

## **City Council Composition and Ward Boundary Review, Phase One – City Council Composition and Employment Status, 2020-179**

### **General Correspondence**

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I just read the item in Guelph Today about the staff proposal to increase the number of wards to 8 and to have just 1 full time councillor per ward.

I'm in general agreement with the proposal, except for one part - I believe that there should be some councillors at large, perhaps 4 but am undecided about whether they should be full or part time.

I am 78, and have lived in or around Guelph all of my life. I first voted when all councillors were "at large" and was not a big fan of the ward system. I would have preferred to have one per ward, plus 6 at large. Having said that, It's worked pretty well so far as designed, but now that the city is much larger, I think increasing the number of wards is the way to go.

I am still in favour of an "at large" component, so that some councillors will take a wider view of issues, and not think too much of their own area.

My two cents worth.....

And thanks for doing a good job for us!!

Wynne Wright

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I'm writing to express my opinion on this matter but must admit that the article in today's (23rd) Guelph Today is creating much confusion - making it sound as if the public already voted for 12 full time councilors.

That aside I agree that as Guelph is growing so rapidly the move from six to eight wards makes sense....particularly since some areas are becoming much more populated.

I also agree that 8 full time councilors is more than sufficient. Given that Toronto has a population of 2.9M and functions with 25 councilors, Guelph most certainly should not require more than eight.

In my opinion not all the current councilors are pulling their weight; let's tighten up the numbers and hopefully they'll be more productive.

My only other concern is the wages for councilors. What will full time councilors be paid? I believe they currently get \$40K with generous benefits as well.

Guelph needs to tighten up its spending. As a senior the proposed tax levies are stress inducing to say the least!

Regards,

Phyllis Paroshy  
Guelph

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Dear Mr. McMahon and Drs. Siegel and Williams:

I am writing this letter to the three of you, but copying the Mayor and Council and members of the media as well.

***Key data is missing from the City of Guelph Council Composition Phase 1 Report.***

Figure 3 on page six of the report, the Study Process references *Interviews with Senior City Staff and the Mayor and Members of Council.*

Watson & Associates gets top marks for transparency in relation to the public consultation aspect of the process - there are almost 300 pages of raw data in the report and everyone can read everything that citizens submitted.

In stark contrast, key opinions conveyed to the consultants by senior staff and the Mayor and Council are absent from the report. The one exception is the tally of hours worked by Councillors which is set out in a table in Appendix C.

I would be most appreciative if the raw data from the staff and Council interviews could be included in the consolidated agenda which will be published on Friday.

Including this information is crucial to meeting the stated goal of "*Inspiring confidence in local decision making and a transparent process.*"

I was at a loss to understand why you recommended fewer Councillors. This is completely contrary to the results of the public input which indicated that **66.1% of citizens want a Council that is either the same size, or bigger.**

This disconnect was picked up by local media:

***Public Survey Shows 12 Full-Time Councillors is Preferred Choice:***

<https://www.guelphtoday.com/local-news/public-survey-shows-12-full-time-councillors-is-preferred-choice-2817030>

This passage on page 35 of the report appears to hold the key as to the drivers behind the your recommendations:

*A system of one member per ward would allow the City to increase the number of wards and decrease the number of Councillors simultaneously.*

***This is not in agreement with the majority view of those who responded to the survey, although a significant minority did support one-member wards. It is understandable that residents are more comfortable with a system that has been in place for almost thirty years.***

***The views of Councillors and staff who work in the system, however, as well as experience elsewhere, lead us to conclude that one-member wards would solve issues that frequently arise both between the two Councillors in the same ward and the working arrangements with City staff.***

*Recommendation 3. The City of Guelph should have eight single-member wards.*

So... the "views of Councillors and Staff" are driving your recommendations, however these "views" are completely opaque to citizens and even Council itself.

Some staff and Councillors clearly gave formal input that the size of Council is a problem for them, and **that** input has been prioritized over public input from some 670 citizens. Why have comments from these interviews not been summarized and included in the report so we can see how many staff and members of Council were advocating for this change and the rationale they put forward?

It is frankly disturbing that political and bureaucratic positions have been privileged over clear majority citizen preferences, but doubly so that these positions are not on the public record and therefore not subject to public scrutiny. How many individuals among senior staff and Council advocated for a smaller Council? Where are their interview responses not just to this question, but to the other matters being studied by the consultants?

I hope that this situation can be rectified by this coming Friday and that full transparency can be brought to bear on this process.

Sincerely,  
Susan Watson

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Dear Mr. McMahon and Drs. Siegel and Williams:

Slide 6 of the consultant slide deck in the Council package contains the following statement:

- Guelph only city of its direct comparators with two-member wards.

<https://pub-guelph.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=9846>

This statement does not align with the data provided in Fig. 5 on Page 11 of the consultants' report which lists Chatham-Kent as one of the single-tier comparator cities. You identify that Chatham-Kent has multi-member wards, ranging from 2 to 6.

While St. Catharines, Oshawa and Brantford were not selected as comparator cities for the purpose of the study, these three communities also have two Councillors per ward.

Perhaps it would be more precise to state that Guelph is among a minority of municipalities who have two-member wards.

Sincerely,  
Susan Watson

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Dear Mr. McMahon:

Page 7 of the Watson and Associates reports notes the following:

***"City staff pulled out all the stops to promote civic engagement by reaching out to their most comprehensive and up-to-date list of over 200 community organizations...."***

Have these 200 organizations been notified regarding the release of the consultants' report and the impending decision meeting on November 5th?

If not, I would suggest extending the delegate registration and correspondence deadline beyond this coming Friday.

Sincerely,  
Susan Watson

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Mayor Guthrie and members of Council:

I'm looking at page 32 of the consultant's report. The consultant is suggesting that full-time Councillors would want/need support staff: two positions at \$111,800 and one at \$90,350. This is almost equal to the cost of 12 full-time councillors - just off by one salary.

Citizens were never asked in the public consultation what they thought of the option of cutting council size, but adding support staff.

Making Council positions full-time AND adding in support staff seems counter-intuitive. In fact, I would posit that it is part-time councillors who need support staff most, not full-time councillors.

Full-time councillors would have more time to do their own admin and policy analysis.

You have no mandate from the community to shrink the size of Council: not via the 2018 election, not via the public consultation and not via a referendum.

Staff claims they conducted an in-depth, robust public consultation. The number of participants was twice what the consultants had projected.

The mandate you received from citizens via the consultation is for 12 full-time Councillors - two per ward. And yes, the boundaries need to be re-drawn to balance for population growth.

Make council positions full-time and forgo the support staff. It's almost exactly the same cost.

Sincerely,  
Susan Watson

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Dear Mr. McMahon and Mr. O'Brien:

Could you please ponder the following questions in advance of the November 5th Council meeting?

Is there anything that precludes a given municipality from having both part-time and full-time councillors serving on the same council? I read in the consultants' report that some municipalities have both at-large and ward councillors. There was no mention of whether there is a difference in remuneration.

I know that in two-tier municipalities, some councillors may work full-time - serving on two tiers, while others may work part-time, only serving on one. On our own Council, the mayor has a full-time job, while councillors are part-time.

Here is a second theoretical question: Is there any legal or legislative barrier to a councillor running for and working a full-time council job on a part-time basis for half the salary?

The range of actual hours worked by individual councillors set out in Appendix C of the consultant's report is striking: at the lower end, some councillors are putting in 10 hours a week, not even meeting the half-time hours for which they are remunerated. At the other end of the spectrum, some councillors are consistently working 36 hours a week.

It appears that in practice, there are no accountability structures around hours worked and it is simply up to the individual councillor.

Given this reality, could a councillor simply state to voters as part of his or her election platform that s/he would do the job on a part-time basis and donate back, or only take 50% of the salary? It would essentially be a negotiation between electors and the individual councillor.

The reason I ask this question is that it has become clear to me that segments of our community would be excluded from running for Council if it is an either-or scenario. Part-time work excludes people who cannot live off the part-time salary or who do not have flexible work they can combine as a second job. Full-time work excludes people who may have a professional career or have a business to run, but who would bring valuable outside perspectives to Council.

If the underlying principles we want to pursue are accessibility to and diversity on Council, then maximum flexibility to have part-time or full-time councillors would uphold this principle.

I look forward to your responses.

Sincerely,  
Susan Watson

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Mayor Guthrie and Members of Council:

You have no mandate from citizens for an 8-ward, 1 member per ward, 9-member Council. You don't have a mandate from the 2018 election. You don't have a mandate from the public consultation. You don't have a mandate via a referendum.

*Why is community engagement important? Quite simply, because it's your city. This is the city you have chosen to live in, to work in, to volunteer in, to raise your family in, to run your business in. **Council and City staff work for you.** It's your tax dollars we are spending to offer services you need and want. In order to make the best decisions possible, Council needs to hear from you. **And we don't want to hear only from the loudest people, or the most articulate people, or the most connected people – we want to hear from everyone. A solid community engagement framework helps make sure that happens.** Local government works better when we're all in this together.*

*Mayor Guthrie, Community Engagement Framework, February 2015.*

What are the stated values underpinning this whole process? I could only find one: "one person - one vote." That principle is what is driving the need to rebalance the wards as a result of population growth.

The unstated principle driving the consultants' recommendation is **expediency**. They wrote, "*We were told that the current number of Councillors prolongs debate without adding substance.*" And at the end of the report they state: "*The view of Councillors and staff who work in the system, however, as well as experience elsewhere, lead us to conclude that one-member wards would solve issues that frequently arise both between the two Councillors in the same ward and the working arrangements with City staff.*"

So...the viewpoints of staff and Council are being prioritized and the clearly stated preferences of citizens are being dismissed.

What problem are you trying to solve? If it's overly lengthy and inefficient Council meetings and interpersonal conflicts, the poison is worse than the cure.

Why are we diminishing democracy because some of you can't get along and others don't want to have to listen to their colleagues?

If we want to address problems around Council meetings, let's tackle that in a holistic manner. The total number of councillors is only one potential factor. What about poor agenda-setting, poor chairing, constant re-hashing of decisions, lack of preparation and substandard or ignored community consultation in advance of the meeting?

If diversity and true democratic representation are the driving values - what does that look like? Citizens told you: 6 wards, 2 councillors per ward - a total of 12. Full or part-time should be the choice of an individual councillor and the constituents who elect them.

Funding for full-time positions has a plurality of support, is supported by many Councillors, and has been previously endorsed by the Council Compensation committee. I think individual councillors should have the freedom to opt for part-time, if they so choose, within this scenario. Take it to the voters.

I would point out that you allocated a \$4.1 million annual increase for policing to add 31.5 FTEs. Making all Council positions full-time would be the equivalent to adding 6 FTEs. If we can spend \$4.1 million annually to enhance our collective security, we can spend an extra \$600,000 annually to deliver robust democracy and fair wages for people who are working a full-time job to represent us.

The consultants are actually suggesting adding 5 FTEs, only they are proposing adding 2 FTEs for Councillors and 3 FTEs for support staff. Again, you have no mandate for this option. Create full-time Council positions and forgo the admin staff. That will only be one more FTE than what the consultants are recommending. The difference in total costs between these two scenarios is very small.

None of you are capable of setting aside individual biases. This is about your jobs and income. Everyone has a pecuniary conflict-of-interest. Those of you who are heartily endorsing the consultant's recommendations and claiming to be above "self-interest" are being disingenuous: you are supporting the consultants' recommendations because it's what you told them you wanted in the first place.

You have support from the electorate for the status quo, with a possible shift to full-time positions. Boundaries need to be redrawn, no question.

Any other scenario needs to be endorsed by citizens. I believe this would be the most objective way to move forward:

- Council votes to keep status quo for 2022 election
- Ward boundaries are redrawn to balance out population growth
- City Hall assembles a randomly-selected citizen's committee using the voters list (invitations sent randomly to voters in wards; select 2/ward; balance for gender; ensure 25% visible minority)
- Committee reviews all input and recommends referendum question for 2022 election

Whether or not a referendum would be legally binding is a red herring. Even if voter participation does not surpass 50% of the electorate, you will have a strong mandate from citizens for the path forward.

Sincerely,  
Susan Watson

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Dear Mayor Guthrie, James and Rodrigo:

I understand that there is a history of examining Council's composition and Ward boundaries going back at least seven years, certainly before my wife and I moved to Guelph in 2017. Forgive me if I'm not completely up to speed on that history, not to mention my ignorance of the Ontario Municipal Act.

Nevertheless, I am writing to register my grave concern that Council itself would decide the issue of its own composition. Surely there are members of Council, perhaps yourselves, who have ambitions in future municipal elections. Does this not mean that (some) current Councillors would have vested interest in the outcome?

This decision ought to be strictly about the governance of Guelph provided by its Council, and must not be corrupted by the factoring in of the political careers of Council's current members.

I recommend that, instead of voting on Staff's recommendation, a motion be put forward to hold a plebiscite on the matter so that the voters of Guelph can express their democratic rights and responsibilities in a more direct way than by delegating this decision to their Council.

I should mention that I myself would vote to support the Staff recommendation if I were given the chance, so for me this is not a matter of what Staff is recommending, but a matter of democratic process.

I hope you will consider my suggestion when the matter comes before Council.



Thank you for your service to the community.

Ted Bangay

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NO to shrinking council and NO to one councillor per ward!  
Let's facilitate inclusion and diversity.

Sincerely,

Dan Maitland

volunteer with Education Committee of Guelph Black Heritage Society

community volunteer with Guelph-Wellington Local Immigration  
Partnership - Leadership Council

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Guelph operates well with the representation we have. I am not alone in recommending that we keep the number of councillors for our ward representations. I cannot understand how fewer representatives would enhance our democracy, as the Guelph City Staff seem to imply. Furthermore City Staff apparently thinks that a smaller council would be more accountable. I disagree.

As I say, I join the majority of Guelph residents in asserting that we need good representation and that means more voices. Please do not change the make up of Guelph's democratically elected representation.

Sheila O'Reilly

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Shrinking city council! When the people want it to grow!!!

What's wrong with this picture? Why are consultants and city staff ignoring the public will? Why are we shrinking council when Guelph is growing? Why would ward residents want fewer people representing them and working for them at City Hall? How are these changes supposed to improve democracy and public accountability? Seems like they do the opposite.

Marsaye Treen

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Dear Mayor, Councillors and Clerks,

I am writing to express my concern, as a resident of The City of Guelph, over the fact that despite pulling out all the stops to promote civic engagement with your online survey (and obtaining more than double the response you expected), and

obtaining a clear result in which 61.1% of participants state that they support a Council of the same size or bigger, you are nonetheless considering the recommendations of the consultants for the Boundary Review to shrink the number of councillors to 8. This is anti-democratic, and does not address concerns about ward representation during illness and holidays or having councillors who are unresponsive to citizens' needs.

More importantly in my view, if this reduction in the number of ward councillors goes forward, we will be curtailing the already tenuous diversity of representation, and contributing to the homogenizing of our representatives at a time when multiplicity of ideas and opinions should not only be celebrated but actively sought.

I beg that you please reconsider and don't prioritize the (always contingent understanding of the) bottom line above our democratic need for robust representation.

Respectfully,  
Natasha Pravaz

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I have received a message from Democracy Guelph that shows Public Opinion significantly favouring 12 or more Councillors and More than one per Ward. while Consultants and City Staff recommend 8 Councillors and One per Ward.

Democracy depends on having informed and involved citizens. Any changes to Council should be aimed at improving Democracy, not making it impossible.

My understanding is that current part-time Councillors are overworked and often struggling to keep up.

I don't know if 8 is the right number, but suggest that efficiency and effectiveness of representation could be improved by:

1. Having full-time Councillors,
2. Mandating that each Ward have a Committee made up of local citizen volunteers, with attached budget, to provide support to each Councillor.

This structure multiplies contact at the Ward level without increasing the size of Council, and provides an enhanced conduit for information flow in both directions.

Gordon Framst

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Plain and simply, Guelph must maintain its diversity representation in Council by maintaining two councillors per Ward. This constituent supports a 13 vote Guelph horseshoe.

Sincerely,  
Jane Thornton

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Good afternoon,

I understand that the staff report on changing the composition of council, recommends a smaller council with one councillor per ward.

It appears that the community engagement results showed a strong preference for keeping 2 councillors per ward. There are numerous reasons for this, all of which have been articulated by others, so I won't repeat them here.

Guelph is a growing city. Now is not the time to shrink council and give citizens less opportunity to see and hear their voices represented at city hall.

Katie Saunders

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It doesn't make sense with a growing population to shrink our councillor representatives. This is NOT serving Guelphites at all. Our voices and concerns will have a hard time being heard and acted upon should you shrink council and restrict numbers of councillors per ward.

Regards,

Barbara Mathews  
Ward 4

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Hello, everyone at City Hall, notably those making decisions on Council:  
I have been following the news reports and the consultant report about the formation of Council.  
I firmly believe that a councillor's position should be full time and that there should be 2 councillors per ward. The consultant report ignored the 650 people that responded over the past few months. Did the report consider 650 people too small?  
If that is the case then Council has a major responsibility - to table the consultant report and bring the matter to the people OR have the Council edit the findings

after the people are heard. That has to be adjusted with added time during this C19 time we are in.

If we can have consultations with neighbourhoods about rezoning plans or have community input on the type of housing or street modifications, then surely a major change in the formation of Council is of that much greater importance, notably to those in the present and future who will be vastly affected - by taxation; by service; by availability; by a variety of views; by different models of representation; by greater options and diversified representation. What I would demand though are clear expectations and reviews of the performance of a full time councillor as well as a review of the compensation for full time work. Full time remuneration and clear expectations will support quality people from joining the Council and remove those who cannot meet such expectations as attendance; being on committees; reporting findings; conducting oneself professionally; being accountable to budget, planning, and representation of their constituents.

Thank you and best wishes. Be wise; stay safe. Take care of yourself as you serve your constituents and "employers", the citizens of Guelph. As well, take care of your loved ones and each other. Be the dignified team that has integrity and full disclosure that we expect because that is why we, including you, vote. Best wishes during this C19 time.

Will Lenssen

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Wards should be based on a) equal or close to equal population per ward and b) potential increases in housing as per the City planning. Presently having 6 wards with 2 full-time councillors per Ward requires a review of the workload for each of the councillors in order to determine if the 6 wards should become 7 or 8. Also for consideration should be which wards are demanding more work based on the planning departments and if councillors are required to spend time on that work, development, etc. Eg Ward 1 may be expanding exponentially or have major environmental or infrastructure issues whereas Ward 4 may be "stagnant" for a period of time hence less workload for the Ward 4 councillors. So I am unable to do this analysis or review. I just know that the role and workload of a councillor can change accordingly. The councillors should have input in full disclosure and trust with a list of things each of them do or should do. Perhaps this could result in re aligning the Ward boundaries or even add a Ward or two. That list or job description should be uniform across each councillor "job description" and should be visible to the Ward voters as well.

The decision regarding ward and councillor numbers requires the above in my opinion.

Best wishes on deciding what is best for Guelph.

Will Lenssen

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I don't want the number of counsellors on city council to go down. It is a silly idea. Please listen to your constituents!!

Karen Morris

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My preference would be a mix of ward assigned councilors and some at large. There are sometimes very good candidates to choose from in one ward and less so in another. That means we lose out on having new people to choose from.

I do not like the idea of full time councilors. That is another level added then for career politicians with an enticing salary. As it is now, it is getting harder to get good candidates to run for political office.

Part time councilors have done an excellent job over the years we have lived in Guelph. Some were excellent, some not but there are elections to allow citizens to choose who should continue in their view.

I do appreciate the amount of time involved and also the low remuneration. Past councils have made every effort to keep costs down and sacrificed a lot in order not to appear "greedy" and burden the taxpayer. That does not seem to me to be fair now with the current recommendations.

I also believe that there will be a different kind of candidate when it is full time. It will mean decisions about giving up a job perhaps or not having flexibility in time commitment . Perhaps the salary will be too low for some people who have above average incomes. It will not be a representation of average local citizens and that is what is needed. The city should have highly qualified staff who have expertise to do the work and give coucillors the information needed to make decisions. I think it will create a whole different council.

The solution would be to acknowledge the time being given by raising the current part time salaries. The possibility of at large councillors would also be a good idea. This should go to a referendum in the next election. Citizens should be given the opportunity to make this decision. Even if over 600 people responded to the survey, that is a very low response given the implications of this change to council.

Margaret Abbink  
Resident since 1974

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Dear Mayor Guthrie, Council Members and City Staff,

I support the City's plan to retain the ward system and to make Council positions full time.

However, I am dismayed by the plan to decrease the size of City Council to 8 members, 1 per ward. Those moves contradict wishes clearly expressed by citizens in the recent consultation on this matter. A majority of citizens support a Council with 12 or more members and 2 members per ward.

Yes, it may take a little longer and cost more to operate the a Council with the preferred structure. Democracy is not necessarily efficient. Good governance, not efficiency, should be its primary goal!

Please follow the wishes of citizens on this important matter.

Best Regards,  
Janet Wood

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Mayor and Members of Council:

I have read the Watson report and the City Staff report on phase 1 of the review of our system of local representation in Guelph.

I find the Watson report mechanical, unimaginative and essentially one which takes Council through the regulatory arithmetic of our local government system under the current Ontario legislation.

Guelph's population is currently close to 140,000, and the city is growing rapidly toward 200,00, and beyond. What does a modern, progressive urban community of the 21st century need in its local political system? I saw little in the consultant's report to address any of these matters.

How do we move as much as we can toward a highly participatory process, one that might be found in direct democracy, within the highly centralist legislation of the Municipal Act, the realities of the costs of government (and scant resources available to local government), and the challenges of social, cultural, economic and other diversities in a growing city?

I hope that Council will look at the idea of having 12 wards, and a single ward representative. Currently we have approximately 1 councillor for about 11,700 residents. A city of 200,000 (within another 30 years, or so) with 8 councillors (as per the consultant's recommendation) would have each represent some 25,000 residents. On the face of it, hardly a recipe for more democratic engagement.

If we stayed with the present ratio of population represented (i.e. around 11,700) we would need 17 councillors.

However, if we go to a system with 12 wards, each represented by one councillor, we would have a representation rate of about 16,700 (city population of 200,000) residents per councillor. Not in itself, a serious dilution of democratic representation.

This option would keep City Council at its current size.

Another option would be to expand the wards from 6 to 8, with 2 councillors per ward. City Council would increase from 12 to 16 councillors. Not necessarily, in my view, a serious operational problem. And we would have 1 councillor for every 12,500 Guelph residents, close to current conditions.

The red flag raised suggesting that all representatives will always want to have their say on any and all matters before Council is somewhat disingenuous, and hardly respectful of public service.

I would hope that Council will look at the option of having 1 ward representative elected as an urban community representative, and the other on the basis of internal ward matters and priorities. In a growing and diversifying urban community we need to cultivate the idea of city building, of local representatives freely and explicitly focusing on the longer term, the big picture, the commonwealth of the urban community's future, and related matters. And it is no contradiction to suggest that *city* representatives can and should be elected to represent urban constituents who happen to live in a particular ward.

Besides the political arithmetic I hope that Council will attend to the *substantive* matter of investing in expanding the democratic engagement of our urban community. Should the current neighbourhood organizations be reconstituted as ward-based political organizations? Or should new local organizations be designed? How do we cultivate greater political outreach at the local level? How do new Canadians become more easily involved? How do the less economically and otherwise advantaged (unprivileged?) become active in the local political process? What about younger people? Should we encourage local forums to bring their own development priorities directly to Council? Should we be investing in credible participatory budgeting, from the ground up? Should there be development summits throughout our neighbourhoods, and a plenary event in their City Hall? And, .. .. .

I think there is considerable merit in the notion of full-time councillors. However, the estimated additional costs associated with this recommendation in the reports received by Council need rigorous review and challenge.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

David J.A. Douglas  
Guelph

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To Mayor and Councilors,

I would like to ask that council not support staff's recommendations to shrink City council to 8.

As Guelph unfortunately keeps growing, it is now more important than ever to have good representation and instead of shrinking council we should be adding another ward and having

2 more city council representatives.

Thank-you,  
Lorraine Pagnan

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My issue begins with the assertion that the decision to move toward full time councillors is what "Guelph" wants. If Guelph's population is 131 974 (Stats Can 2016) there were 670 respondents to the survey. At 0.5% of the population participating, you should begin to question public engagement. Moreover, this would represent the views of the small portion of the population that is engaged with municipal politics and actively sought out the survey.

Secondly, to hire a firm with a target goal of 300 respondents (0.22%) they are not developing a full picture. I would be disappointed to find out the cost for this third-party service.

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Wade A. Van Der Kraak

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Greetings!

I am writing to offer feedback on the issue of composition of Guelph Council. I understand that only 670 people responded to the survey seeking input on whether or not to make elected positions on Council a full-time "job". As an applied social scientist, I find it odd that anyone could possibly conclude that 670 responses represents an accurate and reliable finding from a city the size of ours, which in 2020 is estimated to be about 134,842. Even though the sample of 670 was above that sought by the firm contracted to do the study (300), it is still far below a statistically representative sample size.

More to the point, people who seek public office do so out of interest in service. The remuneration, if any, is not the driving factor as most do not see this type of service as a job but rather as a chosen duty of service to represent others with whom they frequently consult with. Having served myself in numerous public service and leadership roles over my lifetime I never once thought about what was in it for me and certainly never about how much money would I get paid for something I did for the betterment of others. However, if Guelph moves ahead with its plan to make council members "paid employees" the idea of public service in the interest of the public will be squashed and replaced by self-interest. Furthermore, if council members do become paid, full-time employees of the City of Guelph, I would like to know what their credentials are and are these employees suited for the roles they are assuming? We give elected people a very easy pass on this account, but if they are being employed full-time then I and the others in Guelph



have the right to know what their credentials are. Are they civil engineers, social scientists, health and mental health professionals, community planners etc.? My bet is that the taxpayers' money could be better spent hiring those needed when needed who possess the knowledge, training, skills, and experience to do what needs to be done. Good elected people surround themselves with experts, who they consult with and whose recommendations they follow. Bad elected officials surround themselves with grifters who are interested in what they can lobby for and at what cost to their bottom line, which is not in the public interest.

So, for what it's worth bad science provides convenient results that confirm already decided upon directions. Good science and practices directs us to keep elected officials in a voluntary role who out of passion and commitment serve as representatives of the public and not as paid employees who cut themselves a cheque at the taxpayers' expense and represent themselves. My hope and belief is that our elected members of Council sit because of their call to duty and service. So, I would caution moving down a path that takes us away from the meaning of representational government and towards a bureaucracy divorced from the community they serve. I would ask that my comments be shared with members of Council and be considered at the next Council meeting

Respectfully,

Dr. G. Brent Angell

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Hello,

I'm writing to say I do want to lose 2 councillors per ward. Our City population is growing and diverse, we should have a council large enough to properly represent our city. On public surveys, the citizens of Guelph want 12 or more councillors and more than one councillor per ward. Support what the public wants.

Thank you for your time,  
Elly Pond

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To whom it may concern,

As our city increases its population, it is becoming more important than ever to maintain a strong council with enough ears to listen to our needs and concerns, and enough voices to be able to debate and formulate balanced decisions. City council must have been counted on to provide a check-and-balance for the decisions that are critical to our city. I would support a growing council to represent the Guelph population, but shrinking it will lead to less objectivity and more special-interest groups gaining a foothold in the decision-making process.

Sincerely,

Francis Papillon

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Hello,

I'd like note for the public record that I fully agree with the consultant's recommendations for the 2022 Council composition.

It makes sense given the growing population, and with full-time allowing people to have sufficient paid time for a quality job. Should also reduce confusion and overlap between 2 councillors in the wards yet still ensure diversity and ward-specific representation at Council.

Sam Stevenson

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Good morning,

As a long-time resident of the City of Guelph and as a respondent to the survey conducted on the size and composition of city council, I am writing to express my concern with the recommendations of the consultants involved in the survey, as well as the recommendations of city staff. These recommendations are in direct contradiction to what the public indicated as their preferences. A large majority (66 per cent of people) said they wanted 12 (as we have now) or more councillors total but the recommendation is to shrink council to eight. A clear majority (53 per cent of people) said they wanted two councillors per ward (as we have now) but the recommendation is to switch to one.

At a time when our city is growing rapidly, please do not reduce the size of our city council. Local representation and a strong local democracy are vital to tackling the challenging times ahead of us as a community. Democracy is in decline all over the world and here in Guelph we have the opportunity to be a beacon of light to those around us. This includes having strong local representation that reflects the preferences of the population and encourages civic engagement. Reducing the size of council at a time that the city is growing and the challenges keep mounting makes no sense- it's what Doug Ford did to the City of Toronto without precedent and without consultation and I ask you to do better here in Guelph.

I implore you to listen to the public you consulted. Keep our wards and our city council strong and representative of the population they serve.

Dunja Lukic  
Ward 3

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Dear City Clerk,  
Please include this letter for correspondence for Monday Nov 2 2020 meeting,  
"Council Composition"

Dear Guelph City Council, Mayor, and Clerks,

I am truly concerned that you are describing community engagement as;  
an 18 day window,  
at the end of summer,  
in the PANDEMIC  
on the core structure and democratic representation for the citizens of Guelph  
and you have wholly left out the 30,000 students who contribute to our economy  
with an online dependence for response,  
with neonate, emergency crisis media communication systems scrambling.

Our Guelph City Couciors need to have administrative support. It is  
embarasing there is no staff and space.

The councilors need a pay raise & administration staffing( mayor got a raise ).

This is the type of question that merits being placed on a referendum.

Thank you.

Regards,  
Diane Hurst

A VERY GOOD LETTER SUMMARY OF CITIZEN RESPONSE ON COUNCIL  
REPRESENTATION

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<https://www.guelphtoday.com/letters-to-the-editor/letter-consultants-and-city-staff-contradict-public-will-2829048>

**LETTER: Consultants and city staff contradict public will**

'Why are we shrinking Council when Guelph is growing fast?' asks reader Kevin Bowman

*GuelphToday has received the following letter to the editor from Kevin Bowman concerned that staff is not taking the recommendation of Guelph citizens into account when they make recommendations.*

The City of Guelph recently published the results of public consultations on questions of council composition. Of particular note are two questions:

- How many councillors in total should Guelph have?
- How many councillors should each ward have?

Other questions were asked but these two worth noting because the recommendations coming from the consultants and city staff who ran the public consultations are in direct contradiction to what the public said they wanted.

A large majority (66 per cent of people) said they wanted 12 (as we have now) or more councillors total but the recommendation is to shrink council to eight. Only 25 per cent of people want that. A clear majority (53 per cent of people) said they wanted two councillors per ward (as we have now) but the recommendation is to switch to one. Only 35 per cent of people want that.

Why are we shrinking council when Guelph is growing fast? Why would ward residents want fewer people representing and working for them at city hall? Why does city hall bother to pay tens of thousands of public dollars (if not more) to consult the public and then proceed to ignore the public's will?

If you are a resident of Guelph and you have an opinion on this matter I encourage you to email your thoughts to [clerks@guelph.ca](mailto:clerks@guelph.ca) by the submission deadline of Friday, Oct 30 at 10 a.m.

This is not an isolated incident. There seems to be a growing trend of public consultations not happening when they should, being done poorly and being ignored. Some examples:

- city staff suggested limiting public delegations to either Committee of the Whole or council but not both with no advance public consultations
- a bylaw was passed to close Dublin St. with no consultation
- the Metrolinx Power Station was planned for Margaret Greene Park in collaboration with city hall with no advance public input
- the input of citizens being considered equivalent to the input of developers who stand to profit from the development and then don't have to live there for the coming decades
- residents being asked if they feel "confident" in internet voting with no attempt to educate them about the risks and benefits.
- Council siding with staff and developers on the Parkland dedication issue when local residents were opposed
- local residents clearly preferring a community park with a view of Hall's pond and city staff making an alternate proposal

Luckily council overruled staff on the last example but the question remains, why is this happening in a city with an award-winning Community Engagement Framework?

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