

# Democracy & Democratic Participation







# What is Democracy?

# Democracy or *demos-kratos* means "power to the people"









# What is Democratic Participation?

#### One way to understand democratic participation:

Activities designed to deepen community connectedness and strengthen commitment to democracy.

#### > Four Dimensions of Civic Literacy

#### APPLICATION KNOWLEDGE Institutional **Political** Knowledge Ability · Democratic institutions and processes Navigate political participation · How political power dynamics work in society · Know where to go in government if The historical evolution of Canada problems arise Examples: voting; political actions like Examples: the three branches of the state; the function of political parties; the methods by protesting; writing to elected leaders; engaging which public leaders are elected. with appropriate government agencies; using media to advance a cause. Topical Media Literacy Knowledge · Analyze and process information from Issues and current events · Policy discussions the Internet and media · Awareness of parties' positions · Seek out and evaluate original sources Examples: knowing who the premier or prime Examples: recognizing fake news; processing

new information and evaluating existing beliefs;

Getting

Involved

identifying bias.





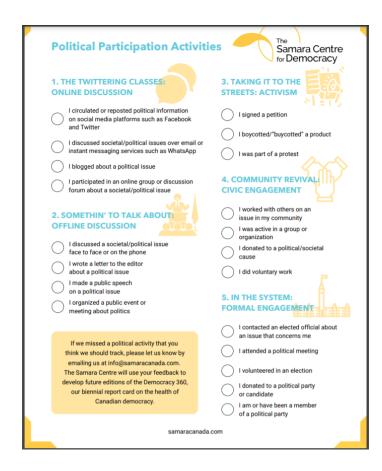


Source: Samara Centre for Democracy

minister is; awareness of the public policy issues

in play; following current affairs.

# What does democratic participation look like beyond the ballot box?



#### Source:

Samara Centre for Democracy









# How you can get involved:









### 1. Volunteer

The City and Park Board have a wide range of volunteer opportunities. Volunteering is a rewarding way to:



Share your skills to improve your community



Meet new people who share your interests



Gain experience or learn new skills you can use in a job or other areas of your life









### 1. Volunteer



https://vancouver.ca/people-programs/volunteering.aspx

https://volunteerbc.bc.ca/

https://volunteeringvancouver.ca/









### 2. Share Your Views

The City of Vancouver and the Vancouver Park Board want to hear from you.

We use a variety of ways to listen to what you have to say about what is most important to you.









### 2. Share Your Views



https://shapeyourcity.ca/



https://vancouver.ca/yourgovernment/citizen-involvement.aspx

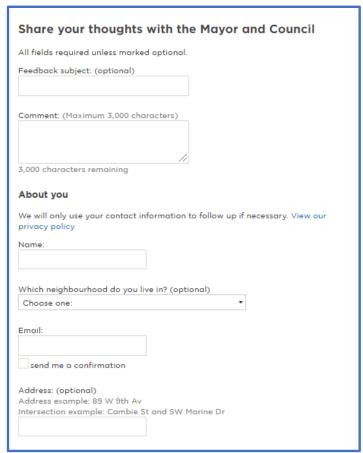








# 3. Share Your Thoughts with Mayor and Council



https://vancouver.ca/yourgovernment/contact-council.aspx









## 4. Watch or Attend a Council Meeting

- Meetings are currently held online.
- Council meetings are live-streamed on our website.
- We operate meetings from the Council Chambers at City Hall but the mayor, councillors, staff, and rezoning applicant representatives participate remotely.

https://vancouver.ca/your-government/city-council-meetings-and-decisions.aspx









# 5. Speak at a Council Meeting

#### Types of meetings open to speakers:

- 1. Public hearings
- 2. Council meetings
- 3. Special Council meetings
- 4. Standing committee meetings (City Finance and Services, Policy and Strategic Priorities)









# 5. Speak at a Council Meeting



Requests usually open one week before a meeting once we post the agenda. Request early to speak earlier.

Meetings are publicly streamed and recorded.

- 1. Types of meetings open to speakers
- 2. Deadlines to request to speak
- 3. <u>Upcoming meetings taking requests</u>
- 4. Prepare to speak
- 5. Track your turn to speak

https://vancouver.ca/your-government/speak-at-city-council-meetings.aspx









# 6. Serve on an Agency, Board or Committee

- Agencies, boards, and committees focus on a particular topic that has an impact on the City of Vancouver and its people. Through the expertise of its members, these groups advise Council and City staff.
- Committees include persons with disabilities; children, youth & families; seniors; Urban Indigenous Peoples; Racial & Ethno-Cultural Equity; and more!









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  Urban Indigenous Peoples; Racial & Ethno-Cultural Equity; and more!
- To ensure that the membership of our civic agencies, boards, and committees represents the broader community and can address the issues of those communities
- We encourage applicants of all ages, genders, neighbourhoods, racial origins, income levels, and sexual orientation to apply.
  - https://vancouver.ca/your-government/join-an-advisory-board-or-committee.aspx









#### 7. Vote!

To vote in a local government election in BC you must:

- Be 18 years of age or older on election day
- Be a Canadian citizen
- Have lived in BC for at least 6 months immediately before registering to vote
- Have lived in Vancouver or owned property registered in your name in Vancouver for at least 30 days immediately before registering to vote
- Not be disqualified by law from voting

https://vancouver.ca/guides/voting.aspx#section51386









#### Other Ideas!

- Start or join a community garden or community orchard
- Host or join a neighbourhood cleanup party, or block party
- Become a volunteer gardener in the Green Streets program
- Prevent local flooding by adopting a catch basin
- Volunteer for the Adopt a Block program
- Learn more about the City's Healthy City Strategy, Greenest City Action Plan,
  Resilience Strategy or Climate Emergency Action Plan









#### Learn more about how you can get involved by visiting:

https://vancouver.ca/your-government/your-city-hall.aspx https://vancouver.ca/share-your-views.aspx

Email: yourcityhall@vancouver.ca







