A Citizens' Assembly for Grandview-Woodland

Discussion Paper

**City of Vancouver
Planning & Development Services
Community Planning**

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CITY OF
VANCOUVER
Grandview-Woodland
Community Plan

CONTENTS

I.   INTRODUCTION

In September 2013, Vancouver City Council directed Planning staff to develop a Citizens' Assembly as part of the Grandview-Woodland Community Plan process. A Citizens' Assembly is a specific approach to community engagement that is designed to allow for a deeper and on-going level of discussion than traditional consultation processes. This backgrounder sets out some key considerations around Assemblies (and related processes), and asks for your input on how this sort of engagement model might work in Grandview-Woodland.

The Citizens' Assembly in Grandview-Woodland will be the first time this model has been used for developing a community plan. This is an exciting opportunity – one that will see the Assembly approach utilized to help resolve key neighbourhood-based issues. The Assembly will be one tool of several ways that people can get involved with helping to create a new community plan for the neighbourhood.

There are various precedents for the Citizens' Assembly – in Canada and around the world including the BC and Ontario Citizens' Assemblies on Electoral Reform, Citizens' Juries and Citizens' Reference Panels. These processes have also been utilized on a wide-range of topics, including transportation funding, health care service delivery, internet voting, constitutional reform, agriculture, climate change, and regional planning, to name just a few.

Background: the Grandview-Woodland Planning Process

The City launched a community plan process for Grandview-Woodland in April 2012. When completed, the plan will set out a series of long-range directions, policies and priorities, for the neighbourhood. The new community plan will update a neighbourhood plan that dates to 1979-82.

The new community plan will cover a range of topics – housing, transportation, parks and public space, social well-being, heritage, arts and culture, and more. The document will also feature direction on land use and zoning, urban design, and public benefits such as childcare spaces or community centre facilities.

Planning work has unfolded in a series of phases. The first -completed in 2012 - involved outreach and engagement, as well as the general identification of assets, issues and opportunities in the neighbourhood such as what people love about the community, and areas that they'd like to see changed. The second has focussed on the development and refinement of draft policy directions. The third component will integrate the various policies into a single, comprehensive policy document. The fourth and final component sees a draft plan completed, refined and prepared for presentation to City Council.

The Grandview-Woodland planning process is sitting between the second and third phase. In May and June of 2013, staff produced a series of initial policy ideas (prototype policies for the neighbourhood) and assembled them in an *Emerging Directions* document. While some of the policies were well received, there were a number of concerns raised about certain key directions – including specific land use and built form considerations for Broadway and Commercial, Nanaimo and Hastings Street, as well as broader issues around affordability, rental housing, and the security of local, independent businesses. As staff noted, there was clearly more to be done to create a plan that worked for the community at large. More time and an enhanced process were needed to 'get it right.'

Planning Extension

The original timeline called for the draft Grandview-Woodland Community Plan to be completed by December 2013. However, in September 2013, Council granted staff an extension of a minimum of 12 months. The purpose of this extension is to allow for additional consultation on the key planning issues that were identified during the *Emerging Directions*. Council also directed staff to create a Citizens' Assembly as a new and important part of the future planning work in the neighbourhood.

Both the additional time and the enhanced engagement process will allow planners – and the community – to collaborate to produce a strong community plan – one that will guide growth and development in the neighbourhood over the next few decades. The work of the Grandview-Woodland Citizens' Assembly will be a key part of the process.

The Citizens' Assembly will be one part of the Grandview-Woodland Community Plan process. In addition to the Assembly, the City has committed to other engagement activities for the whole community, including specific workshops on key sub-areas of the neighbourhood (e.g. Nanaimo Street, Broadway & Commercial, etc.)

II. DESIGNING THE ASSEMBLY. YOUR INPUT.

In order to make the Assembly process as effective as possible, we need your ideas on how you think a Citizens' Assembly might work in Grandview-Woodland.

This Discussion Paper provides an overview of the material that the Planning department has gathered as part of its preparations for a Citizens' Assembly. It showcases key aspects of how these deliberative processes have been undertaken elsewhere, and notes some of the considerations that affect how the model might be used in Grandview-Woodland.

Material gathered as part of this consultation will be summarized and shared with the community by the end of February 2014. Community input will also inform the development of a draft Terms of Reference and report to Vancouver City Council.

Reading this discussion paper

The discussion paper is organized around key aspects of the Assembly process, starting with a general overview of Assemblies and how they work. Subsequent sections explore the following considerations:

- Guiding Principles
- Composition of Assemblies – Representation & Numbers
- Mandate and Tasks
- Products of the Assembly
- Other Features – Recruitment, Duration

Each of these sections notes some general "things to think about" in terms of Grandview-Woodland. When you attend the workshops or provide your input online, we invite you to share your thoughts.

Provide your input

Community workshops on designing the Grandview-Woodland Citizens' Assembly take place on Saturday, January 25, 2014 (12-3pm) and Tuesday, January 28, 2014 (6-9pm). The workshops are free, but you need to register to attend. You can sign up at *vancouver.ca/gw*, or by calling **3-1-1**.

An online questionnaire (containing the same questions as the workshops) will be available starting **Saturday, January 25, 2014**. You can access the questionnaire at *vancouver.ca/gw*.

If you have other questions about the Assembly, or the community plan process, feel free to contact our planning team via email – at *grandviewplan@vancouver.ca* – or by telephone, at 604-873-7271.

III. CITIZENS' ASSEMBLIES AND RELATED PROCESSES

What is a Citizens' Assembly?

A Citizens' Assembly is a group of people brought together to consider an important issue or topic. Assemblies allow for a deeper and on-going level of discussion than traditional consultation processes.

Citizens' Assemblies come out of a broader school of thought known as "deliberative democracy" - which focuses on meaningful opportunities for citizens to wrestle with important policy issues and help shape public policy. In BC, the Citizens' Assembly model is probably best identified with the push for Electoral Reform that took place at the provincial level about a decade ago. However, there have been dozens of previous Citizens' Assembly-type projects in Canada and around the world.

There are a variety of similar approaches to Citizens' Assemblies that fall under different names, therefore, in preparing this discussion paper, staff also looked at examples of Citizens' Juries, Citizens' Reference Panels and other deliberative processes.

The intent behind a Citizens' Assembly and related processes is to create a 'mini-public' (a group of people that reflect the demographic look and feel of a larger public) that can deliberate on key issues. While they range in size and composition, Assemblies are generally representative of the broader community on whose behalf they are deliberating. In this regard, the representative Assembly members act as a stand-in for the community as a whole. Members serve the community by learning and investigating key issues, wrestling with different perspectives and working to generate a meaningful solution. Decisions are made through a process that adopts elements of both consensus decision-making and majority rule.

The focus on deep and on-going deliberation makes Assemblies a useful means to tackle 'sticky' or complex issues and to create better policy. Assembly member are able to wrestle with big issues in a meaningful way, and decision-makers and government can have confidence that they will get an authentic and representative picture of community sentiment on a given issue.

Citizens' Assemblies have proven to be an effective democratic tool for gauging public opinion, determining levels of support on various issues, and creating stronger policy. They have been used across Canada, and internationally, to make informed decisions on specific questions such as electoral reform, climate change, health care policy, transportation planning, service delivery, budgeting, engagement processes and online voting, among many other things.

Research shows that after the Assembly concludes; members have increased knowledge of the subject, interest in politics, attention to public affairs and confidence in their ability to make decisions about complex policy issues. Members also often become ambassadors of the process in their own communities and become more active in civic life. Research also shows that the public treats these Assemblies as a trusted information proxy. That is, the more people know about the Assembly, the more likely they are to support their recommendations, even if they don't understand the details of it.

Most importantly, Citizens' Assemblies have been used in situations where the issues examined are particularly complex. This makes a Citizens' Assembly a useful tool for community planning work. Neighbourhood-based planning issues are complex and overlapping, and a deliberative process such as a Citizens' Assembly, partnered with other public engagement opportunities, can help resolve key issues.

This is a model that has been used dozens of times, in communities around the world.

Glossary of Key Terms

Deliberative democracy – An approach to public decision making that emphasizes the right, opportunity, and capacity of the public to participate in a process that is aimed at improving both understanding and decision making.

At the heart of deliberative democracy is **deliberation** – " an approach to decision-making in which citizens consider relevant facts from multiple points of view, converse with one another to think critically about options before them and enlarge their perspectives, opinions, and understandings." (Lars Hasselblad Torres, *Deliberative Democracy*, 2006.)

Mini-public – A representative group of the public that meets to learn about a particular public issue then form, articulate, and refine opinions through conversations with one another.

How does a Citizens' Assembly work?

The members of a Citizens' Assembly are typically a group of randomly selected people who become a 'mini-public' that is *reflective* of the community at large. Representation is usually achieved by ensuring that the demographic composition of the Assembly is consistent in key ways with that of the wider community.

This group is then given the responsibility of working through a set of tasks or questions. They learn about a particular issue or range of policies, and then work together to make informed recommendations for the government to consider. The final recommendations provide the government with a clear sense of that community's priorities and values.

Although each individual brings their own personal opinions and life experiences, each person also carries the responsibility of being *a representative* of the larger community. Most Assembly processes use some means to randomize the selection of participants, which ensures that the deliberation that takes place is truly one of 'regular' community members.

A Typical Assembly Process

Strong deliberative processes have a number of similar characteristics. From the start, organizers need to be clear about expectations, responsibilities, and outcomes because Assembly participants need to know ahead of time what topic(s) they will be deliberating, and how their decisions will be considered.

Citizens' Assemblies are most successful when:

- Members are convened to address specific, tangible problems
- Commitment from leadership that the participants' input will influence the decision
- Built on a process of selection, learning, consultation, deliberating and making recommendations
- Professionally facilitated by a neutral third party
- Public is informed about the process and has an opportunity to interact with the Assembly

The main Citizens' Assembly meeting schedule is determined ahead of time so it can be included in the recruitment materials. Meetings typically take place on weekends (e.g. four Saturdays in a row for one month, or one to two Saturdays a month for several months). The length of time commitment varies between Assemblies, depending upon number of members, and the amount of questions or issues to deliberate.

After recruitment has selected the members, there are typically three phases to the process: **Learning, Consultation, and Deliberation** (the specific terms vary, but the general format is consistent)

1. In the **Learning** phase, members gather for a series of presentations from a range of relevant stakeholders and experts. Presentations are intended to be informative, factual, and neutral, to provide all members with an equal foundation of information to help them make informed, effective decisions, and understand the effects and trade-offs associated with each option. Members discuss the information that was presented, and have the opportunity to ask questions, and share concerns and suggestions.

2. In the **Consultation** phase, Assembly members work to engage the public and to seek further input and feedback to help with their decision-making. The format of these can range from hosting a series of small meetings to coordinating a large public event with guided round-table discussions, facilitated by Assembly members. In all cases, this becomes an opportunity for the Assembly to 'test' their selected values, concerns, and emerging recommendations/priorities to see if they match up with the larger public.

3. In the **Deliberation** phase, members reconvene to deliberate and make a final decision(s). Participants can ask further questions if need be, and can share their Consultation Phase experiences with the rest of the group. Deliberation typically takes several rounds of discussions, and is done in both small groups and as a collective whole. Depending on the task the Assembly is given, and the specific 'product' they are aiming to produce, the Assembly may vet a series of options, develop and prioritize recommendations or produce a final report.

The focus on ensuring a representative process is key, particularly as it enables the final product to be accepted (by the government or convener of the Assembly) as being an accurate reflection of the larger community. The report or product that an Assembly produces is presented for consideration by the government, rather than a binding decision.

IV. A CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY FOR GRANDVIEW-WOODLAND

Identifying Guiding Principles

One of the ways to achieve clarity around what the Citizens' Assembly process for Grandview-Woodland should look like is to start with identifying a set of core guiding principles. Having a clear set of principles up front can help to inform the way that the Citizens' Assembly is created, recruited, and how it undertakes its activities.

City staff anticipate that a set of core principles will be included in the Terms of Reference that is developed to guide the work of the Assembly. In a successful Assembly process the core principles will be applied throughout the duration of planning work.

Both the literature on deliberative democracy and actual Assembly processes reference a number of common principles, such as:

- *Openness and Transparency* – members of the public are able to clearly follow along with the work of the Assembly
- *Representation* – ensuring that the composition of the Assembly is representative of the community-at-large
- *Legitimacy* – the role of the Assembly, and the work that they produce is seen as legitimate, both by the community-at-large and the elected governing body
- *Independence* –the Assembly functions free from excess influence by governing bodies, organizations, and stakeholder groups
- *Well informed* – the Assembly works off of clear, accurate and sufficiently comprehensive information
- *Balance* – a diversity of voices/opinions should be heard as part of learning, listening and deliberation, in order to ensure a range of ideas is considered. Different points of view should be heard, acknowledged, and given sincere consideration based on their merits
- *Respect* – the core work of the Assembly should be conducted in respectful, conscientious and civil fashion.
- Democratic decision-making – Assembly members will attempt to strive towards consensus, and/or use a majority rule approach to guide decision-making

Things to Think About

1. Imagine the Grandview-Woodland Citizens Assembly is now over and it was a success. How would you define success for the CA?
2. Are there any missing principles from the list above? Would you remove any? Which three principles for guiding the activities of the Grandview-Woodland Citizens' Assembly are most important to you, and why?
3. What do you think should be done (by the Assembly, the City or others) to ensure your priority principles are followed?

Determining the Composition of Assemblies

Two key considerations are central to ensuring an effective Assembly process are: having the right 'mix' of people in the room, and having the right number of people. The former ensures that the Assembly is able to accurately function as a representative subset (or proxy) for the community as a whole; the latter, to ensure that the opportunity for fair and reasoned deliberation isn't compromised by having too few, or too many people in the room.

Representation

As described above, Citizens' Assemblies are typically seen as a 'mini-public' that is as representative as possible of the population of the whole community. This is usually achieved by selecting a series of demographic qualities and matching the composition of Assembly members to these qualities (e.g. if 50% of the community is male and 50% female, then an Assembly that was created to match this demographic feature would see 50% of its members male and 50% female).

Some demographic qualities that have been used in other processes are: age, gender, geography (e.g. political ridings, regional communities, neighbourhoods, sub-areas, etc.), income, educational background, ethnicity, mother tongue, and housing tenure (i.e. owners vs. renters.). The first three – age, gender and geography – are the most commonly used.

A few additional considerations should be noted:
- It can be more difficult to gather accurate and consistent data on some demographic features – e.g. income, ethnicity, sexual orientation – because Assembly candidates may not be comfortable in providing this information
- Candidacy in most deliberative processes is open to every resident 18 years of age or older. In Grandview-Woodland, planners recommend lowering this to 16 years of age to ensure opportunities for younger people to participate
- Knowledge of English (or the relevant official languages) is always a requirement in the Assembly processes. In the Canadian processes reviewed to date, input from non-English community members was achieved through separate focus groups, or through meetings with representatives of different language groups
- A process consideration: the more attributes that are included in the Assembly recruitment process, the more complex the selection process can be. Trying to make an Assembly that perfectly matches the community would be challenging, if not impossible
- To support people who might not otherwise be able to participate as members, and thus to strengthen representation, Assembly processes cover the cost of childcare or eldercare, and sometimes provide an honorarium for members' time.

Things to think about

1. What, if any, are the key demographic attributes that you feel must be represented in the Grandview-Woodland Citizens' Assembly? Why is each of these important?
2. Grandview-Woodland is more than just the people that live in the area. Like all neighbourhoods, the 'community-at-large' also includes businesses owners and workers, property owners, students, transit users – even visitors of one form or another. How do you see this broad definition of community being involved in the Grandview-Woodland Citizens' Assembly?

TABLE 1: Some key demographic features of Grandview-Woodland[1]

Sex (2011 Census)			
	Number and proportion of men	13,310	49.0%
	Number and proportion of women	13,995	51.0%

Age (2011 Census) *total population by age groups*			
	Under 19	3860	14%
	20-29	4800	18%
	30-44	8045	29%
	45-64	7605	28%
	65-84	2645	10%
	85+	350	1%

Income (2011 NHS)– *In low income in 2010 based on after tax low-income measure (LIM-AT)[2]*			
	Under 18	945	3.5%
	18-64	4355	16.1%
	65+	1015	3.8%

Owner/Renter Status (2011 NHS)			
	Number and proportion of homeowners	4915	35%
	Number and proportion of renters	9060	65%

Knowledge of English (2011 Census)[3]			
	Knowledge of English	25,685	94%
	No knowledge of English	1,500	6%

Top-10 Languages spoken <u>most often</u> at home in G-W (2011 Census)			
	English	21,780	80%
	Cantonese	1,285	4.7
	Chinese, not otherwise specified[4]	775	2.8
	Vietnamese	330	1.2
	Spanish	335	1.2
	Tagalog (Pilipino, Filipino)	205	0.7
	Mandarin	220	0.8
	Italian	270	0.9
	French	190	0.6
	Korean	85	0.3

Total Population in private households by Aboriginal Identity (2011 NHS)			
	Aboriginal Identity	2,195	8.1%

<u>Notes</u>:

[1] Figures are derived from the 2011 census and National Household Survey. Figures are for the Grandview-Woodland Local Area, containing a total population of 27,305. Owing to changes in data collection, the 2011 NHS cannot easily be compared to the 2006 census. Further information on the 2006 census figures can be found in the Grandview-Woodland Community Profile – available at vancouver.ca/gw)

[2] Total number of low income individuals in Grandview-Woodland is 6,320 – or 23% of the neighbourhood population

[3] "Knowledge" refers to census respondent's assessment of his or her ability the ability to conduct a conversation in English.

[4] Chinese, "not otherwise specified" is an aggregated census category that includes all Chinese languages other than Mandarin, Cantonese, Hakka, Taiwanese, Chaochow, Fukien and Shanghainese

Identifying the Number of Participants

Deliberative processes like Citizens' Assemblies typically vary in size from approximately 15 (e.g. Citizens' Jury processes in Edmonton) to 160 (e.g. the BC Citizens' Assembly). There are processes that are larger or smaller than these, but the majority of the ones that were reviewed – particularly those dealing with longer-term deliberation on complex issues - fell within this range.

There are three main reasons for this:

First, there is the principle of "not too big." There is the need to ensure participants are able to connect with and deliberate with each other in a meaningful way. This means having a group size that enables participants to get to know one another, establish trust and rapport, and be in a position to openly, safely and honestly share their opinions on given issues with one another. A large room, where people feel anonymous, is less conducive to this sort of deliberation.

Second, there is a principle of "not too small." Assembly processes need to ensure that the overall group is able to adequately function as a representative mini-public. Where a group of five people representing the community is too small, a group of several dozen can prove highly effective at ensuring a reasonable range of backgrounds, life experiences, opinions, while accounting for a representative range of demographic characteristics.

Third, there are logistical considerations that also impact the size of Assemblies. These include the availability of staffing and administration, as well as the cost of venues, transportation, food, workshop materials, and any additional supports that are needed. While some modest efficiencies can be achieved with more people, the basic reality is that the bigger the Assembly, the larger the cost.

Things to think about

1. Processes like this typically bring together 12 – 60 people. What number of participants do you think would be effective at representing the community, and why?

2. Typically participants are selected through two steps (see page 16 for details). First, a large and random group of people are invited to express interest in participating. From those who respond, a small group is randomly selected to represent specific demographic attributes. What are the strengths and limitations of this approach for our Assembly?

Mandate and Tasks

Deliberative processes (large and small) tend to focus on a limited number of specific core tasks and/or questions. By focusing in this way, Assembly members can 'dive deep' into a given issue or problem.

This is not to say that, by being focused, the problems or issues are small. On the contrary, one or two well-defined questions can, and have, provided the starting point for substantive explorations. The following are some examples of the types of questions that have been considered as part of deliberative processes:

- Should our province or country change its electoral system? If so, to what system?
- What are the best ways to fund regional transportation?
- Should our city adopt Internet voting? And why?
- What should be the key goals of our climate change efforts?
- How should we apportion budget funding in our community?
- In an era of limited funding, should we prioritize health care spending by focusing on palliative care or pre-natal services?

The task or tasks associated with these questions usually involves learning a lot of background material on the subject at hand, hearing from an array of experts, looking at a range of options, and ultimately producing a formal response. The response itself usually takes the form of one or more recommendations – usually contained within a report.

In Grandview-Woodland, the planning process presents an interesting challenge. Community plans are comprehensive policy documents that cover a wide array of topics, so it will be important that the Assembly work on a question (or questions) that sit at the appropriate level for deliberation. A question that is too focused on a specific area (e.g. Commercial Drive), or issue ("ensuring adequate social services") risks excluding other parts of the neighbourhood, or issues. Similarly, giving the Assembly too many issues to work on can mean the work of the Assembly becomes unfocused as a result.

Things to think about

1. How would you describe the mandate, or focus, of the Assembly's work?
2. Using (and adjusting where required) the following draft criteria, what are the most important community planning topics for the Assembly to address?
   - Draft criteria for topics to be discussed by the Assembly:
     - The Assembly will build on the work that's already been undertaken as part of the planning process, especially input heard during earlier stages of planning such as responses to Emerging Directions
     - The Assembly will make use of input from community-wide workshops happening at the same time as the Assembly, including workshops that focus on specific "sub-areas" of the community (e.g. Broadway and Commercial)
     - Focus on neighbourhood-scale issues
     - Avoid granular topics such as specific side streets or the design of a particular park

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Don't forget!

The Citizens' Assembly will be <u>one</u> part of the Grandview-Woodland Community Plan. In addition to the Assembly, the City has committed to other engagement activities for the whole community, including specific workshops on key sub-areas of the neighbourhood (e.g. Nanaimo Street, Broadway & Commercial, etc.)

Community Engagement

While the Citizens' Assembly will be doing its work, the City of Vancouver will be holding a number of other engagement activities for the whole community. The additional engagement methods will enable anyone who wants to participate in the plan to have a voice in the discussion. There will also be specific workshops on key sub-areas of the neighbourhood (e.g. Nanaimo Street, Broadway & Commercial, etc.). The City will also provide opportunities for people to participate online.

Additionally, Citizens' Assembly processes typically see Assembly members engage directly with the community in a Consultation phase. During this time, Assembly seek further input and feedback to help with their decision-making. In some examples, including the Provincial Assemblies in BC and Ontario, members travelled back to their home jurisdictions to host a series of meetings with the public and affected stakeholders. In other examples, the Assembly or Panel will host a large event where the public will take part in guided round-table discussions, facilitated by the CA members. As noted earlier, this becomes an opportunity for the Assembly to 'test' selected values, concerns, and emerging recommendations/priorities to see if they match up with the larger public.

Components of the learning phase of some Assembly processes have also been shared with the wider community through online video, live stream, and, where logistically possible, in person attendance. Plenary discussions have also been shared in a similar fashion; however small group discussions are typically closed.

Things to think about

1. How should the broader community be involved with the Assembly? How should information and input from other (non-Assembly) activities, such as community-wide events and focus group, best be integrated into the Assembly process and vice versa?

Results of the Assembly

In the majority of deliberative democracy precedents, the Assembly's recommendations are presented in a final report – which is then delivered to the governing body for review and official response.

The final product should provide a clear response to the key tasks or questions that define the Assembly's work. It should also enable and receive a clear response by staff indicating (a) how their recommendations will be acted upon; and, (b) how their recommendations will be incorporated into the draft community plan that is written by staff.

The work of the Citizens' Assembly will be <u>one part</u> of the overall community planning process – so the final report that is produced will ultimately need to be considered alongside other input from the planning process (e.g. materials produced via other non-Assembly workshops, focus groups, city-wide policy, etc.).

Things to think about

1. The City is currently thinking that the Assembly will produce a report with recommendations that will (a) receive a formal response from city staff; (b) be incorporated into the Grandview Woodland Community Plan; (c) be shared with members of the public; (d) be presented to City Council along with the draft plan. What do you think are the strengths and drawbacks of this approach, and why?
2. How should the recommendations of the Assembly be weighted in relation to input gathered during other community engagement activities?

Other Features – Recruitment, Duration

In addition to the considerations outlined in previous sections, two other considerations are discussed here. In both cases, the City has made some preliminary decisions around the next steps based on practices used in other Assembly processes.

Recruitment

One of the most critical features in creating an inclusive and representative Assembly is ensuring that community members are made aware of the process and given an opportunity to indicate their interest in participating.

In previous Assemblies, recruitment processes have involved a variety of techniques, including mail to households, media advertisements, posters, automated telephone calls, outreach to local service groups, and in some cases, even random intercepts of people walking on the street. The scope of the outreach is usually proportionate to the community in question. With the provincial Citizens' Assemblies, a random sampling of households was mailed an addressed information package and invitation to participate. With some of the more regionally focused Citizen Reference Panels, somewhere between one-in-10 and one-in-four households receive a notification.

In most precedent processes, those who received the initial "call for interest in participating" were given an opportunity to indicate their interest in being a member of the Assembly. From this pool, a random selection was made that worked to match desired Assembly demographics (the mix of genders, age categories, etc.) to that of the neighbourhood as a whole.

Recruitment processes work best when participants are given a clear sense of the task at hand, and the nature of the commitment that will be required. In practice, this usually means that a preliminary schedule of meetings and outline of work is part of the information package, as well as an easy means to call and get further information (e.g. a toll-free telephone line, web-based FAQs, information meetings).

In Grandview-Woodland, staff anticipate that the initial call to participate will take place via a mail-drop to all households. Both addressed and unaddressed mail will be used because the City does not have name/address information for all residents in the neighbourhood. In addition to the mail-drop, initial outreach will also include postering, postcards in local businesses, one or more ads in local print media, neighbourhood signage, and the use of social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter.

Duration – How long should the Assembly last?

One of the hallmarks of deliberative processes like Citizens' Assemblies, is that they are built around deeper and on-going engagement with a consistent group of individuals. Where planning processes often have a variety of workshops and activities that participants can attend as they wish, Assembly-type processes usually require a commitment to participate in a complete series of activities. The activities are meant to be cumulative in nature – much like a night school course or a college or university seminar.

With this in mind, deliberative processes have varied in their overall length. Basic deliberative dialogues usually last one to two intensive days; a Citizens' Jury process that was recently completed in Edmonton took four full days; Citizens' Reference Panels such as the one recently conducted on the BC Services Card has lasted over two months and involved two full weekends of work. Larger processes like the BC and Ontario Citizens' Assemblies lasted between one and one-and-a-half years.

In all of these processes, participants were expected to stay involved with the process throughout its duration. Because the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to their community is so appreciated, member participation rates – even in the longer Assembly processes – has always been above 95%. The specific nature of the commitment varied, depending on duration of process, but often entailed several full-day meetings each month. Often, these meetings take place on one or more weekends.

> Although the specific work and mandate of the Grandview-Woodland Citizens' Assembly has yet to be identified, the Assembly will likely be active for the duration of the community plan process.

V. NEXT STEPS

Thank you!

Your participation in the planning process will help to ensure the creation of an effective community plan for Grandview-Woodland.

Share your ideas!

The City is gathering input on various aspects of Assembly design (roles, composition, tasks, etc.). In addition to workshops on January 25 and 28, 2014, there is also an on-line questionnaire available – starting January 25 and online until midnight February 9, 2014.

Once you've finished reading over the material in this backgrounder, plan to take a few moments to share your thoughts on how an Assembly process might work in Grandview-Woodland. For details on the workshops, or to access the questionnaire, visit our *vancouver.ca/gw*.

Stay Involved

If you'd like to stay involved with the Grandview-Woodland Citizens' Assembly or larger community planning process, there are a number of ways to do so.

Get information on the plan

- *Sign up for our email list-serv* – visit *vancouver.ca/gw* to add your name to the list, or call **3-1-1**
- *Like us on Facebook* – at www.facebook.com/GrandviewWoodlandCommunityPlan
  Follow us on Twitter - **@gwplan**

Participate in the process

We send out regular bulletins advising community members of upcoming workshops and other engagement activities. Help to shape the future of the neighbourhood. Plan to attend an event and share your ideas.

Appendix A: Ad-hoc Group Input

A group of Grandview-Woodland residents has been meeting for a number of months to discuss what they would like to see in the Grandview-Woodland Citizens' Assembly. The group, which refers to itself as the "Ad-hoc Committee on the Citizen's Assembly" is a community-based initiative. Their work, while not officially associated with the community-based Grandview-Woodland Area Council (GWAC), is detailed on the GWAC website.

On January 17, 2014, the Ad-hoc Committee submitted a letter to the City that outlined their position on some of the key considerations around a Citizens' Assembly.

In summary, the group has indicated that:

- The **role of the Assembly** "should be to review, revise, recommend and, where necessary, reject the full range of subject matter contained within the Community Plan." The work of the Assembly should be central to "decisions concerning values and trade-offs, including community benefits and amenities."
- The **work of the Assembly** could involve "reviewing all of the basic planning assumptions, including data to support density assumptions, current zoning capacity, and any other relevant information." Additional sub-area work could involve "the Assembly reviewing form and character, suggesting images, sketches and potential options…" as well as "review[ing] plans for transitional areas between districts affected by the Plan."
- "**The duration of the Assembly** should essentially be the duration of the Community Plan process."
- That where **representativeness and numbers** are concerned, they have a "clear preference for a self-selected membership with no limit to the number of people involved."
- That **outreach** should take place via a "full household mail drop to initiate this entire process and engage in recruitment" and that this be one part of a "multi-cultural outreach communications strategy that would include street posters, ads in the *Vancouver Courier*, and a social media component."
- The Assembly should have the opportunity "to sign off on the final Plan and have the right, if required, to submit to City Council its own report, on an equal basis."

To read the complete Ad-hoc Committee summary, please visit the Grandview-Woodland Area Council website at *www.gw-ac.org*.

Appendix B: Sample Case Studies

Case Study #1: The British Columbia Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform (2003)

- Created by the provincial government in 2003 to study provincial electoral reform
- Comprised of 158 'near-randomly' selected citizens (one man, one woman from each of BC's 79 provincial ridings with two more Aboriginal members were added by the Chair, bringing the total to 160. In addition to riding (geographic) representation, Assembly members were also selected to match provincial age and gender demographics.
- 15,800 invitations mailed to randomly identified British Columbians, pulled from an updated voters list.
- Three phase process – Learning, Consultation, and then Deliberation. Sessions took place in Vancouver and were entirely in English. Sessions were open to the public to observe and were also well reported by local media. All learning materials for the Assembly were posted online so that public could 'follow along', website and weekly newsletters also kept the public up-to-date on CA's progress.
- Development of program was supported by an array of full-time staff, as well as an advisory committee (comprised of a number of academic experts). Staff and Committee members steered the organization of the Assembly, and created the curriculum for the Learning Phase.
- Process took approximately one year, and total budget was $5.5 million.
- The Assembly was permitted to give only one recommendation as part of their final report. This was put to a vote in a referendum as part of the next election.

Case Study #2: The Ontario Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform (2006)

- Created in 2006 to also examine electoral reform in Ontario, modelled after BC.
- Selection process similar to BC's, but only one individual from each riding, for a total of 103. 50% male, 50% female, and one self-identified Aboriginal.
- As with BC's Assembly, members came from a diverse background of age, ethnicity, and employment. Assembly members collectively reported 28 different mother tongues, but sessions conducted entirely in English.
- Three Phase Process – Learning, Consultation, Deliberation. (Six weekends for each phase)
- Assembly members were educated on political options and effects and all learning materials were posted online so that public could follow along. A website and weekly newsletters also kept the public up-to-date on progress.
- Public consultation included 41 public meetings, and over 1000 written submissions.
- The process took approximately one year and had a budget of $6 million.
- Time commitment for members: approximately 30-40 hours/month.
- The Assembly's final product was report with recommendations.

Case Study #3: The City of Edmonton Citizens' Jury on Internet Voting (2012)

- Created in 2012 to deliberate on internet voting as an alternative voting method in future municipal elections.
- A survey of 1,349 residents collected demographic and attitudinal profile information of potential jurors. Survey respondents were chosen based on a list of randomly generated landline and cell phone numbers and contacted using an automated calling method. 17 members randomly selected from pool of positive respondents.
- Participants were required to be eligible Edmonton electors, able to attend all jury sessions, and not be employees of the City of Edmonton.
- The two phase process – Learning, Deliberation – took place over a single long weekend
- Citizen Jury members gathered and received expert presentations, and were given the opportunity to question the speakers. Moderators engaged participants in many small group activities, followed by whole group deliberation.
- The final product was a report with verdict, recommendations given to the City Clerk.
- Jury supported by research/guidance from the University of Alberta's Centre for Public Involvement. A separate advisory committee was also created, consisting of representatives from academia, government.

Case Study #4: The City of Edmonton Citizens' Panel on Energy and Climate Challenges (2012)

- Formed in 2012 to make recommendations to Edmonton City Council on an energy transition plan, to gauge level of public support for the *Edmonton's Energy Transition Discussion Paper.*
- 66 panelists recruited using randomly-generated telephone surveys. Further refined to reflect general demographics and attitudinal composition of larger Edmonton population.
- Panel members met for a total of 42 hours over six Saturdays. Sessions were professionally facilitated and Panel members received a number of presentations from key stakeholders and experts.
- Final recommendations were a series of high-level goals on climate change strategies. The total budget for the Panel was Budget: $125,000.

Case Study #5: The Halton Region Citizens' Reference Panel on the 2011-2014 Strategic Work Plan (2011)

- Panel assembled to inform Halton Regional Council's development of their four-year strategic work plan (Halton is a regional municipality in Ontario, population 501,000).
- Panel selected by mailed invitations – 10,000 letters mailed to communities across the Region, selected through a randomly generated list of Halton postal codes.
- The final panel consisted of 36 members blindly selected to fulfill certain attributes, including age, gender, geographic location, whether they rented or owned their homes, and short or long-term residency in the Region. The process was "diverse by design."
- Reference Panel members met for four full Saturdays within five weeks and engaged in a Three Phase Process – Learning, Consultation, Deliberation. They produced a final report, with recommendations, on key aspects of the Reference Panel.

Case Study #6: Perth, Western Australia's Citizens' Jury on Community Engagement and Deliberative Democracy (2005)

- Jury assembled to make recommendations on community engagement methods and water supply issues in Western Australia.
- 16 community members recruited off the street via a 'random intercept' process.
- Jury process required a five day commitment. Experts in community engagement and water supply management made presentations and Jury members engaged in a series of small group discussions to review material and make recommendations. Plenary discussion and questions followed.
- Jury made presentation on final day with recommendations for specific community engagement methods. Exercise was considered a success, although members noted that five days were too short for some groups to fully complete their report.

Case Study #7: Oregon Citizens' Initiative Review (2011)

- Created in 2011 as an innovative way of publicly evaluating ballot measures so voters have clear, useful, and trustworthy information at election time.
- Initially a pilot project (in 2010), Citizens' Initiative Reviews were enacted into law in 2011.
- Panels are comprised of 24 randomly-selected and demographically-balanced voters, reflecting a cross-section of the entire state electorate (age, gender, ethnicity, education, partisan affiliation and geography.) Potential members are pulled from a large random sample of 10,000 voters from the voter registration list.
- Panel members listen to campaigns for and against each measure, and hear policy experts' presentations. Then Panel then drafts a Citizens' Statement highlighting the most important findings about the measure. Each statement published as a prominent page in the voters' pamphlet as a resource for voters to use at election time.
- For each measure reviewed, a new Panel is convened. Most of the panels run for five days and each costs approximately $100,000 USD to operate.

Case Study #8: Icelandic Constitutional Assembly (2010-2011)

- Created for the purpose of reviewing (and preparing a revised version of) the Icelandic Constitution.
- 25 citizens were elected to form the Assembly – and ranged in age, profession, education, etc. (15 men, 10 women). Members were directly voted in by the public, drawn from a pool of 500 volunteers who submitted their candidacy for the Assembly.
- Assembly members deliberated over draft Constitution and prepared a proposal for revisions to the constitution.

Case Study #9: Greater Toronto & Hamilton Area's "The Big Move" (2013)

- Launched by Metrolinx (the Ontario government transportation agency) to help build public understanding about the challenges of building/funding transportation infrastructure, and to gauge public priorities for projects and funding sources.
- Engagement methods included a 'conversation kit' mailed out to various stakeholders and citizens associations to help explain the 25-year transportation plan, and potential benefits and trade-offs. Included links to a website with an interactive simulation model.
- A Residents' Reference Panel was formed, comprised of 36 members. 10,000 invitations were mailed out to households, and members were randomly selected, balancing for age, gender, and geography.
- Panelists convened for four Saturdays, listened to presentations from transit experts, and then deliberated on funding tool options.
- 12 'Public Roundtable Meetings' were hosted to give the public an opportunity to learn more about the plan, ask questions, and share their feedback. A summary of this input, along with the final recommendations of the Reference Panel was submitted in a report to Metrolinx.

Case Study #10: We The Citizens Ireland – Citizens' Assembly (2013)

- Created in response to economic and governance "trust" challenges following the 2008 economic crisis.
- Regional meetings first hosted around the country to allow the public an opportunity to share concerns, suggestions and set the agenda for the Assembly.
- 100 participants invited to join the Assembly, drawn from positive survey respondents who had indicated interest. Members were selected to be representative of Ireland's overall demographics (age, gender, region, and socio-economic background).
- Members listened to presentations and then broke into smaller facilitator-led discussions to deliberate on issues around political reform, and how best to deal with the economic crisis. Recommendations from deliberation were put forth to a vote by all members of the Assembly.

Case Study #11: Adelaide, South Australia Citizens' Jury (2013)

- Formed to deliberate on how to ensure a vibrant and safe Adelaide nightlife.
- 20,000 invitations mailed to random households. 43 randomly selected individuals were chosen from the pool of people that indicated interest in participating. Composition of the Assembly was structured to be representative of larger South Australia demographics.
- A total of six meetings held over three months, and a three phase process was used, involving Learning, Public Consultation, Deliberation.
- Jury asked to submit a minimum of five specific reform recommendations, and these were ultimately submitted in a report to the South Australia government.

Appendix C: Community Plan Study Area