

REGULATION REDESIGN PROJECT

Results from the Regulation Redesign Roundtable

Report Prepared by Tarran Consultants | November 2018



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Executive Summary

The City of Vancouver's Corporate Plan 2018 identified Regulation Redesign as a corporate priority to help achieve excellent service. It is a city-wide project to simplify the City's land use regulations, policies, and online tools in order to improve processes.

PURPOSE OF THE ROUNDTABLE

The purpose of this Regulation Redesign Roundtable event was to engage and to listen to a variety of representative constituencies involved in various types of development in Vancouver and who have direct experience with the City's land use regulations (e.g. architects, designers and builders, developers, and space operators/end users including commercial, public and non-profits). This workshop sought input on issues identification and ideas to improve and simplify the land use regulations. This represents one in a series of public engagement events for public inputs into the Regulation Redesign project.

METHODOLOGY

The Roundtable was held on November 28, 2018 at Simon Fraser University (SFU) Harbour Centre, 515 W. Hastings St. from 8:30 am to 12:00 pm. Sixty-eight (68) individuals attended of which approximately 50% were from the construction industry, 25% were from the real estate sector and the remaining 25% were from a variety of other businesses and Business Improvement Areas, the heritage sector, and cultural sector.

WHAT WE HEARD

There were two rounds of table discussions that focused on issues and ideas.

Round One: What are the key issues you have been facing with the City's land use regulations?

During this discussion several key themes emerged including:

- "I can't find the information I need"
- "I can't understand the regulation (or it is confusing)"
- "The rules are being inconsistently interpreted and applied"
- "Information conflicts within bylaws and across regulations/policies"
- "There is over-regulation"
- "There is a need for an organizational culture change"
- "Staff needs more authority and discretion"
- "Roles of advisory committees and the Board of Variance need to be reviewed"

Round Two: If you were the Director of Planning for the day, what would you want to change? What might we not need to regulate? What are your experiences with regulations elsewhere that are effective?

During this discussion several key themes emerged including:

- “Move from regulating to enabling”
- “Simplify regulations and eliminate where possible”
- “Address conflicts within City regulations and with regulations of other jurisdictions”
- “Write regulations in a clear and straight forward manner that minimizes interpretation”
- “Allow for more discretionary decision making by staff and the Director of Planning”
- “Improve digital access to regulations and policy documents”
- “Improve inter-departmental liaison to manage regulation interpretation”



Results from the Regulation Redesign Roundtable

1.0 PROJECT BACKGROUND

The City of Vancouver's Corporate Plan 2018 identified Regulation Redesign as a corporate priority to help achieve excellent service. It is a city-wide project to simplify the City's land use regulations, policies, and online tools in order to improve processes

1.1 CONTEXT/ISSUE

The current Zoning and Development Bylaw was adopted by City Council in 1956. It has been amended extensively but a comprehensive review has never been undertaken. To implement the City's goals and objectives, the Bylaw has grown significantly more complex over the years. Some of the 8,000+ amendments to the original 1956 Bylaw have introduced new terminology or regulations that have resulted in inconsistencies with either other parts of the Bylaw or with other City Bylaws. The growing complexity of the regulations, policies and guidelines has resulted in an increasingly complicated permit review process and longer review times.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE REGULATION REDESIGN PROJECT

- Create user-friendly land use regulations and policies by simplifying and updating regulations and policies (e.g. improving format, using consistent terminology);
- Reconcile competing objectives and conflicts between policies and regulations;
- Streamline application processing by reducing and simplifying regulations;
- Ensure land use regulations and policies advance City policies and priorities; and
- Improve communication and information sharing about regulations, policies and processes.

2.0 PURPOSE OF THE ROUNDTABLE

The purpose of this Regulation Redesign Roundtable event was to engage and to listen to a variety of representative constituencies involved in various types of development in Vancouver and who have direct experience with the City's land use regulations (e.g. architects, designers and builders, developers, and space operators/end users including commercial, public and non-profits). This workshop sought input on issues and ideas to improve and simplify the land use regulations. This represents one in a series of public engagement events for public inputs into the Regulation Redesign project.

3.0 ROUNDTABLE METHODOLOGY

Date: Wednesday, November 28, 2018 | **Time:** 8:30 am to 12:00 pm

Place: Simon Fraser University Harbour Centre, 515 W. Hastings St.

Sixty-eight (68) individuals attended of which approximately 50% were from the construction industry, 25% were from the real estate sector and the remaining 25% were from a variety of other businesses and Business Improvement Areas, the heritage sector, and cultural sector (see Appendix F for full list of registrants). The City sent out notifications of the session to various sectors listed above. Selection was by order of individual response to the notification with an upper limit of 80 participants.

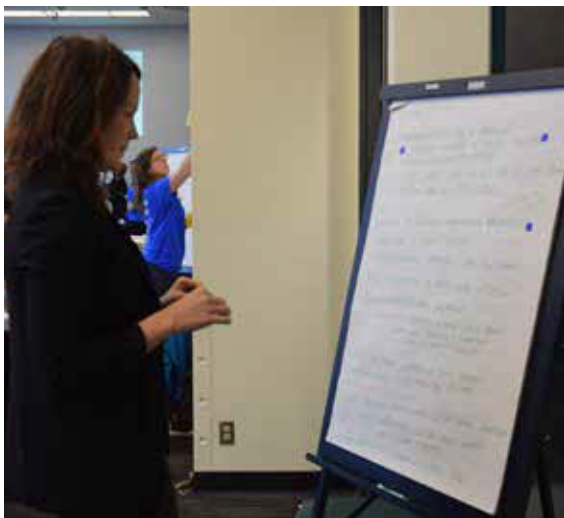
Once attendance was confirmed, twelve discussion tables were pre-selected to ensure a variety of perspectives at each table and a maximum of 6-7 people per table. Each table was hosted by two City staff - a facilitator and note-taker. Other City staff were available to answer any technical questions from participants during their discussions.

There were two rounds of discussions that focused first on issues that participants had with the existing land use regulations and second on ideas that participants had on simplifying the regulations.

At the beginning of each of the discussion participants at each table were asked to write down their issues and ideas for each discussion before the group discussion was started (see Appendix D for these verbatim notes provided as references). All discussions were captured on flip charts (see Appendix D). For the purpose of sharing at the event, each table reported on their top issue and idea based on participants' top 3 choices at their table.

During the table discussions some of the points raised pertained to application processes and specific policy review, which are beyond the scope of the Regulation Redesign project. These discussion points are incorporated into the 'parking lot' notes (see Appendix E). The parking lot notes will be shared with the appropriate project teams and City departments such as Development, Buildings, and Licences Department.

There was a great deal of similarity on issues and ideas discussed. Below is a summary of the discussions.



4.0 WHAT WE HEARD

4.1 DISCUSSION ONE - ISSUES HIGHLIGHTS

What are the key issues you have been facing with the City's land use regulations?

During this discussion several key themes and details emerged including:

“I can't find the information I need”

- Hard to navigate zoning and subdivision parts of VanMaps
- The website information is scattered and a challenge to find relevant information
- No clear point of contact at the City for certain regulations

“I can't understand the regulation (or it is confusing)”

- Clarify what is a policy and what is a guideline
- Definitions of land uses are out of date and do not always recognize modern needs
- Easy-to-understand explanations of what regulations apply are not available to either staff or the public

“The rules are being inconsistently interpreted and applied”

- There is inconsistency of advice on development potential and regulation interpretation from staff
- Challenging to identify which policy takes precedent when several may apply
- Inconsistency between regulations and application of policy
- 'Unwritten' rules keep changing from project to project through change/loss of staff

“Information conflicts within bylaws and across regulations/policies”

- Conflicting policies within the City when policy and regulations have conflicting goals
- Rate of new guidelines and policies introduced adds to conflicts
- Inconsistencies between department policies (e.g. Planning, Parks, Engineering)
- Definitions need to align with provincial and federal laws and regulations
- Conflicts between contemporary building requirements and heritage conservation objectives can lead to work being undertaken without permits
- Affordable housing objective impacted by costly requirements such as parking

“There is over regulation”

- Regulations are implemented too quickly without an understanding of cost implications
- Additional hurdles for heritage sites impede renovation/retention
- Requirements for renovations are often harder than for new build commercial and residential projects

“There is a need for an organizational cultural change”

- Seems a lack of a collaborative approach between City and development community
- Staff don't fully understand the implications of delays such as holding costs
- Over administration is expensive, complicated and time consuming

“Staff needs more authority and discretion”

- Conditional approval requirements open up too much for negotiation
- Not enough authority given to planners

“Roles of advisory committees and the Board of Variance need to be reviewed”

- Heritage Commission does not have input on significant heritage issues
- Going to the UDP as a standard process is unnecessary
- The role of the Board of Variance (BoV) is unclear

4.2 DISCUSSION TWO - IDEAS HIGHLIGHTS

If you were the Director of Planning for the day, what would you want to change?

What might we not need to regulate?

What are your experiences with regulations elsewhere that are effective?

During this discussion several key themes emerged including:

“Move from regulating to enabling”

- Develop more of a partner model with more collaboration for development projects
- Focus regulations on what makes a project safe, green, affordable, equitable and recognizes City priorities
- Base regulations on best practices
- Use incentives instead of ‘sticks’
- Use performance points and facilitate performance based on outcomes to foster creativity
- Give more weight to professional sign-off from engineers and architects

“Simplify regulations and eliminate them where possible”

- Eliminate zoning and replace with comprehensive plans and pre-zoned areas
- Have base guidelines and let market innovate
- Less design control for 3-storey developments
- Make it easier to build new models for sharing community living
- Reduce the number of zones and apply them city-wide
- Increase flexibility in all zones to encourage creativity and be less prescriptive
- Focus on the building envelope and not what happens inside it
- Allow for diverse uses in zones for evolution of jobs and communities
- Tree management plan and bylaw needs to be reviewed
- More clarity on the application of the urban forestry policy and tree retention
- Consider a plan for new tree planting as well as retention

“Address conflicts within City regulations and with regulations of other jurisdictions”

- Resolve where logic and code (regulation) don’t meet
- Remove contradictory policies
- Ensure regulations align with City goals

“Write regulations in a clear and straight forward manner that minimizes interpretation”

- Clarify intent of requirements/regulations and evaluate against city priorities
- State the broad objectives of the regulation and give flexibility on how to achieve them.
- More clarity around Community Amenity Contribution for applicants and the Arts and Cultural organizations
- Simplify the Downtown District maps

“Allow for more discretionary decision making by staff and the Director of Planning”

- Policies need to give more discretion to staff and the authority to use it
- More staff discretion to reduce dependence on the Board of Variance

“Improve digital access to regulations and policy documents”

- Clean up and edit the website
- Simplify access to the website
- Use GIS to identify zoning and related documents
- Share examples on the website of how previous projects were successful

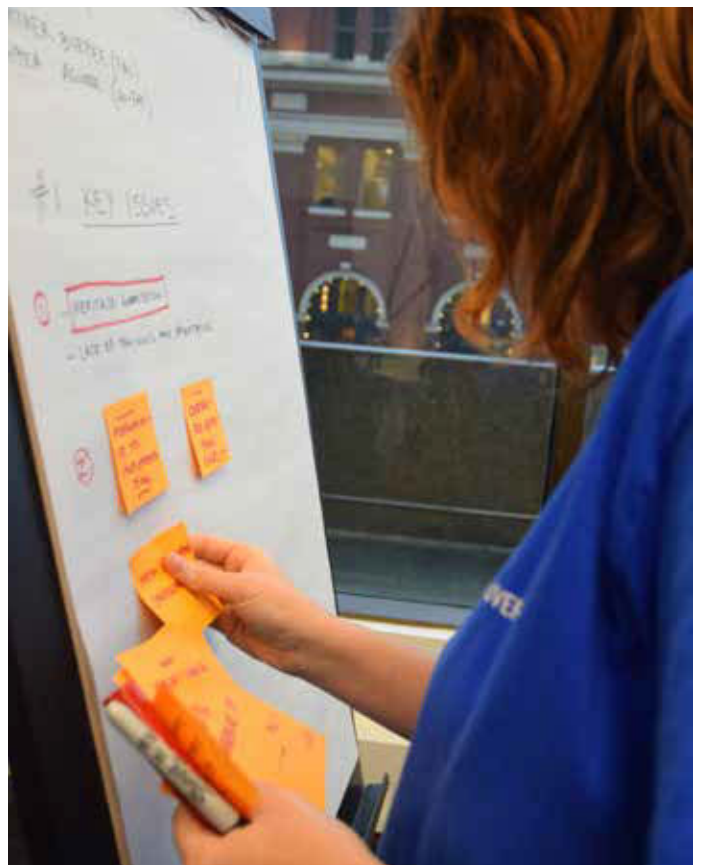
“Improve regulation implementation and inter-departmental liaison”

- Retain institutional knowledge by increasing staff sharing of information, experience and knowledge
- More cross-pollination across departments
- Integrate the Building Department with the Planning Department
- A more transparent organizational structure and staff contact information
- An ongoing review group to keep regulations and policies current
- Include a wide range of stakeholder consultation in development of new regulations and policy

5.0 CONCLUSION

This report documents the key issues and ideas discussed at the Regulation Redesign Roundtable event held in November 2018. The report will inform the staff team’s work heading into Phase 2 of the project. It will be available on the project webpage (vancouver.ca/regredesign). Please visit the project webpage for ongoing opportunities to engage and stay up-to-date on the project.





Appendices

A. Roundtable Agenda

November 28, 2018, 8:30am-12:00pm

SFU Harbour Centre, 515 W. Hastings St, Room 1400 (Segal room)

Agenda:

8:30 am	Breakfast
9:00 am	Welcome + program presentation
9:30 am	Discussion 1: Issue Identification
10:30 am	Break
10:40 am	Discussion 2: Ideas to Improve
11:40 am	Closing remarks
12:00 pm	End

B. Issues by Themes

Discussion question: What are the key issues you have been facing with the City's land use regulations?

1. "I can't find the information I need"

- Info is hard to find
- How to find out and keep track of changes
- Website: information is scattered, has too much info, is a challenge to find relevant info; Clean up and edit website - make information easy to access
- Hard to navigate zoning and subdivision part of VanMaps
- No clear point of contact at the City for certain regulations
- Better communication of what we can build and what targets are
- Difficult to gather all info during property acquisition stage
- More clarity around Community Amenity Contribution: who do they go to? how are they developed?
- Unknown fees

2. "I can't understand the regulation" (or it is confusing)

- Regulations are rules require experts to understand, need to be accessible to non-experts
- Definitions of land uses are out of date; zoning is archaic and does not recognize modern needs
- Objectives of the rules are unclear
- Clarify what is a policy and what is a guideline
- Easy to understand explanations of what regulations or requirements should apply are not available to both staff and the public
- Examples of confusing regulations:
 - FSR (Floor Space Ratio) interpretation and exclusions could be worded better
 - Horizontal angle of daylight (explain intent)
 - No doors on side yard (explain intent, eg. because secondary suites)
 - Resolve Where logic and building code don't meet
 - How to deal with significant trees and which take priority
 - Regulations about arts & culture don't reflect arts & culture spaces
 - Patios for pubs: in general unclear design parameters, slow process, too many "experts involved"
 - Fee simple ownership (shared party wall): lack of clarity to achieve
 - Regulations for art production

3. "The rules are being inconsistently interpreted and applied"

- Inconsistency between regulations
- Inconsistent application of policy, eg. design standards
- Inconsistency of advice on development potential from staff
- Challenge identifying which policy takes precedent when many apply
- Multiple policies & guidelines - Inconsistent eg. setbacks, form of development
- Unwritten rules - these rules keep changing from project to project (change/loss of staff) (FSR, roof deck)
- Regulations are often not transparent
- Lack of capacity on interpretation
- Administrative bulletins and regulations issued too quickly and staff have not thought through implementation

4. “Information conflicts within bylaws and across regulations/policies”

- Conflicting policies within the City; policy and regulations have conflicting goals
- Rate of new guidelines and policies introduced adds to conflict
- City’s performance objectives and implementation policies conflict
- Not useful to discuss regulations if key priorities are unclear/conflicting
- Competing regulations: disconnected from outcomes and inconsistent hierarchy
- Land use regulations have no collective overarching policy and lack of clarity
- Design guidelines out of date and not connected with current city building goals
- Zoning regulations too specific
- Developments abandoned due to the complexity of rules
- Inconsistencies between departments (e.g. Planning, Parks, Engineering): get stuck or siloed
- Definitions need to align with Provincial and Federal laws and regulations
- Examples:
 - Planning unaware of Vancouver Building Bylaw issues which could impact design
 - For Single lot development (inside lot), often conflict in planning policies, e.g. Official Community Plan and existing zoning
 - Competing priorities: view cones, shadowing, etc. reduces buildable floor area; Need process to resolve (e.g. ranked list)
 - Sloping sites (lack of flexibility, conflict with height limits)
 - Having affordable housing as an objective but implementing parking requirements that increase cost of units (should not require parking for affordable house developments or developments near transit)
 - Housing Vancouver vs Zoning and Development Bylaw
 - Zoning versus community plans
 - Conflict between contemporary building requirements and heritage conservation objectives; leads to work without permit
 - Character homes vs duplex policies
 - No alignment of arts and culture between the Zoning and Development Bylaw, Vancouver Building Bylaw and the Licence Bylaw
 - Green building goal and building goals conflict. No priority
 - Vancouver Building Bylaw conflicts with City goals like heritage retention
 - Delays due to other bodies like BC Hydro; requirements are at odds with city bylaws
 - Passive house being pushed but results in box form, which results in shadowing, massing, adds to bottom line as market wants larger doors and windows

5. “There is over regulation”

- Rigid application of ALL the rules (eg. FSR)
- Don’t make one standard and apply to all projects, e.g. ventilation
- Don’t regulate small things like decks, back door or light wells
- ‘Boxes’ created: No room for innovation
- Hard to repeat projects, use precedent, or design models
- Renovations need to be easier than new build for commercial and residential projects; Requirements applied during ‘ change of use’ are onerous, many requirements triggered
- Building bylaws not flexible for renovations (eg. heritage projects, energy efficiency upgrades, 4” sprinklers for artist production space)
- Takes time/approval to achieve relaxation (going up the chain)
- Multiple permits required for small or temporary things, like patios with liquor service and events
- Outright projects lost in complexity (e.g. Laneway Houses: 6-8 months to process)
- Low density - regulatory minefields (consolidate Residential zones)
- Additional hurdles for heritage sites
- Regulations require specific green building approach [but over time that approach] becomes outdated or changed midstream
- Confusing with when to incorporate new policies into on-stream applications eg. Broadway/Cambie

corridor plan is being distributed but no one knows what to do with it

- Regulations are implemented too quickly without an understanding of cost impacts/implications (e.g. new West End Plan 'trumps' district schedule)
- Tree regulations are onerous, requirement process not effective, lacks flexibility for varying building footprints; trees shut down projects or sometimes it is not realistic to design around trees
- Over-regulating roof deck covers
- Requiring windows for all bedrooms - inboard bedrooms
- Conflicting policies within the City:
 - Too many zones/sub-zones - some difficult to interpret - need to reduce # of zones
- Get rid of guidelines and regs about building materials (e.g. RS-5 and 6) let designers decide:
 - Yes there will be good and bad design, but there already is

6. "There is a need for an organizational culture change"

- The City [needs] to have an attitude of expediting process, of "getting things done", attention to urgency of timelines for applicants, and to move to a "yes" based process
- Develop a more collaborative approach between City and development community
- Staff not clear on the implications of delays, e.g. holding costs: Vancouver addicted to dragging out process which takes way too long
- Over-administration: expensive, complicated, time consuming
- Can we reach a point where regulation can be self-administered, with teeth
- City doesn't trust experts

7. "Staff need more authority and discretion"

- Need boundaries that staff and industry can understand
- Other jurisdictions give much more authority to their planners (Best practices in New Westminster and Sunshine Coast)
- Staff empowerment to incorporate bylaws, take action
- Conditionality opens up too much for negotiation
- Too much Director of Planning discretion lately - adds uncertainty and time to process

8. "Roles of advisory committees and the Board of Variance need to be reviewed"

- Advisory bodies do not have expertise

8.1. Heritage Committees and Commission

- Projects that go to Gastown Historic Area Planning Committee and Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee don't go to Heritage Commission - is embarrassing
- Heritage Commission does not have input on significant heritage issues
- Combine heritage advisory groups into one committee (have reps from GHAPC and CHAPC on Heritage Committee), and hold meetings in pm rather than am to make it easier to recruit members

8.2. Urban Design Panel

- Maybe out of touch with economics of a development, as cost impact may be large
- Don't make Urban Design Panel a standard process; only send projects that require additional design review

8.3. Board of Variance

- Role of Board of Variance?
- Appeal process for issues would help with the interpretation of issues along with promoting accountability

C. Ideas by Themes

Discussion questions: “If you were the Director of Planning for the day, what would you want to change? What might we not need to regulate? What are your experiences with regulations elsewhere that are effective?”

1. “Move from regulating to enabling”

- Develop partner model for development and City:
 - More collaborative approach
 - Clear, consistent advice
 - Take more responsibility
- Complete re-design:
 - Simplify
 - Focus on Safe, green, affordable, equitable
 - Recognize City priorities
 - Base on best practices
- Change dynamic from regulate to enable:
 - Use ‘incentives’ instead of ‘sticks’: move from no to yes
 - Use performance points
 - Facilitate performance-based outcomes to foster creativity and innovation to require complex goals /interests to be met in synergistic ways
- Flip the process around: rather than try to preserve everything, approach it as what must be kept
- Take lessons from other cities: Be Proactive about adapting ready-made solutions
- Eliminate rezoning and replace with comprehensive plans with pre-zoned areas
- Plan for longer term than life a building
- Create a citywide Official Community Plan, one that looks 100 years out with time-based implementation
- Update community plans
- Update Vancouver Charter

2. “Simplify regulations and eliminate them where possible”

- Apply more “umbrella” [land] uses
- In-board bedrooms: Allow bedrooms without windows
- Basement and rental suites
- Height
- Waive seismic upgrades for properties slated for demolition
- Don’t regulate parking
- Repeal RS-1 zoning
- Delete RS Guidelines
- Eliminate rezoning and have Comprehensive plan with pre-zoned areas
- Allow outright approval for projects smaller (less than 4-stories)
- Have pre-approved plans. Best practice: Kelowna
- Have base guidelines and let market innovate
- Don’t regulate activities in a building or a specific use; just impacts or interactions between uses
- Make renovations easier
- Overemphasis on neighbourliness: Area will be up-zoned in the future; should not design for transition to single-family houses; stepping back of building = fewer units, less sustainable
- Less emphasis on FSR [Floor Space Ratio] (and focus on affordability and sustainability)
- Make it easier to build new models for sharing of community living
- More flexible uses (shared spaces)
- Less design oversight (from staff)

- [Reduce regulations on] view corridors
- Over-regulating roof deck covers, patio size
- Less design controls for 3-storey developments
- Should not require parking for affordable house developments or developments near transit
- Focus on fixing policies that meet future needs eg. High Density Guidelines for Children and Families
- Allow more flexibility with height and FSR for rooftop patios, decks and other amenities

2.1. Zoning Regulations

- Reduce number of zoning districts and apply city-wide
- Reduce the zones and increase variance
- Increase flexibility in all zones to encourage creativity
- Allow for diverse uses in zones for evolution of jobs and communities
- Have one C-2 zone not multiple commercial zones
- Single duplex zone for all 'residential' zoning in city
- Move away from multiple RS and RT zones
- Why one-off zoning with CD-1?

2.2. Floor area and height regulations

- Be less prescriptiveness
- Simplify FSR regulations so development potential is clearer
- Determine building envelope and not regulate what happens inside it.
- Exempt loading [space] from floor space ratio Loading corridors to be FSR exempt
- Best practices: West Vancouver, Victoria, Langley, Penticton

2.3. Tree regulations

- Tree management plan and bylaw needs to be reviewed.
- Categorize trees into good trees to keep and bad to remove
- More flexibility
- Relax requirements for trees that need to be kept
- Consider a plan for new tree planting, rather than just tree retention
- Application of urban forestry policy needs clarity on tree retention

3. "Address conflicts within City regulations and with regulations of other jurisdictions"

- Resolve where logic and code don't meet
- Remove contradictory policies
- Definitions need to align with provincial and federal laws and regulations
- Ensure regulations align with city goals

4. "Write regulations in a clear and straight forward manner that minimizes interpretation"

- Write it so we don't need to interpret it
- Clarify intent of requirements (e.g. for Horizontal angle of daylight, no doors on side yard because no secondary suites)
- Identify intent of Policy/regulation then evaluate against City priorities
- Simplify Downtown District (DD) maps
- Guidelines on parking layout
- More clarity around Community Amenity Contributions for applicants and Arts and Cultural organizations
- Clarify what is allowed on lanes with fire/garbage services
- Clear regulations and objectives: State broad objectives and give flexibility on how it can be achieved (district energy and passive house)
- Overlay community plans in zoning - so don't need rezoning

5. “Allow more discretionary decision making by staff and the Director of Planning”

- Want flexibility but also certainty. How to balance outright (rigid) and discretion (can take too long)
- More discretion for Director of Planning
- Increase willingness to use discretion for staff/Director
- Other jurisdictions give much more authority to their planners. Best practices: Westminster and Sunshine Coast
- Policy needed to give staff discretions
- New Staff empowerment to incorporate bylaws, take action
- Discretionary decisions that go to the Board of Variance should be made by planning staff
- Less dependence on the Board of Variance
- Give more weight to professional sign-offs (engineers/architects)
- Have sustainability and energy requirements determined by a professional

6. “Improve digital access to regulations and policy documents”

- Clean up and edit website, simplify access
- Use GIS to identify zoning and related documents
- Transparency; Share examples of how other projects were successful
- Best practice: Surrey
- Publish data on expected building capacity vs target

7. “Improve regulation implementation and inter-departmental liaison”

- Retain institutional knowledge: staff need to share info and knowledge
- More cross-pollination across departments at city
- Clear/transparent organizational structure and contact info for staff made available to the public
- Ongoing review group to keep regulations and policies current
- Include a wide range of consultation including stakeholders (open houses)
- Integrating building into planning

D. What We Heard - Flipchart and Discussion Card Notes

TABLE 1 - KEY ISSUES

Flip Chart:

- Policy vs guideline (what are they, how are they applied)
- Difficult to gather all info during property acquisition stage (rules and regulations that apply to zones)
- Appears to be a disconnect between departments
- Clear/consistent direction regarding regulations during permitting
- Multiple review process yet decision still not clear
- Conflict within written direction (prior-to's not clear)
- Consistency to occupancy
- Reign in process back to basics:
 - Pre-application
 - Inquiries
 - Zoning applications
 - Development permit applications
- At intake, the ability to table ideas/variances that meet corporate direction, to be delivered by professional that can be articulate ideas and get direction to proceed*
- Nexus pass!

Discussion Cards (for reference):

- Duration of processing time before comments received
- Length of time to set up an internal meeting or required to line up and wait
- Varying reviewers will provide different responses and additions documentation to be required
- Appears to be a disconnect between departments (planning, engineering and sewer)
- Requirements of variance requested not clear, seems to change
- Too many and often conflicting
- No/little room for creativity for public benefit or sustainability and common sense
- Inconsistent application by city staff and changes late in the process
- Checklist for standard projects
- Difficulty in gathering all the applicable regulations and guidelines etc. that impact a site
- Some regulations are too prescriptive eg. zones with FSR & UPA
- Update heritage list
- Long wait times for building development permits – financial implications
- Polarizing viewpoints (from extreme ends) holding too much sway in public debate
- Too little in way of incentive to encourage green or EE [energy efficient] development
- Housing inventory change unaffordability issues; we need more styles of smaller housing units.
- Unwritten rules - these rules keep changing from project to project (insecurity of staff)
- Checklist for applicants vs checklist for staff
- Regulations by staff not correctly addressed
- Consistency and inconsistency of city staff (continue throughout process and project)
- Bulletins quickly issued, but city staff has not thought to follow through

* These flipchart items raised points which are outside the Regulation Redesign Project, eg. points pertaining to application processes or specific policy review. They are also documented in the "Parking Lot" and will be shared with the appropriate City departments. With further review of the verbatim notes, if additional out-of-scope items are identified these also will be shared with the appropriate departments.

TABLE 1 - IDEAS

Flip Chart

- Does this policy bring me joy! If not then throw it out!
- Access to staff in person/multiple disciplines at the table*
- Much simpler rezoning application requirements in other jurisdictions
- Escalate projects that promote key city policy:
 - Direction with benchmark dates with approvals
- Prioritize without realizing other applications - Rental housing vs market...community benefits
- Planners need to be planners*
- Update community plans
- Find a way to retain staff - continuity/consistency*
- Staff need to be able to balance community interests with large city planning goals
- Don't regulate parking
- Increase flexibility in all zones

Discussion Cards (for reference):

- Maintaining staff - allows more familiarity with policies and bylaws
- For existing dwelling allow for targeted repairs that comply with best practices understanding there may be a slight difference in aesthetics
- Empower staff to make decisions and use of them
- Holland and Amsterdam RFP land to bidder but not a \$, public benefit, sustainability, best use.
- Back common sense, simplify the process
- Create a citywide OCP
- Capturing City objective for each area
- Create increased flexibility in all zones and simpler zoning regulations to encourage creativity
- Empower staff to make design decisions
- No need to regulate parking
- Live/work facilitating development
- Empower project architect, planners and energy advisors to mediate between the city and property owners during the entire development process
- Require performance-based development rather than prescriptive to foster creativity and innovation to require complex goals /interests to be met in synergistic ways
- Accelerate development for missing middle and climate change
- Masterplan? Process? Continuity?
- Bigger picture
- Planning department double in size

* These flipchart items raised points which are outside the Regulation Redesign Project, eg. points pertaining to application processes or specific policy review. They are also documented in the "Parking Lot" and will be shared with the appropriate City departments. With further review of the verbatim notes, if additional out-of-scope items are identified these also will be shared with the appropriate departments.

TABLE 2 - KEY ISSUES

Flip Chart:

- Character Merit:*
 - No incentive for post-1940 buildings which have character
 - Cambie corridor character homes lost, yet single-family dwelling character retention cumbersome
- Heritage:*
 - No incentive*
 - Heritage Density Transfer bank*
- Single lot development (inside lot):
 - Conflict in planning policies
 - Avoid rezoning & selling the lot
 - Official Community Plan & existing zoning conflict
 - Parking challenge like parking elevator*
 - Reduce parking regulation with car sharing and bikes*
 - Different or innovative subsections for engineering*
 - Guidelines on parking layout*
- Multiple policies & guidelines:
 - Inconsistent eg. setbacks, form of development
 - The inconsistency of advice
- Letter of inquiry:*
 - Drastic cost increase to project due to insufficient advice on identified issues eg parking, trees, density*
 - Simplification of process*
 - Improve advise on identified issues eg parking, trees, density*
- Tree retention for new development:
 - Sometimes unrealistic to design around tree and time length from City staff to provide guidance
 - All design issues for new proposals should be identified by staff prior to application stage
- Better liaison between inspections and Project Coordinators:*
 - Inspectors may require many drawings*
 - Better access needed to city staff and various departments to resolve issues quicker*
 - Quicker timeline needed for setting meetings with staff
 - Staff interaction and feedback to customers lacking*
- Prior- to review by staff:*
 - Too long and uncertain
 - Tracking helpful
- Urban Design Panel:
 - Maybe out of touch with economics of a development
 - Cost impact may be large
 - Design issues and materials should be resolved prior to Urban Design Panel to avoid multiple Urban Design Panel reviews*
- FSR - 1 & 2 FD [Family Dwelling]
 - Zoning regulations not tested for new duplex prevision in bylaw
 - Different scenarios should be separated by word “or”
 - Secondary suites - Min & max 400 sq.ft

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- Complex regulations:
 - RM Zones
 - Calculations of density
 - Inconsistency in interpretations due to high turnover of staff
 - More flexibility and clarity needed
- Regulation Transparency:
 - Hidden policies not available to the public
 - Update website to improve regulation clarity with diagrams
 - Information requirements: has increased for DP applications - eg, Hydro geological report
 - Provision of list of requirements helpful at pre-application stage

Discussion Cards (for reference):

- Regulations are often not transparent and are not being consistently interpreted and applied by the city staff
- There are often situations where regulations are too onerous for a particular situation and City staff are not equipped to deal with issues outside of the box
- Character merit (cut off at 1940?)
- Multiple policies and guidelines (sometimes up to 10)
- Inconsistency within bylaws, policy, and guidelines
- Requiring more information at early stages of planning
- Process - after prior-to re-submission takes 6-8 months to get DP issued
- Intake times 6-8 weeks out
- Trees
- Review dates
- Communication protocol
- Heritage
- Development and parking regulations
- Late introduction of planning requirements in development
- Trees
- Staff variations of advice
- Inconsistent application of bylaws

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TABLE 2 - IDEAS

Flip Chart:

- Guideline Documents:
 - Low quality of images on old guidelines
 - Some photos out of date
 - Better linkage required between regulations and guidelines
- Remove RS guidelines:
 - Materials, roof slopes unnecessary
 - Removal could provide more flexibility
 - Limit regulations to essentials eg. FSR (Floor Space Ratio), height
 - Make regulations less prescriptive
 - Roof forms geared to single-family dwelling
 - Should not be regulated
 - Use performance points methods for roofs
- City-initiated rezoning:
 - Better than single site rezoning
- Downtown District (DD) zone:
 - Simplify, esp map showing for density and height
 - Need for concurrent rezoning & development permit process*
- FSR - 1 & 2 FD
- Zoning regulations not tested for new duplex provisions in Bylaws

Discussion Cards (for reference):

- City zoning based on city priorities
- Introduce a trackable process with estimated timeline for each portion of review
- Clean up and edit website
- Clarify what is a policy and what is a guideline
- Make existing policies more transparent to ensure they are applied
- More performances based regulations
- Processing time! Intake meeting 6-8 weeks
- City Initiated rezoning
- Guidelines too prescriptive
- Simplify DD - Maps too complicated areas are different on different maps
- Feedback loop, appeal process for issues would help
- Remove SF zones
- Form and character only - no design guidelines on SF neighbourhoods, NO DP requirements
- Have all documents run through OCP
- Checklists needed
- Port Moody has a nice clear diagram for each zone

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TABLE 3 - KEY ISSUES

Flip Chart:

- Stratas vs small projects - over-regulated for scale of projects
- Existing non-conforming - lack of clarity how to proceed
- Temporary events - too complex many departments*
- Competing regulations - disconnected from defined outcomes - Hierarchy not consistent
- Archaic zoning - not recognizing modern needs
- Laneway Houses - 15 hours no 50 hours to designs - 6-8 hours to process
- Holding costs affected - staff not clear of implication of delays*
- More flexible uses - shared spaces
- More live/work opportunities*
- Developments abandoned due to complexity of rules
- Benefits to the city lost
- Objectives of rules unclear
- Boxes created- no room for innovation
- Rigid application of all the rules
- Outright projects lost in complexity

Discussion Cards (for reference):

- Zoning doesn't reflect the 21st century
- Industrial very different these days
- Business licenses
- Solar panels
- Too slow, too complicated, not transparent, too costly
- Impact on public events and arts and culture
- Hotel land use
- Performance-based outcomes
- Not clear how to determine grade in calculating building heights
- The concept of adhering to neighbourhood character is different
- Lack of clarity with regards to redevelopment/value-add for existing building
- Difficulties with the certainty of approval for minor renovation projects

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TABLE 3 - IDEAS

Flip Chart:

- Complete redesign - simple - city properties - regulated - safe, green, affordable, best practices
- Performance-based - outcomes/facilitate - dynamic zoning - prioritize objectives - constantly updated to regulations change - transparent reporting
- Less emphasis on FSR - more on affordability/sustainability*
- Upzoning across the board - more units*
- More outright opportunities - less - rezoning, DCL/CAC (clear explanations)
- Presumptive zoning with clear time limits - UK*
- Transfer of density - more opportunities - NYC*
- Less view corridors - no height restrictions
- Clarify what neighbourhood can comment on - expectations understood*
- Update Vancouver charter
- More online processing - smart technology*
- Less design control for up to 3-storey development
- Encourage more co-op housing
- Other jurisdictions - Copenhagen new land for affordable housing - San Fransisco - innovation zones - Kelowna - pre-approved plans

Discussion Cards (for reference):

- Start over again
- A new way cannot be fix
- Copy global best practices
- Create a city-wide plan
- Performances that reflect land use outcomes
- Clear and transparent reporting is vital
- Less emphasis on FAR and more on metrics of affordability and sustainability
- More co-op housing
- An across the board upzoning
- Estimate height restrictions/simplify view cones

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TABLE 4 - KEY ISSUES

Flip Chart:

- Competing property priorities:
 - View cones, shadowing, etc. Reduces buildable floor area
 - Hard to repeat projects, use precedent, or design models
 - Need process to resolve (e.g. ranked list)
- Over-emphasis on neighbourliness:
 - Area will be upzoned in the future; shouldn't design for transition to single-family houses*
 - Stepping back of building = fewer units, less sustainable*
- Clarify intents of requirements:
 - eg. Horizontal angle of daylight, no doors on side yard (because secondary suites)
 - Takes time/approval to achieve relaxation (going up the chain)
- Additional hurdles for heritage sites
- Inconsistencies between departments (e.g. Planning, Parks, Engineering)
- Lack of incentives for proper heritage restoration/retrofit*
- Sloping sites - Lack of flexibility, conflict with height limits
- Reduce steps people have to do*
- Can't rely on use of precedent:
 - Policies can be conflicting/inconsistent
 - Staff avoid setting new precedent
- Use of city sidewalks for parking access forbidden*
- Multiple permits required for small things (patio exceeding into sidewalk)
- Delays due to other bodies eg. BC Hydro - adds cost
- Cannot add power poles

Discussion Cards (for reference):

- Structure of bylaws
- Consistency
- Take too long
- Sloping sites
- No single-family
- Competing priorities are ruining new buildings
- Fast track is a nightmare
- Not enough clear communication and transparency between departments. We spend a lot of time debating approaches with each department and 3rd party organizations
- The same process applied regardless of scale
- The city has been a hoarder on regulations over the past 3-4 decades
- Look at other cities - why does Vancouver micromanage its housing
- Simplify policies and regulations
- Lack of coordination between regulations and zoning
- No authority to relax height or unloosing to relax by staff
- Sloping sites
- Multiple permits for simple sites (patios)
- Parking, heritage and process for heritage building is too onerous
- Too many committees deal with heritage

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TABLE 4 - IDEAS

Flip Chart:

- Remove contradictory policies - Character homes vs duplex policies
- Eliminate rezoning - Comprehensive plan includes pre-zoned areas
- Identify intents of every policy/regulation, then evaluate and prioritizes against city priorities:
 - Affordability, heritage, etc.
- Official Community Plan [should be] looking 100 years out with time-based implementation
- Allow 6-storey projects with zero line lot*
- Allow for zero lot line development if neighbours agree*
- Repeal RS-1 zoning
- Heritage projects have a dedicated staff/streamline process*
- Transparency; share examples of how other projects were successful
- Clarify what is allowed on lanes with fire services, garbage, etc.

Discussion Cards (for reference):

- No parking for rental
- Transit corridor
- Upzoning
- Parking minimums for rental/social
- Prioritize acquiring parkland and transit corridor
- City-wide plan to provide clarity
- Reduce parking in density corridor for rental and affordable housing
- Policy for missing middle
- Focus on planning that extends beyond the life of a building
- Create a city-wide OCP/zoning plan
- All subsequent applications are reviewed by non-political expert panel
- Transparent process by the city
- Coordination of third-party contributions
- Vote on OCP
- Rely on professionals to do the job responsibly

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TABLE 5 - KEY ISSUES

Flip Chart:

- Conditions and requirements of development permit DP need to be outlined at the start:•
 - Many surprises as the project progresses like structural engineer plans are requested mid-way, but was not required as a condition*
- Tree Bylaw:
 - Needs to be updated “no one wants to touch it”
 - Terminology is confusing on how to deal with significant trees which take priority
 - Should be considered on case-by-case basis as it can delay development
- Conflicting policies within the City:
 - Too many zones/sub-zones - some difficult to interpret - need to reduce # of zones
- Waiting times for intake (development services)*
- Difficulty with accessing City Hall and City staff expertise to address your concerns (both over the phone and coming to City Hall) needs to be a better way to easily find out status of project*
- Need to be a better way to finds out project status/application*
- Can we reach a point where regulation can be self-administered- with teeth*
- The requirements for design rationale in general are redundant/pointless. The regulations already tell applicants what is required*
- The administrative process:•
 - Expensive, complicated, time-consuming*
 - Over-administration*
- Requirements applied during ‘change of use’ become onerous
- Clarity on CAC’s is required- who do they go to and how are developed?
- Confusing with when to incorporate new policies into on-stream applications eg. Broadway/Cambie Corridor Plan is being distributed but no one knows what to do with it
- Need helpline to assist with questions*
- Integrating building into planning
- Hard to navigate zoning/subdivision part of VanMaps
- Abundance of new policies/guidelines are coming on daily - how do we prioritize them:
 - Eg. City-wide plan, accessibility, energy efficient
- Most planning staff are on a reactive basis, rather than addressing policy
- City over-administers - need to be more creative with regulations (too generic)
- Planning doesn’t reflect that well need to give up 2ft from alley for PMT’s:
 - Regulations reflect regulations for PMT’s and BC hydro (City must be aware of whats happening with outside agencies)
- Competing bylaws/priorities
- Will City incorporate “net zero” national policies in its planning?*
- Every project is unique and requires a “human” lens, There needs to be an element of flexibility, rather than adding more and more regulations (at the end of the policy review, how do we still remain human) - need to look case-by-case.
- No one is enforcing landscape regulations- the building inspectors that end up enforcing some of it, but don’t know enough about landscape design rationale- is ineffective, pointless redundant, not necessary - often disregarded by applicants*

Discussion Cards (for reference):

- Prioritizing conflict bylaw, guidelines and policy
- The rate of new guidelines and policies as to conflict
- Conflicting regulations and policies

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- Outside requirements like BC Hydro
- Wait/lead times to get an intake and other meetings
- Lack of communication with staff
- Permit time was City Hall
- Property taxes escalating due to land values
- Lack of arts and culture
- Hard to navigate policies

TABLE 5 - IDEAS

Flip Chart:

- Tree management plan and bylaw needs to be reviewed:
 - City needs to look at plan for new tree planting, rather than just tree retention
- Access to planner:
 - Other jurisdictions give much more authority to their planners (New West and Sunshine Coast)
- Planner should have more discretions/power- should not always need to go to Director of planning for decisions
- Limiting need for neighbourhood notifications if its “out-right” (can take over a month)*
- Better communication from the City:*
 - City is like a black hole*
 - A solution can be that all emails need to be responded to within “_” hours*
- Definitions need to align with Provincial and Federal laws and regulations
- Staff (planners and project co-coordinators) could dedicate 1 hour a day to responding to applicants re: status and concerns
- Pre-intake process is becoming too onerous:*
 - Time-consuming, need to book with intake coordinate on Monday for 6 weeks from now*
- More staff at building services and longer hours:*
 - Some municipalities have one evening a week with longer hours*
- More clarity around Community Amenity Contribution for applicants and/ Arts & Cultural organizations - Amount of Community Amenity Contribution and transparency on where it’s going*
- Possible alternate Community Amenity Contribution currency for non-profit organizations
- More creativity if required
- Email sent to in-take meeting:*
 - No automated response advising that email has been received*
 - Let me know if I’m in the queue*
- Reduce the zones and increase variance:
 - Board authority - too difficult to get something to the variance board
- Needs to be a “helpline” to assist with explaining regulations (more immediate answers with where there is opportunities*
- Waiving seismic upgrades for properties slated for demolition
- Reduce number of zones - over-regulated
- Give more weight to professional sign-off (engineers and architects)
- City needs to accept digital copies/files*
- Intent needs to be clarified
- Also needs to links there to areas of conflict
- Reduce zones - over-regulated
- Retire the landscape design rationale and design rationale - it’s redundant

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- A flow chart around how application proceed is required*
- City needs to reduce the need for consultants for virtually every city requirement
- Seller of a building should have onus on them to certificate of occupancy at time of sale
- Other places provide bonuses for creativity - Italy \$ high quality retention
- Other municipalities provide better access to staff - less time required at hall

Discussion Cards (for reference):

- Online resource centre with linked regulations, forms and checklists
- Help line for fast feedback
- Improved VBBL presentation which must link all applicable amendments, guidelines and community plans
- Access to the planner
- Guaranteed reply time from staff
- Permit release date guaranteed
- Online update
- Scrap design groups (too many voices)
- Online permit process/schedule
- Dedicated planners
- Scrap design groups
- Scrap neighbourhood notifications
- Engineers over regulated
- More staff at longer hours
- CAC's to be addressed at the beginning of the project
- Have a cultural service staff working in connection with other department
- Wave seismic upgrades on project slated for demo
- CAC's increased predictability
- Process and timing

TABLE 6 - KEY ISSUES

Flip Chart:

- Staff empowerment to interrelate bylaws - take action - enable
- Conditional (amount), opens too much for negotiation (adding conditions, green design)
- Focus on form and character (unit mix and parking can vary)
- Elevations in package requirements (parking designs P.T conditions) Parking review is too early in design process*
- Sustainability and energy REQs by professional
- Building codes compliance drawing requirements overlays not necessary - rely on professional not just structural*
- Unit size for townhouse - building cost doesn't match - can't build
- Can't meet livability regulations in laneways with garage and building code, WC + same with townhomes, SFD
- Green building goals and buildings goals conflict - no priority
- Livability bedroom size - lights - locations - kills affordability

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- Trees regulations too restrictive and \$ for land value
- Inconsistent apply thought City
- Amalgamate zones RT/RS, one street across next are not the same
- Write it so we don't need to interpret it - For non-profit and small businesses (uses multiple relevant uses same)
- 8 months for a coffee shop because it was retail - bank = retail = office...spaces uses so similar
- Changes of use small tenant delay marking
- Definitions of use out of date - simplify
- Kitchen ventilation/clear out/12 weeks/vent to street - use mechanical system - hard for tenants to carry out with jr staff
- Production repair/distribution use - pilots are not tested enough
- Places of worship/halls/non-profits land - loss of spaces - kids club, enable the protection of this in bylaw in (CAC) somewhere. Value not in property taxes giving to City regulation in monetary value
- Loading corridor to be FSR exempt
- Digital drawings*

Discussion Cards (for reference):

- Inconsistent policy regarding the density of rental and marking towers
- Office density
- Planning expecting such as passive housing vs design expectations and code requirements
- Review and approval process
- Conditional zoning - increase the land use outright - limit what can be asked for in conditional zoning
- Stop expanded use of pre-application "free time" Pre-application is taking 2-12 months that don't count and are replacing what used to happen during the application process
- Building bulletin - get released with no industrial consultation
- Reduce use or project spacing CD-1 and adopt more flexible advice to use zoning options
- Increased documentation at rezoning combine with D4
- Paperless
- Sustainability - energy modelling and performance
- Zoning budding duplication - accessibility
- DPB neighbourhood input
- Conflicting bylaws
- Access to info
- Empower staff to problem solve
- Political interference
- Urban design - building code
- Too many bulletins that are hard to understand
- Lack of diagrams to understand basic concepts
- Need to prioritize City objectives
- Lack of updates in the bylaw
- Lack of consistency in what the parts of the permit

TABLE 6 - IDEAS

Flip Chart:

- Have a "service level agreement" to process, step by step, clear and accountable*
- Make renovations easier

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- Intent (don't make one SDF and apply to all projects don't affect public realm)
- Abolish UDP or penalty instead of standard process
- Taking outsiders to seriously up flexibility/ innovation with base guidelines and let market innovate. Not realizing to do everything on one site
- Ask council to prioritize policies
- Enable transfer of resources to be applied elsewhere*
- Enable staff mentor/train - think outside the box*
- Micro suites - let people live how they want to live - allow lifestyle choice on livability, rental, size not restricted*
- Make it easy to build new models for sharing of community living
- Illustrated guides to make intent evident
- Adaptability requirements (accessibility) Door swings, 1/2 walls - products not make sense in multiple drawing
- State of California - accessibility apply to all zones/site specific
- Affordability/ sustainability (being displaced) non-profit - part of arts and culture - like small businesses*
- More P.F's
- Regulatory concierge - enable those spaces
- Too many people (staff) get in the way. too many eyes on the project*
 - Especially if priority (everyone tries to help)
 - Right staff in the right roles*
 - Staff with single focused objective in management*
- Cost of permit requirements affect affordability
- Finance and real estate want to own land - procedures make more complicated*
- Change dynamic from regulate to enable (let private pros innovate)
- Archaic ration for package reservation
- Regulations don't allow for creativity but just a minimum so you achieve "basic" products eg. tower podium

Discussion Cards (for reference):

- Simplified-source centre with linked regulations, forms and checklists
- Helpline for fast feedback
- Improved VBBL presentation which must link all applicable amendments, guidelines and community plans
- Access to the planner
- Guaranteed reply time from staff
- Permit release date guaranteed
- Online update
- Scrap design groups (too many voices)
- Online permit process/schedule
- Dedicated planners
- Scrap design groups
- Scrap neighbourhood notifications
- Engineers overregulated
- More staff at longer hours
- CAC's to be addressed at the beginning of the project

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TABLE 7 - KEY ISSUES

Flip Chart:

- Renovations need to be easier than new build:
 - Both residential and commercial
- Inconsistency between regulations and info hard to find
- Patios for pubs:
 - In general unclear design parameters, slow process, too many “experts” involved
- Building bylaws not flexible for renovations - Also including heritage
- Tree bylaws:
 - Onerous requirements
 - Requirement process not effective
 - Lack of flexibility on varying building footprints
 - Need high bar for “project killing” tree
- Shouldn't be different development permit process for infill development and single lots*
- No clear point of contact at the City for certain regulations
- Energy efficiency upgrades for renos onerous
- Design guidelines out of date and not connected with current city building goals
- Inconsistency between regulations and info is hard to find

Discussion Cards (for reference):

- Trees, too complicated and time-consuming + inflexible
- Redevelopment: building depth, rear yard, site coverage all regulating the same things
- Separate DP with neighbour notification - way too much for a small lot project
- Too precise: too many decimal points!
- Finding the required information/bylaws
- Process and wait-times
- Delays and clarity of bylaws
- Delays between steps - time if money
- Requirements can differ in building permits + delay
- Hiring professionals (expensive) which do not always seem to save time
- Different departments require approvals at different stages eg patios and liquor licenses
- City trees on boulevard can delay/stop a project and using arborist is time and money
- Lack of accommodation of existing conditions in heritage house and buildings
- Retention goals vs feasibility of retaining a building/house at a reasonable cost
- Difficulty and length of time in getting plans approved and lack of consistency in implantation (like inspections)
- VBBL should be available free online to everyone
- Need good framework and guidance with community input
- Inconsistency/conflict in the regulations, bylaws and policy

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TABLE 7 - IDEAS

Flip Chart:

- Simplify tree bylaw and categorize trees into good tree to keep bad tree to remove:
 - More flexibility, relax requirements for trees that need to be kept
 - Need high bar for 'project killing' tree
- Shared goals/priorities across all city departments
- Heritage project need their own focused process
- Flip around the process:
 - Rather than try to preserve everything, approach it as what must be kept
 - Ensure regulations align with city goals with we are reviewing them
- Make regulations a living document so we can change things in real time rather than review everything all at once ever "X" number of years
- Shorter/simpler zoning bylaw
- Character should not be driving most of the process

Discussion Cards (for reference):

- Heritage projects need their own set of regulations, process and experienced staff to achieve good outcomes and help meet City goals
- Each project is custom, need to be encouraged and facilitated

TABLE 8 - KEY ISSUES

Flip Chart:

- Challenges to find relevant info for site - no way to know about missing info
- Requirements are not clear
- Website information is scattered
- Website can have too much info
- Hard to find the right person to connect with
- Challenge identifying which policy takes precedent when many apply
- Regulation focused not design focused*
- If there is policy flexibility charity is needed about that flexibility is
- Consistency at staff level is needed
- Overly prescriptive design for heritage and character and modern interventions
- Relaxation for heritage retention are needed
- Integration between ZDB [Zoning and Development Bylaw] and building code is needed
- Policy and regulations often have conflicting goals eg. Housing Vancouver vs ZDB
- What part of policies/plans apply for a project when multiple policies apply:
 - This should be clearly communicated to public
- Common processes should have guides (step-by-step) - important for small business*
- Simplify rezoning
- Encourage applicant to gather community support*
- Submission requirements for small projects are onerous*
- Submission requirements are often unclear*

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- Small businesses have challenges identifying policy that applies - location of policies
- Discretionary decision that go to BoV [Board of Variance] should be made by planning staff:
 - Decisions should be made earlier in process
 - Less dependence on BoV
 - Policy is needed to give staff discretion
 - More discretion to Director of Planning
 - Regulators should reward good design*
- Too much of City land is allocated to single-family dwelling*

Discussion Cards (for reference):

- Finding required information on the website
- Information is scattered - always concerned I have missed something that will affect a design
- Not sure of submission requirements for small projects, particularly interiors
- Requirements can be excessive and then find out what is written is not required
- Lack of clarity regarding rear yard setback, very discretionary. good in some ways but don't know what parameters are
- Mis-interpretation by new and training staff
- Conflicts between policy and existing bylaws
- The bylaws are policy forward rather than design forward
- Simply rezoning - ask the applicant to check for public support
- Businesses struggle with understanding restrictions and regulations especially in the DTES
- Small businesses need different supports than developer jargon
- Clarify issues eg locations within different zoning districts (DTES vs downtown)
- Take top processes, boil them down to a step by step - common inquiries, examples

TABLE 8 - IDEAS

Flip Chart:

- Be courageous in investments and technological solutions
- Have conversations with city, development and community early - developers engage with community early
- Identify shared objectives early eg. Westbank - Vancouver House
- City should facilitate engagement
- Upzone single-family zones - add density*
- Allow for diverse uses in zones eg. allow for evolutions of jobs and communities
- Downtown industrial manufacturing not permitted:
 - Low impact use should be allowed
- Give less space for parking & roads:*
 - Parking requirements drive up costs
- More separated bike lanes
- Incentivize sustainable design eg. passive housing and greater floor area*
- Remove view cones - height restriction
- Permit tracking - for users - Transparency of staff discussions and decisions*
- GIS identify zoning and related documents (web-based, auto prop)
- Senior staff attend intake meetings*
- Increase willingness to use discretion on part of staff/Director of Planning (use common sense)
- SF Cultural districts
- If small business is important to disallow lot consolidation

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- Consider community functions
- Intangible heritage*
- Public space permitting
- More fun!

Discussion Cards (for reference):

- Upzone a lot of single-family zones
- Use within zones - allow for more uses
- Less space requirement for parking and roads
- More separate bikes ones
- Less regulations
- Incentive for sustainable design and passive house (more flood area)
- Intake by meeting with senior staff
- Eliminate view cones and height restrictions in DT core and high-density areas
- More aggressive OCPs
- GIS to indicate zoning and related documents
- Access to staff notes and more transparency
- Establish process for feedback on regulations so issues and challenges are addressed faster - living documents to adjust
- Investment in technological solutions to reduce workload and wait times for applicants
- Money is always an issue so getting on board has to be a priority
- Uses within DTES consider how zoning and policies impact DTES and residents and community members
- Consider impact of zoning on small businesses gentrification of retail and small business

TABLE 9 - KEY ISSUES

Flip Chart:

- Fee simple ownership (shared party wall):
 - Lack of clarity to achieve
 - Specific to townhouse and row house
 - Required education
 - Regulatory obstacles like engineering requirements
- Use definitions have not kept up with actual work/use
- Excluded space:
 - FSR (Floor Space Ratio)
 - Unique to Vancouver repurposing of spaces (renovations)
- Inconsistency of advice on development potential from staff
- Need consistent application of policy
- Upgrade triggered in renovations
- Vancouver Building Bylaw requirements:
- Conflict between contemporary building requirements and heritage conversation conservation objectives
- Should have one C-2 zone not multiple C-2 zones:
 - 30% daylight to street results in step back and no street wall
 - The discretionary capacity in C-2 zone would accommodate other sites

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- Application of urban forest policy:
 - Clarity and consistency when landscape/tree needs to be retained
 - Impacts development capacity
- Vancouver Building Bylaw upgrade requirements:
 - Conflict with other city objectives like character retention
 - Also leads to work without permit
- Regulations require specific green building approach - over time becomes outdated or changed midstream
- Regulations are implemented too quickly without an understanding of cost impacts/implications:
 - Adds cost to development
- Inconsistent application of design standards eg. materials - for design guidelines zones “natural material” - wood vs hardie
- New policy eg West End plan trumps zoning district schedule - Policy moves “faster” than regulations (bulletin)
- How to find out and keep track of changes

Discussion Cards (for reference):

- Fee simple, shared wall/party wall agreements still not widely adopted but would address ownership and density issues
- Why is temporary housing temporary? Is there a mechanism to allow it to be permanent?
- Plain language to explain the intent
- The inconsistency of advice when making inquiries on potential redevelopment options for sites
- Lack of understanding of which policies are applicable when assessing a site for redevelopment
- Timing, winter Xmas closed, intake timing, hours/weekends
- Cannot provide the date of approval
- Culture issues
- Can't make an appointment
- Regulations too many districts/zones
- Hard to decipher FSR guideline
- Users haven't changed with the times/tech
- CofV workers don't understand the policy
- FSR regulations
- Excluded spaces regulations
- Upgrade triggers

TABLE 9 - IDEAS

Flip Chart:

- Reduce number of zoning distinctions (to 6-10) and apply across the City
- Single duplex zone for all 'residential' zoning in City:
 - Move away from multiple RS and RT zones
- Determine what intake priority - mission statement and guiding principles for zoning
- Intake statement - must be kept up to date
- Group for ongoing review/update/delete policies and regulations to make sure they stay current
- More cross-pollination across departments at City - coordination of feedback*
- Incentive/relaxation for voluntary VBBL upgrades

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- No Official Community Plan = makes it difficult as no overall guidance:
 - Brings clarity to property expectations
- Develop partner model for development and City:
 - More collaborative approach
 - Clear, consistent advice
 - Take more responsibility
- Simplify FSR (Floor Space Ratio) regulations so development potential is more clear
- Transition to new regulations:
 - State broad objectives and give flexibility on how it can be achieved eg. district energy & passive house
- Good rollout of policy/regulations changes including wide range of consultation including stakeholders (open houses)
- Lessons to learn from other cities:
 - Be proactive about adapting ready-made solutions
- Match your policy objectives with incentives (eg, food waste and compost policy/garbage pickup every 2 weeks)
- Set minimum cost of constructions/sq.ft. to achieve high level of innovation and construction quality (passive housing) - needs some authority too
- Better retain institutional knowledge:
 - Staff need to share info and knowledge
- Clear/transparent organizational structure and contact info for staff made available to the public
- App/software to allow application or enquiry to be tracked*

Discussion Cards (for reference):

- Regulations obstacles to fee simple, shared wall, engineering requirements of senate connection to each lot, Langley has a shared utility agreement that deals with this
- Transition to regulations, specifically green sometimes well managed, but sometimes not. Especially philosophical changes, like district energy to the passive house and electric baseboard
- City coach for projects, this is a person you contact for a problem
- The vast reduction in zones, clarity provided for FSR
- Update permitted uses to current trends and technology
- Cultural change to me more if a partner as opposed to always a fight
- More responsibility on behalf of the CoV once they have provided guidance
- Methodology for removing excluded spaces regulations
- Determine what zoning is needed - then apply these 6-10 zones thought out the city
- Develop a mission statement
- For regulations then use this to review existing policy to see if any meet this

TABLE 10 - KEY ISSUES

Flip Chart:

- Communication - lack thereof:
 - Planning unaware of Vancouver Building Bylaw issues which could impact design
 - Not clear info in one place
 - Better communication with Planning, Sustainability and Urban Design and Development, Buildings and Licensing Bylaw

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- Zero language about arts & culture spaces:
 - Regulations about arts & culture don't reflect arts & culture spaces
 - No alignment of arts and culture between the Zoning and Development Bylaw, Vancouver Building Bylaw and the License Bylaw
- Applicant becomes project manager of processes, e.g. Did you call engineer, planner, Development Services, etc.*
- A&C [Arts & Cultural] institutions leaving because there is no option for them in city - lack of spaces
- Vancouver addicted to dragging out process which takes way too long*
- Trees shut down project - Who pays for carrying costs
- Principles needed about highest and best use
- Really need guiding principles
- More discretion "would like to approve" but regulations don't allow
- City says wants more "x", then when trying to apply, not possible as there is no policy in place
- No opportunity to replicate development
- Complete lack of consistency between departments and interpretation of regulations
- Rio Theatre would have been an opportunity to create great cultural spaces but is, instead isolated project
- Bylaws writers don't have full understanding of impacts
- Inter-connectedness of canopies
- PTR [Prior-to] letter has 91 DS conditions with sub-conditions - more than other departments
- Too much over-thinking of regulations
- Design guidelines - pendulum swings to the extreme
- Architects act as planners - planners should be planners - Planners commenting on project playing architect
- Land-use:
 - No collective overarching policy and lack of clarity
- Common sense hijacked by process*
- "War zone" of rental housing
- Should be incremental changes - less big boom
- Lack of density on west side - Dunbar*
- Too much seeking "top level" advice only to have say no
- Density concentrated downtown - suggest develop arterial first then work out towards residential (start with Dunbar and work out)*
- Don't be short-sighted on building usages
- Onus should be on professionals who install not homeowner - WWOP [Work without permit]
- Departments are siloed:
 - Interests are not aligned
- Need 1 point of contact:*
 - That person should be contacting city departments to get clearance instead of applicants running around*

Discussion Cards (for reference):

- Lack of adequate land-use regulation for arts and culture - diversity of practices (assembly, production, residential etc.)
- City staff consistency - not just within permitting + land use, but across city departments
- Inability to deal with non-conforming properties
- Consistent policy changes

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- Common sense hijacked by the process
- Need a QB to help you, break down lines between departments
- Arts and cultural spaces have not been kept up with art spaces (especially multi-use spaces and has caused confusion/delay in development
- Getting specific advice from one staff member and directly contradicts advice later
- Having to have expensive consulting staff for relatively easy issues
- The applicant has to be the project manager
- Too much conflicting information
- Too complex
- Why is safety standard higher for better uses?
- DP notification
- Tree bylaw
- Setback regulations
- How the laneway house & duplex will affect the future zoning bylaw
- Too many rely on City for the regulation procedure
- Communication with public on policy change
- Inter-department conflicts (Planning and landscape)
- Land use policy is limited to the neighbourhood which creates conflict

TABLE 10 - IDEAS

Flip Chart:

- Other municipalities: 1 contact, clearly outlines what is needed:
 - Empowered to make decisions
- Need a culture shift of getting things done institutional culture of the City of Vancouver
- Interesting relationship between staff and applicants:
 - Unfortunately less partnership more adversarial
- CD-1: Why one off zoning? - Is there a more appropriate zone to use
- Over-regulating roof deck covers
- Shift focus to improve instead on rejecting - how do we get to approval?
- Nexus line - trust in architects
- Common sense approach to complaints - neighbours using regulations to get back at each other*
- Policies need to be taken together
- Focus which has been placed on affordable housing projects carried throughout all projects in the City
- Less design oversight (from staff)
 - What does it say? How enforced?
 - City oversteps boundaries
- Too much complexity - no one understands who to move forward
- Apply for more “umbrella” uses - less minutia - less specific
- Arts need to be defined: painter vs graphic designer etc. more arts-related vs video game designers
- Balance of definitions needed
- Richmond - no lineup
- Citizens using City to report neighbours - “I don’t like my neighbour - go after him”
- Lacking capacity to mediate
- “Newbie vigilance”

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- Too many times waiting in line for small issues
- “I can only comment on my part of the process”
- Too much proving out of FSR
 - No allowance to permit minor overage
- Look at regulations that has massive impact:
 - Ask what the impact of regulations is
- Too rigid - regulations (FSR)
- Applications should be intent driven vs regulation driven
- Need a holistic approach: more contemplation on things
- City should have their own arborist
- Should be certified arborist:
 - Professionals city trusts
 - Too often requires 2-3 arborist reports, 1st rejected

Discussion Cards (for reference):

- Align city departments - if the city loves policy so much, ensure that policies are aligned with each other - Affordable housing, Creative City, Design Guidelines
- Clear checklist - City staff is responsible for conflicting answers - if one person approves and the other doesn't - it's on the city to sort it out.
- Citywide policies - more consistency
- Simplify process - rename to the single-family to multifamily
- More resources to multifamily
- Nexus pass system +Architects - unclog the system
- More density in SF neighbourhood
- We shouldn't regulate use for arts and culture spaces, that should be in the building code
- Include all non-profit spaces not just housing in density bonus opportunities
- Improve intake - have staff members who connect all the pieces - like your caseworker
- Apply zoning and bylaw principles with discretion.
- Approach applications with an objective of finding a way to approve, not identify ways to reject
- We need a planner to handle and respond for every single project application
- We need a computer tracking system to let the client know the process
- Less design oversight
- Let design professionals shoulder the burden of approvals
- Provide simplified planning initiatives that have a clear outcome

TABLE 11 - KEY ISSUES

Flip Chart:

- Need to review mandates of the Heritage Commission, Gastown Heritage Area Planning Commission (GHAPC) and Chinatown Heritage Area Planning Commission (CHAPC):
 - Items that go to GHAPC and CHAPC don't go to Heritage Commission-is embarrassing Heritage Commission does not have input on significant heritage issues.
 - Lack of training and orientation/briefing binder for new committee members - they are not clear about their role and responsibilities.
- City's performance objectives and implementation policies conflict:
 - Zoning regulations too specific
 - Need to decide on performance standards and be less heavy on regulation

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- Results in spot zoning
- An example is having affordable housing as an objective but implementing parking requirements that increase cost of units (should not require parking for affordable house developments or developments near transit)
- Explosion of new requirements e.g. energy audit; especially for smaller development
- Get late hits:*
 - Have list of prior-to's and then hit with more requirements
- SHORT program and ASAP haven't helped applicants:
 - Process still as long for developers (they just do more before applying to the City)- just made it better for City stats (looks like faster processing)*
- Has been a lot of staff change – loss of knowledge*
- Get inconsistent information from City staff:
 - Architect told can't do something, but homeowner complains and City allows it – architect looks bad
 - Vague responses to questions – no certainty
 - Would like to be able to call a staff person and get an answer
- Too much Director of Planning discretion lately – adds uncertainty and time to process
- Bylaws and policies are mixed up – what is a regulation?
- Conflicting feedback from different departments:
 - No mechanism to solve conflicts
 - No staff responsibility to resolve conflicts
 - No one helps applicant to deal with it or communicates enough with applicant
- Hard to get information on the status of application:*
 - Old files are in one system and new files in another
 - Hard to find info on heritage buildings
- Passive house – being pushed, but results in box form which results in issues of shadowing, massing:
 - City says it only adds about 5% to cost; but people want houses with big windows and doors (not tiny ones in passive house) which adds cost
- Don't have a good definition of affordable*
- First response from City is often no, with no assistance on how to get a yes; or if get a yes, then get hit with additional requirements late in the review process – never know what you'll get*
- Would be helpful for City to be specific about info required for application and to not expect applicants to come in for so many meetings*
- Conflict between zoning and community plans
- City doesn't trust experts
- Neighbours can impact development too late in process*
- City doesn't work with expediency or pay attention to urgency of timelines for applicants
- ASHRAE requirements should not apply to tenant improvements, only to owner led improvements*
- Zoning is broken/ over-regulate:
 - Should consider looking at impacts vs specific uses
 - Don't regulate small things like decks, rear doors, light wells

Discussion Cards (for reference):

- Mandates and effectiveness of heritage advisory agencies - Commission, CHAPC, GHAPC
- Informal reductions in mandates
- Lack of density
- Lack of training
- The conflict between existing zones and community plans

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- Unnecessary complexity - Requirements work against each other
- Regulations interpreted differently between staff and projects
- Policy and regulations appear geared more towards market development
- Difficulty in delivering affordable middle-income rental projects giving current market and policy structure
- Ability to meet objectives of affordability, daycare, church renewals, parking etc...
- Competing City objectives can make development difficult (engineering chasing with the landscape with bylaws)
- Inconsistencies
- Director of Planning overuse - relies on intermediate levels of staff
- New procedures, policies and laws alarming
- Explosions of new requirements
- Multi-headed monsters
- Outside vs inside the box

TABLE 11 - IDEAS

Flip Chart:

- Provide clear requirements (from all departments) up front so no surprises and before start designing so don't have to re-design*
- Staff should be more pro-active in pushing applications through and resolving conflicts – saying yes*
- Electronic submissions would be easier to track*
- Allow higher basements so can have more livable suites*
- Decide on a building envelope and not regulate what happens inside it
- Provide clear requirements (from all departments) up front so no surprises and before start designing so don't have to re-design
- Staff should be more pro-active in pushing applications through and resolving conflicts – saying yes
- Need a project ambassador for small projects to manage application process
- Provide an agreement – timeline for review that is to be met if nothing in the application changes and clearly* identify any issues up front
- Integrate project facilitator into process better; have them as key contact and empower them to make decisions and move process*
- Revisit parking requirements – consider a maximum number of spaces instead of minimum*
- Get rid of guidelines and regs about building materials (e.g. RS-5 and 6) let designers decide:
 - Yes there will be good and bad design, but there already is
- Eliminate 1940s arbitrary date for character houses*
- Performance based zoning instead of prescriptive zoning:
 - Figure out what City wants and get it via objectives rather than detailed regulations – don't have to say how to achieve it
- Don't regulate activities in a building/specific uses, just impacts or interactions between uses; many parts of the world do it that way
- Define neighbourhoods differently- not based on Neighbourhood Improvement Program areas which currently are used to define neighbourhoods:*
 - Should be smaller to reflect actual character of area
 - Can use performance based zoning to better reflect character of area
- Combine heritage advisory groups into one committee (have reps from GHAPC and CHAPC on Heritage Committee), and hold meetings in pm rather than am to make it easier to recruit members
- Overlay community plans on zoning – so don't need rezoning
- CAC [Community Amenity Contribution] expensive – work differently in every city; is there a better mechanism to get amenities?

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- Want flexibility but also certainty – how to balance outright regs and discretion:
 - Outright can be too rigid
 - Discretion can take too long
- Need better leadership; staff empowered to make decisions; need access to decision-makers; need more accountability by staff and they need to recognize urgency and timing
- Need better training for staff and applicants; regular training and updating
- Electronic submissions would be easier to track
- Decide on a building envelope and not regulate what happens inside it
- Allow higher basements so can have more livable suites- frustrating because can't have light wells, so very dark

Discussion Cards (for reference):

- Integrate advisory heritage agencies
- Get rid of using NP boundaries to design neighbourhoods
- Community plans to be overlaid on zoning with integrating as part of planning approval process
- Have broad performance-based zoning rather than activity based areas
- Define: Build bonafide neighbourhoods
- Move away from water
- De-regulate use, regulate interference
- Having an ambassador at the city to not simple pas on information but to actively push project - analyze and ensure feedback is not conflicting
- Empower CoV planning staff to make decisions
- Agree on timelines
- Shared goals - collaborations
- Policing in zoning, side doors, no BR without window
- Regulate what is required from leadership vs authority
- Any smaller communities so it better

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TABLE 12 - KEY ISSUES

Flip Chart:

- Hydro requirements - transformers:
 - Impact on site layout
 - Underground policy
- To retain a shed - led to delays
- Regulations and rules - Need to be a brain surgeon:
 - Make regulations more accessible to non-experts
 - [Currently] Requires need for experts
- Issue of regulations changing and not published/not communicated
- Unknown fees - surprises! - project impacts
- Regulations can lead to sub-standard buildings - timelines discourage innovation
- Clarify regulations for artist production space [studio]
- Regulations not following intent
- Unintended consequences - Example character retention reduces # of units
- FSR CALC's - negative effects:
 - Wiggle room? Leniency? Code flexibility?
- Artist production space - 4" sprinklers, VBBL, Rigid
- Discourages spaces (covered) that are outside (not counted FSR) - Porches
- Consolidate R zones
- Cases that go to BOV (why are some cases going - seems silly)
- Smaller scale (residential):
 - A minefield
 - Too many requirements
- Implementability regulations - interpret
- Heritage projects - Parking and Z/D [zoning and development]
- Discretionary vs outright need boundaries that staff and industry can understand
- Affordable housing/parking regulations
- High density housing for families and children
- Regular communication between departments
- Resolve where logic and code don't meet by referring to City objectives
- Project objective/intent to lead the process to and encourage innovation (FSR/ Floor Space Ratio interpretation and exclusions could be worded better)
- Communication and coordination between departments:
 - Lack of capacity on interpretation
- Increasing incentives to reward projects that achieve municipal objectives:*
 - Smaller scale development regulations*
 - FSR (Floor Space Ratio) and exclusions*
- Low density - regulatory minefields (consolidate Residential zones):
 - Need to consolidate R Residential zones

Discussion Cards (for reference):

- Simplify and accelerate development process
- Discussion at early pre application CoV meeting carry through to prior to conditions
- Planner focus on bylaw issues at DP stage less on architectural issues

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- Ensure that internal CoV committee reviews staff project reviews
- Streamline minor amendments process
- Planning and engineering conflicts
- Incentives for heritage
- West Van doesn't include basement in FSR
- Digitize submission
- Change requirements for small spaces
- Allow folks to relocated to replace trees - simple
- Relax safety code in interior residential eg., starts, 4' gap min requirements, door handles
- Improve communication between various departments
- Review guidelines for family living in high density housing
- Review role of urban design staff and UDP advisory group especially for affordable housing
- Allow staff to make more decisions - because good stand the best way to guide projects through the process efficiently
- Review parking requirements for affordable housing - set formulas based on proximity to transit
- Can we book appointments online
- Clarity of FSR overlay process because has been tricky and time consuming
- Inter-departmental connections - Planning to connect with cultural services
- Understanding of the space needs of the arts community
- Smaller builds should be looked at differently
- Lack of accountability and transparency in timelines and services
- Time = money
- Contradictory policies - what are priorities
- Unknown costs - CACs
- Empowerment of city staff to make decisions

TABLE 12 - IDEAS

Flip Chart:

- Trees:
 - Cut a tree - plant a tree (private property)
 - Tree retention affects high density
 - Need more balance
 - Is the tree bylaw too generic - city wide - emerging densification
- VBBL:
 - Safety requirements override personal design preferences (door knobs and railings)*
 - What are driving the safety regulations? - how many accidents are really occurring?*
- Incentives vs. sticks - Incentives preferred:
 - Move from No to yes
- City of Port Coquitlam - eg. Heritage project vantage wall addition by applicant to revolve space issues
- Reward creativity and innovation:
 - FSR
 - Permit times
 - Staff given tools to be more flexible
- Not need to regulate: basement and rental suites
- Regulations for small homes - change regulations in definition of a small buildings (VBBL, access, stairs)

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- Why restrict patio space area?
- Issues on “neighbourliness”:
 - What does that mean?
 - As city densifies - challenges
- Out of date policies:
 - Focus on fixing policies that meet future needs - High density guidelines for children and families
- Incentivize designs elements that encourage community interactions*
- Different uses that are similar - Restaurants, retail, offices
- Community based elements to allow flexibility in regulations:
 - eg, Rooftop patios and amenity decks (height calc's)
 - Add 10% flex to height and FSR
- Apply human thought and meaning to the regulatory decisions process - staff sensitivity
- Move away from no-no-no to yes based process:
 - Incentivise flexibility
 - Culture change
 - “Partners” in city building (not enforcers/authoritative)
 - Look to smaller city departments for customer service attitudes
 - Staff could be excited or focus on good things the project offers
 - Culture shift encourages staff to administer regulations with room for discretionary interpretation
- Disconnect between policy makers and staff who implement
- In-board bedrooms:
 - Don't always need a window
- Allowing planners more discretion
- West Van's approach to FSR (Victoria, Langley, Penticton)
- Municipal Best practices:
 - Great customer service - Victoria (Mike Wilson) Penticton (Ben Johnston) Township of Langley (Stephen Richardson)
 - More diversity on UDP - Policy, environmentalist, disabled persons
 - City of Vancouver is way ahead of other municipalities

Discussion Cards (for reference):

- Train staff to have skills in resolving conflicts
- Train staff to assess design issues
- CoV planning reviews to clarify policy
- Change the requirements for 2'-10" doors - a combo of thicker walls and wider doors makes it difficult to design on 33 x122 lots
- Digital submissions
- Checklists
- Provide visuals more visual examples
- Look at regulations for the future
- Customer services tied to accountability, timeline, financial, implications
- Ongoing consultation
- Flexibility to the planner to make decisions on ie 5% of FSR, tree bylaw
- Not be scared to remove policies
- Promote public spaces policy

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E. Parking Lot

Ideas and discussion points that are beyond the scope of the Regulation Redesign project are listed here. The Regulation Redesign team will share input with relevant City departments or work teams.

1. Permit Process

Processes

- Simplification of process: Reduce steps people have to do
- Reign in process back to basics: Pre-application, Inquiries, Rezoning applications, Development Permit applications
- Pre-intake process is becoming too onerous
- Senior Staff attend intake meeting
- Provide early, reliable directions and decisions at intake
- Conditions and requirements of development permit need to be outlined at the start. Many surprises as the project progresses like structural engineer plans are requested mid-way, but was not required as a condition
- Prior-to review by staff are too long and uncertain; tracking would be helpful. After prior-to (e.g. for Development Permit) no one can give an update
- Need to be a better way to find out project status /application
- Design issues and materials should be resolved prior to Urban Design Panel to avoid multiple Urban Design Panel reviews
- Limit neighbourhood notifications (exclude outright DPs)
- Neighbours can impact development too late in the process
- Time needed to resolve issues with trees on site
- Staff reviews at wrong time in process – not effective; e.g. review of parking too early in process
- Late hits - additional requirements after prior-to letter
- Applicant becomes project manager of processes, e.g. Did you call engineer, planner, Development Services, etc.?
- App/software to allow application to be tracked, and let me know if I'm in the queue
- Common sense hijacked by process
- QC checklist
- Get inconsistent information from City staff:
 - Architect told can't do something, but homeowner complains and City allows it – architect looks bad
 - Vague responses to questions – no certainty
 - Would like to be able to call a staff person and get an answer

Processing streams

- Need development focused streams for different types of projects
- Process need to be faster to get an answer on small sites – Best practice: Port Moody zoning
- Expedite projects that promote key city policy
- Heritage project need their own focused process
- Shouldn't be different development permit process for infill development and single lots
- Need for concurrent rezoning & development permit process
- Nexus pass for permitting
- SHORT program and ASAP haven't helped applicants:
 - Process still as long for developers (they just do more before applying to the City)- just made it better for City stats (looks like faster processing)
- Has been a lot of staff change – loss of knowledge

Submission

- Unclear/unnecessary submission requirements (which can lead to multiple meetings)
- Submission requirements not always clear and can be onerous for smaller projects
- City needs to accept digital copies/files
- Overlay drawings are not necessary for Building Code compliance if approval can rely on Certified Professionals
- Unknown fees
- The requirements for design rationale in general are redundant/pointless. The regulations already tell applicants what is required

Operations and wait times

- More staff at [Services Centre] and longer hours; some municipalities have one evening a week with longer hours
- Waiting times at processing centre too long
- Single-family dwelling line-up
- Time-consuming, need to book intake coordinate: 6 weeks [wait time]
- Have a “service agreement” for process, step-by-step, clear and accountable; provide an agreement timeline for review that is to be met if nothing in the application changes
- Small project took 2 years
- Shorter turnaround time for meetings

2. Rezoning process

- Letter of enquiry: need simpler process, can have drastic cost increase to project due to insufficient advice on identified issues e.g. parking, trees, density
- Clarity of Community Amenity Contribution: Amount of Community Amenity Contribution and transparency on where it's going; consider possible alternate Community Amenity Contribution currency for non-profit organizations; more creativity if required
- Provide clear requirements (from all departments) up front so no surprises and before start designing so don't have to re-design
- Simpler rezoning application requirements in other jurisdictions

3. Staff

- Have one key contact for an application who clearly outlines what is needed and coordinates feedback from all departments
- Staff need training/mentorship/empowerment to think outside box
- Retain staff: allows more familiarity with policies and bylaws
- Too many staff gets in the way, have the right staff in right roles
- Staff should be more pro-active in pushing applications through and resolving conflicts
- Planners need to be planners [Planners commenting on projects, playing architect]
- Lack of staff consistency
- Lack of accountability and transparency
- First response is often a no, with no assistance to get to a yes
- More project facilitators, integrate them better
- Train staff to resolve conflicts
- Enable transfer of resources to be applied elsewhere

4. Communication and coordination

Communication

- Better communication. City is like a black hole. Difficulty accessing staff
- A solution can be that all emails need to be responded to within X# hours
- Automated response acknowledging receipt of email
- More opportunities to drop in and ask small questions.
- Would like opportunity to talk to planner early on (before investing 15k in designs)

- Need helpline to assist with questions
- Better feedback loop
- Clarify what neighbourhood can comment on (expectations understood)

Coordination

- Lack of inter-department connections
- Inspections are inconsistent with each other and Vancouver Building Bylaw
- Need better liaison between inspections and Project Coordinators
- No one is enforcing landscape regulations - the building inspectors that end up enforcing some of it, but don't know enough about landscape design rationale - is ineffective, pointless redundant, not necessary - often disregarded by applicants

5. Policy

Vancouver Building Bylaw

- Why is this required — use BC Building Code
- 8-Storey wood frame (New Westminster)
- Sprinkler design kills projects
- ASHRAE requirements should not apply to tenant improvements
- Safety requirements override personal design preferences: need to understand the driver of safety regulations

Density, form and character

- Upzone larger areas of land
- Upzoning places pressure on retail streets
- Up-zoning across the board
- Regulations should reward good design [eg. FSR, permit times, staff discretion]
- [Current system is] regulations-focused not design-focused
- Allow for zero lot line development: if neighbours agree, fewer setbacks, or for 6-storey projects or larger
- Overemphasis on neighbourliness: area will be upzoned in the future; shouldn't design for transition to single-family houses
- Stepping back of building = fewer units, less sustainable
- Define neighbourhoods differently - not based on Neighbourhood Improvement Program areas which currently are used to define neighbourhoods:
 - Should be smaller to reflect actual character of area
 - Can use performance-based zoning to better reflect character of area
- Lack of density on west side - Dunbar
- Develop arterial first then work out towards residential

Heritage

- No heritage incentives, especially for proper heritage restoration/retrofit
- Character merit: No incentive for post-1940 character buildings
- Eliminate 1940s arbitrary date for character house
- Cambie corridor character homes lost, yet single-family dwelling character retention cumbersome
- Heritage registry is not up to date
- Heritage Density Transfer
- Preserve streetscape of heritage homes, not individual ones
- Intangible heritage

Residential projects

- No single-family homes
- Encourage co-op housing, more paths to accept co-op housing

- Too much city land is allocated to single-family dwelling
- Upzone single-family zones, add density
- Basements suites: allow lifestyle choice on livability - don't restrict rental size, allow higher ceilings
- Micro suites: let people live the way they want to live

Parking

- End parking minimums
- Consider a maximum number of spaces instead of minimum
- Give less space for parking and roads
- Parking requirements drive up costs
- Reduce parking regulation with car sharing and separated bike lanes
- Parking challenge like parking elevator (for single lot development)
- Use of city sidewalks for parking access forbidden

Sustainability goals

- Too little incentive to encourage green or energy efficient development
- Incentivize sustainable design:
 - Passive house, Floor area
- Building envelopes/stepping and not sustainable
- Green City = no parking
- Will City incorporate "net zero" national policies in its planning?

Public Benefits, Amenities and complete communities

- Need more schools, amenities, community centres
- Like the west end plan, protect villages, priority heritage, parks
- Increasing incentives to reward projects that achieve municipal objectives: Smaller scale development regulations, FSR (Floor Space Ratio) and exclusions
- Not enough Community Amenity Contribution's for artist groups
- Incentivize design elements that encourage community interactions

Restaurants and patios

- Operating hours for patio been under study for years
- Bigger grease traps required for restaurants

Affordability

- Cost of permits affect affordability
- Don't have a good definition of affordability
- Affordable housing should be a regional issue
- Affordability/sustainability being displaced, like small business, non-profits, part of arts and culture

6. Other

- Property tax for small businesses
- CoV Finance and real estate want to own the land, procedures make more complicated
- More regional transit
- Allow more opportunities for transfer of density; best practice: NYC
- Public space permitting
- Common sense approach to complaints
- More diversity on UDP

F. Registrants

- Acton Ostry Architects Inc
- Esther Rausenberg, artist
- b Squared Architecture Inc.
- BC Artscape Society
- Brookhouse Residences Ltd
- Carscadden Architects
- Catalyst Community Developments Society
- Clay Construction Inc.
- Coho Commissary
- Colliers International
- Conwest Developments
- Cornerstone Architecture
- Creative Coworkers
- Downtown Vancouver BIA
- Draft On Site Services
- Eastside Studios / Eastside Flea / East Van Arts & Culture Society
- Formwerks
- Fountain Head Pub & Mary's On Davie
- GBL Architects Inc.
- Grant Street Properties Inc
- Greenworks Building Supply
- Haeccity Studio Architecture
- Hastings Crossing Business Improvement Association
- Heaccity Studio Architecture Inc.
- Henriquez Partners Architects
- Vancouver Heritage Commission
- Heritage Vancouver Society
- Inspired Architecture Inc
- Javier Campos
- K. Henry Design
- Kinexus Consulting Inc
- Lanefab Design/Build
- Larigakis Architecture
- Licon Construciton Ltd.
- Light House
- Listel Hotel/ Timber Pub
- Lotus Capital Corp
- Lower Mainland Health Authorities
- M+ Architecture
- maison d'etre design-build inc
- MCM PARTNERSHIP
- Metro Vancouver
- MONDEVO
- MST Development Corp
- Novell Design Build
- NSDA Architects
- Perkins+Will
- Project Mint Developments Ltd.
- Quadra Architecture
- RDH Building Science
- Regeneration Design Studio
- Regius Group
- Renegade Arts Society
- Ronse Massey Developments
- Open Road Living
- Greater Vancouver Home Builders' Association
- smallworks
- Social Purpose Real Estate Collaborative
- Stephane Laroye Architect Inc. | SLA inc.
- Studio Balcaen Kwan Architecture and Design
- Suna Studios Inc.
- Suncor Development
- Suvic Homes
- Terra Lumina Life Lease
- Tourism Vancouver
- Urban Development Institute
- Vancouver Economic Commission
- Vancouver Heritage Foundation
- Vanterre Projects
- Wesgroup Properties
- West End Business Improvement Association
- Western Front Arts Society
- Yamamoto Architecture

G. Staff List

- Aaron Lao - Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability
- Alena Straka - Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability
- Andrea Law, Director - Development, Buildings, and Licensing
- Berg Balantzyan - Development, Buildings, and Licensing
- Beverly Chew - Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability
- Bill Boons - Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability
- Brenda Clark - Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability
- Danielle Wiley - Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability
- Diana Leung - Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability
- Haizea Aguirre - Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability
- Hayley Hoikka - Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability
- Heather Burpee - Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability
- Ingrid Hwang - Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability
- James O'Neill - Arts, Culture and Community Services
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- Joyce Uyesugi - Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability
- Kevin Cavell - Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability
- Lee Beaulieu - Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability
- Linda Gillan - Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability
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- Michelle Au, Assistant Director - Development, Buildings, and Licensing
- Paul Cheng - Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability
- Ryan Dinh - Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability
- Sonia Erichsen, Manager - Development, Buildings, and Licensing
- Susan Haid, Deputy Director - Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability
- Tami Gill - Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability
- Zoë Greig - Planning, Urban Design, and Sustainability

