

To: Mayor and Council  
Standing Committee on City Finance and Services

Subject: Community Planning in Grandview-Woodland, Marpole and the West End

Date: Wednesday, September 25, 2013

The Vancouver City Planning Commission supports Council's direction to staff to review the schedule, progress and feedback for all four community plan processes underway to identify options for possible additional steps, including revised timelines and budgets.

Citizens' support and collaboration at the community planning level is essential to successfully address the issues facing the city in the future, including the development of a new city-wide planning framework.

We are speaking today to encourage Council to agree to extensions for community planning in Grandview Woodland, Marpole and the West End, as needed, in order to support the City's desire for a collaborative process for developing community plan directions in all three communities. We are not speaking to the DTES planning program, which has followed a different process.

Although the Commission has not been a formal participant in each community plan process, we did participate in the development of the general terms of reference in 2011. As well, some Commissioners have taken part as residents, and the Commission and its committees have been following and discussing the unfolding process. The community plans process was approved by Council at the same meeting that we reported out on our Sustainable City of Sustainable Neighbourhoods initiative.<sup>1</sup>

The Commission has also reviewed the new approaches that were set out in 2011 to "enhance and diversify" engagement.<sup>2</sup> These approaches became the basis for a set of principles to guide outreach and engagement, as outlined in the general terms of reference.<sup>3</sup> For each community plan, the terms of reference included the same nine criteria for success:<sup>4</sup>

1. fulfill the core principles outlined in the Terms of Reference;
2. be achieved through broad collaboration between a wide range of stakeholders;
3. be completed within the allocated timeframe and resources;
4. provide a clear sense of direction for the future of the Local Area;
5. be practical and easily implemented;
6. have general community buy-in;

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<sup>1</sup> *Sustainable City of Sustainable Neighbourhoods 2009-2011*. <http://vancouverplanning.ca/projects/sustainable-neighbourhoods>

<sup>2</sup> *Vancouver's Next Community Plans*, Council Standing Committee on Planning and Environment, July 28, 2012. <http://former.vancouver.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/20110728/documents/penv1b-VancouversNextCommunityPlans.pdf>, pp. 13-14

<sup>3</sup> *Next Community Plans: Terms of Reference*. Council Standing Committee on Planning, Transportation and the environment, March 28, 2012. <http://former.vancouver.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/20120328/documents/ptec2.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, Appendix A for each plan: pp. 23, 44, 93

7. help to make the community a better place to live, work and play;
8. have the commitment of the City (and, where appropriate) its partners to tracking its long-term effectiveness; and
9. provide a framework for positive change in the well-being of [neighbourhood]

The Commission believes that completion of the plans within the allocated timeframe and resources should not take precedence over the other criteria for success. And we recognize this may impact on other important planning work which is need by the City as mentioned in the report.

Embarking on three community plans simultaneously, with a fourth underway concurrently, was an ambitious undertaking. Pausing for a review may delay completion, but improve outcomes for the other indicators of success.

Looking ahead to future planning processes, there would be a benefit to building in ongoing assessment of the process in relation to the success criteria, to determine if any adjustments or corrections to the process are needed. Also, clarification of what is meant by terms such as 'engagement,' participation,' and 'collaboration' would contribute to the development of a shared understanding and clear expectations.

The Commission believes that the timelines of the Grandview-Woodland, Marpole and West End Community planning programs should be extended as needed so that staff and communities can further discuss, debate, and select preferred options for the emerging directions that will be included within the community Plans. The successful conclusion of these community planning programs now underway is very important for future city-wide plan initiatives.

In closing, we recall Council's motion of March 28, 2012, to "make all reports coming to Council regarding these three community plans available to respective communities for at least two weeks prior to the Council meeting at which the report is to be heard," and hope that future reports will be released according to that Council motion to allow time for review.

Yours truly,



Peter Greenwell, Chair, on behalf of

The Vancouver City Planning Commission

*A Council-appointed advisory body with a mandate to consider planning matters affecting the city's future*