THINK CITY

IDEAS FOR A 21ST CENTURY VANCOUVER

Peoples' Report

April 7, 2004

Submitted by Think Democracy Participants to:

The Vancouver (Berger) Commission on Neighbourhood Constituencies & Local Democracy
The City of Vancouver
The Vancouver Park Board
The Vancouver School Board
The Office of the Premier of British Columbia
The Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services
The Coalition of Progressive Electors
The Non-Partisan Association
The Vancouver Green Party
Vancouver Civic Action TEAM

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Introduction

"Think Democracy" - that's what we at Think City decided to do over the last year as we came together to discuss and propose ways to increase citizen control of local governance here in Vancouver. Our timing couldn't have be better. Shortly after our first meeting at Library Square, the City of Vancouver hired former Supreme Court Justice Thomas Berger to head the Vancouver Commission on Neighbourhood Constituencies & Local Democracy. In fact, we at ThinkCity feel that our June kick-off with Anne Latendresse and Dimitri Rousopoulos at least partially prompted the Mayor and City Council to take action.

After almost a year of hard work we have the great pleasure to release our Peoples' Report. The Report outlines what participants in the Think Democracy project feel should be done to improve local democracy and citizen participation in Vancouver. It is the culmination of discussions of almost 400 people at four forums held at different locations throughout the city. Produced by volunteers and funded by small donations, these forums were used to deliberate about electoral reform, neighbourhood power and local economic democracy so that we could make recommendations to the Berger Commission and other decision-makers.

We hope that you take the time to read through this report and consider our thoughts and ideas. They represent the views of people who felt strongly enough to donate time, money and effort to this project. The overwhelming message voiced through this process is that we want to change how we govern ourselves. It is now up to you to make sure these changes happen.

Sincerely,

Kennedy Stewart   ## Kelly Quinn

Kennedy Stewart   and   Kelly Quinn
Think City Co-Chair   Think City Co-Chair

On behalf of the Think City Society & Think Democracy participants
www.thinkcity.ca

Background

Think City

In January 2002, the first Think City conference attracted more than 500 residents to a "big ideas" conference on the future of Vancouver. Discussion focused on creating vibrant neighbourhoods, preserving and expanding public services, making economic development work for everyone, nurturing diverse cultural communities, and moving people and goods in revolutionary ways. In short, participants explored how cities make a difference in citizens' lives.

Think City's community partners recognized that civic activism has tremendous potential to confront disillusionment with the status quo and to empower change. Local government is often said to be the level closest to people's daily lives. Although local governments are elected with only limited mandates, they make a huge difference in the quality of life of the people who work, live and play in local communities.

Since its founding conference, Think City participants have worked to engage citizens in the decisions that affect their daily lives. Events including Think Schools, Think Eco-City and Think Youth in 2002 provided additional opportunities for the public to get involved in shaping civic society. Starting in the summer of 2003, Think City launched Think Democracy - a series of citizens forums, film nights and speaker events. Think Democracy concludes in April 2004, with the release of the Peoples' Report. In April 2004, Think City also hosted Think 2010 – An Olympics for All – and is currently planning a 2004-2005 Think Region series for the Lower Mainland.

A number of community partners have helped to make Think City a successful registered society. These include: Better Environmentally Sound Transportation, Communicopia.Net, Council of Canadians, DOXA – The Documentary Film and Video Festival, Headlines Theatre, Institute of Governance Studies at Simon Fraser University, Seniors Network BC, Society Promoting Environmental Conservation, Tenants' Rights Action Coalition, Vancouver and District Labour Council and the Vancouver Independent Media Centre and numerous individual volunteers and small donors.

Think Democracy Chronology

The "Think Democracy" project ran from June 2003 to April 2004. Information included in this report was gathered from the following events:

Think Democracy Kick-off (June 11, 2003)

Held at Vancouver Public Library
Greeting - Mayor Larry Campbell

Speaker - Anne Latendresse, University of Quebec Professor of Geography outlined participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil, and possible applications to Canadian cities.

Speaker - Dimitri Roussopoulos, head of Montreal's Task Force on Municipal Democracy, described Montreal's decentralizing to provide more power to local neighbourhoods.

Summer Workshop Series (June 25-July 23, 2003)

Electoral Reform (St. James' Community Centre - June 25, 2003)
    Facilitator - Kennedy Stewart

Neighbourhood Power (Evergreen Community Health Centre - July 9, 2003)
    Facilitators - Patrick Smith and Tammie Tupechka

Economic Democracy (Hastings Community Centre - July 23, 2003)
    Facilitators - Merrilee Robson, Kevin Shoesmith, Marcia Nozick
    & Erika De Castro

Civic Celluloid Film Series(February 13-April2, 2004)

Held at SFU Harbour Centre
Conceived and hosted by Patsy Kotsopoulos

The Candidate (1972, Dir. Michael Ritchie - Feb. 13, 2004)
Bob Roberts (1992, Dir. Tim Robbins - March 12, 2004)
City of Hope (1991, Dir. John Sayles - April 2, 2004)

The Peoples' Report Celebration and Release - April 7, 2004

Held at Heritage Hall
Panel: Professors Patrick Smith, Julian West and Kennedy Stewart
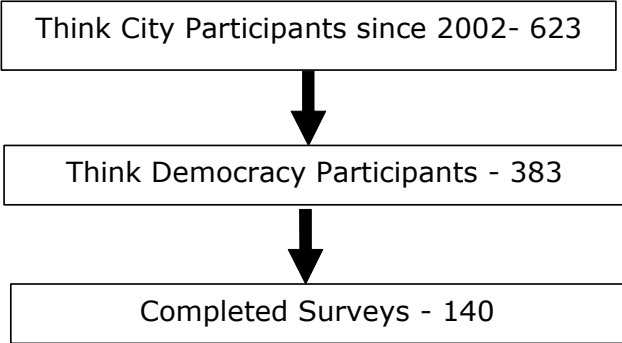
Think Democracy Process

The aims and objectives of Think Democracy were outlined and discussed at the first workshop held on June 25, 2003 at the St. James Community Hall. Groups would work together to improve local democracy in Vancouver, beginning with discussions held at the three workshops. At this first meeting it was suggested that:

- An initial report would be drafted and circulated to all participants.
- All those who participated would have the opportunity to comment.
- Any comments would be included verbatim in the report.
- Any participant could remove their name from the final report.

As an organic process, these rules were debated and adjusted once it was decided to use an innovative deliberative survey as the basis of the report. The final process used to generate this report was as follows:

- A survey was drafted to reflect discussions at the four meetings.
- This survey was submitted to participants for revision.
- The revised survey was sent to all meeting attendees.
- Postage paid return envelopes were used to assure anonymity.
- A map of participant addressed was substituted for a names list.

Over 200 people attended the Think Democracy Kick-off Event on June 11, 2003 with approximately 100 people attending each of the three workshops. Another 100 people have attended the Civic Celluloid Film Series. Designed by Norman Gludovatz of TechRepublic.ca, the www.thinkcity.ca website has also been popular source of information about local democracy - earning 176,000 hits between May 2003 and April 2004. Once designed, our deliberative survey was mailed to each of the 383 participants who attended at least one of these events. Of these, 140 questionnaires were returned and their responses are tabulated in this report.

Think City Participants since 2002- 623
↓
Think Democracy Participants - 383
↓
Completed Surveys - 140

Think Democracy Score Card

This summary reflects the level of participant agreement on a variety of issues discussed at the Think Democracy forums. In Table 1, a letter grade is attached to each reform recommendation according to the level of agreement on the issues. These grades reflect the degree of consensus for each recommendation arrived at through our deliberative survey process. Each issue is discussed in more detail below.

Table 1: Score Card of Consensus for Change in Vancouver

Grade	%	Recommendation
A+	96	Local political parties should disclose donor lists between elections
A+	95	Vancouver's political parties should be subject to spending limits
A+	91	The City's budgetary process should be more participatory
A+	90	Vancouver's at-large system should be replaced with 13-15 wards
A	88	Donations to political parties should be subject to limits
A	88	Election Ballots should be multilingual
A	88	Greater Vancouver Regional District directors should be directly elected
A	87	Mayoral candidate policy platforms should be distributed during elections
A-	84	Local political parties should have tax exempt status
A-	82	Neighbourhood-based offices to plan and deliver local services
A-	81	Door-to-door registration drives should be reinstated
B	74	The Province of British Columbia should **not** make voting compulsory
C	67	Mayoral candidates should pay $200 to be included on the ballot
C	65	The Province should legislate proportional representation in Vancouver
D	55	Local political parties should ensure half of their candidates are women
F	47	The City of Vancouver should randomly select citizen to sit on boards
F	15	The Vancouver Park Board should be abolished.

A+ Reforms

Campaign finance reform sits at the top of list for Think City participants. Both disclosing donors between elections and subjecting local political parties to spending limits were approved by over 95 percent of participants. Forum discussions included looking to other cities such as Toronto and Montreal as examples and modeling such reform after existing federal and provincial legislation.

Think Democracy participants also wanted to have more input into the city's budgetary process. Participants suggested looking at the Porto Allegre experience in Brazil or developing our own local model of participation.

Replacing Vancouver's at-large system with 13-15 neighbourhood constituencies is the final A+ recommendation. Interestingly, except for one participant who advocated a 19 question referendum on all aspects of democratic reform there were no suggestions to include a survey question about a holding another referendum before initiating this reform.

A Reforms

Like recent federal campaign finance legislation, 88 percent of participants felt that donations to political parties should be subject to limits. When added to the A+ reforms it is clear that candidate and party campaign expenditure change is extremely important to those surveyed.

Increasing information availability during elections was also extremely important to survey respondents Sympathetic to the challenges faces by those speaking English as a second language, 88 percent felt that election ballots should be multilingual. 87 percent indicated that they also need more information before elections and asked that the city print and distribute a booklet containing the policy platforms of all mayoral candidates.

Turning to the regional level, 87 percent of respondents felt that Greater Vancouver Regional District directors should be directly elected.

A- Reforms

The last round of highly supported local democratic reforms concern local political parties, neighbourhood planning and voter registration. 84 percent stated that local political parties should have tax exempt status similar to that of federal and provincial parties, 82 percent supported a move by the City of Vancouver to bring in neighbourhood-based offices to plan and

deliver local services and 81 percent favoured the reinstatement of door-to-door voter registration drives.

B Reforms

Low levels of voter turnout were generally lamented during Think Democracy and a good number of participants felt that this problem should be addressed. However there was a very strong indication that this should not be done through compulsory voting. 74 percent of participants felt that voting in local elections should be not be made compulsory.

C Reforms

A fair number of people felt that access to the ballot should be mildly constrained and the Province of British Columbia should legislate some type of proportional representation electoral system in Vancouver. 67 percent supported the idea that mayoral candidates should pay a fee to be included on the ballot with $200 being the median choice for a fee level. That 65 percent indicated they are in favour of PR suggests that this democratic reform option should be thoroughly discussed and explored in the near future.

D Reforms

Barely over half of those surveyed felt that the list if candidates submitted by local political parties should be gender balanced. Interestingly, male respondents rejected this notion (51 percent 'no') while 63 percent of female respondents supported this idea.

F Reforms

Two issues flatly rejected by survey respondents were the idea of randomly selected citizens being selected to sit on city boards and committees and the idea of abolishing the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation. Where only 53 percent thought the addition of random citizens was a bad idea, 85 percent rejected the idea of abolishing the Park Board with the average supporter calling instead for the number of commissioners to increased to 8.

Conducting a Deliberative Survey

The Think Democracy survey represents an innovation in public participation in that the survey was designed through a deliberative process. The initial questions were taken from a series of three workshops on electoral reform, neighbourhood governance and local economic democracy. These questions were circulated to participants who could then alter or add their own questions to the survey. The redesigned survey was then sent to participants for completion along with an unmarked, postage paid return envelope to ensure anonymity. Of the 383 original participants of Think Democracy, 140 completed and mailed surveys for a return rate of 37 percent.

Demographically, 55 percent of the respondents were men, with 57 percent reporting membership in a local political party. 86 percent of those completing surveys reported voting in the last civic election. Finally, when asked which local political party most closely reflected their views, 86 percent indicated COPE as their party of preference. The Non-Partisan Association, Vancouver Green Party and vcaTEAM also garnered support.

It should be noted that the overall number of survey responses, 140, is quite small for purposes of making statistically significant conclusions. Furthermore, respondents were self-selecting, and are, by and large, much more politically engaged than other residents of Vancouver. The survey was an integral part of the deliberative process, with survey questions emerging directly from the Think Democracy sessions. For this reason, questionnaires were mailed only to citizens who had participated in one or more of the Think Democracy sessions. The support for reforms identified in this report should be understood to describe the views of participants in the Think Democracy project without inferring conclusions about the population of Vancouver as a whole. This said, participants who completed the survey showed a strong degree of consensus around many democratic reform issues.

Deliberative Survey Results

The results in this subsection reflect both the topics raised during the discussions and the participants' preferences for change. Questions are arranged as they were in the questionnaire – grouped first according to the level of government responsible for change, followed by questions relating to general neighbourhood governance.

A. Vancouver City Council

Question 1
Vancouver City Council is currently composed of ten (10) councillors and one (1) mayor. How many councillors do you think should be chosen to represent the citizens of Vancouver?

Mean score 15   Median score 13   Range 7 to 100

Question 2
Are you in favour of Vancouver City Council changing from the current at-large electoral system to a neighbourhood constituency (ward) electoral system?

Yes - 90 percent   No - 10 percent

Question 3.
Are you in favour of multi-lingual election ballots?

Yes - 88 percent   No - 12 percent

Question 4.
Do you think the city should reinstate door-to-door voter registration drives?

Yes - 81 percent   No - 12 percent

Question 5.
Do you think the City of Vancouver should provide information containing
mayoral candidate profiles and platforms to all citizens during local election
campaigns?

Yes - 87 percent   No - 13 percent

Question 6/7
Do you think potential mayoral candidates should pay a fee to be included
on the ballot? If yes, how much?

Yes - 67 percent   No - 33 percent
Mean fee suggestion – $947.99
Median fee suggestion - $200
Range - $1-$10,000

B. Vancouver Park Board

Question 8/9
Do you think Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation should be abolished?
If No, how many Park Board Commissioners should be elected every three
years (there are 7 [seven] currently)?

Yes - 15 percent   No - 85 percent
                          Mean – 8 Park Commissioners
                          Median – 7 Park Commissioners
                          Range – 1 to 70 Commissioners

C. Province of British Columbia

> **Question 10.**
> The Province of British Columbia has the power to determine if Vancouver City Councillors are elected through proportional representation. Do you think the Province of British Columbia should legislate a proportional representation system in Vancouver?

Yes - 65 percent   No – 35 percent

> **Question 11.**
> The Province of British Columbia has the power to determine how Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) directors are chosen. Do you think GVRD representatives should be directly elected? (Yes/No)

Yes - 87 percent   No - 13 percent

> **Question 12.**
> Do you think The Province of British Columbia should make voting compulsory in Vancouver civic elections?

Yes - 26 percent   No - 74 percent

D. Local Political Parties

> **Question 13.**
> Do you think local political parties (i.e. Coalition of Progressive Electors [COPE], Non-Partisan Association [NPA], Green Party, vcaTEAM) should ensure that at least half of their local candidates are women?

Yes - 55 percent   No – 45 percent

Male respondents: Yes - 49 percent   No - 51 percent
Female respondents: Yes - 63 percent   No - 37 percent

Question 14.
Currently provincial and federal political parties are subject to spending limits during election campaigns. Do you think local political parties in Vancouver should be subject to similar spending limits?

Yes - 95 percent   No - 5 percent

Question 15.
Do you think local political parties should be required to disclose their donor lists between elections? (Yes/No)

Yes - 96 percent   No – 4 percent

Question 16.
Do you think there should be a limit on the amount any single donor can contribute to a local political party?

Yes - 88 percent   No - 12 percent

Question 17.
Currently provincial parties are eligible for tax exempt status. Do you think local political parties in Vancouver should be given a similar exemption?

Yes - 84 percent   No – 16 percent

Question 18.
Do you think Vancouver City Council should establish neighbourhood-based offices to plan and deliver local services?

Yes - 82 percent   No - 18 percent

Question 19.
Do you think randomly selected citizens should be chosen to sit on city committees and boards?

Yes - 47 percent   No – 53 percent

Question 20.
Do you think the City of Vancouver should institute a more participatory budgeting process?

Yes - 91 percent   No - 9 percent

F. Miscellaneous Information

Question 21.
In order to determine in what neighbourhood you live, we request that you supply your postal code. Please write your postal code here:

See Appendix I Map

Question 22.
Are you male or female?

Male – 55%   Female – 45%

Question 23.
Which local political party most closely reflected your views in the 2002 Vancouver Civic Election? (Coalition of Progressive Electors [COPE], Non-Partisan Association [NPA], Vancouver Green Party, vcaTEAM, Other, None of the above)

COPE: 117   NPA: 1   Green: 11   vcaTEAM: 2   Other: 1   None: 4

Question 24.
Are you currently a member of a local political party (i.e. Coalition of Progressive Electors, Non-Partisan Association, vcaTEAM, or the Vancouver Green Party)?

Yes – 57%   No – 43%

Question 25.
Did you vote in the 2002 Vancouver local election?

Yes – 86%   No – 14%

Question 26.
If No, what is the main reason you did not vote?

New to Vancouver/Not Eligible: 53 %
Out of Town: 37 %
Couldn't decide/No time: 10 %

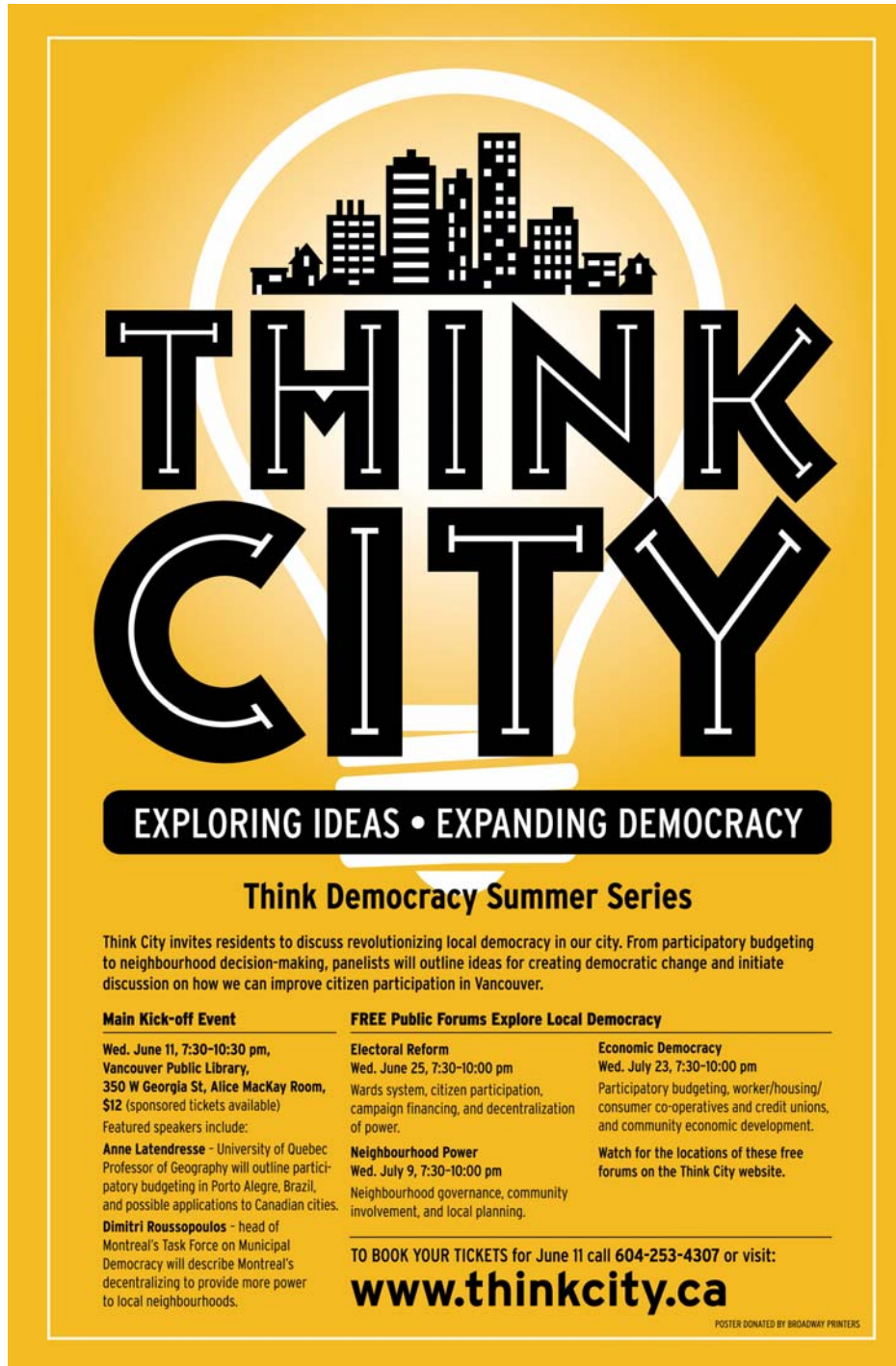| Question 27. |
| Please include any comments or suggestions you wish to share |

Want direct regional representation system (9%)
Want mixed ward/at-large system in Vancouver (7%)
Critical of Think Democracy survey (5%)
Voter participation needs to be increased, especially of the young (2%)
Should be careful with random citizen selection (2%)
Want more direct democracy (1%)
More community development (1%)
Need non-political civic parties (1%)
Need more televised debate (1%)
Proportional representation is a bad idea (1%)
Need Two-Round Run-Off system (1%)
Neighbourhood offices could be inefficient (1%)
Vancouver public is not prepared for PR or ward system (1%)
Need to develop a comprehensive approach to civic literacy (1%)
UEL should have representation in Vancouver City Hall (1%)
Participatory budgets are good idea (1%)
Parks and school board should be elected by wards (1%)
Greater concensus and less bickering needed in city hall (1%)
Build complete communities that are less automobile dependent (1%)
COPE is too 'wishy washy' (1%)
Hate 4AM bar closing (1%)
Deliver council minutes door-to-door (1%)
Need inexpensive offices in community centers (1%)

Appendix I – Participant Map
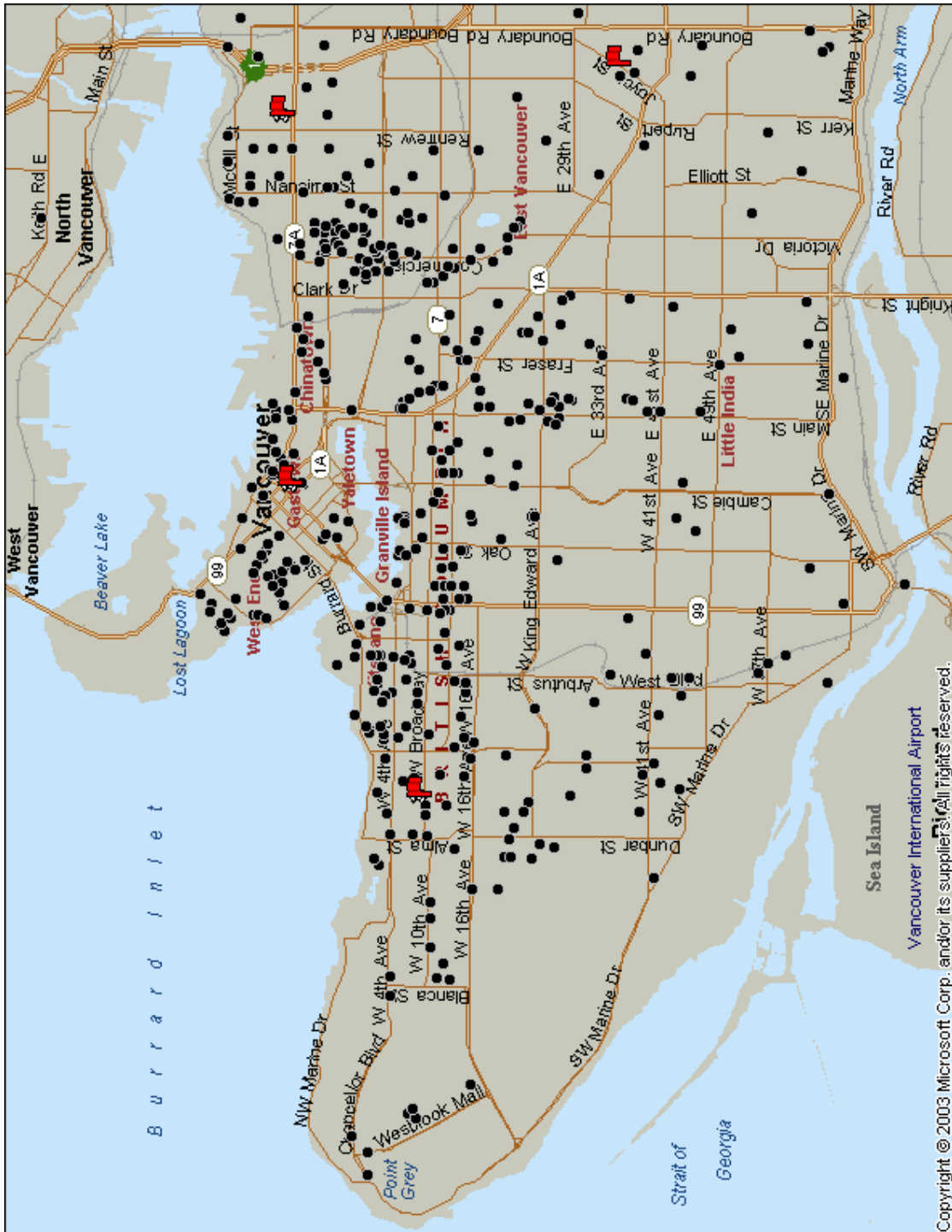
Each dot on this map represents the address of a Think City participant. Flags represent Think Democracy meeting locations.

Appendix II – Poster with Meeting Dates

Appendix III – Verbatim Meeting Notes

This appendix reproduces the notes taken at our three Summer Forums held in June and July, 2003. These are the notes exactly as transcribed by participants at those meetings.

A. Electoral Reform (June 25, 2003)

1. Imagining Electoral Democracy
   - slate voting – don't know individual candidates
   - would have had one-party council if COPE ran full slate – not a plurality of voices
   - in 1996, had one-party council (NPA)
   - what counts if it benefits working people (as opposed to corporation)
   - at-large system favours 2 blocs
   - Vancouver is more diverse
   - multilingual – but need unbiased translators
   - COPE is coalition
   - 1st exercise – fairness –
   - 3 stages of electoral process: Before, During, After
   - candidate that represented your views?
   - did you receive enough info to make informed?
   - where did you get most info?
   - were campaign promises vague or specific?

Before
   - info received- communication not sufficient – what are their positions?
   - media focuses only on centre issues – independents got no coverage
   - sheer volume of candidates because lack of wards creates party system
   - media focuses on figurehead
   - who elected slate vs. individuals
   - majority elected slate
   - some didn't vote all positions because didn't know
   - independents can't be in 2 places at once during all candidate meetings so disadvantaged
   - even parties word would help concentrate efforts

- secondary suites don't get mail – rental housing creates issues re: communication – discriminate

During
- alienation
- sheer volume overwhelming
- low turnout because issues don't motivate

2. Reform Options
   1. Our Experiences with Elections
   2. Decide on 1 or 2 questions to pose to room
   - elections are only a tool to make democratic decisions
   - ward system would still given rise to same council results over past years according to Ken's book
   - what if neighbourhood doesn't represent your views? geographic location chosen based on ideology?
   - ward system only one step toward more effective participation

Before election
- parties serve a purpose. To gather together different personalities and ideas and present more exposure
- municipal politician must do more connection with less resources
- in an ideal world with enough info: would understand a portion be better
- with ward system, candidate would come from neighbourhood base – you'd know them before election – develop track record
- "I don't trust candidates because no track record" – wards would give that
- most large centres don't have parties because ward system organising candidates

During election
   Suggestions
   – municipal clearing house of info
   – not party based
   – covering everyone so people can look in one spot and get info
      – 4 factors: low voter turnout, disproportionality (votes to seats), neighbourhoods street art, judiciary decision
      – some courts struck down at-large

Problems
I. Low Voter Turnout

1. door-to-door canvassing for registration
    - but doesn't address 2nd suites, ESL
    - maybe leave multi-lingual, written info

2. signage – better use of billboards, newsletter mailed to every address (more than 1, more than Eng.)

3.newspapers
    - publication of all parties info in Straight, Courier, multiple ethnic newspapers
    - city election publishing own paper?
    - with the expense – deliver in conjunction with yes we agree door to door

4.Use local ethnic community groups – temples, papers, radio –

OUTREACH
5.Databank for Enumeration
    - people can specify language that want to be dealt with in
    - this happens between elections, before election
    - something in the mail, but this only helps to narrow areas where enumerators must focus
    - include with hydro bill, phone bill, send letter "multi-layers"

II. Disproportionality
    - any city operating on PR? (none in CA but in Europe – London is half and half)
    - but PR can lead to splintering

Solutions: blend – 20 councillors for City – 10 ward/10 PR – similar to London

Regarding the ward system proposed for Vancouver – how do we keep wards from becoming local fiefdoms, with the corruption which often ensues from such fiefdoms?
    - dogs – large dogs

- enact fundraising, spending, advertising limits for campaigns and civic parties similar to the federal government's new campaign finance legislation – currently there are NO LAWS restricting civic parties!
- participation in decision-making vs. consultation
- full proportional representation in multi-member wards
- explore what the scope/boundary would be between area covered by the given ward and the city at large
- as much as I want electoral reform at all levels of government, it cannot be seen as a silver bullet. It will be people who are willing to practice democracy day-to-day that will make the difference
- some multi-member ward models of proportional representation are analysed at www.mala.bc.ca/~westj/wards.htm

How can we engage community television and independent media in the process of neighbourhood decision making?
How are citizens engaged?
How are their ideas utilized and carried forward?
If there are economic challenges to implementing the ideas and needs of the people, how are decisions then made, and how transparent is this process?

- move city council meetings around to different community centres and invite neighbourhood participation
- add more official languages – we have many Vancouverites who would be better engaged in another language
- Mayor Campbell said he had "zero tolerance for NIMBYism." But how can we distinguish cases of NIMBYism from genuine cases of neighbourhood local concern, e.g., the 1960s opposition to putting a freeway through the east side of Vancouver? Or what happens when NIMBYism trumps regional interests, i.e., urban sprawl, transportation?

Equality based on equal opportunity/ equal outcome
The system in general:

- what are the government rules?
- should deal with poverty and unemployment
- with aim to solutions
- social problems are consumed by powerless minority

- how are decisions made?
- municipalities?
- social problems often stem from corporations

Options
- at-large system/distorted results
- problem – number of people on council is an issue

Solutions
– more information for the masses
– more representation on council – multiplicity of parties

Questions
- are parties necessary?
- what kind of electoral system do we want in Vancouver?
- How can we, or what do we need to do to have a council reflective of voter beliefs, needs, concerns? Is this desirable? Why?
- Should there be public funding for parties and candidates?
- How can we set up the basic functions of a community/neighbourhood in a decentralized way to ensure that communities' unique needs are met? i.e. ward system
- Is there a role for municipal referendum? If so, under what circumstances?
- Is there a role for neighbourhood councils? What would it be?
- What size should an electoral district be?

Electoral Reform
- lack of electoral reform is why we still have Gordon Campbell
- how can we begin to use technology to engage citizens in issue-based policy? What are the barriers to this idea? Realistically, how effective is electoral politics?
- often, politics is a threat to democracy
- citizen initiative is necessary in order to promote a non-partisan form of referendum. I believe that those who create the wording of referendum questions should have no stake/no interest in the outcome of the referendum questions. A referendum should be purely a decision-making instrument
- who has to "let go" to make neighbourhood decision making a reality?

- is city council, as a central body, prepared to give responsibility for spending of city budget to a neighbourhood?
- will need to educate everyone on the limits which will be imposed by NAFTA/FTAA/GATT – get everyone active on this issue of neighbourhoods or will not be able to make decisions
- we need to give the necessary resources to poorer neighbourhoods to help them begin to become more involved
- place community stakeholders on the decision-making body e.g. Woodwards decisions should not be made by bureaucrats only

Information is important
– unbiased – ideally role of journalism
– made available – e.g. internet voting allows info at time of voting; flyers distributed before election by independent org.
– forums are a source

Problem: voting by party
- especially without full information on each candidate
- with large number of candidates on ballet difficult to know enough – ward system improves this

In civic elections maybe not appropriate to have parties/slates
- system should encourage individuals
- civic government's role is regulation not …
- unaffiliated members would think more about city goals without party lines

3. Barriers
   - an ideal candidate is a person who represents our/my ideals
   - candidates should speak English well
   - media control of information
   - media manipulation of info and therefore of the electorate
   - provincial Liberal funding/financing – corporate – limits on spending?
   - municipal voting influenced by people's attitudes to the provincial government
   - candidate, political party, and media credibility
   - single-issue platforms of independent candidates
   - guns in the US are too close to BC – gun money
   - we find out about candidates after the election
   - we have seen the ward system in province and fed.

- citizen cynicism
- racist history of Canada and of Vancouver
- language as a barrier to information and to voter participation
- multi-lingual campaign literature advisable
- negative (attack-style) campaign information is a problem
- proportionate/disproportionate election system
- strategic campaigning (inter-party)
- poverty is an exclusionary factor (a socio-economic barrier)
- participatory budgeting
- system should involve more people enabling

Problems with status quo/Barriers to change
- education
- referendums

Problem
- economic/culturally biased involvement
- internet an equalizing technology
- multiple sources of info should be available
- and information should be actively sent to each household – who should do this? Now city clerk, could be independent body targeting info delivery

Problem
- how can change be effected at the political level, even if citizens clearly want it
- elected officials have self-interest not to change
- Personal empowerment – how to overcome personal cynicism
- Empowerment
- having society that values many groups (not just business)
- communication between different groups coming together helpful
- posing questions encourages involvement

Problem with Electoral System
- need more locally-based – neighbourhood reps; neighbourhood councils
- electoral system won't necessarily address
- problem with current number of councillors dealing with large number of issues
- electoral reform should not fragment opposition to big corporate interests (NPA)

- referendum question should not fragment **e.r**. vote
- how many councillors do we need to represent neighbourhoods, diversity?
- neighbourhood councils devolve some of decision making – wards only, your rep still has 1 vote only

1. During last election – our input as citizens/experiences
2. Status quo not satisfactory/at-large system?
3. Reform Options
4. Hurdles to options (provincial government – electoral rules)

Concern about polarization
- lack of policy discussion/info
- mixed slate/encourages discussion
- mixed proportional representation/independent party
- huge ballots
- ward system/corruption/low voter turnout: 10 votes/ 10 people?
- at-large – can promote voting party line
- tired of voting "against"/want to vote "for"
- seat distribution based on votes cast (non-proportionality)
- strategic voting
- lack of accountability between elections
- divisive party politics
- election results out before stations close (federal?)
- number of candidates in Block Vote
- wards?
- voter registration
- issues being covered (too much personality contests) – media
- size of council
- campaign financing
- electoral system rules
- difficult to choose candidates without information
- won't change society just by changing mechanism for voting - democracy is more about what happens between elections – need public spaces for people to spout ideas
- fairness of distributions of power
- polarization – no one represents alternative points of view
- big media large influence on agenda
- big $$ - no spending limits municipally
- difficulty of informing and educating voters

Problem – lack of representation

Problem – lack of neighbourhood empowerment

Problem – lack of voter interest/connection to parties/candidates or political issues
- cynicism
- lack of relevance in everyday life – food, housing, etc
- who is disenfranchised? working class immigrant community; middle class

B. Neighbourhood Democracy (July 9, 2003)

1. Community Assets
Collingwood – parks, churches, transit, recreation, mixed housing, ethnic diversity, Skytrain, neighbourhood house

Dunbar – services (local), street trees, safety, families, Pacific Spirit Park, trees and gardens

Champ. Heights – green areas/space, library, central location, recreation facilities, mined SE groups, accessibility by foot, diversity, co-ops, parks and green spaces, co-operative community values

South Cambie – stability, parks, hospitals, seniors/young families, safety – Block Watches, beautiful trees and gardens

Pt. Grey/ UBC – local/bigger shopping, transit, access to UBC, access to beaches, Pacific Spirit Park, bikeable shopping, small nice stores, local bike carts, consignment stores, wreck beach

False Creek – water front, pedestrian-oriented, political organization, access to Granville Island, planned mixed community, walkable location though still addicted to cars, good bus, say hello to people on Seawall, village in a big city: neighbourliness, semi-natural setting, economically diverse

Hastings N – community involvement, diverse and inclusive

Hastings Pk/ New Brighton Pk – library

KCC – community involvement, 20 minutes from downtown, Sunset, Ontario bikeway, multicultural, mountain views, neighbours, greenspace, parks and recreation

Commercial Drive – political community, street engagement, diverse, Brit. ctr., good stores, strong community

Mount Pleasant – old houses, centrality/transit, community centre – pool, 10th Ave bikeway, Heritage Hall, heritage houses, antique stores, walkable to shops, friendly, trees, quiet, bicycle anywhere, diversity of population, housing and services for the homeless, history, working

class neighbourhood, funky Main St, community facilities, neighbourhood house, ethnically divers, mixed land use (e.g. industry)

Hastings/sunrise – co-ops, programs at community centre, involvement, old established cultural community

Sunset – good transit, hodge-podge of everything, walkable shopping, wildlife/dog walkers, Punjabi market

Victoria and Powell – good views/mountain views, community involvement, diversity, access to roads

Downtown Eastside – good transit, Chinatown, Gastown

Kensington – community association, trees, famous foods, people, multicultural, ethnicity, respect, clean streets

Dunbar – trees, quiet street, lanes, "ordinariness", people interested in neighbourhood, wildlife (herons, coyotes, raptures, hawks, skunks, racoons, dogs), long time residents

Kits – beach, trees, sense of tradition or history, character homes, sense of activity, youth/energy, great community, open air stage, parks/athletic venues/activities, dog areas, library, small one-of-a-kind stores, good access to transit, still quite diverse population, human scale, easy access to services, community and private gardens, fighting to keep lower-density, family, environment, heritage houses

Arbutus Corridor, SPEC/city farmer

Southlands – seniors, trees – Catalpa, horses, big plants, nurseries, young kids, wildlife, large lots, Fraser waterfront

South East Vancouver – intentionally-planned community, lots of co-ops, trees and green space, no traffic noise at night, frogs! beavers and salmon!, Everet-Crawly Park, community involvement in creation of park, mix of generations/families/seniors

Marpole – much of others listed – good mix youth/seniors, etc – diversity, plus it's a small down local butcher/baker, everybody know kids/seniors, etc, community centre

Victoria and Nanaimo – diverse, lots of sense of security

Port Coquitlam – agricultural area, community unity

Burrard View – activist community

Riley Park – neighbourliness, green space, central city, cemetery: mixed blessing

Strathcona – strong community campaign to protect heritage houses, school and services through rezoning – likes small lots and density, 90% non-English

2. Community Drawbacks
North Shore – not enough personal contact with North

Mount Pleasant – transit at night, threat of community centre moving, cemetery not the beautiful sanctuary it could be, poverty, unemployment, crime, gangs, high traffic arteries (Great Northern Way)

Sunset – long haul to other communities, not enough personal contact with North, lack of knowledge of community organizations

Point Grey – lack of local/amateur public space (e.g. coffee shops/small theatres/community venture)

Hastings/Sunrise – prostitution/drug use/crime

UBC – lack of connection between cultural community

Downtown Eastside – not green, no businesses, hardware, grocery stores, normal stuff

General Deficits – arrogance of Park Board and delisting small parks for maintenance, traffic safety issues (opportunities for traffic calming?), costly retail rents, lack of park space on east side

3. Using/Participating in Local Governance

What we can do
- street meetings, petitions to demand community input into vision, lack of response from Council/Operations
- more and better buses needed
- more control of development and more medium height development – input into Flats
- bike routes and misuse of alleys – right turn only planes and/or pref. left turn lights

- when the community decides what its vision will be the results much closer meet their needs
- take an inventory of persons of experience in your community and place them in positions of influence
- strategies to sustain a long haul situation

City Wide Representation
- need council/association of neighbourhood groups – common interest of concern – city wide initiatives
- time/process for dissenting views
- computer polling on issues in every community centre
- rights and responsibilities of neighbourhoods

Getting on City Council
- large delegations
- doing the leg work ahead
- approach a councillor – lobby
- civil disobedience
- participating on committees
- bribery
- invite politicians to the situation
- organize a community event
- get media attention

How to speak (about assets)/local governance?
- community associations – need to re-consider divisions
- communities/neighbourhoods within communities
- problem-solving asset-based processes like this in the neighbourhood
- encouraging involvement – community-weekends
- positive-empowerment model
- neighbourhood celebrations

- "easy" involvements – casual and not big time commitments
- better communications
- local websites (may not be accessible)
- eco-system based groups

Ways you got your (neighbourhood) issue dealt with?
- elect people who will help with participation
- speak to City Hall about issues ("Density" issue)
- committees
- find out about the links/how things move forward
- stay united – have clear/core issue
- keep it constructive
- involve the public
- go to community centre or association
- agree to make it happen

Mechanisms for participation
- theatre (interactive)
- translator who takes community input and turns it into bureaucratic language
- internet – supported by community access and training
- libraries/community centres
- multiple methods of communication (repeated)
- face-to-face
- funded outreachers or "bridgers"
- neighbourhood ambassadors
- recording people's voices
- de-centralized study circles
- organic structures
- friendship centres/voting members
- Board of Directors for neighbourhood association that makes yearly budget
- neighbourhood (that have money) parks board
- structured in accountability
- shared property taxes
- neighbourhood based structures combined with community mobilization
- decentralizing power and resources to neighbourhoods

How to avoid NIMBYism – no time to discuss

What worked
- support de-centralization
- communication with neighbours (x2)
- jurisdictional and fiscal de-centralization
- involvement of neighbours
- re-instate Federal Neighbourhood Improvement Program (1978)
- central meeting place
- building on existing modes
- solidarity and good neighbourhood communication (educated – rooted in community; experience)

Local Power
How can local governance keep what we value?
-diversity
– decisions about housing/zoning
– access to funds by local communities – community initiating
– accountability of government to local communities
-fill in gaps
- improvement of parks for youth
- encouragement and support of community councils
- smaller buses, more frequent, shuttles
- local governance – helps us identify issues e.g. safety, representation/voice for all groups (ethnic), density, speed of change
- creating community spaces (for dialogues, interaction)

Community Involvement
- Lafarge
- slots
- mix of resident initiatives
- polarization on issues
- community policy
- retaining community based businesses

4. Blocks and Structural Impediments to Participation

Neighbourhood Historical Resource
- developers use method to change a plan or prevent a change from happening
- market values take first priority over community needs

Blocks?
- not yet working toward common good
- size of areas – divide and conquer
- lack of diverse representation
- communication (from council etc to neighbourhoods) and from neighbourhoods to elected bodies
- money – well-funded vs. no funds competition
- language
- TV culture
- apathy

Structural impediments
- no rules at local level for zoning
- size of areas – need for "open day" to meet elected folks
- lack of diverse representation
- central bureaucracy disconnect to neighbourhood level
- no wards
- access and pre-access to agenda issues
- sense of powerless - "can't beat city hall"

Barriers
- apathy
- communication within neighbourhood
- lack of transparency – shifting ground
- not knowing who to talk to
- absence of mobilizing issue
- lack of funding
- lack of meeting place

Institutional impediments (didn't work)
- couldn't mobilize entire community
- veto from city staff
- city levelling agreements
- shifting "ground" (standards)
- commitments not action

- city staff don't actually support values
- mistrust between community org. community – diverse needs/interests in community
- transient community

Blocks
- council wasting our time/stonewalling
- meaningless consultation – cottonwood mall
- small number of participants (no provision for legitimacy of local participation)
- not a big enough voice
- disconnect between local/city
- no long-term thinking/planning
- reactive rather than proactive
- find some way to make elected council accountable to local communities

Structural impediments
-neighbourhood
- funding transportation/child care
- lack of structure/space
- lack of support – e.g. staff to research

-city hall
- staffing – specialists to a community
- commitment to neighbourhoods – philosophically
- lack of alternative visions – principles that as a community we build together
- accessibility – hours, places
- not disseminating information widely enough getting information out to communities

Hurdles
- city finance and city engineering
- profit motive – profit over people
- developer-led initiatives
- communication – lack of information - not enough to work through a response
- structural set up – hard to access city hall – easier to access the community/neighbourhood level
- no meaningful consultation – they give us information
- difficult to get citizen initiatives/new ideas on the agenda – typical reactive to developers

Impediments
- no resources of decision making
- people don't know where to start, how to advance ideas to decision makers
- feeling that bureaucrats don't care, obstacles, stall, no will to have staying power
- need to be able to remove bureaucrats easier
- don't know how to get into City Hall bureaucracy
- need someone at City Hall to help you there
- Council meetings intimidating
- government too patronizing, people don't feel empowered to speak
- lobbying, organizing, squeaky wheel – only resorts
- City Hall should decentralize, go out to community, listen, connect
- government needs to make information more available – office in each community
- enlist citizens (like jury) to participate in government and decision making – short terms – build competency over time

Gaps in Governance
- funding – e.g. – support for community orgs, policing, program social services
- downloading
- rent controls
- official community space – funding by city
- lack of "street life"
- transit
- safety issues
- communication – lack of representation
- meaningful involvement
- electoral reform
- structural responsiveness
- representation

5. Solutions

Answer?
- Local government? Ward system
- local mechanism to provide continuity, long-term planning

- structural reform – changing structure of city council (e.g. wards) may be way to provide legitimate local structure, local communications

To break down barriers
- local forums/meeting place/community events
- insist on sustainable values redevelopment, more implementation, even just communication/feedback
- taking advantage of stuff like closing street, Block Watch
- better use of community centres
- property values "devalued" in civic discussion
- c.c. take more of a lead – stir up community pot
- community org. take on projects, do real work together
- dedicated places to find out about politics, government
- people become part of government – "jury selection" for boards, commissions – citizen's duty

Communication
- use surveys to gauge people's opinion – more control – translate
- need to connect community groups
- more positive community events
- find new ways to communicate and connect and express opinions, work together, synergy, individual initiatives, interdisciplinary
- libraries
- cultural/language impediments

C. Community Economic Development (July 23, 2003)

1. Cooperatives
- how can co-ops contribute to a viable community?
- consumer co-ops?
- housing co-ops?
- co-op is a model where some entity is owned and controlled by membership
- other forms of "alternative consumerism" exist (2nd hand, local shops)
- co-ops not mainstream – not in public eye (generally) no store fronts
- co-op centres exist at universities but not as something that is promoted in society
- what is failure/success rate of co-ops?
- provides direct opportunity for democracy but is the model effective?
- Vancouver housing now out of reach for many (most?). Need new model
- where do people learn about democratic process – how do we live co-operatively?
- co-ops do not exist in a vacuum – affected by whole economic/social environment
- reasons for joining – ideology, financial, ?, not necessarily joining for democratic idea
- co-ops can facilitate coming together with others of like mind for a specific purpose
- mixed-use co-ops (e.g. retail/residence)
- co-ops, as a movement, can affect the larger politic (critical mass/awareness)
- number of members creates different opportunities – economies of scale opportunities – e.g. insurance bulk purchase
- sharing opportunities – tools, books, cars, etc
- legislation can affect co-op viability – membership eligibility – free car parking; housing co-ops (used to be "nuclear family")
- www.bcca.coop - directory of all co-ops; www.chf.bc.ca - housing co-ops
- handing over seized property to co-ops – crack houses
- lobby civic government to obtain funding/land for housing co-op
- leverage co-op need to help apprenticeship opportunities
- co-operation amongst all levels of government

- do governments have a view of co-ops? – co-ops can be political – e.g. lobbying for $$ or policy which facilitates co-op growth

2. Community Economic Development (CED)
- limit franchises
- develop framework – Vancouver = service centre for BC and beyond – planning, involvement
- bring BIA's together – need input of social
- CED corporations
- local procurement mandated – NAFTA complications? City help with bidding processes (red tape)
- Agreement on Internal Trades
- BALLE – Social Ventures
- Tax incentives
- Olympics – large purchases
- grouping together many small enterprises – Co-operative Piecework
- "Affirmative Action" principles
- measures – indicators: genuine progress, sustainability, etc
- local designers
- Visioning around CED at local level – also needs sustained commitment to follow up
- Many identifiable communities – equalized
- Consumption
- price differentials
- Rural BC'er have knowledge

Encourage neighbourhood dollars

Buying clubs – use web technology – ensure fair trade – local

Increase contact between new Canadians and native

Co-ops – members contribute time in lieu of price breaks

Real Estate
- ownership via CED
- commuity Land Trust – leases out to business, housing
- city owns land
- Synergies such as Granville Island experience and Commercial Drive business supporting each other

Land Trusting
- Develop criteria around Land Trusting to circumvent cries of "subsidy" i.e. "Toronto Experience" of low income housing purchased by co-op of residents

- Grants/gifts from corporations and senior governments
- look at city's property endowment fund
- include CED/Land Trusts in City's Capital Plan
- zoning for small co-op businesses

Economic Democracy
- Community input into funding budgets on a basis that meets local needs
- work with feds to insist that federal transfer payments to Victoria (education, health) are tagged, enforced, and accountable to be spent in municipalities (school boards, regional health authorities) without neo-liberal gerrymandering
- what do you mean by "economic democracy"?
- how much money does the city actually have to work with? – two bits and my front teeth

3. Participatory Budgets

NOW – no differentiation of participatory items – difficult to access info and make choices
- categories formed/presented for input rather than what citizens want
- budgeting shouldn't be just wish list
- criteria/responsibility to whole city and community needs to be articulated (e.g. % of social housing)

Participatory Budgets
- start from government?
- start with citizens' group (contact T+O for info)
- education as important as demands

NOW – consultation more than participation

Participatory Budgets
- how balance demands with long-term plans
- should it be a provincial model – poverty, education, housing – problem dealing with at local level
- municipal local government – parks, bridge, ped lights, traffic calming, zoning, land use, parking (cities stronger in Brazil)
- need to get elected officials on board

Participatory Budgets and Wards
- all send delegates – 3 or 4 N. in a ward
- also themes (e.g. health, transportation)
- need technical info prepared

- organization that already exists that can form basis of participatory budget
- unorg. N: city should provide money for org/advocates/animators
- does budget have to increase to meet demands?
- participatory budgets include cost-effectiveness of government – increased transparency
- culture of participatory budgeting improves benefits for everyone
- breaks down fragmentation in city
- how distribute capital funds – per capita? per capita and theme areas? by need?
- need e-mail list to carry on discussion
- be wary of letting loudest voices speak/control
- need positions that monitor the process. Balance needs. Civic leadership critical.
- education must continue all the time!
- transfer of info is important

How can we keep the needs of the federal and provincial governments from unduly influencing the creation of budget decisions for local government?
- I would like to hear about specific marketing campaigns that got people involved
- fostering of locally based and controlled economies (co-ops, small businesses, etc.)
- explore changing legal framework/constitution to truly support 3 levels of governments – how can this be done – examples
- how can we make sure that progressive (but non- governmental) organizations like Co-op Radio are adequately funded, so they are sustainable?

4. Olympics
- what can the city do to make the development process economically inclusive?
- issue of the fair wage law
- Olympics must not be a conduit for the drain of civic/provincial/federal capital to outside interests
- economic spin-offs go back into things like social programs
- how do we maximize the benefits to community economic development?

- develop a city policy on ethical community procurement
- independent, politically elected body to monitor and measure the Olympic development process
- if there are negative impacts from the games (i.e. homelessness, etc) how do we measure the economic impacts of that?

Appendix III – Feedback Forms

Electoral Reform

1. Good session; 2. Good balance of information/small groups work; 3. More detailed info (from Kennedy) on disproportionality would have been helpful; 4. The Think City sessions attract a homogeneous group (white, age 30-50,…). Outreach to the Chinese community, youth may be needed. 5. 10 pm is late for a wind-up. 7 pm-9:30 would work better for me.

Recall was never discussed, nor allowed to be discussed. The only alternative to electoral reform was proportional representation.

Very good! But, no need to stop here. I would propose that Think City move to a new phase of facilitating online discussion on various issues and movements discussed during the forums. A simply way to implement this could be to:1. Set up e-mail discussion, lists at a public server like yahoo.com; 2. Update the Think City web site to refer to these lists and describe how to join; 3. Send an e-mail to those registered at Think City announcing the new lists. Good Work!

Thanks, Kennedy! Really enjoyed your presentation.

Great – generally, I think the idea of "Think City" is just great – hope this will be continually on-going. Tonight good (June 25). I don't mind the hot – that's nature. Acoustic poor – should pay more pre-meeting attention to seeing that hearing is not a distracting struggle – also, awareness of hearing decreased attendees. Older people tend to have [poor] hearing. Cons: 1. Sessions would be more constructive if there was one question we had to answer – then examples listed as to what we can think of to answer to one question (quite often we didn't exactly know what we had to discuss). 2. You are speaking to a public who do not know the finer points of our electoral system, i.e. demographics presented. Groups spoke of how should social issues be addressed; you spoke about numbers and charts. 3. Sound was terrible. Pro. 1. What you presented on the overheads was educational. Thank you for the juice & cookies.

A "melting pot" evening and I don't mean just the temperature. The opportunity to share and explore ideas of your own and others is very satisfying. Hopefully, the outcome of these meetings will lead to community action. I look forward to participating.

A great event – very participatory. The venue made it difficult during discussion to hear even the people in my own group. I learned a lot.

I think we should hold these conferences in the fall. There was a good discussion, however. I could not be as lucid as I would of liked because I did not feel fresh.

Think we should knuckle down to discussions/design the mechanics of a ward system.

Need a neutral facilitator. Despite the small group work, this came across as Kennedy's personal project to get us to endorse his views. I'm worried that the report will be tailored to say his opinion. Small group activities were not clearly explained – I was unclear how the second one was different than the first. Trained neutral volunteers should circulate during small-group discussion and make sure groups stay on topic (ideally they would actually facilitate…). Someone should visibly be taking notes when small groups make reports, so we believe our views are being recorded (or else explain that the video tapes will be transcribed, if that's the case). Please tell people to stand up when they talk so they can be heard. More info should be sent to registrants by e-mail beforehand so we know what to expect and can come with ideas/issues (agenda, etc.). As usual, it was a left-wing middle-class white dominated crowd, but I don't know how to address that (always a problem). Despite these suggestions, it was overall a good process, and I look forward to the next session. Thanks for making this happen!

Interesting –but too little time to cover complex issues.

Neighbourhood Democracy

Community Mapping Project – excellent process to get participation

Great diversity of topics. Getting groups to speak about different topics allowed for greater spread of information. Extended time very beneficial

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That was a really good way to share ideas. I learned a lot about potential for change locally and couldn't believe the wealth of perspectives that were represented. Why not take the idea further and foster discussion groups through the City of Vancouver web page? Thanks for this chance to participate.

Why were not the leaky condos on the agenda?

Many people mentioned the need for education in democratic processes; another constant theme: land costs and financing space for community enterprises. This is a prominent obstacle to local initiatives by low income people; introduction to local organisations I did not know about - was very helpful. A good introduction to local community development initiatives for me.

This series has been excellent from conception to completion; raises some good issues and has influences (apparently) policy.

It is a great way to involve citizens in local decision making. More events like this should take place in all levels of community and regional ideas.

Actually I thought the small group sessions were quite a good idea. I would suggest that in the future such groups have trained facilitators in a manner similar to the last session. My experiences in the earlier sessions were frustrating as people who are unaccustomed to this type of process have trouble staying on track or listening to anyone but themselves.

Great- but the groups would have been better in separate rooms. More time in groups/less for speakers would be better.

The issues in tonight's agenda were so interrelated I would support any opportunity to organize a further public forum. The politics are changing so fast and the seriousness can no longer be ignored. Thanks so much!

Much better organized small groups than the 1st forum; more focussed; fun/mediated by knowledgeable individual; interesting topics.

Local Economic Democracy

Great! Thank you! Glad it was divided into four different topics that represent different forms of economic democracy. Feel that more specific questions should have been addressed in the small groups- sometimes more philosophizing than concrete ideas and applications.

Interesting, useful; but…most adults are employees rather than employers, and most people spend at least one-third of their total waking hours at work. "Economic democracy" once meant democracy at work – worker's control, self-management – but nothing in this evening's session touched on this crucial aspect of people's lives.

A useful part of the whole educational process. Getting in touch with other like-minded individuals is very useful. Forum for involvement – initial at least and a way to get more involved in civic process. Glad to see elected officials participating. I have a better idea now about economic democracy.

Great stuff – excellent topics. Suggestions: obvious I guess, but better organization, i.e. no overlap of talks (participatory budgeting) and timeliness.

Who is invited…where are the invitations sent out? Who was represented here…the population was very white and middle aged. The facilitation/group presentation was by middle aged white men and Anne Roberts?

Very informative evenings (attended 2 & 3). I wish we could have had time for more than one workshop. Speakers may have been too long. Brainstorming with different perspectives very effective. I liked how these forums were located in different parts of the city. Thank you for your efforts. Hopefully, there will be similar forums focused on democracy in the future.

Would like to see the regular budget formation process opened up to public participation. Maybe a participatory portion, handled democratically, would show the way to a better overall process. How to influence the provincial budgetary process? Let's get the info about Brazil's process out in the public consciousness.

DO MORE!!