

Task Force on Council Representation



December 21, 2020

Aaron Lande, Senior Policy Analyst
Jeff Swanson, Consultant/Facilitator

Outline

- Task Force Work Since September 21 Workshop
 - Public Involvement
 - Development of Recommendation
- Recommendation of Task Force
- Discussion/Q&A

(Prior workshop slides attached as background)

Public Involvement Summary

- Outreach and Engagement Period: October 1st thru 30th
 - Be Heard Vancouver Project Page w/ Survey Link
 - 2 Virtual Open Houses
 - 2 Be Heard Vancouver Newsletter Email blasts
 - Over 1,000 recipients
 - Vancouver Connects Newsletter Email
 - Over 10,000 recipients
 - Weekly Email Newsletter Blast to Neighborhood Associations
 - Numerous Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Next-door posts
 - Re-shared by community organizations representing residents of color

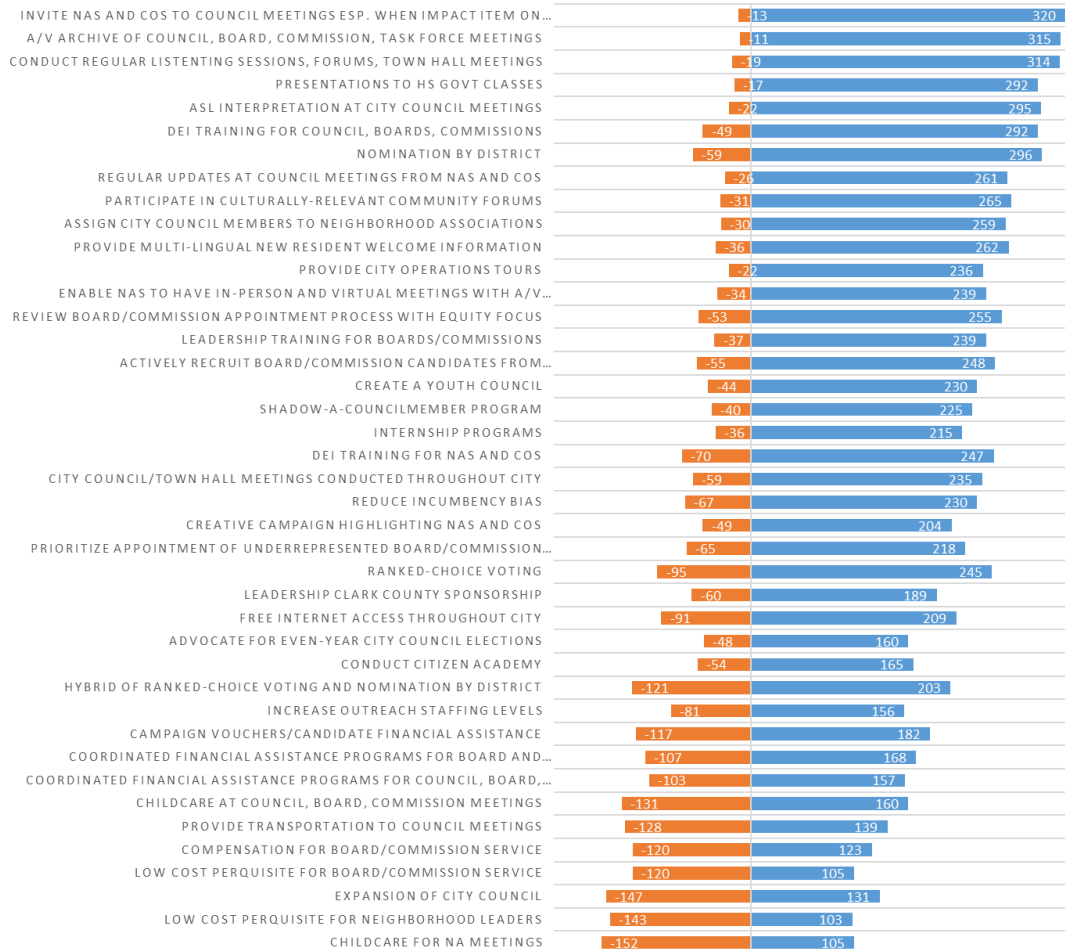
Public Survey Results

- Scale Used:
 - “Strongly Agree”
 - “Agree”
 - “Neither Agree nor Disagree”
 - “Disagree”
 - “Strongly Disagree”
- Caveats of Community Survey results
- Positivity analysis: controlling for under-response and indifference

Answer Positivity

Agree or Strongly Agree

Disagree or Strongly Disagree



Question

Task Force Ranking of Proposals (Top 5 Ranked)

Proposals Receiving 3 Votes

1. Nomination by District
2. Ranked Choice Voting (RCV)
3. (TIE)
 - Assign Council Members to Neighborhood Associations
 - DEI Training for Council, Boards, Commissions



Proposals Receiving 2 Votes

5. Hybrid of Districting and RCV
6. (TIE)
 - Review Board/Commission Appointment Process Focusing on Equity
 - Conduct Council and Town Hall Meetings Around City
8. (TIE)
 - Advocate for Even-Year City Council Elections
 - Reduce Incumbency Bias
10. Presentations to High School Government Classrooms
11. Expansion of City Council Size

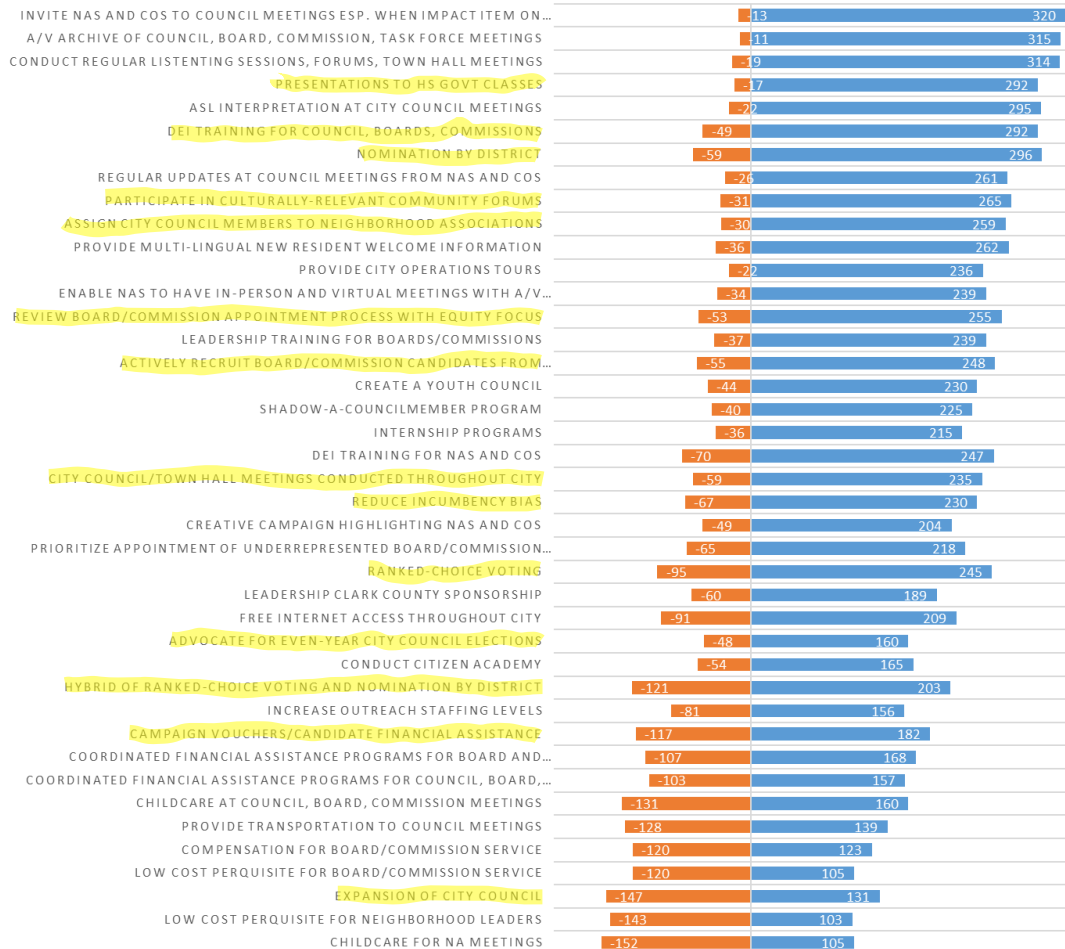
Proposals Receiving 1 Vote

12. (TIE)
 - Actively Recruit Candidates for Boards/Commissions from Underrepresented Groups
 - Campaign Vouchers/Candidate Financial Assistance
14. Participate in Culturally-Relevant Community Forums

Answer Positivity

Agree or Strongly Agree

Disagree or Strongly Disagree



Question

Q#	Strategy	Brief Description	CS Rank	TF Rank
2	B	Nomination by district	7	1
1	A	Ranked-choice voting	25	2
8	D.5	DEI training for Council, Boards, Commissions	6	3 (TIE)
17	E.1.1	Assign City Council members to neighborhood associations	10	3 (TIE)
3	C	Hybrid of ranked-choice voting and nomination by district	30	5
28	F.1.3	Review board/commission appointment process with equity focus	14	6 (TIE)
14	D.6.6	City Council/Town Hall meetings conducted throughout City	21	6 (TIE)
6	D.3	Reduce incumbency bias	22	8 (TIE)
7	D.4	Advocate for even-year City Council elections	28	8 (TIE)
41	F.4.7	Presentations to HS Govt Classes	4	10
4	D.1	Expansion of City Council	39	11
30	F.1.5	Actively recruit board/commission candidates from underrepresented groups	16	12 (TIE)
5	D.2	Campaign vouchers/candidate financial assistance	32	12 (TIE)
36	F.4.2	Participate in culturally-relevant community forums	9	14

Recommendation of Task Force

Proposals that appear simpler to implement and have broad support:

- Invite NAs/COs to Council meetings especially when an agenda item has impact
- Provide A/V recordings and archives of Council, Board, Commission, Task Force meetings
- City Council conduct regular listening sessions, forums, town halls
- *Conduct presentations to high school government classrooms and encourage voter participation
- Provide ASL interpretation at all City Council meetings
- *DEI training for Council, Boards, Commissions (***City to begin implementing in 2021***)
- Regular updates from neighborhood associations and community organizations at Council meetings
- *Participate in culturally-relevant community forums to introduce City
- *Assign Councilmembers to neighborhood associations
- Provide new resident welcome information in multi-lingual format

Recommendation of Task Force

- Complex proposals that are more challenging to implement and require additional detailed consideration and process:
 - Nomination by district
 - Ranked choice voting
 - Hybrid of districting and ranked choice voting

Nomination by District

- Districts (compared to the whole city) will make it easier for candidates to compete, and in doing so encourages participation
- Residents should vote on a new system of electing their city councilors
- A lack of representation is a root cause of apathy and citizen involvement. Wanting a change requires a change to status quo
- With census data forthcoming the timing for district formation is optimal
- With districts, we will have equal and equitable representation for all and remain united for a stronger, more inclusive Vancouver.

Nomination by District

- Survey comments and input have overwhelmingly been in support of districted voting
- 75% of those surveyed agreed to election by district - 45% strongly agreed
- Only 15% of those surveyed disagreed with districting

"Presenting in front of the city council is very intimidating. But the councilors are not. If one meets them in a supermarket or brew pub or whatever, friendly conversations ensue. But when all the councilors are from one corner of the city those who don't live in the area find it hard to have those conversations."

Ranked-Choice Voting

How does ranked-choice voting work?

- Ranked-choice voting lets voters rank multiple candidates in order of preference.
- Combines the primary and general election into one event.
- A winner is not declared until one candidate receives over 50 percent of the votes (50% plus one).



RANKED CHOICE VOTING

	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice
Candidate 1	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Candidate 2	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Candidate 3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Ranked-Choice Voting

The Civic Benefits of ranked-choice voting.

- Ranked-choice voting is more majoritarian than plurality voting (current system).
- Ranked choice voting saves jurisdictions money because it eliminates the need for multiple rounds of voting.
- By eliminating multiple rounds of voting, ranked choice voting avoids the decline in voter participation that occurs in most primary elections.

Hybrid/Combination

- An election system that combines the features of both districting and RCV.
 - Single or multi-member districts elected using RCV
 - Examples: 6 single-member districts and 1 at large OR 3 multi-member districts and 1 at large
- **Benefits:**
 - Districting ensures geographic diversity of elected officials, while increasing the possibility of ethnic diversity.
 - RCV may further contribute to likelihood of ethnic diversity, while also making campaigns more affordable and likely increasing participation in the process.

Hybrid/Combination (cont'd)

Hybrid Districts/Combination

Pro: Candidates campaign in a geographically smaller area simplifying process in terms of scope and cost.

Pro: Districting will generate more neighborhood involvement and ensure representation from every part of the city.

Pro: The probability of underrepresented groups elected is higher than in current election system.

Con: Although geographic diversity is assured, increase in ethnic representation depends on the people's will to run for office.

Questions and Discussion

VANCOUVER
CITY HALL



Aaron Lande, Senior Policy Analyst

360-487-8612

Aaron.Lande@cityofvancouver.us