

BURNABY COMMUNITY ASSEMBLY

Advisory Committee Meeting Summary - Sept. 10, 2024

Meeting Attendees

The Burnaby Community Assembly Advisory Committee Members

- Ana Maria Bustamante, Manager, Burnaby Intercultural Planning Table
- Dr. Andréanne Doyon, Director of SFU's Planning Program and lead on developing a resilience framework for Burnaby
- Jeffrey Yu, Founder of REL Technology and Vice President of the New Vista Society
- Noreen Ma, Manager, Community Development, Burnaby Public Library

Representative from the City of Burnaby

- Lee-Ann Garnett, Deputy General Manager Planning and Development will also attend Advisory Committee meetings as a representative from the City of Burnaby to offer feedback and advice but will not vote on Committee decisions.

Burnaby Community Assembly Project Team

- Robin Prest; Phil Chalk.

Next Steps Following Presentation of the Assembly's Recommendations

- The Assembly officially presented their final recommendations to Burnaby City Council on July 22, 2024. Council has committed to responding to each of the Assembly's recommendations.
- Upon the publication of the draft Official Community Plan in 2025, the Centre for Dialogue will be re-convening some Assembly Members to give feedback on that draft and the extent to which the Assembly's Recommendations have been integrated.
- Some of the Assembly's recommendations extend beyond the limited scope of the Official Community Plan. This presents an opportunity to open conversation and communicate the multi-jurisdictional nature of some of these recommendations and issues, but there may be challenges in integrating such recommendations into City processes and strategies outside of planning.
- The formal response to recommendations and integration into the Official Community Plan is one aspect of impact, but the recommendations also have an informal impact on the perspectives of City staff. The Assembly was also an unprecedented approach to community engagement in Burnaby, and can impact City engagement processes in ways beyond the recommendations themselves.

Review of Assembly Process

- Process was generally effective at inviting input from the community and supporting participants to engage in dialogue while expressing their own beliefs. It is important for people to learn give-and-take and evolve their perspectives based on learning and discussion.
- There is a need to use accessible language for topics like climate change so that people feel they can engage and contribute on those issues.
- There is a healthy design tension between the autonomy of the Assembly to engage in topics and frame issues in an independent fashion and ensuring that the City is able to receive advice in all areas the Assembly chooses to address. This is an ongoing area of learning for how Burnaby and other cities work with Assemblies.
- The working language of the Assembly Meetings was English and the convenors took steps to make the Assembly accessible to people with a range of language abilities. The parallel Multi-Lingual Engagements helped to fill a gap in representation, while holding more sessions in the future would allow for coverage of additional language groups. Some residents may also have a lack of trust in government based on past experiences, including experiences outside of Canada.

Review of Advisory Committee Process

- Overall, the Advisory Committee process was effective. Committee members felt they had opportunities to express their opinions, engage in dialogue, and learn from each other. Committee meetings were productive and committee members felt well-supported by meeting materials and the meeting process.
- The input from the Advisory Committee was acted upon and had a meaningful impact on the Assembly process.
- Partnerships developed with Advisory Committee members through the development and coordination of the Multi-Lingual Engagements was really positive.
- It was important for the Advisory Committee to have opportunities to see the Assembly in person. Committee members did join Assembly Meetings on a number of occasions, and found it really valuable to see it in action.