

# Summary of Public Input on the Design of the Grandview- Woodland Citizens' Assembly

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## Executive Summary

City of Vancouver hosted a series of conversations in early 2014 about a proposed Citizens' Assembly for the Grandview-Woodland Community Plan. A Citizens' Assembly is a method of community engagement that allows for a deeper and more sustained discussion than traditional consultation processes. The Assembly is one of several ways that people could help create a new community plan for the neighbourhood.

The public was asked to share their views about who should be on the Assembly, how it should work, its tasks and more. During January and February 2014, 143 participants attended one of two public workshops, while 170 respondents completed an online questionnaire.

Community input gathered through these two processes will play a key role in informing the development of a Terms of Reference for the proposed Grandview-Woodland Assembly. In addition, the Terms of Reference for the Assembly will be guided by 'best practices' used in previous Assembly-type processes.

Participants were invited to prepare for these engagement opportunities by reviewing a Citizens' Assembly Discussion Paper. This document is available at [vancouver.ca/gw](http://vancouver.ca/gw).

The workshop design and facilitation as well as this report, were prepared by Susanna Haas Lyons, Public Engagement Specialist, in collaboration with and on behalf of the City of Vancouver.

### Overview of All Participants' Views

Participants were almost unanimously supportive of the idea of hosting a Citizens' Assembly for the Grandview-Woodland Community Plan. Regarding the design of the Assembly, the following table describes the ideas most often heard during workshops and the online questionnaire:

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Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support for all draft principles proposed in the Discussion Paper, especially Representation, Openness and Transparency, Legitimacy, Independence, and Well Informed</li><li>• Additional principles suggested: Accountability, Accessibility, Authority and Influence, Clarity, Healthy City for All, Positive Impact</li></ul>
Mandate of the Assembly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support for a broad scope of work, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Neighbourhood scale focus, avoiding most granular topics</li><li>○ Key issues for discussion: density, built-form, land-use, neighbourhood character, community diversity, (affordable) housing, transportation, public benefits</li><li>○ Include City-wide and regional topics and policies as appropriate, as well as Community Plans for other neighbourhoods</li></ul></li><li>• City planning assumptions &amp; relevant data should be made available to Assembly</li><li>• General support for the use of previous planning work (e.g. <i>Emerging Directions</i>) and community input as key sources of information</li></ul>

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Member Composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggestion that the Assembly should reflect the neighbourhood’s diversity and “mirror the mosaic of social-economic demographics”<sup>1</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Important criteria: Geography, Renter/Owner status, Age, Gender, Income, Aboriginal</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Geography</i>: Participants from all areas of Grandview-Woodland</li> <li>• <i>Renter/Owner status</i>: A mix of housing situations, including co-op</li> <li>• <i>Age</i>: Allow participation from age 16</li> <li>• <i>Gender</i>: A mix of men and women, in proportions of the census</li> <li>• <i>Income</i>: Ensure lower income residents are involved in the process</li> <li>• <i>Aboriginal</i>: Assembly membership should include Aboriginal people</li> <li>• <i>Ethnocultural</i>: Consider how to be inclusive of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds</li> <li>• <i>Community</i>: Discussion yielded some divergence of opinions, broadly characterized as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Residents only; OR,</li> <li>○ Limitedly involve those who work, own businesses, own property in the neighbourhood, and/or those living in adjacent areas</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Concerns noted about potential exclusion of people who are currently participating in the community planning process</li> <li>• Suggestion that City should provide supports to increase participation of less represented groups (cover costs of child and elder care, etc.)</li> </ul>
Member Selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion yielded some divergence of opinions, broadly characterized as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Use random selection (a sample of people randomly chosen to be representative of the community), matched to key demographic variables; OR,</li> <li>○ Allow community members to self-select with targeted outreach to fill the demographic gaps, particularly to involve those who are already committed and involved</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Number of Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion yielded some divergence of opinions, broadly characterized as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Convene an Assembly of <i>up to</i> 60 participants; this size enables the group to be both inclusive and diverse; OR,</li> <li>○ Allow Assembly membership to be a “Flexible number, based on response”</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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<sup>1</sup> Quotations throughout the document are direct quotes from workshop notes or online responses, which accurately describe an idea heard from a number of participants



**3. Public Feedback on the Draft Terms of Reference**

The public should be invited to provide feedback on the draft Terms of Reference, in person and/or online. A summary of input received should be shared with participants, the public and City Council.

**4. Provide Recommendations to City Council**

Using both public input and best practices, City Planners should submit to City Council its recommendations on the whether to hold a Citizens' Assembly, and if so, its design.

## 1. Introduction

The City launched a community plan process for Grandview-Woodland in April 2012. The process was initially slated to last 18-21 months.

In May and June of 2013, staff produced a series of initial policy ideas (prototype policies for the neighbourhood) and assembled them in a DRAFT *Emerging Directions* document. In September 2013, responding to community requests for additional consultation, Vancouver City Council directed Planning staff to extend the process. As part of this extension, Council also directed staff to develop a Citizens' Assembly as part of the Grandview-Woodland Community Plan process.

A Citizens' Assembly is a method of community engagement that allows for a deeper and more sustained discussion than traditional consultation processes. City staff researched precedent processes through a review of literature and expert interviews. Material from this work helped to shape a Discussion Paper, which was shared with the community and can be found at [vancouver.ca/gw](http://vancouver.ca/gw).

In January and February, 2014, the City hosted two workshops and an online questionnaire about the proposed Assembly in Grandview-Woodland.. To support this work, the City engaged Susanna Haas Lyons, Public Engagement Specialist, to design and deliver the workshops and shape the related online questionnaire. Through both avenues, community members shared their views about who should be on the Assembly, how it should work, its tasks and more. This report provides a synopsis of this input.

Community input gathered through these two processes will play a key role in informing the development of a Terms of Reference for the proposed Grandview-Woodland Citizens' Assembly. In addition, the Terms of Reference for the Assembly will be guided by 'best practices' used in previous Assembly-type processes. Information on these precedents can be found in the Grandview-Woodland Citizens' Assembly Discussion Paper, available online at [vancouver.ca/gw](http://vancouver.ca/gw).

NOTE: 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.)

## **2. Overview of engagement events**

A total of 143 people attended one of two workshops held in January 2014 (110 of which completed a brief evaluation form and demographic profile at the close of their workshop). Workshop dates were January 25 and 28, 2014. Following the workshops, a further 170 on-line questionnaires were received. Through both means, roughly 300 people shared their input on *how* a Citizens' Assembly should be formed, implemented and responded to.<sup>2</sup> The questionnaire was online from January 25 to February 10, 2014.

Workshop participants and questionnaire respondents were invited to prepare for these engagement opportunities by reviewing the Grandview-Woodland Citizens' Assembly Discussion Paper.

### ***2.1 Overview of the Workshop events***

The first hour of the three-hour workshop was dedicated to presenting information and answering participant 'clarifying questions' about Citizens' Assemblies and the City's plans for the Grandview-Woodland Assembly. (A synopsis of these questions and answers can be found in Appendix A). The remaining two hours of the workshop was spent at discussion tables and hearing a brief report on these conversations that took place.

Participants selected the issue they were most interested in discussing for each of two discussion rounds. Topics included:

- Guiding principles
- Assembly composition (representation and number of members)
- Mandate and Tasks
- Community Engagement
- Results of the Assembly
- and a table for other ideas

Table facilitators and note takers were City staff, who took notes on flipcharts at the table. At various points in the discussion, participants were able to use sticky dots to vote on items that they felt to be of particular importance. In addition, individual participants were invited to make comments on the flipchart notes at the end of the meeting. The following is a summary of participant ideas heard and prioritized by participants (using sticker dots) at both workshops.

### ***2.2 Input from Online Questionnaire Participants***

An online questionnaire explored the same issues as the workshop, namely, how should a Citizens' Assembly should be formed, implemented and responded to. As noted, questionnaires were submitted by 170 people - 110 people who completed the entire survey and an additional 60 who completed portions.

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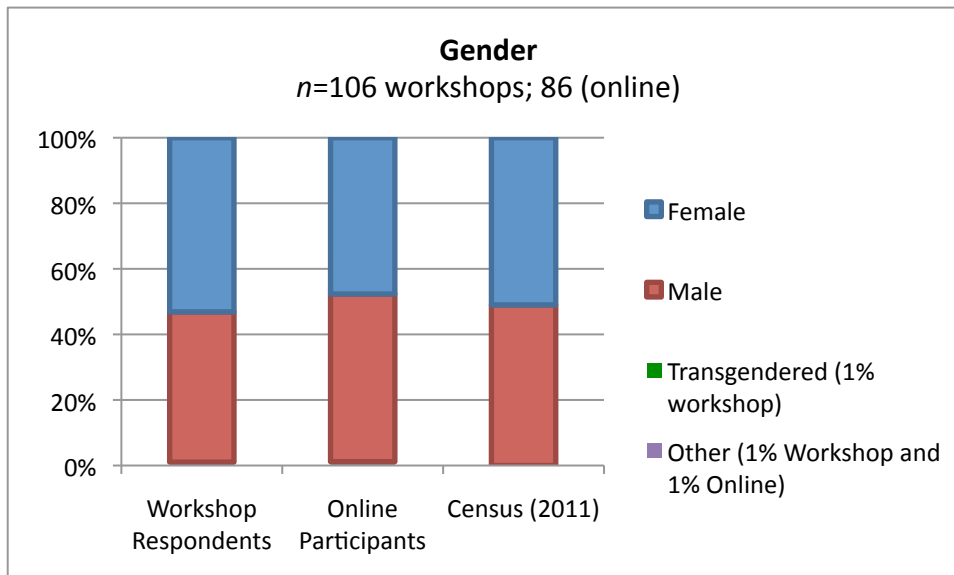
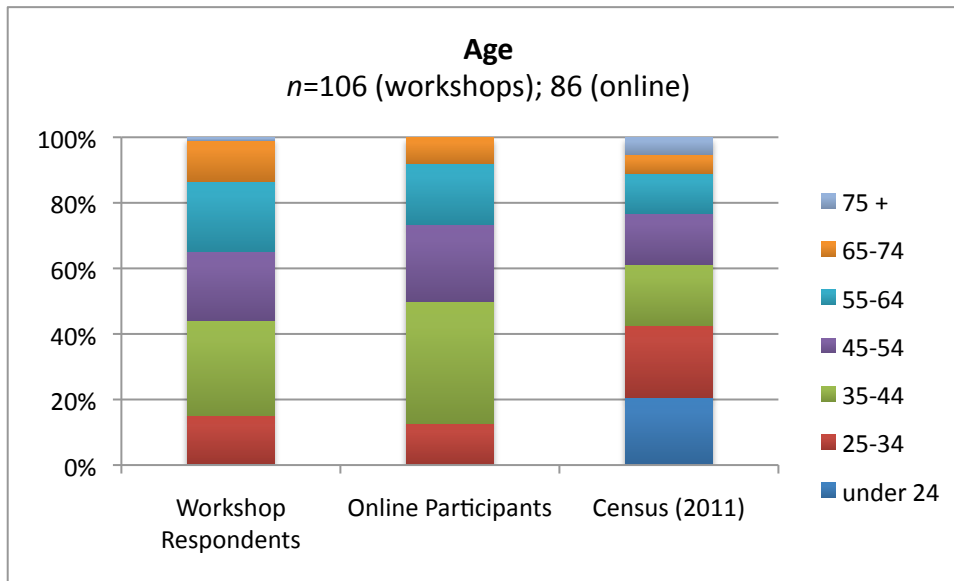
<sup>2</sup> Workshop participants were required to register (either in advance or on the day-of) in order to participate. On-line questionnaires could be submitted anonymously. Some overlap in participation between workshops and questionnaire should be assumed.



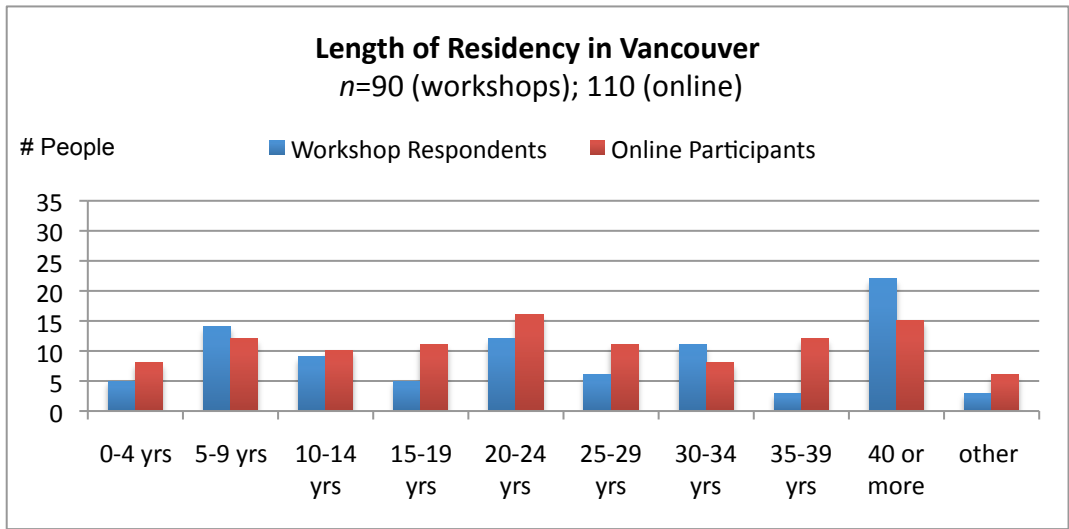
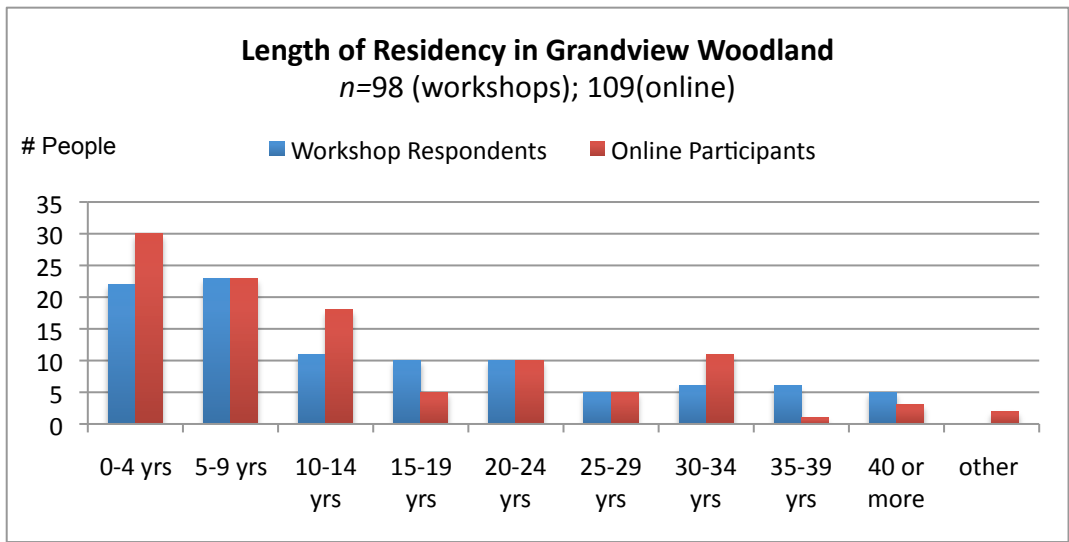
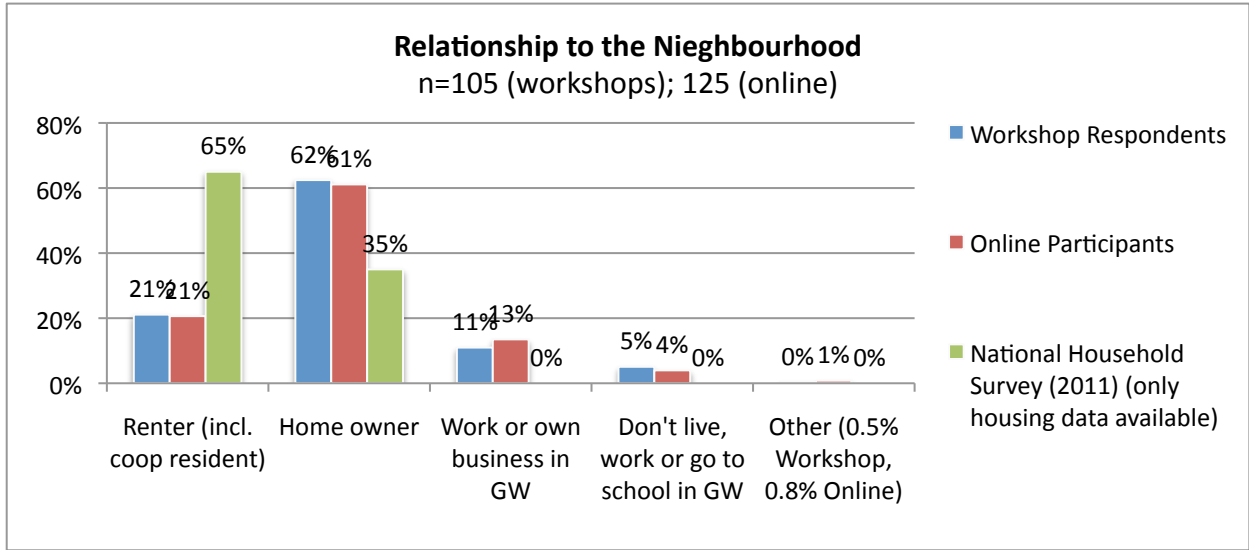
### 2.3 Participant profile and comparative demographics

Participants of both the workshops and the online questionnaire were self-selected, meaning they chose to participate on their own accord, rather than being invited through a systematic effort to ensure participants reflected the Grandview-Woodland community.

The following charts show the makeup of workshop participants, online participants, and where available, comparison data about the neighbourhood.<sup>3</sup>



<sup>3</sup> Census information is derived from the 2011 Census and National Household Survey and refers to the population of the Grandview-Woodland Local Area (bounded by Burrard Inlet, Clark Drive, Nanaimo Street and Broadway). The actual Grandview-Woodland community plan study area is slightly larger - stretching eastward to Kamloops Street, and south to E 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue. In addition, a total of six workshop participants and nine questionnaire respondents indicated that their place of residence was outside of both the study Local Area and larger study area.



Workshop participants and online respondents also had the option to make note of their ethnicity. On this demographic aspect, a straightforward comparison to census figures is difficult because people describe their ethnicity in all sorts of ways (e.g. national identities and combinations thereof, historical home countries, more racially based descriptors, etc.).

Nevertheless, looking at the question of ethnic diversity is important. For example, in Grandview-Woodland roughly 14% of the population identifies as Chinese and roughly 9% of the population identifies as Aboriginal (First Nations or Métis).

The following Wordle diagram<sup>4</sup> illustrates the self-identified ethnicity of workshop participants:



n=102

This Wordle diagram shows the self-identified ethnicity of on-line questionnaire respondents.



n=83

<sup>4</sup> A Wordle diagram scales words or phrases in a document according to the frequency of the text. The larger a given word (or phrase) in the source text - in this case answers provided to the question “what is your ethnicity?” - the greater its frequency as an answer.

### 3. Guiding Principles for the Assembly

A set of core guiding principles can inform the way that the Citizens' Assembly is created, recruited, and how it undertakes its activities. A draft set of principles, derived from a review of other Assembly-type processes, was established for participants to consider.

- *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

#### 3.1 Input from Workshops: Assembly Principles

Workshop participants discussed the above list of principles and gave the following input:

##### **General**

- General support for the draft principles identified in the Discussion Paper.
- Suggestion that the Assembly should be able to define and/or refine its own working principles

##### **Ranking and Comments of the Draft Principles**

This list orders the principles according to workshop participants' level of support (with the most supported at the top), as well as a general sense of the participants' ideas about these principles:

1. Openness: members of the public can observe the Assembly, when appropriate
2. Transparency: City planning assumptions, public consultation data and Assembly's work are made publically available
3. Representation: need to clearly define which demographics must be represented
4. Legitimacy: *no specific comments recorded*
5. Well informed: information should come from a variety of sources, including the City, organizations, developers, specialists, and community

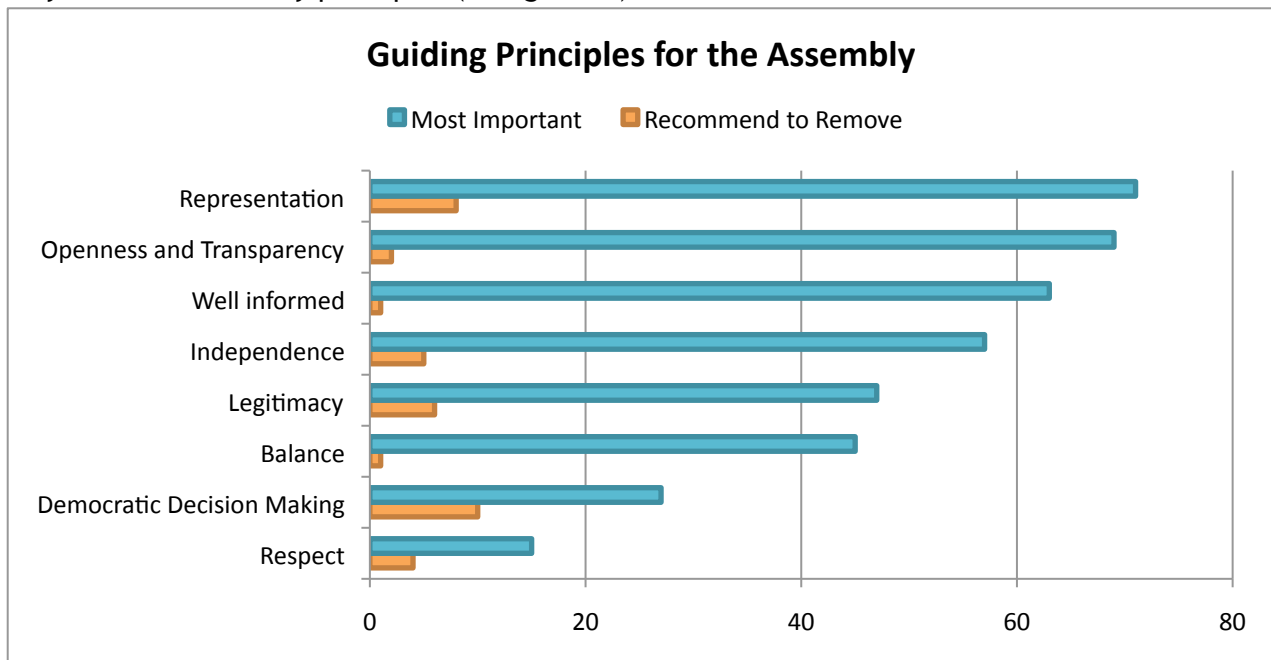
6. Independence: in addition to the Assembly being free from excess influence by governing bodies, organizations, and stakeholder groups, Assembly members should be transparent with one another, noting any affiliations they may have
7. Democratic decision-making: The Assembly should decide together how they want to make decisions
8. Respect: “members of the CA will be respectful of each other’s opinions” and the Chair should keep the Assembly on track
9. Balance: *no specific comments recorded*

**Additional Principles** (listed alphabetically): Workshop participants had the opportunity to suggest other principles that they would like to see included.

- Accessibility: provide accessible meeting space, meeting times and support services like childcare
- Clarity: use language that everyone can understand
- Community engagement and connection
- Evidence based: provide rationale for decisions
- Healthy City for All: apply to the Assembly’s work both the principle and the City’s framework
- Discussions that emphasize what’s important to each person, rather than their positions on an issue
- Make a positive impact: “Make a difference in order to seek change in the community”

### 3.2 Input from Online Questionnaire: Assembly Principles

Online participants were asked to select three principles that they felt were most important to guide the work of the Citizens’ Assembly (blue bars below). Respondents were also asked if they would remove any principles (orange bars).



### ***Additional principles***

Additional guiding principles suggested a by multiple participants include:

- Accountability: “The Assembly is accountable to the population of Grandview-Woodland and not only their personal interests”
- Authority and Influence: the Assembly “must be able to influence City Council's decision making in a meaningful way”
- Publicity: “information about the Assembly and its activities should not merely be available to the public, but energetically brought to the public's attention.”

### ***How to Ensure the Guiding Principles are Followed***

Respondents were able to suggest various ways to ensure the guiding principles are followed.

Suggestions include:

- Independence: Chair/Facilitator/Moderator that is independent and neutral
- Decision-making: look for agreement without ignoring diversity of opinion within the Assembly
- Openness: community engagement including “periodic workshops hosted by the city and the CA to exchange information and ideas between the city, the CA and the rest of the residents of GW”
- Legitimacy: “transparent, timely, periodic updates/reports to all who have contributed into the process”
- Well informed: “the information presented should represent diverse perspectives”
- Independence: City should support but not influence the Assembly's work
- Transparency: meetings outcomes are recorded and made public, but there should also be space for participants to privately explore the issues

## **4. Mandate and Tasks**

A Citizens' Assembly typically focuses on a small number of specific tasks and/or questions. By focusing in this way, Assembly members can 'dive deep' into a given issue or problem. However, Community Plans are comprehensive policy documents that cover a wide array of topics. Therefore, the Grandview-Woodland Citizens' Assembly must be given a task that balances focus and breadth.

With this in mind, participants were asked to explore the mandate, or focus, of the Assembly's work.

### ***4.1 Input from Workshops: Mandate***

Workshop participants felt that the Citizens' Assembly should

- address a broad scope of planning issues
- undertake their work with a view to creating a 30 year "living plan" that addresses long-term issues like transportation, housing, schools, open space, social inequity, heritage protection, arts and culture, etc.
- wrestle with how to integrate community plan with city-wide plans and objectives such as Greenest City Action Plan

Participants also felt that the City should provide transparent information to the Assembly

- "Ask the City to be more specific about research, development goals, and proposals"
- "Assembly needs to access assumptions being made with data (e.g. around future growth, zoning capacity, existing density, etc.)"

### ***4.2 Input from Questionnaire: Mandate***

Online respondents had the following suggestions for the mandate of the Assembly's work:

- Review and make recommendations on City's draft plan and Emerging Directions (and land use map) as well as the results of previous community consultations
- "What will the future Grandview-Woodlands look and feel like?"
- "Assembly should be focused on issues specifically affecting GW. However these cannot be done in isolation"
- "The CA should help manage ALL aspects of the Community Plan process"
- Focus on implementation
- Focus on the controversial issues

### ***4.3 Input from Workshops: Criteria for Topics to be Discussed by the Assembly***

Workshop participants were asked to review four draft criteria for deciding which topics the Assembly should address. These criteria were:

- 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

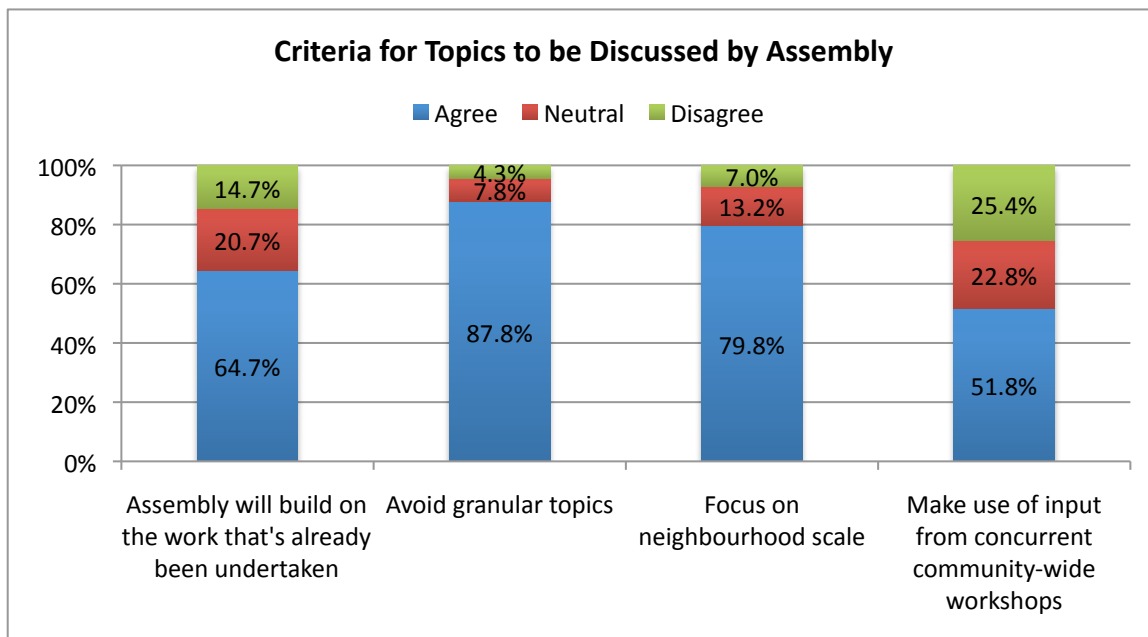
- The Assembly will make use of input from community-wide workshops happening at the same time as the Assembly, including workshops that focus on specific “sub-areas” of the community (e.g. Broadway and Commercial)
- Focus on neighbourhood-scale issues
- Avoid granular topics such as specific side streets or the design of a particular park

In response, participants noted:

- The Assembly should review and build on community input and planning work already undertaken, but not be “held hostage by it”
- For example, the *Emerging Directions* report and maps are a tool, not a roadmap, to be used by the Assembly. As well, additional expert and public opinion on *Emerging Directions* is required (“not necessarily always getting it from the City”)
- The Assembly should have some input into the community workshops
- “Yes, keep in mind local issues unique to Grandview-Woodland”, but it is “also important to include City-wide and regional topics as appropriate” as well as the Community Plans for other neighbourhoods
- The Assembly should avoid granular topics

#### 4.4 Input from Online Questionnaire: Criteria for Topics to be Discussed by the Assembly

Respondents were able to review each of the four draft criteria and indicate whether they “Agree”, “Disagree” or were “Neutral.” Their selections were as follows:



(n=116, 115, 114, 114)



Respondents also provided specific input on the draft criteria. In particular, they noted:

***Build on the work that's already been undertaken***

- The Assembly should draw on the work already undertaken, but should be allowed to question its assumptions and not necessarily be bound by it
- “Note that much of the prior consultation work was very good and valid. However, some issues such as levels of density were never properly vetted for public opinion. In these areas, the public needs to be re-consulted”
- The assembly may also need to consider new self-generated ideas
- “Don’t use the Emerging Documents because it was contentious and instead start fresh”

***Avoid Granular topics***

- “This is a neighbourhood plan scale project, no need to deal with smaller-scale site specific issues”
- “People need to understand the impacts of a community plan, which are granular once the plan is enacted. While this should not be a design exercise, specific impacts on proposed changes must be explored and understood”
- “Some granular topics are key touchstones of the region and may need to be addressed by Assembly. But framework should be that recommendations should take the form at the neighbourhood-scale.”

***Focus on neighbourhood scale***

- “The neighbourhood scale issues are critical to the look and feel of our neighbourhood. Sub areas need to be considered separately and with the residents in these sub-areas.”
- “Neighbourhood-scale issues should be considered in context of City and region”
- The Assembly should also focus overarching direction for the entire community

***Make use of input from concurrent community-wide workshops***

- “Community-wide workshops are a good way to be more inclusive, get input into specific sub-areas or issues, get input into the broader plan, and [they act] as an accountability mechanism”
- Start the community workshops early so the results of those workshops can help inform the work of the Assembly
- Avoid running duplicate or parallel processes of Assembly and community engagement

***4.5 Input from Workshops: Specific Topics to be Discussed by the Assembly***

The following is a list of specific topics that workshop participants suggested the Assembly address:

***Land Use, Density, Built Form, Zoning***

- Some of the most often heard topics were: land use, built form, density, transportation, and public space
- Other ideas with participant support (related to land-use and density): Protect local,

independent businesses, protect view corridors, how to preserve diversity in the community, sustainability (environmental, economic, social) of the neighbourhood, contentious issues like height and density at Commercial and Broadway)

- The Assembly should review the City's planning assumptions behind density
- Recommend how density might be achieved in Grandview-Woodland
- Discuss public amenities and weigh tradeoffs with density
- Put rezonings on hold until the process is complete

### ***Neighbourhood Growth and Change***

- "Ensuring that we maintain the character of our community" in its people, housing options, physical character, commercial and recreational opportunities, etc.
- Phased implementation of changes to control the pace to insure it meets the needs of both the present and future community
- Restore and retain heritage buildings

### ***Community Diversity***

- The Assembly should consider the diversity of the community as a whole, and the needs of subareas
- Actively and appropriately integrate the work of community workshops with that of the Assembly and vice versa
- Proactive outreach to hear diverse voices, such as the Aboriginal community

### ***Housing***

- Develop an approach to housing that ensures "affordability for all present and future" residents
- Consider how redevelopment may impact social housing and affordable options

### ***Transportation***

- Broadway and Commercial regional transit hub, parking, traffic, cycling
- "address the interface between transportation and land use"

### ***Additional important issues***(listed alphabetically):

- Aboriginal issues
- "Healthy City for All policies important to be integrated with decisions of the CA planning process"
- Liveability
- Parks, greenspace and public space
- Public benefits: community centers, etc.
- Safety
- Schools
- Social well being
- Walkability

#### **4.6 Input from Questionnaire: Specific Topics to be Discussed by the Assembly**

Online questionnaire respondents suggested a list of topics for consideration similar to that raised at the workshops.

##### ***Land-use, Density, Zoning, Built-form, Development***

- Amount and type of density changes both near transit hubs and in general , including zoning and building heights
- “How do we accommodate current residents’ desires, preserve the character of the neighbourhood, and prepare for future growth/affordability”?
- “What is appropriate mix of density and housing types that suits ALL demographics that live in the neighbourhood”

##### ***Neighbourhood Growth & Change***

- “Sustaining the community character while planning for the future, including determining the rate and extent of growth”

##### ***Housing***

- Affordable housing
- Mix of housing options
- Preserve heritage housing

##### ***Social services, social sustainability, health, crime, etc***

- “To help provide a safe, healthy and environmentally friendly neighbourhood”
- “How can the GWCP be designed to address the needs of the most vulnerable people”
- Daycare spaces, green space, schools, arts, culture, safety
- Availability of community, medical and social resources

##### ***Community Amenities***

- Services and infrastructure to support changes in resident density
- Allocation of parks, amenities, public spaces, green spaces
- Community spaces like Britannia and Grandview park
- “Making the community a livable place with a good balance of residential, business, light industry, natural spaces, pocket seating and park areas that encourage members of the community to use them for rest, play, relaxation. Community spaces, centres, and transportation all help a community to be livable.”

##### ***Local Economy***

- Local jobs and businesses
- Affordability of commercial spaces to rent or purchase
- Large changes to retail / commercial spaces
- Examine how Grandview-Woodland has the services and retail resources future populations will need

##### ***Transportation***

- Transit, cars, traffic, pedestrians, cycling
- Local transportation issues as well as greater Vancouver transportation demands

- “Specifically - What is the appropriate level and intensity of land use around skytrain, given the regional implications of landuse patterns. What level of neighbourhood ridership is required to support the proportionate share of skytrain debt. How does that translate into density.”

***Neighbourhood Heritage & Character***

- “Preserve the character of the neighbourhood, and prepare for future growth/affordability” through examining zoning/density bylaw changes

***Arts & Culture***

- Protect the existing culture and develop new opportunities for culture and arts

## 5. Member Composition

An effective Assembly process is dependent on 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 represent the community as a whole. The latter ensures that the opportunity for fair and reasoned deliberation isn’t compromised by having too few, or too many people in the room.

Previous Assembly processes have used a variety of demographic characteristics to guide the selection of members. Age, gender and geography - are the most commonly used. It is important to note that the more attributes that are included in the Assembly recruitment process, the more complex the selection process can be. Most precedent processes try to select based on three-four key demographic traits.

### 5.1 Input from the Workshops: Member Composition

Workshop participants were asked to suggest the key demographic attributes that should be represented in the Grandview-Woodland Citizens’ Assembly:

#### *Criteria for Member Diversity*

- Most supported diversity criteria
  - Geography
  - Age
  - Gender
  - Income (although “\$18K-\$64K is too broad a brush”)
  - Tenure / home ownership / renter / co-op / homeless
  - Aboriginal
- Additional diversity criteria
  - Race / ethnicity
  - Sexual orientation / transgender
  - Business organization / non profit / community / work / manufacturing
  - Recent immigrants
  - Family status
  - Non mobile elderly
  - Knowledge of English
  - Length of time in the community
- Consider population trends, not just the current status: youth, renters, aging population

#### *Diversity*

Specifically on the subject of member diversity, workshop participants suggested the following:

- “mirror the mosaic of social-economic demographics of GW”
- “include full spectrum of the community, including Aboriginal, youth, low income”, “mobility challenged, homeless, other vulnerable population groups”
- “Important to represent diversity of values and principles (rather than demographic characteristics)” although “it’s difficult to determine values objectively as attributes

for representation

- Members should represent their individual perspective, not that of their employer or other organizations they are affiliated with

### **Age**

- Allow participation from age 16
- Youth and seniors are important groups to be represented in the membership

### **Geography**

- “Need diverse geographic representation of residents” from Grandview-Woodland
- Include people from adjacent areas and communities (the formal community area and entire affected area are not the same)

### **Ethnicity**

- Include aboriginal people as a distinct category of representation

### **Income**

- Incomediversity “draws out important issues and diverse views”
- “\$18,000 - \$64,000 is too broad a brush”

### **Language**

- “how to participate in the CA in other languages?”

### **Home Status**

- Mix of owners, renters and coop residents
- “Length of residency - spread (i.e. short and long term) - to achieve a fuller discussion of issues and needs”

### **Residents**

There was some difference of opinion on the question of whether the Assembly should be limited to residents of the Grandview-Woodland study area, or include a broader constituency (e.g. business owners or employees that lived outside the community, representatives from other neighbourhoods, other potential stakeholder groups).

- Views on Residents only
  - “Residents only who are renters and owners - or at a minimum, weighted toward residents”
  - “Businesses and others could be engaged through other methods”
  - “not customers, interested developers, or people passing through”
- Views on Residents “plus”:
  - “be careful not to dilute overly to non-residents”
  - Involve those who work in the neighbourhood and those who are “invested in neighbourhood and should have a say”
  - Involve “people living in adjacent neighbourhoods”

### ***Outreach for Recruitment***

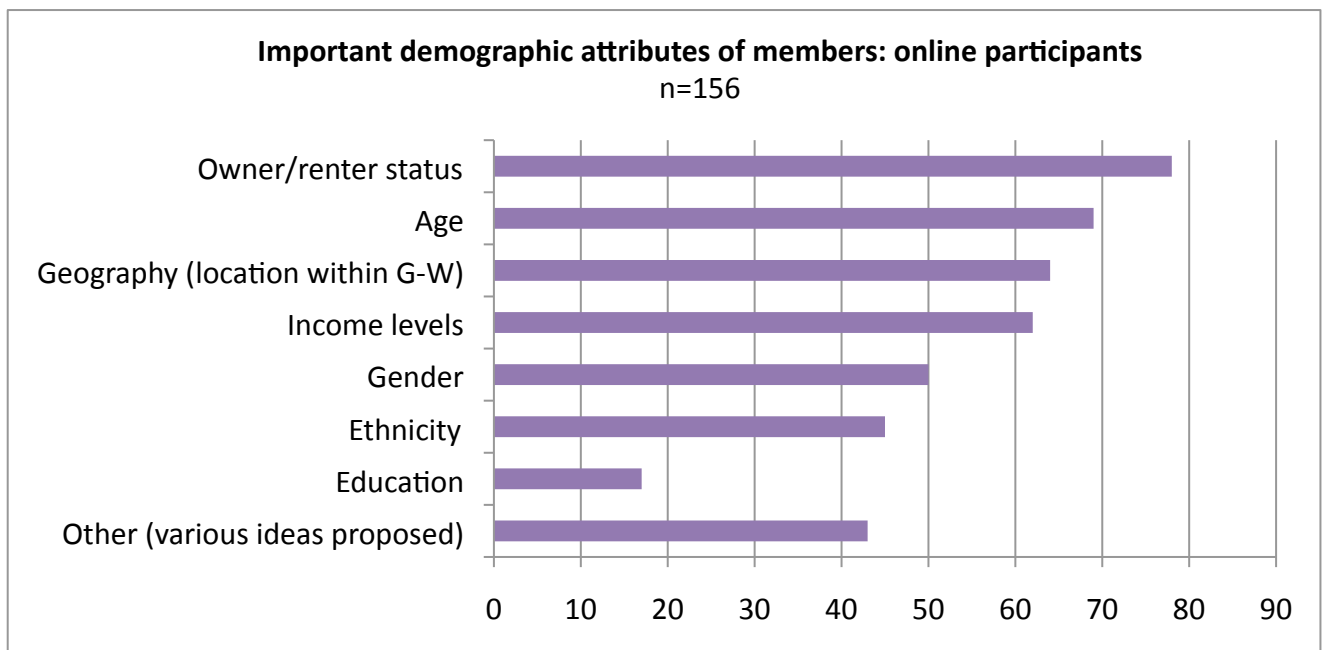
Workshop participants also commented on the recruitment process.

- Proactively reach out to community members less likely to participate to ensure they are aware of and understand the opportunity
- Directly “contact groups within the community to ensure involvement (e.g. Aboriginal community)” and ethnic groups

## ***5.2 Input from the Questionnaire: Member Composition***

### ***Demographic Attributes***

Online participants were asked to select up to four key demographic attributes that they feel should be represented in the membership of the Assembly:



### ***Other***

Questionnaire respondents also suggested a number of additional demographic traits that could be considered (listed alphabetically):

- Business owners
- Family status, including families with young children
- Housing situation including homeless
- Landowners
- Residency length in the community (both long and short term)
- Mental health status
- No set number of participants, anyone should be able to join
- Physical ability
- Prior participation in a community planning process
- Sexual orientation
- Work background, including arts and culture, and civic organizations

## ***Who should be considered for membership in the Grandview-Woodland Citizens' Assembly?***

Questionnaire respondents provided the following commentary with regard to potential Assembly members:

### ***Residents***

- There was a mix of opinions about whether members should be residents only, or if members should also be selected from those who don't live in the community but are from adjacent communities, property owners, business owners, employees and/or service organization employees.

### ***Businesses and Organizations***

- A large number of respondents said business owners should be part of the Assembly's membership because they are invested in the community and spend large amounts of time there. Similarly, there was support for employees of business and service organizations to participate, even if they don't live in the neighbourhood.

### ***Developers***

- Some respondents said developers should not be eligible to participate in the Assembly.

### ***Transit Users, Students and Visitors***

- Most respondents did not support the participation of people who have minimal interaction with the neighbourhood, such as transit users or visitors.
- Respondents noted that many residents use transit and students are living in the area, therefore these perspectives would be represented without focusing on them as selection criteria.

And, a number of respondents reminded us that “while there are a number of groups that can, and should be identified, however, there will be situations where a single individual may cross several demographics and provide a perspective that is inclusive of multiple groups”



## 6. Member Selection

Participants were asked to consider a typical process used to select members of a Citizens' Assembly. "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." The ensuing workshop discussions and online commentary explored the strengths and limitations to this approach:

### 6.1 Input from the Workshops: Selection Process

Workshop participants were asked to comment on how members should be selected for the proposed Grandview-Woodland Citizens' Assembly. Here, discussion yielded some divergence of opinions. Online respondents were evenly split in the number of comments identifying strengths (81) and weaknesses (81) of the random selection method they were asked to consider. However, in general, workshop participants also placed a much higher emphasis on the diversity of members (181 votes) over *how* members would be selected (25 votes).

#### *General Comments on Selection*

- Use an independent group to select members
- Provide support to increase participation of vulnerable and less represented groups: childcare, honorarium, transportation support, school credit, diverse abilities, physical disability, etc.
- Distribute culturally appropriate invitations
- "Look for gaps in CA and reach out to them as part of educational component"

#### *Views on Random selection of Assembly Members:*

- Use census data to randomly select community members to represent Grandview-Woodland's demographic diversity
- Concern that "Self-selection works against broad representation" of the community

#### *Views on Self-selection of Assembly Members:*

- "Self selection with targeted outreach" to encourage diversity and fill in any gaps after
- "Likely that representation would be achieved on its own"
- Ensures "representation from those who have been actively involved in the process"

### 6.2 Input from the Questionnaire: Selection Process

Questionnaire participants provided a similar array of perspectives when asked to identify strengths and limitations to the precedent approach:

#### *Strengths*

- "A broad call for participation gives the most people a chance to serve on the panel"
- Might encourage people to participate who might not normally
- Attracts people who are interested in participating

- Fair because everyone has roughly equal opportunity to be selected
- Prevents bias or perceived bias
- Likely to result in a group that represents the neighbourhood's demographic diversity
- Prevents the assembly from being dominated by any one perspective

#### *Limitations*

- “Might prevent enthusiastic and involved members of our community from having their voices heard”, which means “the participants to date are not being honoured for their time and consideration”
- “Does not include people who may not initially be interested in the project. e.g: the homeless, the working poor, people who don't read their mail or aren't interested in civic issues”
- May exclude people who don't read or people who don't speak English
- The Assembly should be a “broad and large self-selected group composed of as many residents and community members who are willing to put in the necessary work”

#### *Other comments*

Online participants also noted a number of additional considerations around the selection process:

- The random selection process should be implemented and overseen by a neutral third party
- People should be committed and willing to participate, made possible by having the expectations of members (time commitment, task, etc.) explained in detail
- If there are important gaps in the selected group, fill those gaps through targeted invitations
- “In order for this process to be truly representative, members must (a) be paid for their participation; (b) be offered free, on-site childcare; (c) be offered transit vouchers to and from the location.”

## 7. Assembly Size

Previous deliberative processes on complex issues (similar to a community plan), have typically had an Assembly size that ranged between 12-60 members. In choosing the right number of members, the goals are to enable participants to connect with and deliberate with each other in a meaningful way while also ensuring that is representative of the community at large.

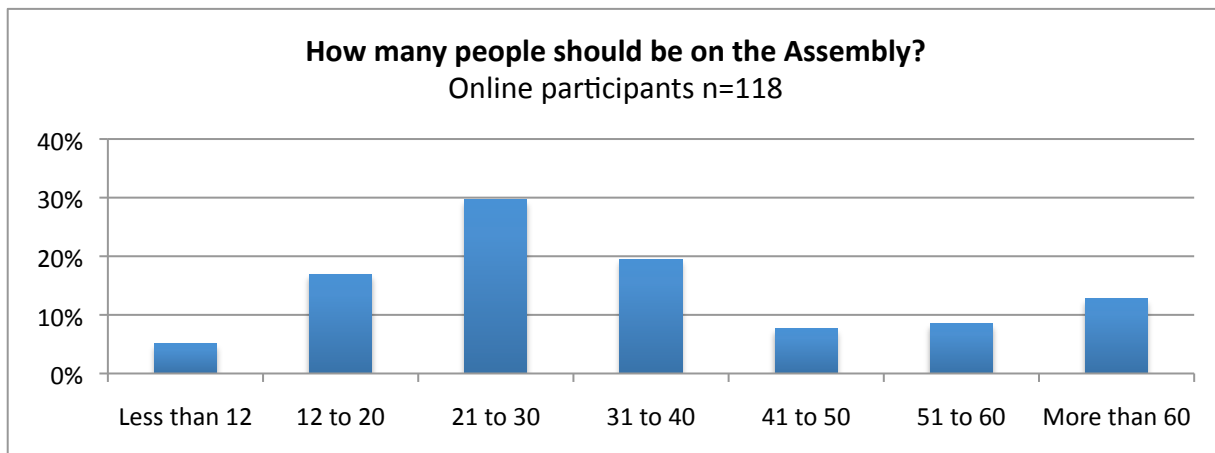
### 7.1 Input from the Workshops: Size of Assembly

Workshop participants were asked to consider how many people should serve as members of the Grandview-Woodland Citizens' Assembly:

- Views on a Medium sized group (20-40 people)
  - “Lower numbers = more opportunities for discussion”
- Views on a Large group (40-60 or more)
  - “Higher end of proposed participant numbers (60)= more inclusive” and more diverse
  - “deal with the largeness through small group work”
  - “need to consider budget and time that gets added to larger groups”
  - “Higher numbers = more trust in the Assembly process?”
- Views on no limit to the number of participants (may include comments immediately above):
  - “Number limitations may not allow those most keen to participate”
  - “Flexible number, based on response” to the invitations to participate
- Provide opportunity for CA to “solicit additional members where the CA feels [it] has gaps in representation,” regardless of selection approach

### 7.2 Input from the Questionnaire: Size of Assembly

Online participants were able to select from a list of potential options regarding Assembly size.



In explaining their choice, participants noted the following principles when describing what was important to them about the size of the Assembly:

- Small enough to give everyone the opportunity to be heard while also providing enough people to accomplish the tasks that need to be done
- Manageable size while also having enough people that they represent the diversity of the community in demographics and opinions
- The greater the number of participants, the more accurate the results will be

## 8. Community Engagement

Participants were asked to consider how the broader community should be involved with the Assembly. For example, how should information and input from other (non-Assembly) activities, such as community-wide events and focus groups, be integrated into the Assembly process, and vice versa? Participants also considered which engagement efforts should be led by the City, and which should be led by the Citizens' Assembly.

It's worth noting that many previous Citizens' Assemblies had a "Consultation" phase in which members worked to engage the public and to seek further input and feedback to help with their decision-making.

### ***8.1 Input from the Workshops: Community Engagement***

Workshop participants focussed on three key themes related to community engagement.

#### ***Citizens' Assembly and the City of Vancouver***

Workshop participants felt there should be

- Clear lines of communication between the Assembly, City and public
- Complementary schedules and purposes between Assembly and public meetings. "Avoid parallel / repetitive engagement process... Consultation is different but not competitive"
- Assembly should be appropriately involved in the community-wide workshops

#### ***Assembly-led public engagement***

Workshop participants also felt that the Assembly should

- Engage with public on education and imagination process
- "conduct independent dialogue sessions with the community" and have its own outreach process to key groups (agencies, neighbourhood houses, specific demographic groups, vulnerable populations)
- Be given facilitation training, as well as provided City staff support for public outreach

#### ***Public Access to Assembly***

Lastly, workshop comments focused on broader issues of access and transparency.

- "Create a culture so everyone knows what is happening"
- "invite community members that represent key groups...to come in and talk to the Assembly"
- "Provide opportunities for the public to attend [Assembly meetings]; open meetings and all allowed to submit comments in writing"
- Translation provided for non-English speakers

## 8.2 Input from the Questionnaire: Community Engagement

Online respondents reviewed a list of options for how information and input from other (non-Assembly) activities, such as community-wide events and focus group, should be integrated into the Assembly process and vice versa. Respondents were able to select the ones that they felt were most important. The following table ranks these selections based on respondent interest.

Rank	Options
1.	The Assembly posts updates about their work to a website
2.	Community members have the option to submit their views to the Assembly
3.	Community input gathered during staff public processes are shared with Assembly
4.	When the Assembly is in their learning phase public members are invited attend the expert lectures panels
5.	When the Assembly is in their learning phase expert lectures panels are live-streamed or recorded and shared online
6.	Assembly members gather to host large public events and collect feedback
7.	Individual Assembly members host small community meetings with their own networks and collect feedback
8.	Other

“Other” ideas included:

- Assembly members can request input/presentations from staff, public and outside expertise
- Updates on Assembly work should be “presented at a public forum by the assembly members and they should take questions from the public at that time”
- Most assembly meetings should be open to the public with published agendas
- “let the Assembly, hopefully at times in sub-groups or subcommittees, have the space to learn, discuss, get somewhere - away from the public”
- Use online tools to share information and get feedback
- Deliberate outreach to invite participation and input from First Nations people
- Avoid duplication of efforts when hosting public workshops so that Assembly’s and the City’s efforts are complementary

## 9. Products of the Assembly

In the majority of Assembly-type engagement processes, the Assembly's recommendations are presented in a final report - which is then delivered to the governing body for review and official response.

Both workshop and online participants were asked to respond to a description of what might happen with the Assembly's work. "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?" Participants were also asked consider how the Assembly's work should be weighed in relation to input from other community engagement activities.

### 9.1 Input from the Workshops: Products of the Assembly

Regarding the Assembly's recommendations, workshop participants made the following comments:

#### *Timing*

- The Assembly's recommendations "must wrap-up well before the Plan" to ensure public can respond and necessary additional research can be done
- "The Assembly should have on-going dialogue with staff in the planning department so they can flesh out data and share emerging recommendations"
- Updates on Assembly's work to should be provided to planning staff, public and City Council

#### *Impact*

- The "report from the Assembly should go directly to Council"
- The City should respond to the Assembly's work with rationale for their decisions
- "Assembly gets to respond to Council's response"

#### *Balanced weighting of Assembly's recommendations with community-wide public input*

- "Weight should depend on the Assembly's recommendations, interaction it had between the public, and how transparent the process has been"
- "Recommendations from the Assembly should be more heavily weighted because opinions expected to be more informed and they've also engaged the larger community"
- "Assumption should be that the public's input has been incorporated into the Assembly"
- "Assembly should have equal weight to City staff's recommendations"

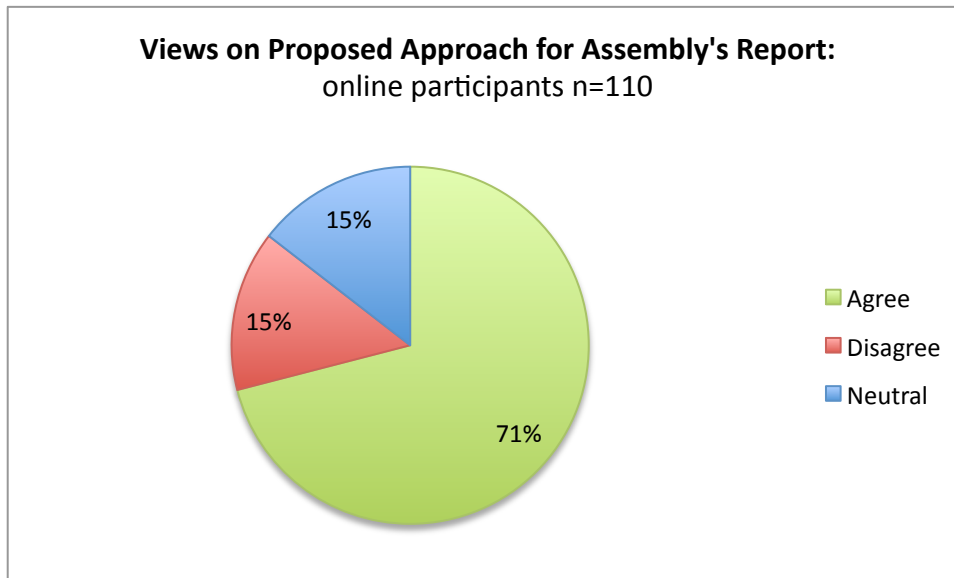
#### *Report Format*

- Plain language and "lots of great graphics"

## 9.2 Input from the Questionnaire: Products of the Assembly

Online respondents were also asked to respond to a description of what might happen with the Assembly's work.

This following chart shows online participants' state of agreement on the statement: "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."



Questionnaire respondents also noted the following strengths and made a number of suggestions about to improve the approach.

### **Strengths of the Approach**

- "Open and transparent and requires a formal response from staff so that it just doesn't get shelved. Like that it gets presented to Council for deliberation as well."
- Bolsters the Assembly's "legitimacy, and City Council's political accountability to the report and recommendations that flow from that process"

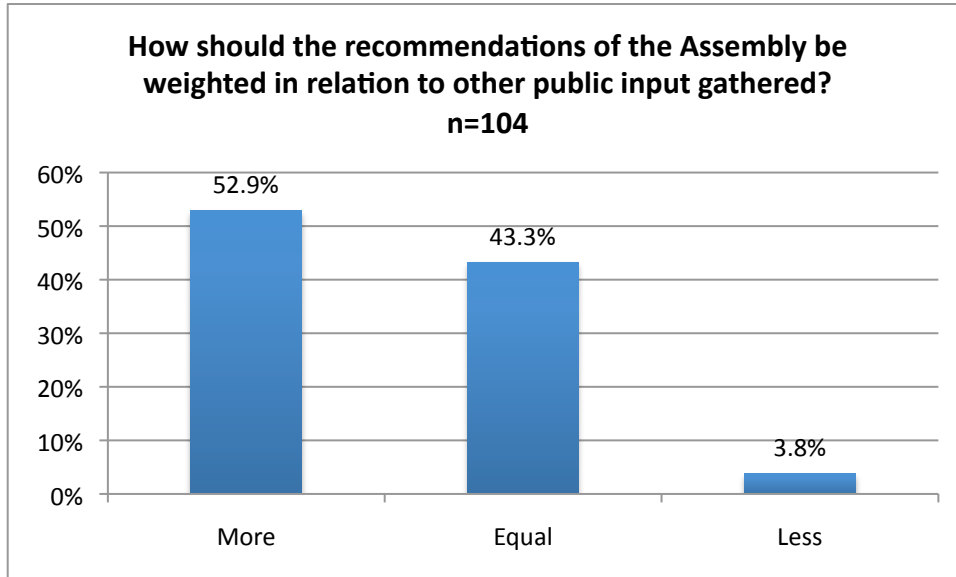
### **Suggestions**

- Need to have ongoing information exchanges between the Assembly, planners, council and public to proactively develop a plan everyone can agree on
- "The report should be presented to the public in the community for response before it is finalized"
- The Assembly should present directly to Council, not be filtered through planning staff. Without this, it "dilutes the power and influence of the Assembly and doesn't require accountability from City Council where the ultimate decisions will be made"
- Clarity is needed about the extent to which the Assembly's recommendations will be incorporated into plans and accepted by Council; "Obviously the City make the final decisions but citizens need to know their opinions are being listened to"



***How should the recommendations of the Assembly be weighted in relation to input gathered during other community engagement activities?***

The following chart details the degree of support for Assembly recommendations that are weighted more, equal to, or less than other community input.



## **10. Conclusion and Recommended Next Steps**

This report has provided a synopsis of public input received about key design choices for the Citizens' Assembly on the Grandview-Woodland Community Plan.

Participants in both processes almost unanimously supported the idea of having a Citizens' Assembly for the Grandview-Woodland Community Plan. Key design choices were reviewed, and while there were points of divergence, there was also considerable support for many aspects of the Assembly process.

### ***10.1 Recommended Next Steps***

After reading all of the participant input provided and preparing this summary in collaboration with City of Vancouver planning staff, the consultant recommends the following four next steps:

#### **1. Supplemental Engagement**

Participants of the workshops and online questionnaire were diverse in a number of demographic areas, but they do not fully reflect the diversity of Grandview-Woodland (see Section 2.3). To ensure that a mix of perspectives are considered, the City of Vancouver should consider hosting focused engagement sessions with groups such as Aboriginal organizations, social service providers (representing at-risk populations in the neighbourhood), business organizations and youth.

#### **2. Draft a Terms of Reference for the Assembly**

A draft Terms of Reference for the Grandview-Woodland Citizens' Assembly should be written to describe the Assembly's objectives, tasks, constraints, deliverables, formation, chair, responsibility of members, role of the City, convergent public process, and other important design features. In order to ensure an independent, arms-length process, the City should proceed with its plan to engage a third-party consultant to facilitate the development of this document. The Terms of Reference should draw from public input gathered through the January and February workshops and online questionnaire, supplemental engagement as well as best practices for Citizens' Assemblies.

#### **3. Public Feedback on the Draft Terms of Reference**

The public should be invited to provide feedback on the draft Terms of Reference and other Assembly related materials. A summary of input received should be shared with participants, the public and City Council.

#### **4. Provide Recommendations to City Council**

Using both public input and best practices, City Planners should submit to City Council its recommendations on the whether to hold a Citizens' Assembly, and if so, its design.

## **Appendix: Frequently Asked Questions**

At the start of both of the January workshops, participants brainstormed a number of ‘clarifying questions’ to ask City planners – questions that would give them additional information (on top of the introductory presentations) about Citizens’ Assemblies. Over 125 questions were collected on cue cards, a large proportion of which addressed very similar topics. A number of these questions were themed and responded to during the workshops.

Below is a summary of all the questions raised by workshop participants. The few questions that correspond only with the January workshops are answered below. Responses to the rest of these questions, which explore the Assembly itself, can be found the FAQ for the Citizens Assembly on the Grandview-Woodland Community Plan, at [www.vancouver.ca/gw](http://www.vancouver.ca/gw).

### ***Planning & Design of Assembly***

**Q1.** What aspects of the Assembly (characteristics, framework) have been decided? Are there any predetermined limitations? How much flexibility is there in the CA model (and its application to Grandview-Woodland)?

**Q2.** What sorts of relevant precedents are there? In what ways have they been successful? How can we ensure the G-W Citizens’ Assembly is a success?

### ***Recruitment***

**Q3.** How will Assembly members be selected? What is the recruitment process? How can we ensure this process is transparent?

### ***Composition***

**Q4.** How many participants should there be? How can we ensure that the Citizens’ Assembly engages, and reflects, a wide and balanced mix of community members and interests, including those that are traditionally under-represented in community processes? How wide-reaching (geographically) should the Assembly membership be?

### ***Schedule, Duration, Commitment***

**Q5.** What is the time frame associated with the Assembly? When would it start and how long would it last? What sort of commitment would be required of participants?

### ***Role/Mandate of the Assembly***

**Q6.** What is the Assembly’s scope of work? Is there any flexibility in their mandate?

### ***Impact of the Assembly***

**Q7.** What authority does the Assembly have, and how can we ensure accountability in the process? Is there a role for the Assembly *after* it completes its mandated work?

### ***Work of the Assembly - Tasks, process, etc.***

**Q8.** How is this process different than previous community engagement in Grandview-Woodland, and how can we ensure that it will have teeth? How will the work of the Assembly be determined? What will be the work of the Assembly?

***Broader community engagement***

**Q8.** How will the Assembly process enable a broad array of people to be involved? How will people (or groups) who are not part of the Assembly be able to participate and/or stay engaged?

**Q9.** How will the work of the Assembly relate to the City's other community planning activities, community initiatives, and/or or larger city-wide processes/policies?

***Final products of the Assembly - & City response***

**Q9.** What will be the final product of the Assembly? If it is a report with their recommendations, what weight will these be given by the City? How will their recommendations be integrated into the final community plan? What sort of City commitment is thereto listen to, respond, and take action on the work of the Assembly?

***Budget, other City staff support***

**Q10.** What is the budget for the Citizens' Assembly? How will the Assembly be staffed and resourced? What sort of compensation or support is available for members?

***Other***

**Q11.** How were the January 2014 workshops advertised?

- The January workshops were promoted through the following means: an unaddressed mail drop to all households in the Grandview-Woodland study area, an advertisement in the Vancouver Courier, social media (Twitter, Facebook), our community plan list-serv, street posters (on utility poles) and postcards (in area businesses), and on large 3'x4' core plast signs posted throughout the neighbourhood.

**Q12.** What is the difference between the geography of the Grandview-Woodland local area and the community plan study area?

**Q13.** Every leader at the discussion tables works for the City Hall Planning Department. How can they be impartial or unbiased?

- City staff worked as facilitators and note-takers at the workshops. Their job was to ensure that the discussion stayed on track and attended to the questions, and to record the ensuing ideas that were generated. Participants at the workshop had the opportunity to see what was being written, and to offer any clarifications or corrections if they felt that was necessary.