



A Stronger Voice for Neighbourhoods

TEAM'S plan to strengthen local democracy: Electoral Reform,
Neighbourhood Councils, and a More Accessible City Hall



Vancouver is a city of distinct neighbourhoods, but its municipal government does not provide direct neighbourhood representation.

All ten Vancouver councillors are currently elected at-large, meaning every councillor represents the entire city rather than a defined local area.

TEAM believes that democracy begins and ends in our neighbourhoods. Without neighbourhood representation, neighbourhoods have no structural voice at City Hall.

TEAM proposes a three-part reform to strengthen the connection between residents, their neighbourhoods, and City Hall:

- 1. Establish a Ward System** 02
- 2. Create Neighbourhood Councils** 05
- 3. Make City Hall More Accessible** 07

A TEAM majority on City Council will pursue these reforms through the legal framework of the Vancouver Charter, with the goal of creating clearer local representation and a more direct route for residents to raise neighbourhood concerns.

PART ONE

Ward System

Give Every Neighbourhood Direct Representation



Vancouver is one of Canada's ten largest municipalities, yet it is the only one that does not have a ward system.

Instead, all ten City Councillors are elected citywide.

Under the current system, residents do not have a councillor specifically elected to represent their part of Vancouver.

TEAM will establish a **ward system for Vancouver City Council**, with the Mayor continuing to be elected citywide and councillors elected from geographic neighbourhood constituencies.

Section 138 of the Vancouver Charter provides the legal framework for this change. It allows Council, by bylaw, to provide that all councillors be elected on a neighbourhood-constituency basis.

The bylaw must define the constituencies, provide for an orderly transition, and receive approval from the Lieutenant Governor in Council before final adoption.

Under a ward system:

- Vancouver will be divided into geographic constituencies;
- Councillors will be elected to represent defined areas of the city;
- Residents will know which councillor represents their neighbourhood; and
- Each councillor will have a clear geographic constituency to represent at City Hall.
- The Mayor would continue to be elected citywide.

The Process:

- Introduce a Neighbourhood Constituency Bylaw
 - A TEAM Council will introduce a bylaw providing for Vancouver councillors to be elected from geographic wards rather than at large. Council will advance the bylaw through the normal legislative process and set out the proposed form of ward representation.
- Establish Independent Ward Boundaries
 - Because Section 138 requires the bylaw to establish the areas of each neighbourhood constituency, TEAM will appoint an independent Electoral Boundaries Commission and provide it with the resources needed to recommend fair boundaries.
 - TEAM will consider creating boundaries similar to those legislated by Elections BC for the provincial election.
 - The Commission will consider:
 - Population and effective representation;
 - Existing neighbourhood boundaries and communities of interest;
 - Geographic continuity and practical ward administration; and
 - Public submissions on proposed boundaries.
- Obtain Provincial Approval
 - Section 138 requires the Lieutenant Governor in Council to approve a neighbourhood-constituency bylaw before it is adopted. Once the boundaries and transition framework are complete, Council will submit the bylaw for provincial approval and work with the Province to complete the statutory process.

TEAM will complete the municipal process required to establish a ward system for the 2030 municipal election and seek the provincial approval required under the Vancouver Charter.



PART TWO

Strengthening Neighbourhood Representation

Give Neighbourhoods an Organized Voice at City Hall

While TEAM begins the statutory process required to establish wards, it can take immediate steps to strengthen neighbourhood representation at City Hall.

Vancouver has existing neighborhood associations such as Community Centre Associations and BIAS, but they are not recognized.

A ward system will create direct local representation on City Council. TEAM will pair that legislative layer with a second, neighbourhood-level layer.

TEAM will establish a system of **Neighbourhood Councils** across Vancouver to provide neighbourhoods with an organized and continuing connection to City Hall.

Neighbourhood Councils will bring together local residents, including renters and homeowners, businesses, community organizations, and other neighbourhood stakeholders.

The two levels will have distinct roles: City Council will retain the legal authority to pass bylaws, approve budgets and make municipal decisions, while Neighbourhood Councils will provide structured local advice before decisions affecting their communities are made.

Neighbourhood Councils will have:

- A formal opportunity to review significant City proposals with direct neighbourhood impacts, including local land-use changes, parks and public-realm improvements, and other neighbourhood matters referred by Council;
- The ability to submit recommendations directly to the ward councillor, City Council and relevant City departments;
- Regular meetings with their ward councillor and appropriate City staff;
- A structured process for identifying neighbourhood priorities and communicating them to City Hall; and
- A clear route for escalating unresolved neighbourhood concerns through their ward representative.

The framework will establish rules for membership, conflicts of interest, public meetings, geographic boundaries and representation. Advisory Neighbourhood Councils will operate openly and will not replace the authority of elected City Council.

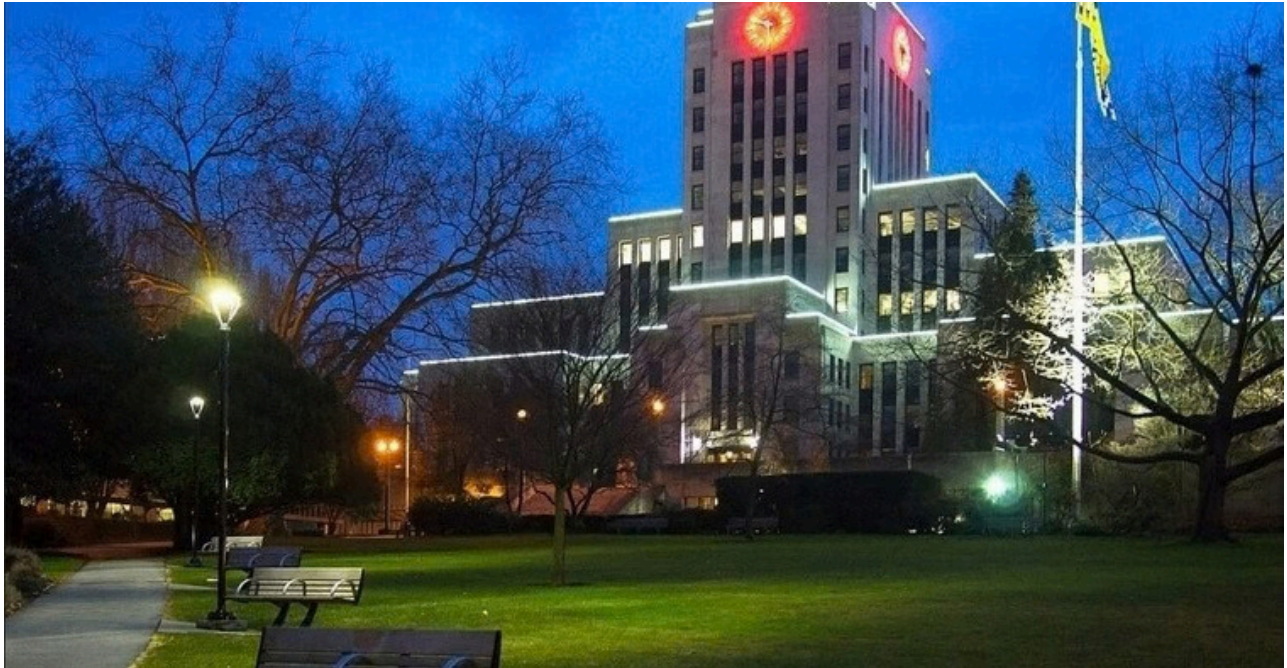
The objective is a two-layer system: neighbourhood councils provide organized local input, and ward councillors carry that input into the legislative decisions of City Council.

When a decision directly affects a neighbourhood, that neighbourhood should have a formal voice in the process.

PART THREE

A More Accessible City Hall

Make It Easier for Residents to Get City Hall's Attention



Local government should be the level of government closest to residents.

Yet people dealing with a municipal problem can find themselves contacting different departments, following up repeatedly, or not knowing who is responsible for resolving an issue.

Vancouver already operates Van311 as the main point of contact for municipal service requests, covering more than 50 categories of City services.

TEAM will strengthen that system and make it easier for unresolved resident concerns to reach decision-makers.

TEAM will:

- **Properly resource Van311** so residents can reach City services efficiently;
- **Restore the QuickFind Directory to the City website for the public** with an Organization Chart of City staff and management with email and phone number contacts of each person;
- Establish clear **service and response standards** for resident requests;
- Allow residents to track the status of their request and know which City department is responsible;
- Create a clear process for **escalating unresolved or recurring cases**; and
- Establish a **311 escalation channel to the Mayor's Office** for cases that are not being adequately resolved through the normal City process.

The Mayor's Office should not replace City departments or intervene in every service request.

Its role will be to ensure there is somewhere for residents to turn when the normal process has failed to resolve a legitimate municipal issue.

The ward system will complement this approach. Residents will have both a clearly identified councillor for neighbourhood representation and an accessible City service system for operational problems.

Residents should not have to know the internal structure of City Hall to get City Hall to respond.

TEAM's reforms will create a clearer connection between Vancouver residents and their municipal government.



A ward system will give residents a councillor directly connected to their part of the city.

Neighbourhood Councils will give neighbourhoods an ongoing advisory voice between elections.

And a **more accessible City Hall and more responsive Van 311** will give residents a clearer path to getting municipal problems addressed.

Together, these reforms establish a stronger voice for neighbourhoods and the residents who live there.