

# EQUITY TEAM MEETING 4 SUMMARY

**Date/time** August 23, 2023; 5-6:30 pm

**Location** Zoom

## Meeting Purpose & Agenda

- Introduce the concepts of a comprehensive plan's vision, goals, and policies.
- Solicit ideas for the vision for the plan, which the project team will use to develop draft vision statements for each plan element and an overall goals framework for the plan.

5:00 Welcome and Icebreaker  
5:15 Meeting Purpose & Agenda  
5:25 Visioning Presentation & Breakout Discussions  
6:15 Community Dialogue updates  
6:25 Next Steps  
6:30 Adjourn

## Homework and Next Steps

Meeting 5 will be on September 20 from 5-6:30 pm via Zoom. At this meeting we will discuss housing and economic development. Before the next meeting, please:

- Continue adding thoughts and ideas to the [Meeting 4 Miro board](#),
- Continue talking with the community and recording what you hear in the [Community Dialogue Miro board](#), and
- Email [admin@sevaworkshop.com](mailto:admin@sevaworkshop.com) to inform us of any future Equity Team meetings that you are unable to attend. If there are multiple conflicts for a single meeting, we will try to find an alternate time.

## Participation

### Equity Team

**Patrick Adigweme**, Vancouver Planning Commission  
**Staci Boehlke**, Fruit Valley Elementary\*  
**Gabriela Ewing**, Pasitos Gigantes  
**Herema “Rema” Gafa**, PICA-WA\*  
**Sierra Hall**, Youth  
**Miracle Joslin**, Odyssey World Int’l Education Services\*  
**Siobhana McEwen**, Southwest Washington Equity Coalition  
**Eduardo Ramos**, TMC, Latino Leadership Northwest, EMAC  
**Dania Rescue**, Sakura 39ers  
**Bryan Stebbins**, Queer Youth Resource Center  
**Kayla Victor**, Community Engagement Liaison

\* Unable to attend

### City of Vancouver

**Domenique Martinelli**, Senior Long-Range Planner  
**Angie Martinez**, Associate Planner

### Consultant Team

**Radhika Nair**, Principal Planner, Seva Workshop  
**Lisa Johnson**, Director of Urban Planning, Seva Workshop  
**Rebecca Fornaby**, Director of Engagement, Seva Workshop  
**Nicole McDermott**, Senior Planner, WSP  
**Reilly Thimons**, Planner, Design Workshop

## What We Heard

### Icebreaker

***Summarize your hope for the future of Vancouver in one word or phrase***

The Equity Team's responses included:

- Harmonious
- Affordability
- Stability opportunities for economic growth
- Welcoming
- Inclusive
- Green
- Vibrant
- Robust
- Happiness
- Affordable for current and future residents

### Independent Visioning Writing Exercise

Team members met in two groups to explore potential visions for the comprehensive plan. They used a [Miro board](#) to review reference material and example vision statements. The Equity Team's draft vision statements are quoted below.

#### ***Vancouver is . . .***

- “An inclusive community. Everyone has an opportunity to participate.”
- “An affordable, inclusive place to live. Acknowledge the past.”
- “A community where people thrive and enjoy a safe environment. People from all backgrounds can access services, housing. Transportation centers around people.”
- “A robust, thriving city. Lowest unemployment rate. Remarkable school districts.”
- “A community where people thrive and enjoy a safe environment. People from all backgrounds can access services, housing. Transportation centers around people.”
- “Affordable and inclusive, naturally diverse but provides opportunity to thrive to all citizens.”
- “A place where members of all communities have minimal barriers and ample opportunities to thrive.”
- “A safe, inclusive, and affordable community where everyone thrives.”
- “A vibrant, diverse, and welcoming community. The city is well known for its amenities and natural features as well as its intentional planning to improve east west connectivity,

realize affordable housing, and to ensure a high quality of life for all its residents. Vancouver is recognized for its safe, walkable neighborhoods and business districts, access to jobs and economic opportunity for all and climate resilience.”

## **Visioning Discussion**

The groups worked with a facilitator and scribe to respond to a set of discussion prompts.

### ***Looking at the set of draft vision statements, do you see any common themes?***

- Inclusivity
- Affordability
- Community
- Quality of life
- Safety, including psychological and bodily safety
- Equity across neighborhoods
- Reduced barriers, including language, cultural, and educational barriers
- Targeted investment in specific neighborhoods to address disparities
- Economic/shared prosperity, “thriving city”
- Walkability and reliable and frequent transportation
- Welcoming, multicultural (multiple levels of need – intersectionality)
- Hubs of connection and community
- Benefits for all (individuals’ success should benefit the entire city)

### ***What comes to mind when you think about the vision for the specific topics of the comprehensive plan?***

Overall, equity team members emphasized the need for an intentional, targeted approach to invest in specific neighborhoods to address disparities. Other comments included:

#### **Land use and development**

- Pursue compassionate revitalization of existing neighborhoods.
- Are there policies and we can put in place on how land is being used and cut off from business using it?

#### **Housing**

- Increase affordability.
- Address youth housing and shelter needs, particularly for ages 14–24.
- Create culturally appropriate housing for multigenerational families.

## Equity

- How does your zip code relate to health impacts and outcomes?
- Create reparative policies that directly address the missing pieces needed to achieve the vision.
- Everyone needs safe shelter and access to food.
- Educate youth about resources and opportunities within the city.

## Climate, Environment, Community Health/Sustainability, Resiliency

- Climate and parks go hand in hand. Vancouver needs more trees and greenery.
- Can the city incentivize homeowners to move onto a greener grid? What are ways to support green development for existing homes?

## Economic Opportunity

- Provide technical assistance like licensing support for small businesses.
- Support business by owning venues like food carts or commercial kitchens (e.g., FP Commons).
- Facilitate spaces for startups such as incubator spaces, reuse of vacant commercial buildings, etc.
- Large corporations attracting more residents to the area should contribute to affordable housing production.
- Would the city be interested in raising the minimum wage to a living wage?

## Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Community Wellbeing

- Enhance walking trails.
- Add more green spaces in neighborhoods within the 15-minute walking distance.
- Make green spaces more welcoming.
- Raise awareness on chronic diseases and prevent them by providing recreational infrastructure.
- Esther Short playground is a successful example.

## Transportation and Mobility

- Reliable and frequent transportation is critical.
- Vancouver needs more pedestrian streets that incorporate other transportation modes, such as smaller trolleys.
- Encourage people to use public transit by making the system comfortable and convenient for everyone, including people with disabilities.

## **Infrastructure, Public Facilities and Services, Utilities, and Ports**

- Provide infrastructure for future development through a targeted approach. Ensure that the infrastructure for middle housing is in place.
- Explore utility rates or other ways to make affordable housing more feasible.
- Vancouver exists in a void of services due to geographic isolation from Puget Sound, but it is not included in Oregon / Portland programs or services.
- Vancouver is far behind other cities of our size in our alternatives to militarized police. We need to invest more in mental health response to crises, support de-escalation training for police, and invest in more community policing tactics.