



# Duncan-North Cowichan Citizens' Assembly on Municipal Amalgamation

Terms of Reference v 2

## 1.0 Objective of the Citizens' Assembly on Municipal Amalgamation

The Citizens' Assembly on Municipal Amalgamation is a deliberative process intended to provide area residents with an opportunity to participate actively in developing and evaluating the case for amalgamating the City of Duncan and the Municipality of North Cowichan. The Citizens' Assembly will be an impartial, advisory body charged with providing detailed recommendations representing a broad consensus concerning the proposed amalgamation. The Assembly will work to represent all residents and exemplify high standards of transparency, accountability and robust civic participation.

## 2.0 Mandate of the Assembly

The Citizens' Assembly is tasked by the City of Duncan and the Municipality of North Cowichan (the Municipalities) to learn about the needs and interests of local residents, examine the implications of creating a new, amalgamated municipal structure, and advise local councillors and their administrations on the conditions under which the Municipalities should proceed.

Specifically, the Citizens' Assembly on Municipal Amalgamation will develop:

- A set of values which describe their aspirations for good local governance;
- A list of issues which they believe need to be satisfactorily resolved for municipal amalgamation to merit consideration;
- A detailed recommendation concerning municipal amalgamation, including any conditions which would need to be satisfied if a merger was to proceed

To assist the members of the Assembly with their task, an extensive learning program will provide them with the opportunity:

- To examine the Municipalities' respective infrastructure, services, operations, and governance structures;
- To inform and review the Amalgamation Study being undertaken concurrently with the Citizens' Assembly
- To learn from relevant case studies concerning prior, similar municipal amalgamations in British Columbia
- To consult with and learn from independent experts as well as local residents

The Assembly will also host two Public Roundtable Meetings. These meetings will provide local residents with an opportunity to express the views and make it possible for members of the Assembly to test their assumptions and ideas with other residents.

## 3.0 Schedule of the Assembly

The Assembly will meet over six days in early 2017.

1. Saturday January 21, 2017; 9am-4pm (Assembly meeting 1)
2. Thursday February 2, 2017 ; 6-8pm (Public Roundtable Meeting A)
3. Saturday February 4, 2017; 9am-4pm (Assembly meeting 2)

4. Saturday February 25, 2017; 9am-4pm (Assembly meeting 3)

*Interim directions document sent to Technical Consultants*

5. Saturday April 1, 2017; 9am-4pm (Assembly meeting 4)
6. Thursday February 8, 2017 ; 6-8pm (Public Roundtable Meeting B)
7. Saturday April 8, 2017; 9am-4pm (Assembly meeting 5)
8. Saturday April 22, 2017; 9am-4pm (Assembly meeting 6)

Additional meetings of the Assembly may be scheduled at the Assemblies discretion and with the authorization of the Chair. The Assembly will also host two Public Roundtable Meetings, which will be open to all residents of Duncan and North Cowichan.

#### **4.0 Reporting and Communications**

##### *4.1 General Reporting*

The Municipalities will develop a shared webpage that will list the members of the Assembly, a detailed agenda including all speakers and resources, and the Assembly's Terms of Reference. Following each Assembly meeting, a brief summary of its activities and progress will be posted.

##### *4.2 Interim Directions Document*

Following its first three meetings, the Assembly will issue a brief directions document listing its draft values, and the issues or questions that the Assembly believes deserve further study and consideration. This document will be conveyed to the Amalgamation Study team for the purpose of shaping their research activities.

##### *4.3 Final Report*

The Assembly will deliver its report to the Municipalities no later than May 31, 2016. The report will include a letter from the Chair, an overview of the process, and the proposed values, identified issues and final recommendations of the Assembly. It will also include an appendix that contains copies of all materials considered by the Assembly, a list of the members of the Assembly, and a 'minority report' that documents any dissenting perspectives.

##### *4.4 Communications*

The Assembly's Chair is authorized as the exclusive spokesperson for the Assembly and will approve all public communications regarding the conduct of the Assembly unless otherwise delegated.

#### **5.0 Composition of the Citizens' Assembly**

##### *5.1 Recruitment Process*

Members of the Assembly will be randomly selected by Civic Lottery — a mechanism that ensures that a broad, representative cross-section of local residents are selected to participate. 10,000 letters will be sent to households inviting residents to register as volunteers before a publicly-specified deadline. Within a week after the deadline, a blind draw will select members of the Assembly from the pool of registered volunteers.

##### *5.2 Criteria for Membership*

The Citizens' Assembly will consist of 36 members. In order to be eligible to serve on this Citizens' Assembly, an applicant must:

- Reside within the City of Duncan or the Municipality of North Cowichan, and
- Be at least 18 years old at the time of volunteering

Additional qualifications:

- Prospective volunteers may only submit their name to the Civic Lottery once.
- All residents who live at a household which has received a Civic Lottery package may volunteer to serve on the Assembly. However, only one person per residential address can be selected as a member of the Assembly.
- Residents directly employed by the Municipalities, as well as any current municipal, provincial, or federal elected representatives are ineligible to serve as members of the Assembly.

### 5.3 *Assembly Composition*

The Assembly will be composed of:

- 18 men and 18 women;
- A proportionate number of members from four age cohorts: 18-29, 30-44, 45-64, and 65+;
- 12 residents from the City of Duncan and 24 residents from the Municipality of North Cowichan;
- A proportionate number of members from three sub-areas in the City of Duncan and six sub-areas in North Cowichan; and
- At least two members who self-identify as Indigenous.

Proportions will be established based on the 2011 census profile.

To assist the Assembly members in participating, reasonable childcare, eldercare, and transportation costs will be reimbursed. Assistance will also be provided to those members with different physical or learning abilities. The working language of the Assembly is English. Translation services are not available.

## 6.0 **Roles and Responsibilities**

### 6.1 *Roles and Responsibilities of Assembly Members*

Members of the Assembly are expected to fulfil their duties and agree to:

- Attend all sessions of the Assembly as well as the two Public Roundtable Meetings;
- Work to understand and represent the varied perspectives of all residents in both Municipalities;
- Treat each other with respect and take an active role in the work of the Assembly; and
- Work collaboratively to achieve a strong consensus concerning the Assembly's recommendations.

If a member of the Assembly must withdraw owing to illness or unexpected events prior to the third meeting of the Assembly, a new member will be appointed from the pool of volunteers who submitted their name to the Civic Lottery. Members who withdraw following the third meeting will not be replaced unless so directed by the Chair.

### 6.2 *Roles and Responsibilities of the Chair*

The Chair of the Assembly is appointed by the firm responsible for undertaking the Assembly and is tasked to:

- Oversee a fair and representative selection process to appoint members of the Assembly;

- Develop and execute a sound deliberative process that upholds high democratic standards and that yields a clear recommendation for consideration by the Councils of both Municipalities;
- Develop and execute a balanced curriculum that will ensure that members of the Assembly are adequately and appropriately informed and able to fulfil their mandate;
- Support respectful dialogue and deliberation amongst members;
- Ensure that regular updates concerning the Assembly's proceedings are made publicly available;
- Produce and deliver a Final Report concerning the Assembly's activities and recommendations before May 31, 2017;
- Exercise discretion in ensuring and safeguarding the integrity and sound conduct of the Assembly;

The Chair acts as project executive and lead moderator. Decisions concerned the conduct of the Assembly are made at the Chair's discretion in consultation with the Chief Administrative Officer of each Municipality.

### 6.3 *The Roles and Responsibilities of Other Parties*

- The City of Duncan and the Municipality of North Cowichan will work to support the Assembly and ensure its success. They will endeavour to:
  - Provide expertise and access to relevant perspectives, documents and other materials; and
  - Give careful and timely consideration to the Assembly's Final Report, responding publicly and in detail to the Assembly's recommendations.
- The Amalgamation Study team will respond to the issues and questions identified in the Interim Directions Document, and support the Assembly in its deliberations by providing impartial expertise.
- Both parties agree to respect and support the independence and integrity of the Assembly.