

City Council Decision-Making Values

The City Council will consider these as primary values in prioritizing and making decisions on City initiatives that contribute to enhancing the quality of life in Vancouver.

Inclusivity

Include all in a healthy, thriving, equitable community that:

- Honors the diversity of its people and neighborhoods
- Has compassion for and supports the needs of all, with particular attention to the most vulnerable
- Fosters civic involvement
- Provides consistency of benefits across all areas, uniting us as one Vancouver

Resilience

Achieve a resilient city and sustainable environment by:

- Providing safe and secure neighborhoods
- Maintaining and creating open spaces and opportunities to recreate
- Preserving and enhancing a verdant and flourishing natural environment
- Leading and inspiring community action to address climate change
- Supporting development of a diverse, prosperous and just economy
- Demonstrating stewardship and being resourceful with finite resources

Courage

Build on the city's heritage of pioneering and courageous decision-making by boldly working toward a shared vision for Vancouver.

- Lead and inspire the community to make the most of opportunities to provide a legacy for future generations
- Be steadfast and unwavering in our convictions to do the best for the community
- Honor the historic legacy of Vancouver as we grow
- Be innovative and remain open to change

City Council Operational Values

The City Council embraces **integrity** as the overarching value that guides how we work together when carrying out our duties. Further, the City Council will be **decisive**, **resourceful** and **seek partnerships** as we pursue policies that support realizing the community vision.

City Council Values Illustration



Prioritized Initiatives | 2021-2022

Universal Themes and Objectives			Prioritized Initiatives 2021-2022	Additional Elements				
Climate Action	DEI Work	Safety	High Touch	Priority initiatives that will take precedence on the Council's schedule and require the highest commitment of Council time and/or urgency of input and action.				
Climate Action Plan	Strategic Equity Plan		COVID Response / Recovery	City Operational Response			Community / Business Recovery Support	
			Housing & Homelessness	City/County Joint Executive Board on Homelessness		Navigation Center - Reuse		Housing Strategy: Policies and regulations
				MFTE Program Refresh			Affordable Housing Fund	
			Transportation	Vancouver Moves (Transportation System Plan)	Complete Street projects		Transportation Benefit District Governance	Sustainable Funding Strategy
			Policing	Police Camera Program <i>Priority/Accelerated</i>	Use of force practices and resources		Other policing issues and resources (scope under consultation and development)	
			Medium Touch	Priority initiatives that require pro-active but non-urgent Council input and/or action.				
			Governance	Recommendations from Task Force on Council Representation		Boards & Commissions - General approach - Aviation Advisory Commission (restore) - Human Rights Commission? (new) - Housing Commission? (new)		Council Policies Review
			Heights District	Phase II: - HX Zoning Regulations - Planned Action Ordinance	Phase III: - Demolition of existing structures - Real Estate Strategy	Infrastructure Investment	Development Solicitation / Negotiations	
			Low Touch	Initiatives the Council wants information on as the opportunity arises or as time permits				
			Interstate 5	15 Bridge Replacement Project (IBRP)	IBRP prompted VCCV Refinements	IBRP related Parking Strategy	ODOT Tolling Program Advocacy	
	INITIATIVES NEEDING FURTHER INFORMATION		These are initiatives that remain a priority within the biennium and require additional scoping to develop a work program.					
	Stronger Vancouver		Under consultation and development					
	Strategic Plan		Under consultation and development (includes resilience planning and economic development strategy)					
	OTHER/MANDATES		Major projects and initiatives that are in progress, mandated by state law, or driven by market forces to which the City must respond.					
	Equity Atlas		Land Use / Land Use Policy	Shoreline Management Plan Update	Comprehensive Plan Climate Policy	Impact Fee Vesting	EverGrand Corridor Strategy	Comprehensive Plan
			Market Driven Projects	Vancouver Innovation Center		Section 30		Waterfront East
			Community Investments	Operations Center Replacement		Police Training & Headquarters		Fourth Plain Commons
				Waterfront Gateway		Community Arts Facility		Fire Station 11
Budget		Utility Rate Policy			2023-24 Budget development			

Summary Report

This two-day retreat was conducted remotely over video conference utilizing the Zoom meeting platform. Members of the public were invited to join as observers.

The Council also met in a follow-up workshop to further discuss and finalize its values and priorities. A summary of that discussion is included below.

Mayor Anne McEnerny-Ogle convened the first day of a two-day retreat at 1:00 p.m. on Friday, January 15th.

Council present: Mayor McEnerny-Ogle,
Councilmember Bart Hansen
Councilmember Ty Stober
Councilmember Linda Glover
Councilmember Laurie Lebowsky
Councilmember Erik Paulsen
Councilmember Sarah Fox

Staff & presenters present: Eric Holmes, City Manager
Brian Carlson, Deputy City Manager
Cara Rene, Communications Director
Aaron Lande, Program and Policy Manager
Tanya Gray, Performance Analyst
Jonathan Young, City Attorney

Consultants: Jeanne Lawson, JLA Public Involvement
Adrienne DeDona, JLA Public Involvement
Hannah Mills, JLA Public Involvement
Darren Cools, JLA Public Involvement

Day 1, January 15, 2021

Purpose: Identify individual and group values in order to root future conversations about City initiatives and priorities in shared values and vision.

1:00-1:30 p.m. Welcome and Purpose

Eric Holmes, Vancouver City Manager, reviewed the existing the community vision to help establish a foundation for the conversation.

Vancouver is the heart of southwest Washington, connecting people and places throughout the region. We are a safe and welcoming city for all ages, incomes, abilities and backgrounds, with unique and vibrant neighborhoods. We are the most livable city in the Pacific Northwest. Residents and businesses across our city are passionate about building a thriving, prosperous and sustainable community together.

Vancouver's projects, investments and partnerships are built on policies and initiatives that result in:

- A city that is welcoming to all people.
- Strong corporate citizenship and many opportunities for civic engagement through events and volunteerism.
- Improved affordability and inclusive services and opportunities that help reduce poverty and homelessness.
- An exceptional, expanded park system that equitably serves the entire city.
- Programs that grow, steward and celebrate a diverse array of arts, culture and heritage.
- Vibrant neighborhoods and business districts throughout the city that offer a range of housing choices and unique day- and nightlife options.
- A diverse, resilient economy that offers a range of employment opportunities, the ability to earn a living wage, and the potential for economic mobility.
- A community that is well connected via a safe system of streets, sidewalks, trails, transit and technology that efficiently connect neighborhoods to each other, to services and to business districts.
- A community that is exceptionally safe, through proactive public safety programs and improved infrastructure, and well prepared for natural and man-made disasters.

Jeanne Lawson, co-facilitator with JLA Public Involvement, began the values discussion by sharing a personal story about an experience that helped shape the values that guide her in her work. The Mayor and Councilmembers were asked to identify an object within the Vancouver community that represents the values that guide them in their work for the City of Vancouver. Responses included:

**Note: some answers were mentioned by multiple Councilmembers.*

- **Heart and Stone sculpture:** represents that downtown is the heart of the city and that Vancouver is the heart of the SW Washington region. The sculpture also represents how people make connections and the long legacy of women leadership in the community.
- **Officer's Row:** represents the courage and perseverance of the Council and their relationship and partnership with the community, honors the culture of the community, serves as a place that people can gather, is a celebration of milestones and connection to past and future.
- **Replica of Kenaka Village at Fort Vancouver:** represents the diverse history of the region. The word "kenaka" means "people" in Hawaiian.
- **Leverich Park:** provides a consistency in place where people can gather for all occasions.
- **Fort Vancouver:** represents the history of the region, the value of continual learning and embracing something new.
- **Grant Street Pier:** represents the history of the region and the prosperity we gained from the Columbia River. The project also demonstrated the value of partnerships between government and private entities to build something for the community.

Jeanne reiterated the values conveyed in the responses, noting that partnership/relationship seemed to be a key theme. Jeanne encouraged the group to consider the strength of working as a unit to build solutions and success as they process through the retreat.

1:30-3:00 p.m. Values Brainstorm

Adrienne DeDona, co-facilitator with JLA Public Involvement, introduced the breakout session exercise. The Council and Mayor were broken into pairs, including the City Manager, and asked to interview their partner and respond to the following questions.

1. Who is someone that has inspired you and why?
2. What is part of your personal history that brought you to where you are now, including a heartbreak or challenging time?
3. What do you hope for the future of Vancouver and why?

The pairs were given 40 minutes to interview each other and then were asked to report back to the full group what they learned about their partner. Key themes from the report back are summarized below.

- Passionate, artistic and civic-minded, and sharing that passion with your community through engagement and action
- Selflessness and generosity in giving one's time to benefit others
- Confidence, courage, and the ability to take risks
- Resiliency, resourcefulness, and endurance through hardship while upholding values
- Enriching community to support connectedness
- Embracing challenges with the goal of addressing critical issues, such as equity and social justice, and currently the challenges related to the pandemic
- Purpose-driven common identity within the community
- Embracing the history of hardship that has led to prosperity
- Striving for equitable distribution of success for all in the community through effective affordability and upward mobility
- Inclusivity at all levels to support equitable distribution of opportunity
- Gratitude and respect for everyone
- Ambition for growing as a successful and prosperous community

Using the JamBoard, Adrienne reviewed the values heard during the individual interviews with the Councilmembers and Mayor and linked them to what was reported back following the interviews.

Values from interviews



Adrienne highlighted the values of:

- Perseverance
- Courage
- Consistency
- Diversity
- Learning
- Partnership
- Connection to history

Jeanne asked the group if they felt there was anything missing from what they discussed during this meeting and what was reported back from their interviews that would help inform and guide their values. Suggestions included:

- Pride in the unique nature of Vancouver, specifically that it is distinct from Portland and Seattle, and how that individuality can be maintained and used as a strength.
- Integrity in the history of the region and ensuring decisions are guided by the community.

The group was asked to identify their primary values that they would like to guide City Council values. Jeanne asked the group to explain why they chose each value reminding them that the values they identify will help shape their decisions regarding initiatives on Day 2 of the retreat. The discussion is summarized below.

- Partnership is something that helps achieve outcomes and fulfill values, including inclusivity. Partnership helps guide our decisions by determining who needs to be involved in the process. Partnership is operational.
- Inclusivity is a good decision-making tool to determine who is being left out of the discussion and guiding how to have compassion and treat people equitably.
 - Inclusivity needs to be a long-term commitment. It is both a decision-making and operational value.
- Quality of life is more environmental and focused on the programs and services. It is not an overarching value.
 - Safety can be included under the “quality of life” outcome.
 - “Quality of life” should be considered an outcome of the overarching value of “resilience.”
- When it comes to the value of “courage,” there is an inherent tension with equity. The goal is to include all voices to guide solutions, but there are times decisions are made that do not have unanimous support from the community. Because there are such great needs, it’s the job of the City Council to prioritize and make decisions with courage, despite potential opposition.
- Integrity should be assumed and included in all values, and therefore does not need to be called out explicitly as a value.
- Courage needs to require innovation and making decisions that previous Councils have neglected to make. It’s about being decisive and visionary. Being trailblazers for future Councils and generations.
- Resourcefulness should be considered as an operational value.
- Consistency was suggested as a value with the intention of helping make decisions that ensure the same quality of life for all regions in Vancouver. However, the term consistency can seem to support the status quo and contrary to the other values without context. Fairness and balance may be a better representation of the intention.

Following the conversation, the group was given the opportunity to review the live draft illustration capturing their values discussion.



*View all iterations of the live illustration [here](#).

Based on the conversation, the Council identified the following core values as a working draft:

Decision-making values:

- Inclusiveness
- Courage
- Resilience

Outcome: Quality of Life

Operational values:

- Integrity (overarching)
- Decisiveness
- Resourcefulness
- Seeking of partnerships

4:30-5:00 p.m. Next Steps

Mayor McEnerny-Ogle thanked the group and expressed the shared desire to continue moving forward with this conversation, keeping the needs of the community at heart. Several Councilmembers shared their appreciation of the process and inspiration they felt for Day 2 of the retreat.

The meeting was adjourned.

Day 2, January 16, 2021

Mayor Anne McEnerny-Ogle convened the second day of a two-day retreat at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, January 16th.

Purpose: Revise shared values and identify near term initiatives for the Council's biennium workplan and longer-term priorities for strategic planning.

Council present: Mayor McEnerny-Ogle,
Councilmember Bart Hansen
Councilmember Ty Stober
Councilmember Linda Glover
Councilmember Laurie Lebowsky
Councilmember Erik Paulsen
Councilmember Sarah Fox

Staff & presenters present: Eric Holmes, City Manager
Brian Carlson, Deputy City Manager
Cara Rene, Communications Director
Aaron Lande, Program and Policy Manager
Tanya, Gray, Performance Analyst
Jonathan Young, City Attorney

Consultants: Jeanne Lawson, JLA Public Involvement
Adrienne DeDona, JLA Public Involvement
Hannah Mills, JLA Public Involvement

9:00-9:05 a.m. Welcome and Purpose

Mayor McEnerny-Ogle welcomed the group and explained the purpose of the meeting. The facilitators reviewed the meeting protocols and best practices before beginning the meeting discussion.

9:05-9:45 a.m. Vision and Values Review

Adrienne reviewed the distilled and refined values that were identified from the last meeting. The group was asked to review the values and provide feedback. Each member was provided a red, yellow and green card prior to the meeting that they could hold up to indicate their level of support. Below is a summary of the conversation.

- There was a suggestion to change “inclusiveness” to “inclusivity”
- There was the suggestion to change the wording of one of the sub-bullets under the “inclusivity” value to say “compassion for and supports the needs of all” instead of “compassion for and supports the needs of all, with particular attention to the most vulnerable”. In response, it was pointed out that members of the mainstream are not typically left out of decisions and therefore it's important to explicitly include

members of communities that are more vulnerable. Another comment suggested that being explicit in directing inclusivity at the most vulnerable exemplifies the value of courage.

- A Councilmember asked that “stewardship” be included in the resilience value.

Following the conversation, the following working draft core values were identified by the Council.

- **Inclusivity** – Include all in a healthy, thriving, equitable community that:
 - Honors the diversity of its people and neighborhoods
 - Has compassion for and supports the needs of all with particular attention to the most vulnerable
 - Fosters civic involvement
 - Provides consistency of benefits across all areas, uniting us as one Vancouver
- **Courage** – Build on the City’s heritage of pioneering and courageous decision-making by boldly working towards a shared vision for Vancouver
 - Lead and inspire the community to make the most of opportunities to provide a legacy for future generations
 - Be steadfast and unwavering in our convictions to do the best for the community
 - Honor the historic legacy of Vancouver as we grow
 - Be innovative and remain open to change
- **Resilience** – Achieve a resilient and sustainable environment by:
 - Providing safe and secure neighborhoods
 - Maintaining and creating open spaces and opportunities to recreate
 - Preserving a verdant and thriving natural environment
 - Taking proactive measures to address climate change
 - Striving to provide a thriving economy
 - Stewardship – being resourceful and balanced, making the best use of limited financial resources

Jeanne reviewed the existing vision and asked the group to briefly identify any specific element of the vision statement that they feel the City Council needs to work harder at. Comments from the group included:

- The vision is still very aspirational so all the goals included need more attention; however, the City is about to begin the next Strategic Plan process so it’s important to recognize that this is the *current* vision.

Jeanne introduced the live illustrations from the Day 1 values discussion and asked the group for feedback. The following summarizes the discussion:

- It would be better to use an image other than rain and an umbrella, instead using something that builds towards quality of life, rather than making it something sheltered underneath. Additionally, having integrity be something we are founded upon, not sheltered beneath. Consider using a tree or a rainbow. A tree with integrity as the foundation and all the things we need to nurture quality of life. It's not something we plant for ourselves, it's something we plant for the future.

At this point, the retreat was interrupted by individuals with the intention of disrupting the conversation using overtly racist and offensive language and profanity. The group took an unscheduled break to collect themselves while the facilitation team resolved the issue. The facilitation team removed the individuals from the meeting and the City Attorney confirmed that this was legal and appropriate based on their intent to disrupt and their violation of the protocols of the meeting. A Councilmember suggested that the when the Council reconvened that the Mayor make a statement to participants and observers denouncing the comments made by the individuals that interrupted the meeting. There was agreement from all participants.

Mayor McEnery-Ogle reconvened the meeting. Facilitators guided the conversation back to the agenda. Comments are summarized below.

- The interruption is indicative of real issues that have been ailing our community. It points out the importance of this process and having a shared vision. When considering inclusivity, we need to recognize that we haven't always been inclusive and there is an urgent need to address that.

The live illustration was edited following the retreat to better embody the Council's suggestions.



9:45 a.m.-2:45 p.m. Near-term Initiatives

Adrienne shared her screen with the list of initiatives they would be discussing and arranging based on the City Council's level of involvement. The group was given time to individually review the proposed workplan initiatives provided to them prior to the retreat and submit their priority initiatives to the facilitation team. A detailed breakdown of how individual members responded can be found in the appendix.

Following individual prioritization of the proposed workplan initiatives, the Council was asked to discuss each initiative that received support from multiple Councilmembers, and then based on consensus agreement, identify which tier the initiative should be assigned to. The initiatives were organized into the following tiers:

- Tier 1: Priority initiatives that the Council wishes to guide from a policy perspective with a higher commitment of Council time;
- Tier 2: Priority initiatives that the Council wishes to be briefed on and have an opportunity to oversee from a policy perspective; and
- Tier 3: Initiatives the Council wants information on as the opportunity arises or as time permits.

Based on the discussion, the following preliminary tiered list of Council supported initiatives for the 21-22 biennial work plan was established.

Tier 1

- **Task Force on Policing**

The following summarizes the discussion of the Council and Mayor:

- Community surveys have revealed that safety is a top priority. The purpose of this initiative is to provide a safe and secure city.
- This initiative speaks directly to the elements of the value of inclusivity, including: honoring diversity, fostering civic involvement by engaging citizen involvement in the decision-making process, and seeking consistency in policing across the City.
- The two components (Use of Force and Body Worn Cameras) are equally important.
- This section needs to be updated with the subcategory about partnerships with regional task forces.
- There is a rightful focus on how the police force interacts with the community, but that is dictated by policies made by the Council.
- Initiating the body worn camera program will require the Council's value of courage.
- This seems like the title only covers one approach to ensuring safety. Consider broadening the title of this initiative.

- The focus of the task force is the use of force and the implementation of the body worn camera program. In order to change the direction of this initiative, it will require a complete reexamination of the task force and its initiative.
- Eric Holmes expressed that in order to address issues related to the initiative, he would like to work with the Chief of Police and come back to Council with a guided scoping conversation about the full range of policy issues that the Council wishes to explore that will help chart out a work program.

- **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) work**

Eric Holmes explained that this initiative assumes the 12 touches with the Council over the biennium and includes an equity atlas as one of the outcomes. The assumption is that there would be consistent regular Council engagement developing a policy statement on equity and inclusion. The equity atlas will serve as a tool that will help inform future equity work.

The following summarizes the discussion of the Council and Mayor:

- This is only further reinforced as a need following the individuals and events that interrupted the retreat.
- This is closely tied to the Human Rights Review.
- This initiative should serve as a guide for all Council decisions. The Council will develop a policy statement that reinforces this, as well as assists in the development of regular engagement, training, and capacity building to achieve DEI outcomes.
- DEI work can often seem less urgent in comparison to issues like Police Use of Force. The Council needs to be proactive in addressing DEI issues in order to follow through with the commitment. This is a long-term core objective that needs to be prioritized.
- This initiative meets all three of the Council's values.
 - Inclusivity – our community will be strongest when all members of the community are embraced and engaged, and feel safe and welcomed. Additionally, a Councilmember noted that diversity, equity, and inclusion are inherently linked. Vancouver is already a diverse community, but equity and inclusion are missing from the equation. The value of inclusivity is vital in building the strong and vibrant community we articulate in our vision statement.
 - Resilience – we are more resilient when we fully embrace all of the members of our community and come together as one community.
 - Courage – it requires courage to follow through with DEI work and disregard the voices, like those that interrupted the retreat, and to understand the legacy we have inherited and unequivocally state that that legacy is unacceptable as we move forward as a society doing the work that is necessary to make change now and for future generations.

- The City is planning to hire people that will manage much of the DEI work, and therefore should be able to address many of the initiatives that are related to DEI. Considering that the Council has determined that DEI needs to inform all decisions, this can help attend to the interconnectedness of the work that needs to be done.

- **Transportation in general**

The following summarizes the discussion of the Council and Mayor:

- It's concerning that the Climate Action Plan is integrated in land use, but not in transportation. Transportation has been the highest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions.
- Investment in this initiative will be required in order to achieve other goals.
- This initiative also addresses climate change.
- This initiative addresses the Council values in the following ways:
 - Inclusivity – Vancouver is built around car travel which puts a higher burden on families.
 - Resilience – choke points in the region put a strain on movement of goods which impacts the local economy, and impacts climate.
- Vancouver has a poor record in regards to transportation safety.
- It's important that the Council and City remain open to change in the transportation system. Therefore, it also requires the value of courage.
- Supporting the transportation initiative creates opportunities that support a thriving economy for Vancouver's workforce.
- Eric Holmes asked the group if they would like to tackle the funding strategy before the Transportation System Plan (TSP) is completed and whether the funding component should be independent or included as a part of the Stronger Vancouver initiative.
 - The Council agreed to wait until after the legislative session and after the TSP is completed.
 - The legislature is currently working on this issue and it would help inform the Council's decision to know the direction they are going following their public outreach efforts.
 - We need to be aware that the funding amount is going to be significant; and therefore, should have a placeholder for funding transportation.

- **Climate Action Plan**

- Climate is called out as a part of the Land Use/Land Use Policy initiative, but not under any other initiative. It seems this should either be included in all relevant initiatives, or be a standalone initiative. This is especially important considering that the majority of greenhouse gases in the region are emitted by transportation.

- Eric Holmes clarified that work on this initiative will influence the Comprehensive Plan climate work.
- This is a high priority for Council involvement because it affects multiple other important issues, including decisions around transportation, fleet, water service, and sewer. The decisions the Council makes now around climate will have cascading effects into the future.
- Decisions that are made now around climate goals may need to be revisited/reversed depending on their efficacy, which speaks to the urgency around making the right decisions now.
- This initiative addresses the Council's values.
 - Inclusivity – issues related to disproportionate climate impact on vulnerable communities in the City.
 - Resilience – this is a critical component of ensuring a successful and viable community going forward.
 - Courage – there are disparate opinions on the importance of addressing climate issues within the community, and it will require steadfast commitment to the goal of addressing climate change as well as courage if the Council expects to meet the goals. It's important that given the financial costs of making climate investments that the Council effectively communicates that the benefits outweigh the costs.

- **Heights District**

- It's important to have a wide and diverse housing market that doesn't box people into choosing from limited traditional housing options.
- Eric Holmes clarified that the reason the Heights District is part of multiple initiatives is that it is critical in finalizing the land use policy that will govern the Heights development. The second is looking for direction from Council on implementation once the policy is adopted.
- This is supported as a legacy marquee project because of its progressive nature, as well as its acknowledgement of history.
 - Integral to a thriving economy.
 - Equity, sustainability, and parks are built in.
 - Provides new open spaces.
- Investment in the Heights, and how development is implemented, has the potential to set an example for future efforts. In addition, it provides the opportunity for the City to establish trust with the broader community that may be able to be carried forward to other projects in the future.

- **COVID Response and Recovery**

- Small businesses will be reliant upon economic recovery.
- This seems like it might not be an initiative, but rather something we must deal with given the current situation. It will be an ongoing process of recovery, responding to opportunities and new requirements.
- Ideally, this will be something that primarily falls on the shoulders of the state and federal government.
- It's important to recognize the local decisions that are needed, and those decisions have the potential to demonstrate our values to the community.
- While much of the efforts surrounding the impacts and solutions to COVID-19 (vaccinations, testing, stimulus, etc.) fall on the state and federal government, the City has a critical role in recovery. COVID-19 has already put a large strain on the City, both financially and otherwise. The community has expectations for us that we are unable to meet.
 - A Councilmember noted that part of the reason community members believe the response to COVID-19 is a local government responsibility is because we haven't received adequate leadership from the federal government. The Councilmember expressed the hope that the change in leadership at the federal level will result in them playing a stronger role.
- As a City, we need to be considering how we can assist the businesses and individuals impacted by COVID-19, for instance, putting money towards grant programs and being explicit in where there were gaps in the response from the federal government. The City will need to make funding decisions, many of which should be influenced by the impacts of COVID-19, i.e. funding a park vs. funding an impacted business district.
- A Councilmember expressed that the City Manager should no longer be issuing emergency declarations to address issues around COVID-19, but that the Council should be responsible for making those decisions going forward. The City Manager agreed.
- It's difficult to determine how much of Council's time should be spent on this initiative without knowing all the issues that need to be considered.

Tier 2

- **Boards and Commissions**

- This initiative should be a high priority for the newly hired DEI coordinator to determine how to approach this work.
- A Councilmember explained that this should be viewed through the equity lens and can be grouped with the Task Force on Council Representation, and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives. The Councilmember noted that it addresses the concerns heard from the community

around representation and that the issues raised could be addressed through term limits, broadening the requirements for those seeking positions on Boards and Commissions, and giving the Boards and Commissions more power to make decisions.

- Other Councilmembers agreed that this will be integral to the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiative.
- This initiative has the ability to empower the community and addresses all three of the Council's values. Specifically, this initiative hits on the value of courage because it takes decisiveness to put trust in a broader community to work on issues and help solve problems.
- The policy needs to be considered because it has the potential to change a lot of how we recruit people to participate. This initiative can change how policies are set and carried out.
- This has the potential to be transformative by expanding the leadership in the community.
- This will be an important step in showing the progress we've made on other initiatives, and where there is still work to be done.
- There is an urgency to address this as it is inherently tied to the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiative in Tier 1.

- **Homelessness**

Eric Holmes framed the conversation by explaining that the City and County established a Joint Executive Board on Homelessness, and that as a result the City is shifting back to a fairly limited scope in favor of supporting the County in more of a leadership role. Homelessness has been a prominent issue in the community, and is on the list to help the Council determine the level in which they would like to be engaged from a policy perspective. The Council will be engaged operationally regardless.

- This addresses the Council's values.
 - Inclusivity – they live in our community as residents and it's important that we do the best we can to keep them safe and help them meet their needs.
 - Resilience – our community will be stronger if we are proactive in supporting these members of the community, rather than just providing responsive support. Providing front end support would be providing safety networks, mental health and addiction services, and housing. The backend support would be things like emergency and response services.
 - Courage – will require a lot of sacrifice from the community in order to confront the issue.
- In the short term this will require a lot of updates to Council.
- The Council has approved a new sales tax around homeless support, but the County has not approved that. This means that while we want to be supportive of the County, there are some actions that will take place outside of that partnership.

- Homelessness is a systemic issue and is inherently linked to affordable housing. The Affordable Housing Fund expires in 2023 making this a high priority for this Council to determine the direction we take to address homelessness and affordable housing. We need to consider whether the direction will include another proposition for the voters and what that proposition will include. There is an urgency to come to a resolution this year.
- Important to consider that when issues are linked that decisions can have cascading impacts if we don't think about the broader picture.
- We know the best way to help homeless citizens is through mental health and drug addiction services, but those are not services that we can provide ourselves. That means we need to play a supportive role to the County that provides those services. We do have more control over ensuring the places they frequent are as safe and healthy as we can make them.
- Discussions need to include the issue of chronic homelessness and potential solutions for those that need immediate shelter.

Tier 3

- **I-5 Bridge Replacement**

Eric Holmes noted that based on the project workplan, the process seems fairly aggressive and includes a number of early decisions that may require a significant amount of the Council's time over the next year to a year and a half.

- A Councilmember expressed support for the I-5 bridge replacement and explained that committees are being formed for community representation and addressing issues of equity. The Council should ask to see the results of those efforts.
- Council needs to be aware of major issues, kept informed of the process, and have an understanding of the implications of how this could impact Vancouver's downtown.
- A Councilmember suggested that the Council develop a policy document that could guide the Mayor's and City Manager's input at future key points in the process. Another Councilmember noted that there is an existing resolution that could guide future input. However, if any decisions cannot be addressed through the resolution, those issues be forwarded to the Council.
- The Council needs to be engaged in the process, but in the most efficient way possible. Essentially developing a proactive plan for addressing issues.
- The Council needs to continue to receive the monthly briefing on this process.

Initiatives Needing Further Information

The Council identified two initiatives that needed further information before identifying how it fit into the 21-22 biennial workplan. The subsequent discussions are summarized below.

- **I-5/I-205 Congestion Mitigation/Value Pricing**

- Congestion mitigation is something that the Council should be watching. This could have a huge impact on Vancouver commuters. Conversations need to be centered on what Vancouver commuters will get in return. In the past the answer has been “time,” but too often that just means time for the wealthy. Need to make sure that the burden of congestion mitigation is not pushed onto low income residents.
- There are Vancouver community members involved in the Portland congestion pricing effort, but there are no members of the Vancouver City Council that are involved or sit on the board. It would be helpful to have representation in the effort. It is going to be necessary to establish a position to forward to the Federal Highway Administration.
- A Councilmember suggested that City staff inform Council of the next opportunity to provide input and develop a workplan that will allow Council ample time to draft their input.

- **Stronger Vancouver**

- It's important to recognize the need for funding.
- Investment in this will be required to achieve other goals.
- A component is needed that speaks to the need for parks construction and maintenance funding.
- Eric Holmes noted that there isn't a clear scope of this initiative, and that depending on how it is scoped it may include funding for transportation, parks, etc.
- This needs to be revisited through one-on-one conversations with Councilmembers to determine the placement of how Council will be involved.
- Consider a small group discussion to determine options, but needs to be revisited by the Council in order to determine urgency.
 - The group agreed to schedule a Council workshop to address this issue before moving forward.
- A Councilmember noted past outreach results may not be relevant now due to changes in perspective following the pandemic and expressed concern about implementation of some elements without reconsidering their value and impacts.

Other Initiative Discussion

The Council also discussed a number of other initiatives that did not get assigned to one of the three tiers. The discussion around these initiatives is summarized below.

- **Comprehensive Plan**

- The Housing Regulatory Policy needs to address the need for wide and diverse housing options and increasing the supply of those options.

- **Income-based Housing / Services**

- Consider the need for diverse housing options under the Affordable Housing Fund.

- **Sustainable Funding Strategy**

- This is both standalone work underway and related/required to achieve other initiatives including the Climate Policy of the Comprehensive Plan and the Transportation initiative.

- It's important to consider grouping the initiatives based on value and the body of work. We have expert staff that can handle a broad range of the issues that address multiple initiatives that relate to a singular value. For instance, with COVID response, it's not just a series of line items to address, it's complex and involves many different people.

- **Multi-family Tax Exemption Program Refresh**

- **Task Force on Council Representation**

- The initiatives list is missing a comprehensive communication strategy for neighborhoods around transportation and land use projects. The 2020 survey indicated that communication with the neighborhoods was one of the weakest points.

- Eric Holmes explained that the goal is to have those built into the operation of the different initiatives, including the Complete Streets Implementation.

- A Councilmember expressed the desire for that communication strategy to be explicit.
- Another Councilmember suggested that a communication strategy is going to be a critical component of all of the top initiatives, therefore it's more operational. This received positive response from the Councilmember that suggested a more explicit communication strategy, implying that the communication strategy should come from the Communication department, not be singular depending on the initiative.

2:45-3:25 p.m. Long-term Priorities

Jeanne explained that the time for the conversation around long-term priorities would be reduced due to the interruption of the meeting. She explained to the Council that rather than developing a finite set of priorities, they would be broken into pairs to brainstorm long-term priorities to be considered within the next six to ten years and serve as the foundation of the next Strategic Plan. The pairs were given 15 minutes to discuss before reporting back. Below is a summary of the responses.

- Operations Center Master Redevelopment Plan is a high long-term priority. It needs to be completed in the near-term and implemented within the six- to ten-year time period.
- It's important to be clear in the Transportation Plan about next order objectives, including 112th Corridor, which is a high priority in terms of safety and also meets the Council's values.

- We need to develop a comprehensive housing strategy that provides framework for affordable to market-rate housing.
- Legacy items from the Strong Vancouver initiative need to be considered, including: arts, parks, quality of life, and different types of amenities. It would be helpful to start those conversations now to determine the kinds of decisions we should be making that will assist in accomplishing those long-term goals.
 - A Councilmember added the idea that arts filters through many economic drivers, education, and parks.
- Aging in Place is a long-term priority. There has been work done surrounding this issue, but would like more to be done to support people staying in their housing as they age and building a community that supports seniors. It's important to have a community that has multigenerational support systems.
- Vancouver Housing Authority will be critical in addressing issues related to affordable housing. It's important to consider income-based housing from a broader perspective that includes the types and locations of housing opportunities.
- Develop a new annexation blueprint.
- Expanding broadband in the community.
- Transforming the economy in a way that has true economic prosperity, including a recalibrated jobs-to-housing ratio, as well as strong childcare and early education services for the community.
- Transforming transit to allow residents to live in Vancouver without owning a car, by choice or necessity.
- Pursue a city that embodies the goal of 20-minute neighborhoods.
- Connectivity through and across manmade barriers, including: I-5, I-205, SR-500, SR-14, the railroad, as well as cul-de-sacs.
- Addressing different geographic boundaries (annexation) that will also necessitate multiple community living rooms. This will require new geographic language when talking about locations and neighborhoods in the City.
- A potential outcome of work done over the next six to ten years is that Fourth Plain Blvd becomes an economically diverse destination.
- Meeting and exceeding the expectations set forth in the Standard of Cover. This directly ties to how first responders are able to perform their job, especially given the issues that were intensified during the current COVID-19 pandemic.
- Commitment to all community investments. A valuable project that hasn't been mentioned is the Waterfront Gateway project, which is critical for connecting the waterfront to downtown. Another is the convention center expansion.

3:25-3:30 p.m. Moving Forward and Close

Jeanne introduced Aaron Lande, City of Vancouver, to briefly review the Strategic Plan framework. Below is a summary of Aaron's comments.

- The discussions and results of this retreat will inform the development of the next Strategic Plan, specifically the long-term priorities and the core values.
- The next staff check-in with City Council will be focused on whether the priorities identified and the strategic planning process are moving in the right direction.
- Feedback on the last Strategic Plan indicated that it lacked measurable outcomes, which likely presents a challenge for the City and Council going forward when identifying measurable outcomes in this effort.
- In terms of the long-term priorities, it would be helpful to identify connections between priorities, like climate action and equity work.

Adrienne reviewed the results of the conversations throughout the retreat to confirm with the Council. She explained that the Council would likely spend more time fine-tuning the results, but that this discussion will serve as a foundation in their decision-making process moving forward.

Adrienne asked the group to express what they have the most hope for moving forward from the retreat. Responses included:

- This has provided clarity around the Council's values and created a framework for prioritizing our vision. This has helped build a foundation for working together going forward and making progress towards those aspirational goals in the vision statement.
- This has been helpful in providing the opportunity to have conversations and build trust, both of which have been impacted by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. This also seems to have provided a better sense of what's important to each person. People were very respectful of and intentional in including all Council voices. This process had us do the hard work in discussing what we believe to be important, rather than just regurgitating the same values and pushing those forward.
- There was a great discussion about values that developed a good idea of the motivations of each Councilmember. The discussions around equity and inclusion provided a sense of confidence in our ability to achieve meaningful transformative change.
- This has been an illuminating experience that helped us better understand each other and it will help guide future Council work.
- The commitment to the task at hand and getting to know each other is appreciated. It is going to be critical to future conversations that we use this experience to understand our commonalities and continue to make real progress.
- This helped us refine our process and set the roadmap for actual progress.

The meeting was adjourned.

March 15, 2021 – Retreat Follow-Up: Council Values and 2021-22 Priorities

Vancouver City Council Workshop

This workshop was conducted remotely over video conference utilizing a GoToMeeting platform. Members of the public were invited to view the meeting via the live broadcast on www.cvtv.org ([replay available](#)) and CVTV cable channels 23 or HD 323, or on the City's Facebook page, www.facebook.com/VancouverUS, or listen via the GoToMeeting conference call.

Mayor McEnerny-Ogle convened the Council workshop at 4:00 p.m. on March 15, 2021.

Council present:

- Mayor McEnerny-Ogle,
- Councilmember Bart Hansen
- Councilmember Ty Stober
- Councilmember Linda Glover
- Councilmember Laurie Lebowsky
- Councilmember Erik Paulsen
- Councilmember Sarah Fox

Staff present:

- Eric Holmes, City Manager
- Brian Carlson, Deputy City Manager
- Teresa Brum, Economic Development Division Manager
- Amanda Delapena, Assistant to the City Council
- Chad Eiken, Community and Economic Development Director
- Aaron Lande, Program and Policy Manager
- Cara Rene, Communications Director
- Peggy Sheehan, Community Development Programs Manager
- Alicia Sojourner, Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Jonathan Young, City Attorney

Consultants:

- Jeanne Lawson, JLA Public Involvement
- Adrienne DeDona, JLA Public Involvement

Welcome, Agenda Overview and Purpose

Purpose: *Review and confirm core values for the City Council. Review, refine and affirm priority initiatives identified by the City Council for 2021-22 biennium during the recent retreat.*

Eric Holmes provided an introduction to the workshop, noting the Council had requested additional time for further discussion regarding finalization of its priorities for the year.

Jeanne summarized the agenda for the session, explaining adjustments had been made to the original version provided to the Council to allow for as much time as possible for the discussion around how the Council will move forward with implementation of its priorities.

Revisit and Confirm Council Values

Adrienne reminded the Council that the agreed-upon values of the body are intended to serve as a compass to guide the Council in the right direction and the lens or filter through which all actions should be viewed. She explained the Council had determined two sets of values (see page 1): Decision-Making Values, which would be considered when the Council prioritizes and makes decisions regarding City initiatives; and Operational Values, which would guide the members of Council in how they work together and conduct themselves in carrying out Council activity.

Adrienne walked the Council through the previously identified values and asked if the group would like to see any changes. Below is a summary of the discussion.

- A question was raised about whether the Operational Values were intended to apply to the Council or to the City organization as a whole, and it was agreed that they are meant to apply to how the Council conducts itself, while the ongoing strategic planning efforts would guide the City organization.
- The current Decision-Making Values are broad and seemingly all-inclusive, which may make it difficult for the Council to use them as a mechanism for prioritizing projects and programs; however, initiatives like the Climate Action Plan and Strategic Equity Plan that are currently or soon to be underway will help the Council refine and inform these values over the course of the year.
- The Council has a difficult time as a body saying no to new projects and initiatives, and the Council needs to be better at having the conversation about prioritizing and whether something should move forward, given the City's finite resources.
- The goal of the Council should be to provide enough direction to staff through these tools to be confident staff is working on programs and projects that meet the Council's values and priorities, rather than spending time on something the Council may ultimately say no to. To that end, the list of specific prioritized initiatives may be the most useful tool.

Based on consensus, the Council agreed to make no changes to the list of Decision-Making Values at this time.

Review, Refine and Confirm Priority Initiatives for the 2021-2022 Biennium

Adrienne summarized the three tiers of priorities identified by the Council during its retreat. Jeanne asked the Council to determine first if the definitions for the tiers are correct. Below is a summary of the discussion.

- The tiers are currently labeled in a way that gives a false impression that the included programs and projects have been categorized by importance rather than in order of magnitude in terms of the amount of time the Council will spend on each initiative.

By consensus, Council agreed the tiers should be re-labeled to: High Touch, Medium Touch, and Low Touch

Jeanne next asked the Councilmembers whether they would like to make any changes to the specific initiatives and programs listed within the priorities. The Council's discussion is summarized below.

- The City Manager's input on the ordering of the items would be helpful now that the Council is prioritizing the initiatives based on the amount of time to be spent on each.
- Items placed in the High Touch tier can be considered as the things Council has prioritized to get done and ensure decisions are being made to move them along. As such, the City Manager can use this tool to give these items priority place on the agenda schedule and bring them before Council quickly whenever Council action or feedback is required. Such initiatives would come before the Council at least on a monthly basis.
- The Medium Touch tier is still a pro-active level of work with these items coming before Council on a roughly quarterly basis in order to keep them moving forward but with less urgency than items in the High Touch tier.
- Council discussed and confirmed Policing should remain in the High Touch tier, but the Vancouver Police Camera Program would be prioritized above the broader, comprehensive body of work related to policing and implemented at a priority pace, per discussions the Council has had during recent meetings.
- Issues and actions pertaining to housing and/or homelessness come before the Council at nearly every meeting, and will only increase in importance as time progresses. This category should be moved to the High Touch tier.
- The Heights District addresses many of the things that are important to the Council and the issues and actions pertaining to the Heights District need to keep moving forward, but much of the remaining work for Council will come at certain benchmarks throughout the planning process. This category should be moved to the Medium Touch Tier.
- Council needs to address the appointment process for Council vacancies before a potential need arises, given the upcoming election cycle, and all of the recommendations from the Task Force on Council Representation still need to be prioritized and addressed by the Council.

By consensus, Council agreed to the following:

- High Touch items will be given agenda scheduling priority as need arises.
- Policing initiatives will remain in the High Touch tier, with the Police Camera Program prioritized on an accelerated timeline.
- Housing and Homelessness initiatives will be moved to the High Touch tier.
- The Heights District initiatives will be moved to the Medium Touch tier.
- The policy pertaining to the Council vacancy appointment process will be addressed in the context of a Council discussion about prioritization of all of the recommendations from the Task Force on Council Representation in the not-too-distant future.

- No changes to the Low Touch tier.

Moving Forward

Jeanne transitioned the discussion to focus on how the Council can use these tools moving forward. She explained the Council could develop a series of weighted criteria that could be applied to prospective projects and programs or the Council could use its Decision-Making Values as a framework when bringing an issue forward for consideration and deciding how much of the Council's time will be needed or dedicated to that issue. A summary of the discussion is below.

- The Council does not currently have a mechanism for making these determinations, and one is needed, but the ongoing initiatives pertaining to Climate Action and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion will help better inform those discussions as they develop.
- The Council's prescribing one matter as more important or valuable than another is not an advisable path and may be difficult for the public to interpret. The weighting of an item will surface through the Council's deliberative process and discussions and will come about more naturally and efficiently than the Councilmembers trying to assign numerical values.
- Councilmembers should be able to raise and discuss issues and ideas during their regular Communications time on the agenda without vetting an item in advance with staff. Such discussions are not necessarily going to be the decision points for any given item, recognizing fellow Councilmembers may need more time to consider and research the item or more information may be required from staff, but there should not be restrictions placed on what Councilmembers can share during this time.

By consensus, Council agreed to use the following criteria for considering future initiatives:

- How does this meet the values we all think are important?
- How much time should the Council spend on it (vs. delegating work to staff or an advisory group)?
- Is it more important than something else on the list / what should shift in the tiers in order to make time?
- How much staff time and/or City resources will be required?

Close

Jeanne encouraged the Council to continue the conversation about how they work as a group to both make sure they can raise issues and be courageous, and follow the values the Council has identified. She reminded the Councilmembers their ability to talk through and come to consensus on issues means, as individuals, they have the ability to support what is best for the Council as a whole.

Mayor McEnerny-Ogle adjourned the workshop at 6:03 p.m.