

# **Open Forum**

## **Weekend 2, Deliberation Phase**

**George Thomson**  
**March 3, 2007**

# Purpose of presentation

- I'll talk briefly about what we decided last weekend and what we did not decide
- Ask you to approve the meeting notes from Weekend 1
- Talk about how we will meet the two objectives for this weekend:
  - To design an MMP working model
  - To decide whether to design another alternative and if so, which one

# Feedback from last weekend

- Deliberation Phase is off to a good start
- Need more time in medium groups (will make sure you get this)

# Last weekend

- We identified three priority design objectives:
  - Each geographic area of the province should have at least one representative
  - The number of seats a party wins should more closely reflect its vote share
  - Voters should be able to indicate both their preferred party and candidate
- We recognized three principles that are important in all our design work: legitimacy; simplicity & practicality; representation by population
- We decided to design an MMP system as the first alternative to consider

# Last weekend cont'd

- We did not reject the other design objectives, e.g.: demographic representation and the “outcome” objectives
  - For example, you may be comfortable with single-party majority or coalition governments, but you may still see the kind of government or the number of parties as relevant to your design decisions
- We did not pick MMP as our preferred alternative
  - We made a decision to design it, not to recommend it
- We did not reject the present system
  - We can't endorse or reject the system without a good sense of what would replace it

# Approve meeting notes from Weekend 1

# Designing an MMP System

# Overall approach

- Advance materials
- Extensive medium group discussion before plenary
- Three categories of decisions

# Four main design decisions

- Number of local seats
- Ratio of local seats to list seats
- Type of list tier
- Size of the legislature

(Until 2:30 p.m. today)

# Five secondary decisions

- Thresholds
- Type of list
- Number of votes
- Formula
- Overhang seats

(From 2:45 to 5:00 p.m.)

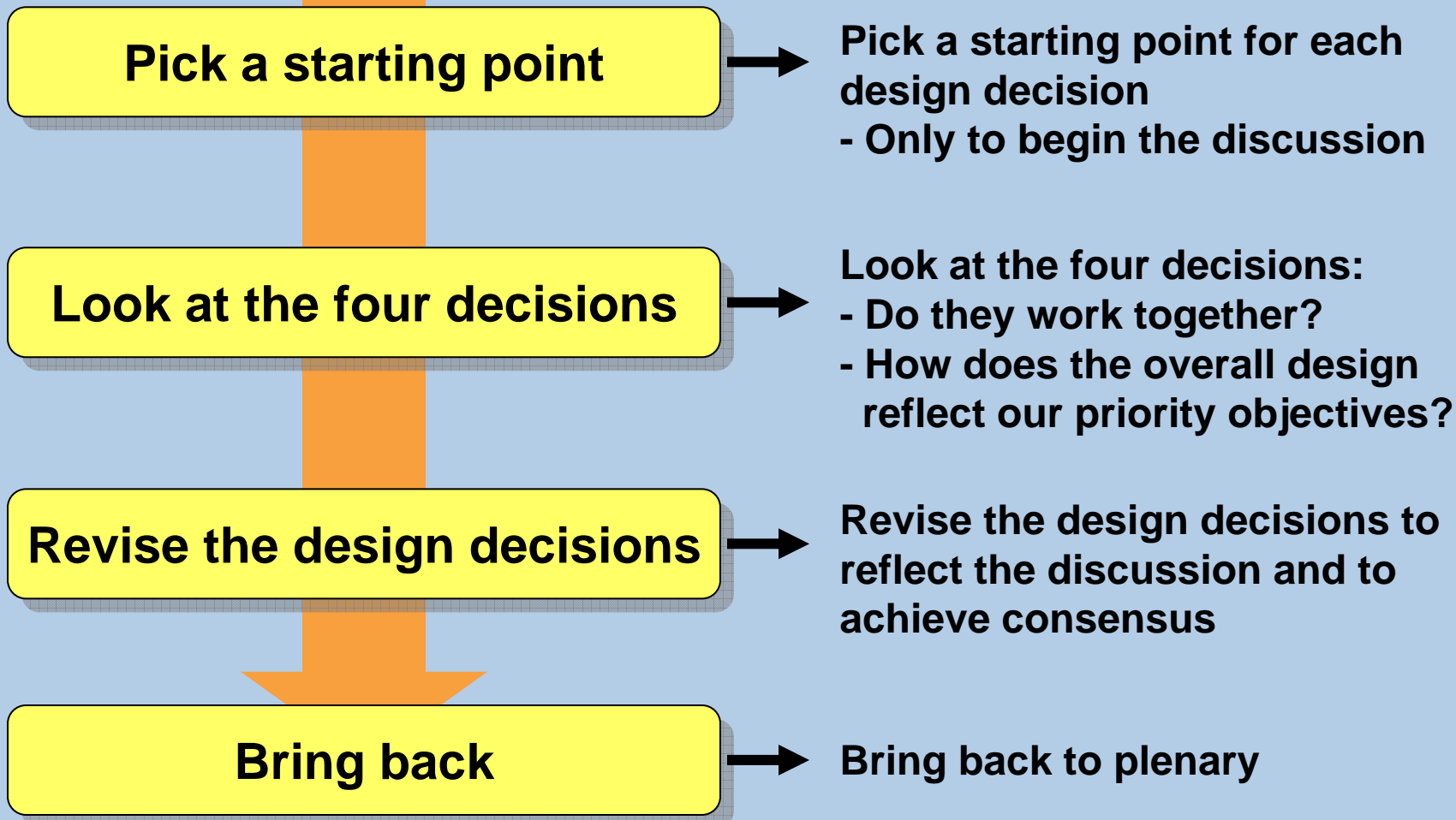
# Remaining decisions

- Seat vacancies
- Candidacy
- Single-member vote

# This morning

- We will make the four main design decisions, so that they work well together and reflect our priority design objectives

# How will we get there?



# This afternoon

- Plenary discussion of four main decisions
- Group discussion of five secondary decisions
- Plenary discussion of these five decisions (and possibly some of the remaining decisions)

# Sunday morning

- Take stock
- Agree on our working model for MMP, subject to reflection in Weekend 3
- Decide whether more work is needed
- Identify the remaining decisions

# MMP design work

- Not an easy process: 12 decisions
  - The decisions are interrelated
  - We need to make as much progress as possible
- Design work involves balancing two basic principles: geographic representation and proportionality

# Support for our work

- What will help:
  - Dividing up the task
  - Taking a starting position to get the discussion going
- How facilitators will support you:
  - Lead facilitator will help you move quickly to the first decisions to get the ball rolling... and then keep you moving
  - Content expert will ask questions to help you evaluate the decisions you've made
  - Facilitators will periodically remind you of our priority objectives and the three additional principles

# Making it work

## This will work if...

- We don't get bogged down in one or two decisions
  - Move forward, look back, review
- We are able to make group decisions in the small groups and in plenary
  - Different than individual decisions
- We recognize that any one group's decisions is not an Assembly decision and can't be a fixed position
  - More discussion and decision-making in plenary are required

# Reminders about deliberation

- Let me remind you of a few things I said last week about deliberation...
  - Let go of the small stuff
  - Acknowledge differences, move on and return later, if necessary
  - We'll never be unanimous – consensus is not the same as unanimity
  - Consensus doesn't always require a formal vote
    - Supporting a group decision doesn't mean that every person in the group supports it; you should still express your point of view
    - We must all adapt to the group to some degree (particularly when dealing with trade-offs & relative emphasis of different objectives)

# Designing a Second Alternative System

# Decisions we need to make

- First decision: Do we design a second alternative?
- Second decision: If so, which one:
  - Alternative Vote
  - Regional List PR
  - STV
  - Parallel
  - Other unique systems

# Process for deciding

- Process developed with Deliberation Planning Advisory Committee:
  - Flip chart comments
  - Dinner speakers
  - Discussion lounge
  - Sunday morning reporting, discussion, and vote if necessary

# Size of legislature

1. We can address it (B.C. did not)
2. Need to think about Ontario context (eg: size of legislature was reduced)

## However...

- The size of the legislature is only one design feature but it is closely related to legitimacy (don't want Ontario voters' decision to be based only on this issue)
- The size of the legislature can't be the fix for everything in our design work (ie: thinking that all problems are solvable by increasing the size of the legislature)