogue, and hope to see more opportunities for committees to provide progress updates and for Council feedback.

### Public/Civic Agency Input outreach

Among other feedback, this review sought to collect input on committees' role in public engagement. As stated in the terms of reference, advisory committees are tasked to:

- Exchange information with the constituent communities and the general public about relevant programs and issues of interest; and
- Engage in outreach to disseminate information and encourage participation from constituent communities.

In practice, Type A advisory committees infrequently engage with the public, with the exception of ad-hoc events and interactions on social media. Most committees do not have the financial resource and time to pursue additional public outreach. There is disagreement among Councillors on the extent to which committees should partake in public outreach. Although some are supportive of these initiatives, others disapprove and maintain that committees should not be tasked with public consultation since they themselves are appointed as representatives of the public.

### Recruitment and membership

Staff, Councillors and members cite unique concerns for the current committee member recruitment process. Amongst Councillors and some staff liaisons, the most pronounced concern is maintaining a balance between rotation and retention of members. Some are in the view that committees are dominated by returning members, thus limiting opportunity for new participants and fresh perspectives. Many advisory committee members, on the other hand, perceive a lack of demographic diversity in membership, particularly with regards to ethnicity. Some members find the lack of transparency and communication during the application process discouraging.

Staff used the recruitment data available for 2017 advisory committees to analyze the cultural diversity amongst members. Out of a total of 983 applicants to Type A committees, 234 (23.8%) self-identified as visible minorities and 40 (4.0%) as Aboriginal. Of the 172 recruited overall, 46 (26.7%) identified as visible ethnic minorities and 18 (10.5%) as Aboriginals. Outside of the Cultural Communities and Urban Aboriginal Peoples' advisory committees, self-identified visible minorities represent 22.0% of the accepted applicants and Aboriginal people 2.3%. Of all the accepted members, 93 (53.5%) have served previously, with an average of 2.7 years of prior experience. All but 2 returning applicants are now serving again.

	All Applicants		Accepted Applicants	
<b>Ethnic visible minority (self-identified)</b>	234	23.8%	46	26.7%
<b>Aboriginal</b>	40	4.1%	18	10.5%
<b>Possess prior experience</b>	95	9.7%	92	53.5%
<b>Women</b>	615	62.6%	102	59.3%

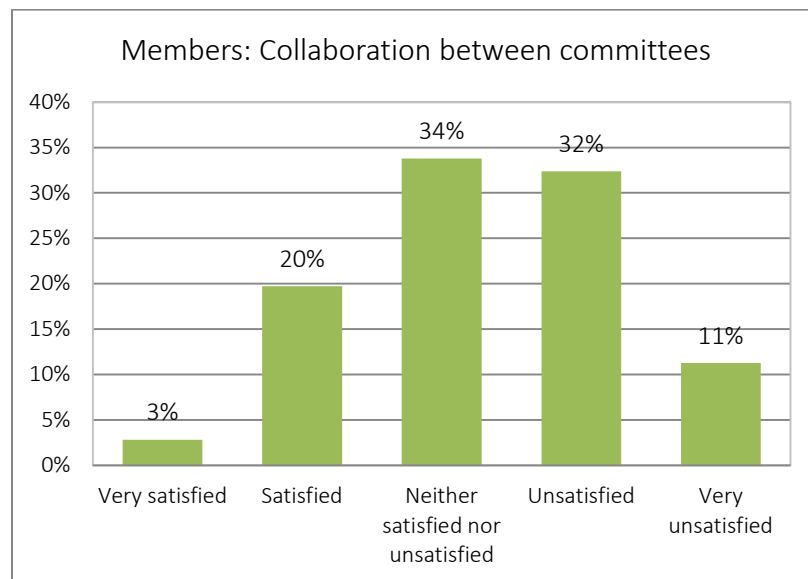
<b>Men</b>	332	33.8%	63	36.6%
<b>Transgender</b>	8	0.8%	3	1.7%
<b>Gender variant</b>	10	1.0%	2	1.2%
<b>Ethnic Visible Minority (self-identified)</b>	272	27.7%	63	36.6%
<b>Total applicants</b>	983	100.0%	172	100.0%

Staff has been unable to assess membership diversity as a whole as current metrics used in the City's advisory committee application forms do not fully capture the demographics of applicants (e.g., lack of survey instructions). Moreover, the questionnaire for each advisory committee varies and does not consistently survey other pertinent demographic information (e.g., age and disability).

### Lack of cross-committee initiatives

Although advisory committees often respond to the same issues and projects, there has been minimal inter-committee communication. A few committees have liaised with one another on their own initiatives or through events such as the Council of Councils. Participants found these experiences to be valuable and see a greater need to expand on these opportunities especially given the intersectionality of issues and overlapping priorities.

For City staff, the absence of a formalized process to engage multiple committees has led to lengthy and tedious consultation. Under current consultation practices, staff arrange separate meetings with multiple committees to gather input, an approach which many respondents find impractical.



## Appendix A: Terms of Reference and Mandates

Type A advisory committees operate under the following common terms of reference:

- Provides input to City Council and staff about issues of concern;
- Considers any matters which may be referred to the committee by Council or staff;
- May take positions on policy initiatives from other levels of government within the mandate of the committee;
- Works co-operatively with city staff and other agencies whose activities affect constituent communities, including initiating and developing relevant projects
- Acts as a resource for staff doing public involvement processes and civic events;
- Exchanges information with the constituent communities and the general public about relevant programs and issues of interest;
- Engages in outreach to disseminate information and encourage participation from constituent communities;
- Produces an annual work plan with specific objectives by no later than April of each year, in consultation with Council and staff liaisons, for distribution to Council and civic departments for information; and
- Submits an annual report to Council describing its accomplishments for the year, including reference to each objective set out in the work plan and any arising issues to which the committee has responded.

In addition, each advisory committee operate within their respective mandates:

Type A Advisory Committees	Additional Mandates
Active Transportation Policy Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Advise City Council on strategic priorities relating to walking, cycling and all active transportation modes in Vancouver, and public transit.</li><li>• Advise Council and staff on Transportation 2040 and Active Transportation Master Plan as they are developed, implemented, and updated.</li></ul>
Arts and Culture Policy Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Advise Council and staff on all civic programs that relate to arts and culture, and ensure that arts and culture is appropriately represented in City plans and policy initiatives.</li><li>• Advise Council and staff on the Culture Plan for Vancouver 2008 – 2018 as it is developed, implemented, and updated.</li></ul>
Children, Youth and Families Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Advise Council and staff on matters that relate to children, youth and families.</li><li>• If requested by the Court, the Committee is also mandated as a family court committee under the British Columbia Provincial Court Act and as a youth justice committee under the Youth Justice Act.</li></ul>
Civic Asset Naming Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To advise Council on matters pertaining to the naming of City-owned assets, with the exception of assets operated by the Park Board, and the Vancouver Public Library.</li></ul>

Cultural Communities Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advise Council and staff on enhancing access and inclusion for Vancouver's diverse cultural communities to fully participate in City services and civic life.</li> <li>Work with staff on civic events which celebrate diversity, e.g. International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.</li> </ul>
LGBTQ2+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advise Council and staff on enhancing access and inclusion for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, two-spirited and queer communities to fully participate in City services and civic life.</li> <li>Work with city staff to ensure that city facilities and events are accessible for people who identify outside the gender binary.</li> </ul>
Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advise Council and staff on enhancing access for inclusion for persons with disabilities to fully participate in City services and civic life.</li> <li>Work with city staff to ensure that civic events are accessible for persons with disabilities.</li> </ul>
Renters Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advise Council on strategic City priorities relating to renters, to monitor and respond to the impacts of provincial and federal legislation affecting tenants.</li> <li>Advise Council on enhancing access and inclusion for renters in developing policy and civic life.</li> </ul>
Seniors Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advise Council and staff on enhancing access and inclusion for seniors' to fully participate in City services and civic life.</li> </ul>
Urban Aboriginal Peoples Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advise Council and staff on enhancing access and inclusion for urban Aboriginal peoples to fully participate in City services and civic life.</li> <li>Advise Council and staff on the City of Reconciliation Framework as it is developed, implemented and updated.</li> </ul>
Vancouver Food Policy Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the development of a food system where food is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safe, nutritious, and culturally appropriate;</li> <li>Affordable, available, and accessible to all;</li> <li>Produced, processed, marketed, consumed, and waste products reused or managed in a manner that is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financially viable;</li> <li>Protects the health and dignity of people; and</li> <li>Minimally impacting the environment.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>Advise Council and staff on the Vancouver Food Strategy as it is developed, implemented, and updated.</li> </ul>
Women's Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advise Council and staff on enhancing access and inclusion for women and girls to fully participate in City services and civic life.</li> <li>Advise Council and staff on the Gender Equality Strategy as it is developed, implemented, and updated.</li> </ul>
<b>Type B Advisory Committees</b>	
Chinatown Historic Area Planning	

Committee	
First Shaughnessy Design Panel	
Gastown Historic Planning Committee	














## Appendix B: Survey Questions and Results – Members

Duration: January 30, 2017 – February 16, 2017



N = 79

Completion rate: 86.1%

### 1. I am currently a member of the:

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Arts and Culture Policy Council		8.9%	7
Children, Youth and Families Advisory Committee		7.6%	6
Cultural Communities Advisory Committee		5.1%	4
LGBTQ2+ Advisory Committee		11.4%	9
Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee		7.6%	6
Renters Advisory Committee		7.6%	6
Seniors' Advisory Committee		16.5%	13
Urban Aboriginal Peoples Advisory Committee		2.5%	2
Women's Advisory Committee		11.4%	9
Active Transportation Policy Council		7.6%	6
Civic Asset Naming Committee		2.5%	2
Public Art Committee		0.0%	0
Vancouver Food Policy Council		11.4%	9
Total Responses			79

### 2. What is your role in the advisory committee?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Chair / Co-Chair		24.1%	19
Member		75.9%	60
Total Responses			79

### 3. Why did you apply to be on a City advisory committee?



Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Gain better access to decision-makers		41.8%	33
Learn more about municipal issues		63.3%	50
Offer my knowledge and expertise to the community		91.1%	72
Advocate for issues I care about		77.2%	61
Other (specify)		8.9%	7
Total Responses			79

Written comments: Other

- Gain skills
- Gain a better understanding of how municipalities make decisions.
- Get the opportunity to "sit at the table."
- I am the s.22(1) and have actively participated in the foundation issues that confronted the new Advisory.
- I am very concerned about livability for children and families in our very dense city
- Have my and my fellow community members heard
- Champion the needs of seniors who can't speak for themselves

#### 4. What challenges, if any, have you experienced during your tenure as a committee member?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Unclear direction as to the roles and responsibilities of members		38.4%	28
Unclear direction as to the roles and responsibilities of staff liaisons		21.9%	16
Unclear direction as to the roles and responsibilities of Council liaisons		24.7%	18
Unclear mandates and objectives of the advisory committee		28.8%	21
Scope of the work / focus of the meeting is too broad		45.2%	33
Few opportunities to engage and communicate with Council and staff members		23.3%	17
Heavy workload		17.8%	13

Other (specify)		37.0%	27
		<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>73</b>

*Written comments: Other*

- Responsibilities were clear to me but not to some other members, low commitment & participation level of some members, biased chair pushing her favoured issues, inner organizational deficiencies, etc.
- Staff - not just staff liaisons - often do not understand the role of committee members. If we do not support their work 100%, they see it as a betrayal instead of as fulfilling our role, representing our committee.
- Meetings cancelled by not reaching quorum, coordination and direction by chair could be improved.
- The selection process of who sits on the council was both challenging and frustrating. The metrics needs to be revamped, to ensure greater diversity and representation of Vancouver's residents through council members.
- Was a very steep learning curve so much information to absorb.
- Some topics are too broad, legal jurisdiction of the city.
- The meetings were too long and not productive.
- Dysfunctional group dynamics within the committee. 2. Overly-controlling chair and vice-chair.
- We always have more ambition than time.
- Lack of understanding of the roles and responsibilities of members among other members and misunderstanding of the mandate of the committee among other members (what is in and out of scope).
- Lack of attendance at working meetings because they are optional.
- I think our committee has focused too much on provincial issues, rather than municipal ones. We have had a few meetings cancelled due to lack of quorum, which I think indicates a lack of engagement.
- Limited (in our case, no) allocated budget to allow pursuit of projects /directions /initiatives of interest to the committee.
- Limited availability of Council liaisons. Unclear connection of our work into the broader CoV work. Time consuming to figure out who to reach out to for certain issues, often time resulting in lack of progress. Lack of attendance of committee members at meetings and events, lack of commitment to committee.
- Too many sub-committee meetings.
- This was the case at the beginning but I believe we are now moving toward a clearer understanding of various roles and opportunities.
- Lack of commitment by some members. Not showing to meetings.



- Communication issues, disappointed as communication regarding continuation was not communicated to me and I'm no longer on the committee for the next sitting. Did not feel like I completed much of anything as I attended only two meetings. Find that process frustrating. Either I missed an email or it wasn't sent. Expected more engagement. Possibly a phone call.
- Not given adequate time to consider council or staff proposals, but asked to vote in support of councillors motions. Confusion on how to get councillors to sponsor motions on council floor. Advisory council consultations by City on neighbourhood plans don't seem genuine.
- It is a large committee which has a lot of pluses but the varied interests can slow down the work accomplished.
- Committee members not showing up for meetings.
- Little continuity between various City departments.
- Not having a paid coordinator or chair.
- Still not clear as to what impact our motions that are not tied to a project going to Council, have on Council. Staff have generally been very responsive to questions/info needs etc. However, there have been a few issues where, in retrospect, I think the staff didn't want to deal with an issue and i felt considerable time was wasted by Council members trying to follow up. In general, staff have been very helpful, this is just a specific concern. I also think that Council members who don't attend meetings- including Working & sub-committee meetings- should be asked to attend regularly or resign and allow someone who will actively participate to do so.
- Too short a timeframe for comment for many of the reports that staff take to Council.

5. Based on your experience with your advisory committee, indicate your level of satisfaction with the following aspects of the advisory committee:

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Very unsatisfied	Total Responses
Member recruitment and appointment process	10 (13.7%)	33 (45.2%)	15 (20.5%)	13 (17.8%)	2 (2.7%)	73
Terms of reference (scope of activities and mandates)	8 (11.0%)	38 (52.1%)	15 (20.5%)	12 (16.4%)	0 (0.0%)	73
Organization of the agenda items	17 (23.3%)	41 (56.2%)	10 (13.7%)	5 (6.8%)	0 (0.0%)	73
Organization of the work plans	7 (9.6%)	31 (42.5%)	22 (30.1%)	11 (15.1%)	2 (2.7%)	73
Support received from	21	28	10 (13.7%)	13 (17.8%)	1 (1.4%)	73

Council liaison	(28.8%)	(38.4%)				
Support received from staff liaison	26 (35.6%)	29 (39.7%)	11 (15.1%)	5 (6.8%)	2 (2.7%)	73
Annual report to Council	9 (12.3%)	26 (35.6%)	30 (41.1%)	8 (11.0%)	0 (0.0%)	73
Annual training for members	4 (5.5%)	10 (13.7%)	22 (30.1%)	31 (42.5%)	6 (8.2%)	73
Collaboration between committees	2 (2.7%)	14 (19.2%)	25 (34.2%)	24 (32.9%)	8 (11.0%)	73
Ease of access to information (e.g., training materials, agenda, annual reports)	8 (11.0%)	32 (43.8%)	23 (31.5%)	9 (12.3%)	1 (1.4%)	73
Ease of navigation on committee website	7 (9.6%)	31 (42.5%)	24 (32.9%)	9 (12.3%)	2 (2.7%)	73

**6. Provide any comments for each of the above aspects of your experience in the advisory committee:**

*Member recruitment and appointment process*

- [The Committee] needs committed & knowledgeable members not diversity for sake of diversity, personal interviews may help and verifying engagement in seniors issues & community
- The [Committee] needs to reflect the ethno-cultural and socio-economic diversity of our city and does not yet. How can the City help us get more indigenous participation, for example?
- Would be nice if there was more communication during this process
- Although it states diversity on the website, it is obvious that there are many people of the same race, gender, and age group. I understand if there are not enough applicants, but I was shocked to see this on my first day.
- The current metrics used is not sufficient in helping ensure advisory committee members represent Vancouver's ethnic and cultural diversity.
- I think the new members should have a mentor for the first year then make it a 3 year appointment.
- I thought it was reasonable.
- Stricter screening of members...i.e. ask for and check references.
- Absences and participation levels for the committee are too loose / lax--as a result the workload is heavy on few shoulders. Existing committee has no input on new appointments--the

functionality of the committee may be improved by permitting "requests" for recruitment criteria such as "we need someone on the committee with experience in the X sector".

- Members to be more diversely chosen to reflect all opinion from artists and art organization of all art forms.
- It would be great if the committee could be slightly smaller. 21 is a lot of people.
- We had a tough time working with certain members who had no idea the role as a volunteer; they joined the committee with a hidden agenda. As a result, created lots of undesirable stresses and lots of disruption for the committee to function.
- We can only recruit from among those who apply, so that is a limitation, but I think our committee would benefit from a broader representation of different demographics, especially lower income and senior renters.
- Overall I am happy with the recruitment and appointment process. A couple areas that need improvement are communication between the CoV and the committees as to the schedule for recruitment and appointment so we are aware and can help spread the word. As well as be prepared for questions and enquiries when members of the public see the posting. It has also been challenging having members who are not committed to the committee. Lack of attendance (although staying within the attendance requirements) and engagement makes it difficult to progress on the work plans. I understand this is a tricky challenge as it is hard to tell who is passionate and committed and who is hoping to use this for the resume and networking. Unfortunately I don't have a solution, but wanted to bring it up.
- Could make more efforts to achieve diversity. How can city hall be made accessible? Truly accessible. For example people on the [Committee] all \*seem\* to know, in depth, the processes of creating and changing policy. Maybe that assumption should not be made. Half the battle of diversifying city hall could be alleviated if work was done to familiarize folks with how city hall functions. For example: committees getting an introductory tour of city hall as well as maybe a short workshop on how council works etc. While many people may \*know\* how it works, many don't. And sometimes being on a committee is the first time people have been inside city hall.
- I feel committee members should be more involved in the process. Also stricter guidelines for volunteer commitments.
- Again disappointed regarding continuation process. Wasn't aware of said process. Don't believe I was given action information and am no longer on the committee for lack of action.
- No diversity. Appointed tokenized members. Please broaden reach.
- As we are a multi-age committee it has sometimes been difficult to fill all the age groups.
- This process should be more transparent.
- Announcement to the large demographic available.
- The people being appointed are not as available as one would like. Maybe prior to the selection, giving potential committee members information on time expectations? The first term I was involved, we had great members. Each term there has been more absenteeism, sometimes unable to make quorum.
- Our members have continually expressed frustration that recruitment is not transparent and that our desire to have many types of diversity reflected on our council are not heard. Members

who were not reappointed were confused as to why and hoped that the City could provide more clarity. Members are always frustrated by the lack of clarity around the role that the staff liaisons, City Council, and the co-chairs play in the recruitment and appointment process. I think the committees need to be consulted with on a revamp of this process, or at least be provided with more clear and transparent information about how the process works. There should be ONE location on the City website that outlines all the deadlines and the process for all committees. We get a lot of information by email at different points in time, making it difficult to keep track of.

- Would like to see current members involved in identifying what needs the Council might have & suggest names etc.
- Some appointed members have misconception about the speed with which they can make the changes that they think should be made
- Members that represent Vancouver's diversity is a challenge as is the recruitment of those 12 but I know that City staff try their best to do so.
- I believe it needs to be a bit more diversified.

*Terms of reference (scope of activities and mandates)*

- Not clearly indicating City mandate under Vancouver Charter v. general issues who those should be handled.
- To me, our role is clear. Some need help with reminders that we cannot direct staff. Most get it.
- Whatever activities came up each month would be what was discussed.
- Okay.
- More meaningful engagement with committee--meaningful consultations, opportunities for input etc. In some instances, our input is requested too late to be included in processes, or is unheeded, or "consultations" are in actuality "presentations" with little or no openness to our advisory role.
- I am very satisfied with that and have no comment.
- Our mandate is too broad (which is good in some sense), but the committee needs tool (funding/staff support) to carry out our mandate. For example,
- Two years term seems kind of short if we like to have some continuity of the project for members to complete.
- I think terms of reference are fine, but would prefer our committee to focus more on core mandate, which I see as advising council on items within its direct jurisdiction, rather than provincial issues.
- Accomplished through the efforts of committee members and now, one hopes, in place.
- Unclear what purpose of advisory committee is.
- This is renewed each term and can sometimes take time to initiate new activities or stay on top of the range of them.
- These were too broad to be useful.



- The scope is so broad and the need for input great, however the terms of reference inadequate.
- Fine.
- It was hard to start our work because we feel that we were crossing with other committees.

#### *Organization of agenda items*

- Preferential treatment of pet projects giving unlimited time to some projects, allocating limited or no time to reports from subcommittees.
- This works well.
- Very good!
- Sometimes presentations are too long.
- Liaison staff is doing great job.
- Lack of time for sub-committee's report and discussion.
- Think our committee would benefit from more proactive management of the agenda - we have been quite reactive and have almost missed a few major opportunities to provide input on local housing policy issues affecting renters.
- Too much liaison updates. Councillors drop in and out.
- Our vice chair has done a remarkable job of this
- [Meeting Coordinator] & chair do great at this.
- Complicated by the need to conform to the City formats.
- We always kept in track with our agenda.

#### *Organization of work plans*

- There was no work plan of whole [committee], no set priorities, only TAMS had work plan and report on members activities per project.
- I don't understand this one. What work plans? Our priorities and goals? That works fairly well.
- The committee does not have a yearly strategic plan nor do the subcommittees.
- Hit and miss - too much work for the committee members which also included sub committees.
- Okay.
- I am satisfied with it.
- Less familiar.
- No comments.
- I think we've spent too much time on planning the work, rather than doing the work.
- Unclear what these work plans will evolve into and whether our work is even meaningful.
- The chair and vice chair also have worked hard on this sometimes incorporating too much given the workload of all of the committees outside activities.

- We didn't have a work plan.
- Good.
- More information about Council's expectations around planning would have been helpful early in term.
- We struggle with the amount of potential work that could be taken on by the [committee] and that both the public and the City ask us to address. We would benefit greatly from having a paid chair or paid coordinator.
- Committee members could use some help with this.
- It took a long time to organize us as committee and have a clear path.

#### *Support received from Council liaisons*

- Only one Council liaison attended most meetings and contributed to the subjects and supported [the committee's] issues at Council.
- It's unclear what to expect of a Council liaison. Is there a minimum of duties we should expect? How is it made clear to us who of the 2 liaisons we should expect more of?
- s.22(1) has been wonderful. We have not seen our other [Council liaison] since the first meeting. This is very frustrating. I hope in the future Council liaison's make more of an effort or at the very least email and respond to messages.
- It was excellent when Council liaison attended meetings, but they had busy schedules.
- [The Council liaison] is fantast... [They] attend, are involved and understands the issues and help us understand the process. The other liaison does not participate.
- I highly value the input of [the Council liaison]; I wish they were able to attend more of our meetings. I am unsure about the intended role of [the other Council liaison] and I would like that clarified; I don't know if they have ever attended a committee meeting.
- Support received from one of them was good; support from other not so good.
- Excellent.
- Sometimes lacking, even when Council liaison is in attendance.
- [The Councillor] has been very supportive and informative; really appreciate s.22(1) in our committee.
- We have two liaisons.
- Appreciate the presence and contributions of [the Councillor] when [they are] able to attend.
- We have had a lack of attendance at our meetings from our Council Liaisons. One of our two Council liaisons has been very available, helpful and supportive via email and phone to make up the lack of meeting attendance. We understand their schedules are full, but their insights are extremely valuable as to how to move the work forward.
- It sometimes seems as though the council liaison tries to control the committee's direction.
- I found this to be pretty good. I know council members are so incredibly busy. The ones on the [committee] made great efforts to attend our meetings. They were informative, kind and made



efforts to familiarize themselves with everyone. Council liaisons remembered my name. That means a lot.

- [The Council liaison] is fantastic.
- Council liaisons often come to meetings with something they want us to vote on to approve and then leave. We don't get adequate time to consider motions.
- Generally we have a council liaison at all the meetings or part thereof.
- We have two council liaisons. Sometimes it's unclear as to what their individual roles are.
- Pretty irregular and unreliable.
- Council liaisons missed meetings or attended only briefly. Not effective following up.
- Liaisons rarely in attendance.
- Excellent.
- It could improve a bit more.

#### *Support received from staff liaison*

- Good within the scope of the liaison position.
- The staff liaisons are available when needed and provide professional guidance in a calm and friendly manner.
- I think [our] liaison is great. I wish sometimes the speed in which we could be given information from the person they ask to respond could be faster and more specific. Often we get a run around at no fault of our staff liaison.
- At times it seemed staff would come to the advisory committee too late in the process of an issue for authentic engagement.
- Good.
- Staff could support us a great deal more in facilitating access to documents and other information we have requested.
- Staff liaison is fantastic.
- Excellent.
- Not sufficiently formal.
- Overall, staff liaison has been very supportive.
- Great.
- Staff liaisons have been really great & I've learned a lot from them.
- Always appreciate prompt and detailed follow through.
- Our staff liaison has been amazing. Very engaged with the committee, very committed to attending meetings, very responsive to emails and very helpful in our work.
- The staff liaison is extremely helpful.

- Also remembered names.
- Usually staff liaisons are there as well and if the agenda specifically needs someone from the department to speak to it they are willing to come or make themselves available/
- Our staff liaison could do a better job helping us form a relationship with other committees, and other departments within the city (beyond social planning).
- Ok.
- Generally satisfied as mentioned earlier, just the times when we need a straight answer early on regarding an issue so we don't keep trying to work on something.
- Excellent.
- Everyone was very nice and engaging.

#### *Annual report to Council*

- Not discussed by [the committee], no relation to any work plan.
- The size of it (small) makes sense. An annual report is a good idea - instead of 1 per term.
- Much more has to be done for disability issues.
- Okay.
- It is fairly good and should be widely discussed among members before presenting to Council.
- No comments.
- The recent annual report to council has inaccurate and incomplete info about our committee - don't recall members being consulted about the contents. Does not reflect the full scope of our work in 2016 and includes an item completed in 2015.
- This is discussed in the group and presented by the chair and vice chair.
- The only report was to the Council of Councils meeting and if that was ever seen or discussed at the City Councillors level we were not informed.
- Does Council actually listen?
- Template for report was helpful, but additional information about activities should be encouraged. It would be helpful to provide more guidance to committees about reporting expectations early in their term.
- Difficult to assemble.
- It can be improved.

#### *Annual training for members*

- New members needed it from start, but it was offered way too late in the process
- I'm not sure what's involved in this.
- Was there training offered? Maybe I missed this.

- I entered the committee in the middle of term, and I was not given any type of direction. I still do not understand the political jargon that is used in the meeting, and how the committees function.
- I think there could be more resources to support advisory committees with the materials needed to be train new members so the advisory committee is as effective as possible.
- I don't recall there being any training.
- Should be more and earlier, and more direct contact between committees.
- Request cultural sensitivity training for committees.
- It needs to be strengthened.
- Council in council training was a bit mundane - lack of interaction between committee members. It should be a time for mingling, getting to know other committee members and staff, as well as council liaisons.
- Not aware of training apart from Council of Councils gathering.
- It would be great if the annual training took place in February before the first advisory committee meeting takes place.
- Could be more. I don't know what that includes so i cannot speak to it more.
- Needs better training.
- Important training like how to speak at council meetings, how to offer policy advice, etc. is missing.
- Not too sure if we need a lot of training. The new members do get support from returning members and some refreshers from City Clerk.
- [The committee] members need more support for the training of new members. We need a retreat; we need physical binders with important information and documents in them, so members have easy access to this at all times.
- Did not receive any.
- This doesn't exist.
- I haven't been to this, I haven't been to this.
- Training about member's roles and responsibilities at beginning of term would be helpful.
- This year we organized our own training session and will encourage our members to attend the training offered by the Clerk's office on conflict of interest etc. We would benefit greatly from funding to allow our members to receive training on other topics such anti-oppression training, Indigenous Cultural Competency, facilitation, etc.
- Non-existent.
- Okay.
- Orientation sessions at the beginning of each term are very important for this committee.
- I don't think we have any training.

### *Collaboration between committees*

- Close only with one other advisory committee, no support to collaborate with other advisory committees, in previous [committees], atmosphere was more supportive and I participated in 2 other advisory committees.
- There could always be more time spent on liaising with other committees. I would love examples of how successful liaisons make it work. Is it assigning people from one to attend meetings of the other?
- There could be increased opportunity for collaboration. Perhaps joint sessions to discuss issues that cross over.
- I experienced none of this is my s.22(1) volunteering. This said, if the other committees are as busy as the [committee], I don't know when anyone would have time.
- haven't seen any collaboration on issues
- There was some collaboration but there needs to be more.
- Should be more.
- Request more formal structures for this to happen.
- More interaction and exchange of information are suggested.
- It would be great if we could have more frequent meetings of all of the Committee Chairs to form more collaboration and coordinate across Advisory Committees.
- No comments.
- We haven't really done much/any of this. Would be good to do that.
- Needs to be a lot more of this--there's been very little in my s.22(1) on the [advisory committee].
- s.22(1)  
I feel I don't hear regular updates on what's going on with other committees, and we don't jointly work on I initiatives / projects.
- There has been some collaboration between committees.
- More, more, more! Working meetings could be done together once in a while.
- Rarely happens.
- Virtually none or very hard to do. Need to create channels to foster collaboration.
- We have just really started into this again. There are lots of overlaps with other committees but often the work load doesn't allow lot of cross collaboration.
- Other than the annual meeting of all committees, there isn't a lot of communication that happens between committees. Perhaps the staff liaisons between committees can meet and help individual committees know of any opportunities to collaborate.
- There was no collaboration between city advisory councils and committees and little collaboration between the Advisory Council and its subcommittees.

- Not much.
- Although we met other committee members at the Council of Councils meeting, we were not able to establish any formal collaboration. I think this is largely due to limitations of volunteers.
- Almost non-existent.
- I think it needs to be a lot more collaboration between the committees.

*Ease of access to information (e.g., training materials, agenda, annual reports)*

- City web is not very user friendly but getting better. [The committee] has its own web to compensate for that but it depends on one member time availability and interest in particular issues.
- It would be very helpful to have access to a database of all motions - from all committees but even as a start just one of our motions from say, 2012. The topic, date passed, date it went to Council (if it did), and the wording.
- There was no ease of access to information.
- Okay.
- Basecamp is really helpful.
- I am satisfied with it.
- I don't believe we received any training materials.
- Good system and have easy access.
- There could be better access to training materials and more information about the committee's mandate.
- Not very. There's no common place to access all this information.
- City clerk is more than helpful.
- It could be easy to access but I was not aware that I could even access them.
- Difficult and pricey.
- Spotty.
- Not as useful as it could be.
- Yes it can be improved.

*Ease of navigation on committee website*

- See above, City web useful for simple info re mandate, membership, agenda, minutes - basics not a source of info about AC activities that could serve the whole Vancouver seniors community.
- This works well. I love the new search button, too. It works so much better than the old way!
- What website?
- Okay

- I am satisfied with it
- Good
- Good
- hard to find materials
- I am not aware of any committee website
- Non existent
- Website is NOT accessible. A poor representation from a City that boasts about its accessibility and inclusion.
- not at all easy to find
- We didn't have a website for our committee

#### Other

- committee seemed more reactive than proactive
- in I was disappointed that health care was not on this committees agenda as my experience and interest was health care issues
- The City has to increase support to these committees tenfold.
- unclear as to who we are advising, can we be pro-active and initiate or are we advocating
- It feels like planning staff treats advisory councils like checkboxes than genuine consultation
- This is a really important committee in terms of fostering a group of people who really care about Vancouver and will hopefully be empowered to give input to the quality of life in Vancouver for years to come
- The City has no vision or official policy statement on Accessibility, all departments inconsistent.
- format for minutes of non-clerked meeting and other documents are difficult to understand and work with

#### 7. Indicate your level of agreement with the following statements

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total Responses
I am given a clear set of expectations on my role as a member	3 (4.3%)	35 (50.7%)	13 (18.8%)	16 (23.2%)	2 (2.9%)	69
I have become more informed on local government issues and operations as a result of my	37 (53.6%)	27 (39.1%)	5 (7.2%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	69

participation in the advisory committee						
I feel that my advisory committee's recommendations are valued by Council and staff	12 (17.4%)	36 (52.2%)	13 (18.8%)	5 (7.2%)	3 (4.3%)	69
Participating in an advisory committee has increased my level of civic engagement	29 (42.0%)	36 (52.2%)	2 (2.9%)	2 (2.9%)	0 (0.0%)	69
I am well aware of the City's key priorities and how the committee's work impacts Council decisions	12 (17.4%)	37 (53.6%)	11 (15.9%)	9 (13.0%)	0 (0.0%)	69
Agenda items and discussions are relevant to the committee's mandates and scope of activities	15 (21.7%)	41 (59.4%)	12 (17.4%)	1 (1.4%)	0 (0.0%)	69
The committee is provided with opportunities to engage with other advisory committees	2 (2.9%)	24 (34.8%)	29 (42.0%)	12 (17.4%)	2 (2.9%)	69
The Council liaison provides meaningful feedback on the committee's work	17 (24.6%)	25 (36.2%)	21 (30.4%)	6 (8.7%)	0 (0.0%)	69
The staff liaison provides meaningful feedback on the committee's work	19 (27.5%)	23 (33.3%)	20 (29.0%)	7 (10.1%)	0 (0.0%)	69
The annual training and guidelines I have received are sufficient and informative	2 (2.9%)	16 (23.2%)	23 (33.3%)	23 (33.3%)	5 (7.2%)	69

**8. Indicate the frequency with which the following occur in committee meetings**

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total Responses
My opinions are heard and considered by other members, staff and	33 (48.5%)	23 (33.8%)	10 (14.7%)	2 (2.9%)	0 (0.0%)	68



Council liaisons and I have the opportunity to introduce an agenda item of discussion

I am well informed on the topics being discussed

Meetings are purposeful, productive and well-organized

Discussions in meetings are relevant to committee mandates

15 (22.1%)	39 (57.4%)	13 (19.1%)	1 (1.5%)	0 (0.0%)	68
17 (25.0%)	35 (51.5%)	13 (19.1%)	3 (4.4%)	0 (0.0%)	68
20 (29.4%)	34 (50.0%)	13 (19.1%)	1 (1.5%)	0 (0.0%)	68

**9. Provide any additional input on your experience as a committee member**

- Clicking on boxes doesn't allow for more comprehensive and fine-tuned feedback that could improve operations of SAC
- Follow up from staff and council liaisons on what is working and what isn't working (and especially on what efforts we made had the most positive impact) would be welcomed by committee members.
- Coming on late in the term was a terrible experience. Other members were not welcoming, which made me feel less valued as a member of the committee. Furthermore, I think it's important that these committees be more representative of average Vancouverites, rather than successful Vancouverites. I felt the voices of everyday renters were missing from the committee.
- I was not given any training; it left me very confused during the first few meetings.
- I very much enjoyed my experience and felt I learned a lot. Very impressed with the advisory committees accomplishments.
- I think additional reading of the Vancouver Charter will be beneficial for any advisory committee members.
- Committees need more support, more funding, and need to be taken seriously which I find isn't always the case.
- Greater clarity as to the councils. Increase clerked meetings to 8 – 10.
- Unfortunately, it appears that input from the advisory committee is not valued by the current administration unless it is in support of their political views.
- Very worthwhile opportunity to contribute.
- Despite certain barriers to communicate with staff liaison, I enjoyed to be part of the team to serve the community. Thank you for giving me this opportunity.



- It's been a good experience overall, s.22(1) . It has benefitted me because it's provided a mechanism for me to learn more about city housing policy and to provide my informed input, and to have some influence. However, I feel our committee needs to be more engaged and more proactive. We've had low attendance and/or lack of quorum at several meetings. I think we need more pro-active chairing.
- Our Parks Board Liaison has been very engaged, supportive and helpful. I think the opportunity to engage with other advisory committees has been available, but due to the business of everyone's schedules and the committees work hasn't been used to its full potential. Though we have been able to engage and work with at least 4 other advisory committees throughout this term. Annual training has been helpful, though I think having more understanding of the priorities of the city earlier on (ex. at Council of Councils), how the City works, as well as the various departments could be helpful from the get go. Also helpful would be to have one person able to meet with each committee at the beginning of the term to help ensure they start the term off on the right foot. We were fortunate enough to have returning members who could help guide the way.
- Really good experience so far. Took a bit of time to find my voice but had gentle mentoring and coaching from members/chair and Council Liaison/staff liaison which all helped me to become more confident and brave. Thank you.
- I didn't have any training or access to website where I could find information.
- The range of topics that come to the meeting give the young people, especially a really good idea of how much goes on under the City's jurisdiction and how complex these issues can be. The whole VSB board firing, Sanctuary City, Housing, Bike paths etc.
- I do enjoy my work at the city however the long hours and level of involvement need not to be in vain. It would be great to see the city take these contributions more seriously and appreciatively.
- Staff frequently asked to consult with the committee, which is good. Sometimes staff were clearly interested in and valued our input. At other times, however, it appeared that they were just checking the consultation box and were asking for input late in the process with no intention to implement our recommendations. I also had the sense that, although the City values inclusion, access for persons with disabilities often is sacrificed to other priorities. I appreciated the guidelines and training I received, but they should have been provided much earlier in my term.
- Our members have expressed that it is difficult to gauge whether or not (or, to what degree), our input and recommendations have influence in the City.
- Generally feel our work is appreciated by staff but not clear about how useful it is to council in a real way.
- I have already given s.22(1) my life to [the committee], and I'm proud of what we've achieved. But it's come at a cost. The workload is tremendous, and in the past two years especially, the rewards have been few. We are constantly frustrated, discouraged and frankly demoralized by the lack of understanding of the pressing needs of the disabled community. Changes to City staff have contributed to this - it seems as soon as we forge strong relationships with key staff, they are gone and we need to start the process all over again. It's been tough for all of us.

- I really like to be part of the city and learn what is happening in terms of the city.

#### 10. Provide any comments and suggestions on how the advisory committee system can be improved

- My opinions were heard but placing an item on agenda not so much as last item usually running out time, gave up doing it. See other comments in the survey.
- Engineers and planners know the difference between staff roles and City Councillors' roles. However, I don't think most of them are clear on the roles of volunteer committee members. We can support their work; we may not always agree with them; we are there to represent the views of our committee(s). Also, re: transportation they are so used to going to PwDAC, SAC, and ATPC. Is this the right combo? What about Youth, Children & Families? What about the Women's Advisory Committee or Urban Aboriginal? How do we all decide which groups are most relevant for transportation? Does this need a refresher?
- Ensuring those selected have an intersectionality lens and do not dominate the meetings.  
s.22(1)
- Often there is the city's agenda and then there is the committee's agenda which results in meetings being bogged down.
- The meetings were too long and the discussion often off topic
- It is difficult to have something included on the agenda unless it's of interest to the chair and vice-chair. 2. Meeting items often drag on much longer than necessary. 3. It is difficult to have a natural, productive discussion in committee because the chair and vice-chair do not permit people to speak out of turn or over each other. While this can be helpful at times, it can often interrupt the natural flow of conversation and can make members feel like they're being infantilized. Sometimes I felt like I was in a kindergarten class.
- Sometimes I've found the meetings painful and boring. Some of the members just drone on or ask questions that have so many assumptions packed into them. But this is just the nature of working with other people.
- What is the process for electing Chair and Vice-Chair? This was not made clear
- Make working meetings mandatory.
- May be more structured time frame for presentation, especially at Q&A period. Some people talked too much and asking too many irrelevant questions - As a result, many meetings turned out to be boring and unproductive.
- For myself, I think I would benefit from attending some meetings of other advisory committees - to see how they work, what they do, how they're run, etc. But I don't think that should be required - it's just useful. The annual report on committees recently sent out was a very useful document for purposes of understanding the work and accomplishments of other advisory committees.
- A more open process for proposing agenda items for formal meetings /working sessions would allow members to be more actively engaged.

- Having the staff liaison whose job is responsible for the work of the committee could be extremely helpful, though I understand not practical. I have provided comments throughout this survey that speak to this. The advisory committee system is a great initiative and I am grateful for the City for having this and for all the time staff, Council etc. put to this. It is extremely valuable. Thanks for the opportunity to provide feedback.
- Participation in agenda formulation etc. We have had an excellent Chair for the past term. Hope she is re-elected. She spends much time keeping engaged with municipal issues and council. It would be good - one understands how busy they are but even so - if there could be a more direct reporting relationship with council as a whole.
- Clearer objectives and roles could be useful. Who would create these roles and objectives, I do not know.
- We often get invitations to events that would be of value to the work we are doing but it is at the last minute and so no one can attend. We really need more notice to fully collaborate on issues that affect the work of the committee. The range in ages is a definite plus for the work of the committee as it gives voice to the concerns of all, ages.
- Clerked meetings should be monthly and advisory council members should be required to attend. The meetings are too infrequent and too many absent members made continuity and forward progress difficult.
- Stronger relationships with both staff & Council liaisons, more reporting to council, a appointed PWDAC member to educate city staff on mandate, issues, procedure, policy & protocol.
- Because of the demands for input to city staff, the working sessions often are devoted to responding to staff requests. More clerked meetings would alleviate the problem.
- We would like to see the development of a system to archive motions that we pass in a centralized place that can be searched by ourselves, City staff, and members of the public. This would serve as a historic record of our decision making and help ensure we are moving forward onto new work even as there is turnover in committee membership.
- I think that there could be more roles on the committee, such as note takers for non- regular meetings, people to help solicit for and organize agendas so that they can be issued in a timely fashion, a way to signal to Council that an issue is of primary concern and we would like to know if that particular motion on the issue will be addressed by Council.
- There has been some concern expressed by members about the frequency of presentations by City staff and while usually interesting the direct relevance of the presentations to the mandate of the committee. Also some presenters have not taken into account the age and knowledge/experience of our younger members.
- I think we can improved the way we do meetings and the structure them, maybe have more working meetings.














## Appendix C: Survey Questions and Results – Staff Liaisons

Duration: January 30, 2017 – February 17, 2017




N = 14

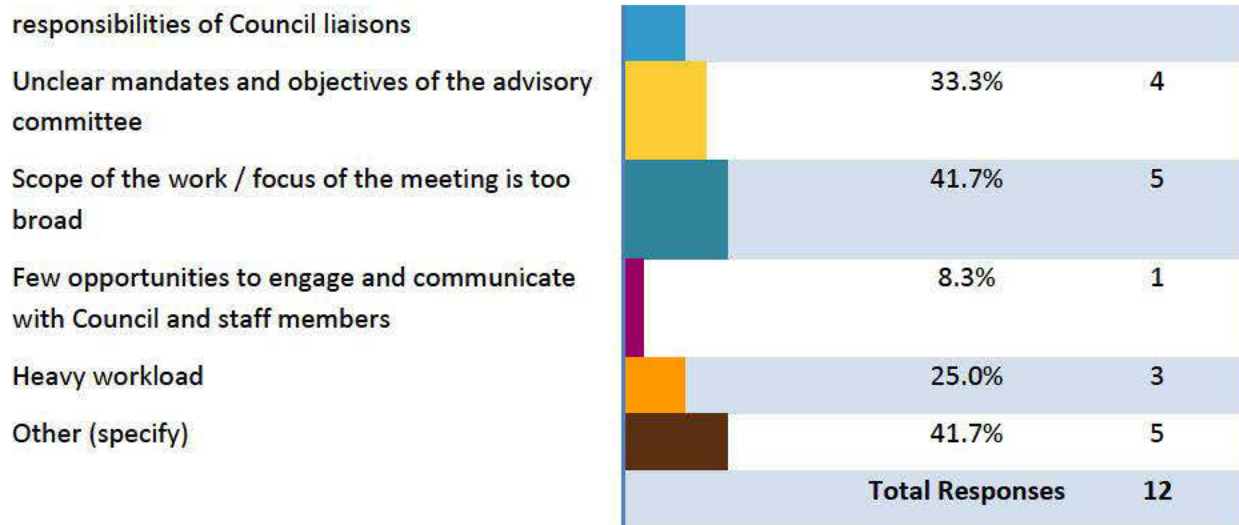
Completion rate: 100%

### 1. Which advisory committee do you support?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Arts and Culture Policy Council		7.1%	1
Children, Youth and Families Advisory Committee		14.3%	2
Cultural Communities Advisory Committee		14.3%	2
LGBTQ2+ Advisory Committee		7.1%	1
Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee		7.1%	1
Renters Advisory Committee		7.1%	1
Seniors' Advisory Committee		0.0%	0
Urban Aboriginal Peoples Advisory Committee		7.1%	1
Women's Advisory Committee		7.1%	1
Active Transportation Policy Council		14.3%	2
Civic Asset Naming Committee		7.1%	1
Public Art Committee		0.0%	0
Vancouver Food Policy Council		7.1%	1
Total Responses			14

### 2. Have you observed any of the following challenges while acting as staff liaison to your committee?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Unclear direction as to the roles and responsibilities of members		41.7%	5
Unclear direction as to the roles and responsibilities of staff liaisons		50.0%	6
Unclear direction as to the roles and		25.0%	3



*Written comments: Other*

- The committee has a very broad mandate and it takes time for members to feel their focus and direction are appropriate. Also, they don't not understand the nature of being 'advisory' to Council, which means they do not have to directly engage in projects of their own. We need to give examples as to how they can 1) identify issues; 2) decide what to do about the issues; 3) what and how they can make recommendations
- Mayor and Council expectations and direction beyond the mandate of the Committee
- Not always able to achieve quorum - perhaps we should consider increasing membership numbers, or reducing the number for quorum.
- No funding to support the work. Even for things such as working group meetings. It would be nice to provide at least food for these evening meetings while the members are working on developing projects that benefit the City.

**3. Please provide comments for each of the following aspect as it relates to your advisory committee experience:**

*Member recruitment and appointment process*

- Found process simple and transparent
- This seemed to fail as a few good returning committee members weren't renewed, apparently through an oversight.
- Council seemed to agree with most of staff recommendations on potential members.
- I am very new to this role and have not yet participated in recruitment and appointment of members.
- It would help identify existing members already serving on a committee if there were a question about it when applying and if those names could be highlighted for the review and consideration.
- It would be helpful to have more clarity on initial selection/appointment process, and filling positions throughout the term (would be helpful for both staff and public).



- I don't feel like people who re-apply should automatically remain on the committee. I feel like there should be a time limit to ensure that other people are given an opportunity. I also feel like the scope is too large. (i.e. Youth should have their own separate committee without the influence of adults).
- Different understanding or process by various parties (i.e.; Council Liaison / Staff Liaison).
- I'd like to require potential members to provide more information about their qualifications or experience directly related to the Committee's work (or at least indicate why they are interested in it or feel they could make a positive contribution).
- Satisfactory.
- Format and process seems appropriate. Seemed like a very tight timeline, given my other work responsibilities.
- Very well organized - and appreciated the opportunity to provide input.

#### *Terms of reference (scope of activities and mandates)*

- Committee and Counsellor Stevenson both work at ensuring work stays within scope.
- Need committee to spend time on scope and mandate; if it's a new group, with a new chair, it's not easy to facilitate this discussion. Can the City provide a skilled facilitator for this purpose?
- The [committee] has been very organized and clear on their role and TOR likely due to the experienced direction of the Chair.
- I think it's clear.
- The scope is too broad.
- Clear understanding within the committee.
- The original mandate was to add names to the Name Reserve List. Most of the work is actually responding to a need to name an asset, and the names on the Reserve List often don't fit (the newly-thought up name then gets added to the List, waiting for the appropriate moment to go to Council). Might want to revise the terms of reference to better reflect the actual workflow.
- TORs and scope of activities is seen as too broad to be effective. It took the committee many long meetings to decide their focus and action plans.
- Clear, appropriate.
- Fine.

#### *Organization of agenda items*

- Always organized and focussed.
- Chair usually consults with liaison
- As the current Chair has had experience with organizing agenda items, this process runs smoothly
- [The committee] develops their own agenda - works out well.
- Well organized.

- Ideal to have clear idea understanding of the mandate quickly, so they can embark of few key initiatives in a planned and methodical manner
- No issues.
- The agenda items are quite last minute as the committee chairs are busy with their work schedules. But to their credit, the Chairs came through every time, and put in a lot of effort to ensure that agenda was meaningful and engaged the committee members.
- Chair and committee clerk work together - this seems to work very well.
- Basecamp is an excellent tool to organize agendas, host discussion forums and share information and research.

#### *Organization of work plans*

- Organized. Maintain focus on achieving work plan.
- Liaison staff may provide significant input.
- The [committee] members are very methodical in outlining the items they want to advance and were clear about their priorities.
- [The committee] has subcommittees who work on various issues that are of interest/importance to them. Each subcommittee has a (rough) work plan - sometimes more difficult to execute the work plan due to limited resources and other time commitments.
- Well organized.
- Same as above.
- No issues.
- Once the committee decided on their work plans, they created sub-committees and worked quite effectively.
- Process worked well. Having a very capable chair helps!

#### *Engagement and communication between advisory committees, Council and staff liaisons*

- Open and without complication.
- This has been very valuable for everyone.
- Advisory can use a lot of input from Liaison councillor
- I'm not entirely clear on the role of Council members
- Council agenda items that may be of interest to [committee] members are not always forwarded to them when made public. If Liaisons are away or possibly unaware that projects from another department are going forward (particularly those that [the committee] has commented or passed a motion on) means some members miss an opportunity to speak to an issue. Could [the committee] members receive notification from Clerks about all transportation and major planning items going to a public hearing?
- It's vitally important that the Council liaisons attend the meetings - provides an opportunity for exchange of information

- Communications between all parties are open and productive
- Training on City process on how a advisory committee can approach to moving motions forward will helpful.
- No issues
- Satisfactory
- Communication between staff and committee members is largely through e-mails, and seems to work very well. Outside of meetings, there has been very little need for staff to communicate with the Council liaisons.

#### *Annual report to Council*

- Committee driven and completed.
- Ok
- [The committee] developed their report and forwarded it for the Council of Councils
- In previous years there were full presentation/report by each Committee (this was too much), then in recent years there wasn't much reporting (other than through the Council of Councils mtg) and then this year I felt like the combined report with all updates from Committees to strike a good balance
- Well documented and submitted on time
- No issues
- Satisfactory
- Works well.

#### *Annual training for members*

- For new members their role in relation to council, staff and community simple to read format.
- Meeting facilitation; team building
- I've only been to one quarterly meeting of staff liaisons. I look forward to learning more
- An orientation (and reminder to returning members) is a good thing to kick off a new term (re TOR, roles, process a motion goes through and how it is forwarded on and what happens if it does (or doesn't) get tabled.
- There is limited opportunity - should and could be more. ex leadership, management (specifically for the co-chairs), conflict resolution-
- Everyone seemed to find the training helpful
- A training to offer clarity of mandate and examples of success can be helpful at the beginning of the term
- I'm not sure we need this each year, but we should certainly do a training/orientation session after every new intake, even for returning members
- Adequate



- I did not attend this, but members seem very knowledgeable about Committee processes, etc.

#### *Collaboration between committees*

- [The Committee] has informally liaised with [a committee] and other departments.
- [The Committee] is very enthusiastic about cross committee collaboration
- As part of engagement processes, staff have created workshops and focus groups with representatives from several committees. This has fostered some collaboration between committees. Council of Council events also helps to let all committee members know what all the committees are doing, which could lead to more collaboration if this were done earlier in the term (even if only with the Chairs)
- It's always mentioned as a good thing, but haven't seen much of it. Would be good to be intentional about it.
- I haven't observed collaboration first hand but the committee does discuss soliciting input from other committees on various topics
- Interaction between advisory committees that are mature in being effective can guide/advice younger committees
- No issues
- Very good. Because if the intersectionality of issues, Inter-committee interaction and dialogue was frequent and meaningful.
- This committee is good at collaborating.
- We didn't do any of this... Not sure how to best coordinate this type of collaboration.
- [The committee] members often receive requests for their time sitting on other committees. This is good but perhaps it is time to specify through certain committees that a spot is set aside for an Aboriginal person. [The committee] member is busy as is and can't be everywhere.

#### *Ease of access to information (e.g., agenda, annual reports)*

- Challenging to navigate.
- Committee should be encouraged to keep tap on council meetings and agendas, to see what are the priorities for council and staff.
- No issues with this.
- Yes, info is easily accessible.
- Offering links to relevant council reports. Council priorities. long term strategies - as part of the orientation package.
- No issues.
- Satisfactory.
- Very easy.
- Basecamp is a lifesaver!

#### *Ease of navigation on committee website*

- Challenging to navigate.
- It is difficult to print off the committee's website.
- No issues with this.
- Somewhat dry information - would be good to have pictures, positions/analysis of particular topics.
- Yes, information is easy to locate and in addition the WAC has a well maintained Facebook page.
- Adequate.
- Excellent.
- Very easy.

#### *Other*

- Each committee should be provided funds to go towards hosting events, to advance the profile of the subject. More funds for food at the meetings would be good too.
- There needs to be clearer direction on everyone's roles and the intent/purpose of the committee.
- This is a very hard working and productive committee, with an excellent committee clerk. It makes my job easy!

#### **4. Indicate your level of agreement with the following statements**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total Responses
Members are given a clear set of expectations on their roles and responsibilities	3 (21.4%)	6 (42.9%)	3 (21.4%)	1 (7.1%)	1 (7.1%)	14
Committee recommendations are valued by staff members	6 (42.9%)	7 (50.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (7.1%)	0 (0.0%)	14
The committee provides an effective forum to engage with residents who are traditionally underrepresented	2 (14.3%)	8 (57.1%)	2 (14.3%)	2 (14.3%)	0 (0.0%)	14
Members are well aware of the City's priorities and how the committee's work impacts Council decisions	5 (35.7%)	4 (28.6%)	1 (7.1%)	4 (28.6%)	0 (0.0%)	14
Agenda items and discussions are	7 (50.0%)	5 (35.7%)	2 (14.3%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	14

relevant to the committee's mandates and scope of activities						
Committee members are representative of the community groups to which they correspond	5 (35.7%)	7 (50.0%)	1 (7.1%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (7.1%)	14
Committees provide a good gauge of general public opinion	1 (7.1%)	7 (50.0%)	4 (28.6%)	2 (14.3%)	0 (0.0%)	14
Committee members are representative of the community groups to which they correspond	5 (35.7%)	7 (50.0%)	1 (7.1%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (7.1%)	14
The committee adequately engages with other advisory bodies	3 (21.4%)	4 (28.6%)	3 (21.4%)	4 (28.6%)	0 (0.0%)	14
The advisory committee adequately engages with the public	4 (28.6%)	1 (7.1%)	6 (42.9%)	3 (21.4%)	0 (0.0%)	14
Staff liaisons are given a clear set of expectations on their roles and responsibilities	3 (21.4%)	7 (50.0%)	2 (14.3%)	2 (14.3%)	0 (0.0%)	14

**5. Please provide any additional comments on your experience as a staff liaison.**

- Found my role is to assist with navigating civic system and providing potential contacts for committee to follow up with.
- [The committee] is incredibly high functioning and deliver informed discussions on all matters of food systems. I have a great relationship with the co-chairs. [The committee] plays a very important part in creating a forum to discuss critical and timely issues. They help me learn and teach me in the work that I do. I could look to them even more to assist in the work that I do.
- It seems that staff come with presentations for the group, do not ask for meaningful feedback and then report that the [the committee] was consulted. It is frustrating for the committee members when this occurs.
- When I first took on the role of Staff Liaison to [the Committee] there was little information available in term of expectations, however since [staff] have taken on oversight, the process has been much improved.
- This committee does not have the resources to do much public engagement outside of their existing affiliations with various disability groups. However, they are very good at showing up at City events organized to get public input, and are willing to meet with other individuals and organizations upon request. Because I came on board midway through the current committee term, I may have missed any staff orientation about roles and responsibilities. I would have found that very useful, and did pick up some of this at later sessions.



- Interested individuals put their names forward so participation is really through self-selection. I can't say if they represent the broader community. The idea of engagement amount advisory committees warrants further discussion. There may be opportunities for cross pollination, but given the limited time for the meetings, this may be challenging.
- They keep me super busy at times! Mainly on community engagement projects.

**6. Indicate the frequency with which the following occur in committee meetings**

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total Responses
Members have sufficient information to form an opinion or participate in the discussion	5 (35.7%)	6 (42.9%)	3 (21.4%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	14
Meetings are purposeful, productive and well-organized	5 (35.7%)	5 (35.7%)	4 (28.6%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	14
Discussions in meetings are meaningful and relevant to committee mandates	8 (57.1%)	3 (21.4%)	3 (21.4%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	14
Committee member suggestions are informative and assist in my team's work	6 (42.9%)	5 (35.7%)	3 (21.4%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	14

**7. Provide any comments on the governance of advisory committee at the City or suggestions on how the system can be improved:**

- Committees would benefit from guidance on how to roll up one term and prepare for new members and their ideas next term.
- Not enough resources for the committee; staff liaison ends up having to do more than liaison, including project management
- This committee receives many requests for input from City staff, which is great. As a result, they have very full agendas. Advanced notice of requests to appear on the agenda would be helpful, and an indication of the time frame for response.

## **Appendix E: Survey and Interview Results - Key Themes**

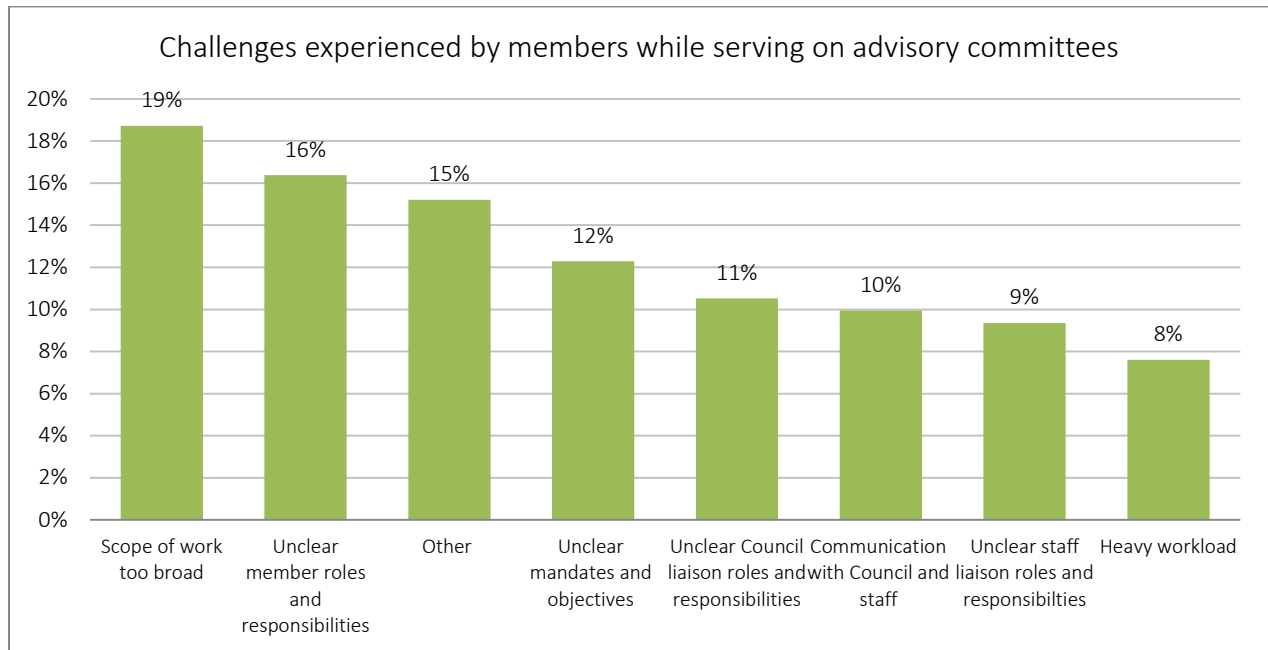
### **Positive experience with civic participation**

- Members reflect positively on their experience on advisory committees. More than 90% surveyed feel that their participation has increased their sense of civic engagement and helped them become more informed on local government issues. One-in-eight (80%) feel that their opinions are heard and they are given the opportunity to introduce new discussion topics. For the most part, members feel that meetings are productive, well-organized and discussions are relevant to committee mandates.
- Councillors general appreciate the level of engagement and active participation by members and proactiveness of advisory committees and agree that committees provide a good gauge of public opinion and offer diverse expertise and knowledge.
- From the point view of staff liaisons, committee members are generally knowledgeable of the City's priorities and contribute to purposeful and productive discussions relevant to the committees' mandates. Feedback also reaffirms the importance and value of committee recommendation to staff's work. Most liaisons agree that the committees provide an effective forum to engage with residents who are traditionally underrepresented.

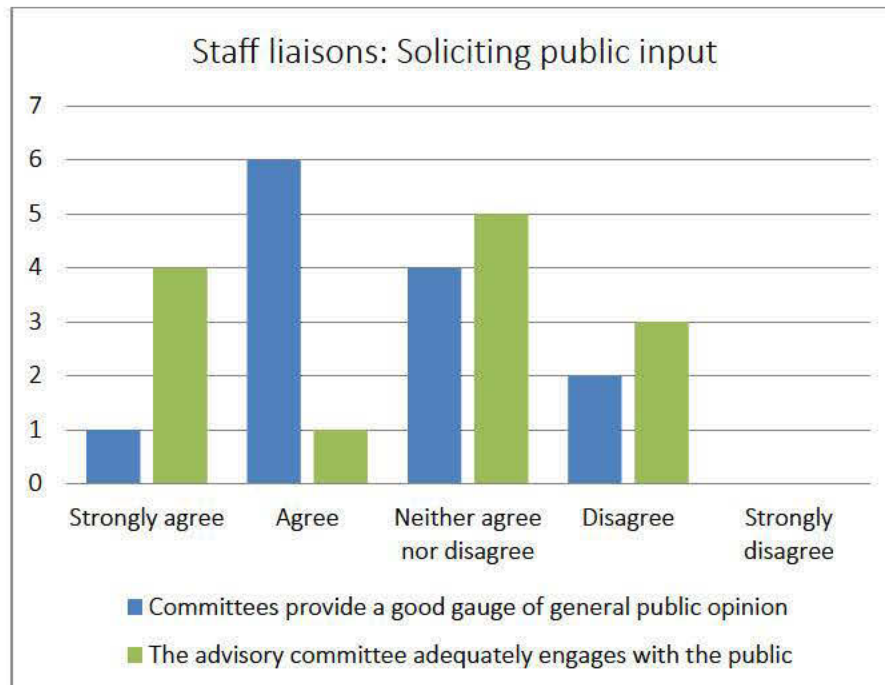
### **Uncertain roles and responsibilities**

- Although most participants agree that committee members are knowledgeable of the topics being discussed at meetings, a commonly cited challenge is the uncertainty around committees' roles and responsibilities. Over a quarter of member respondents feel that they have not been given a clear set of expectations. Several staff liaisons also share mixed views on expectations for members, with 5 out of 13 respondents who do not think that expectations for members are clearly communicated.
- This concern is also echoed by Councillors, nearly all of whom are in the view that advisory body members in general do not have a sufficient understanding of their roles and responsibilities, even though these expectations are documented in the terms of references.
- Councillor's feedback suggests two reasons:
  - The nature of some committees are issue- / operation-based. These committees are frequently referred request for input from staff. This helps to structure committee agenda and discussion. In fact, many Council liaisons find that committees work most effectively and provide meaningful response when they are given a concrete issue to tackle. Unfortunately, this does not occur for every civic agency. For other committees, members have the liberty to pursue a broader framework, and sometimes struggle to work consistently and narrow their focus.
  - The majority of the Councillors feel that advisory committees' role is often undermined by members' lack of understanding of the Council process and where committee recommendations fit in the policy process. In particular, many Council members are concerned that committee often forward motions that are directive rather than advisory. Council would like to see recommendations that provide more advisory content. While a few Councillors express openness to advance motions on behalf of

advisory committees, most Councillors reiterate that they should not be expected to do so.



- Although nearly 70% of the members feel that committee recommendations are valued by Council and staff, one of the recurring feedbacks point to an uncertainty of how their input is valued by Council. In fact, most Councillors acknowledge members' frustration with Council's unresponsiveness, but maintain that Council is unable to respond to inappropriate motions which are overly directive.
- While Councillors feel that committees work most effectively when they are referred items from staff, more advisory committee members see room for more proactiveness. Some feel that committees often play a passive role given the reactivity of their work. Various comments lament on the frequent absences of members which often results in no quorum.



## Mandates and work plans

- The majority of the members approve of the current mandates of their agency, as reflected in the terms of reference, agenda and work plans. The most cited challenge experienced by members during their service on committees is the broad scope of the work (20%).
- Numerous comments received reinforce this frustration. Some members and staff liaisons remark that the attempt to cover a broad scope leads to ineffective and overwhelming work plans. Councillors relate this problem to the different natures of advisory committees, as raised previously.
- Furthermore, it appears that advisory committees do not consistently produce work plans. Although most staff liaisons observe an effective organization of work plans, many members do not know of these products.
- Councillors agree that committees should be vigilant in drafting their work plans and ensure that they are aligned with committee mandates. However, they are divided on the appropriate scope of committee work plans. While a few feel committees should situate themselves within the strategic priorities of the City, many others would like to give members the freedom to explore other emerging issues.
- Councillors' opinions are divided on how committees should receive support on scoping and identifying committee activities. A few suggest that they are best driven through staff referrals. Others propose that Council liaisons should step out of the "liaison" role at times to draw on their own expertise and advise on the development of these products.

## Reporting and Communication

- Many Councillors rely on the advisory committee minutes to stay on top of their discussions, but also recognize the limitation of content as they do not capture all discussion contents. One Councillor in particular expresses discomfort with advisory bodies taking votes, since minority voices could be lost through a vote in a decision-making system of pass/fail. These opinions should be captured somehow.
- They also find that the newly introduced section in the Council Report template to be a positive addition, as it improves the consultation and reporting process between staff, Council and advisory committees.
- Council feels that current reporting mechanism between committees and Council has been uneven and insufficient. Many remarked that Council of Council events are large and infrequent productions that do not facilitate in-depth discussions. A few Council members suggest exploring more formalized initiatives to allow committees come together to provide briefing reports before Council.
- Participants have also pitched other ideas to better facilitate communication:
  - Create a motion database to better keep track of decisions and their statuses. This could also ensure continuity of committee work and provides a quick overview of the progress.
  - Council liaisons to provide updates (written, if they cannot make it to the meeting) at each meeting, if that is not currently being done.

## Role of liaisons

### *Staff liaisons*

- Nearly half of the staff liaisons surveyed feel that they have received unclear direction on their roles and responsibilities. Despite this uncertainty, three-quarter (75%) of the respondents express satisfaction with support received from staff liaisons, with whom they feel are overall responsive and helpful.
- Some Council members express a strong view that staff liaisons should take on a larger role in coordinating work with advisory committees, as they see this as the most effective and productive way for advisory committees to work with the City. They would like to see staff actively circulate relevant reports and Council agenda among committees, as well as soliciting feedback on policy / program. This would also help to ensure that committees are appraised and help avoid misunderstandings.

### *Council liaisons*

- Council liaisons do not share consistent and unified views of their role. Most agree that a liaison's key role is to relay factual information back and forth between Council and advisory committees and facilitate communication and contact. Some see it appropriate to adopt a hands-off approach and limit their participation. Others try to be more proactive in advising on committees work and drawing committees' attention to potential items of interest.
- Members report an overall satisfaction with Council liaisons. However, feedback on the support received varies across different advisory committees. While members from certain advisory committees reflect very positively on the participation of some liaisons, a few other committees



hold contrasting views. A frequently cited source of dissatisfaction stems from a lack of attendance by Council members.

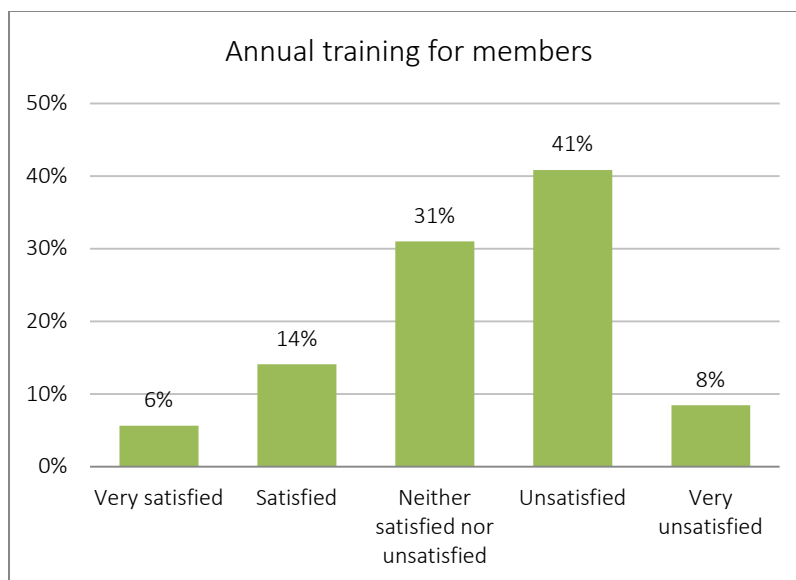
- Based on the comments received, most staff liaisons and members see Council input and participation to be vital. The majority of the members (61%) agree that Council liaisons provide meaningful feedback to advisory committees' work. For this reason, various comments suggest that members would like to see greater clarity around the roles of Councils liaisons, as well as more active participation and regular attendance.
- Additionally, some committee members and Councillors question the necessity of having multiple Council liaisons sitting on an advisory committee. Members are confused over different liaisons' role, often noting that one is consistently more active than the other. Councillors feel that having multiple liaisons can sometimes lead to disagreements, which is counterproductive to committee functioning.

### **Recruitment and Membership**

- Nearly all the comments received from members on public appointment relate to a perceived lack of diversity. Many advocate for better representation of the cultural and age demographics of the community. On the contrary, staff and Council liaisons are in the view that current membership compositions for advisory committees exhibit good diversity. Few members also perceive a lack of transparency and communication during the recruitment and appointment process – lamenting that they received very little information on the process.
- Councillors remain divided on ways to balance rotation and retention. While some feel that it is a good approach to refresh membership and perspectives through placing a limit on terms of appointment, they are also aware of the large number of applicants and need for staff and administrative resources.
- A few Council liaisons acknowledged a shortage of programming resources (staff, software and budget) allocated for recruitment. One observes that the current process is overwhelming given the large number of applications and remark that a few suitable applicants were accidentally fell through the cracks as a result of technological glitches.
- A Council liaison questions the current composition and length of service of the Nomination Subcommittee and how they may impact selection objectivity and the overall fairness of the system.

### **Training**

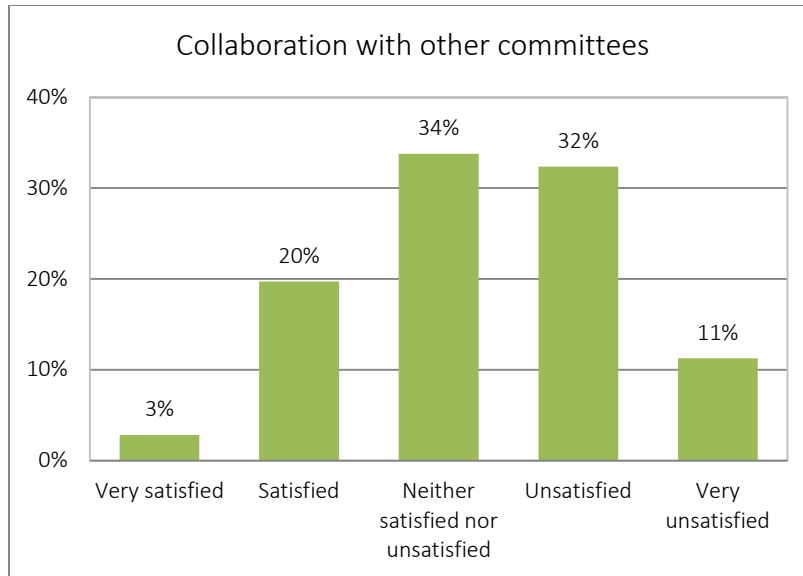
- Nearly half of the member respondents are unsatisfied with the program. Numerous comments also suggest that they were not aware of training sessions even taking place and where to access training materials and guidelines.
- In addition to the traditional training program, respondents would also like to see the session cover the development of skills and knowledge in meeting facilitation, dispute resolution, cultural sensitivity and Indigenous culture. A few Council liaisons also propose that Chairs receive training on meeting facilitation.



- Participants also suggest that training should offer more clarity on the motion process. The experience of members, some of whom have expressed confusion around how motions are advanced and followed-up may reinforce this need. This view is also echoed by several Councillors who also propose the idea incorporating the policy development, Council decision-making process as part of the orientation for members, and offer some tutorials around drafting effective motions and recommendations to Council.
- Some Council liaisons also raise a need to review and highlight member code of conduct guidelines, alluding to multiple cases of interpersonal difficulties between members and several dominating and aggressive individuals.

### Cross-committee collaboration

- All participants (Council, staff liaisons and members) observe a greater need to engage more often with other advisory committees given the intersectionality of issues and overlapping priorities. Among the comments received, most respondents recall few occurrences of cross-committee meetings.



- Although a few committees have liaised with one another on own initiatives to acquire input, the only other opportunity to engage with each other occur during events such as Council of Councils. On these rare occasions, members have found the experience to be valuable and insightful and would like to see more events as such.
- Councillors unanimously feel that there should be more collaborative efforts between committees. Many also feel that rather than consulting individual committees one after another, staff should be encouraged to consult a larger group at once consisting of multiple committees. Other recommendations proposed by Council members include:
  - A regular summit for Chairs; and
  - Have multiple Council of Councils to allow committees to be acquainted one another early on.

## Public outreach

- Among other feedback, this review sought to collect input on advisory committees' role in public engagement.
- Council liaisons note that the majority of the advisory committees do not have the resource and time to pursue these activities, which are costly and time-consuming. Although some Councillors are supportive of such initiatives, others do not think Type A committees should be tasked with public consultation since they are appointed as representatives of the public, from which Council draw on opinions and expertise that are reflective of the community. When asked about an effective and appropriate medium for advisory committees to undertake public outreach, many list public forums as the preferred mechanism
- Another option raised to facilitate this process is to secure a budget for a committee summit that would invite public attendees. Committees may present on their work and have a dialogue with members of the public, who would have an opportunity to provide written and verbal feedback.

## **Other emerging issues**

- A recurring theme observed through written feedback is that members and staff liaisons feel that external staff requests for consultation are more informative than consultative. Some respondents are disappointed that consultations often occur through one-way presentations, limiting opportunity for members to engage in meaningful dialogues with staff. Respondents also remarked that consultations with committees are generally late in the process, leaving very little time for members to consider and debate the issues.
- Various Councillors are concerned with the current number of committees and reiterate that advisory committees should only be created to provide a forum for underrepresented and marginalized groups and / or technical experts.
- A few Councillors are concerned that some members with dependents do not have the economic time to participate in evening meetings and questions whether the City may need to consider child care options to better enable their participation.