

Staff Report



To	Committee of the Whole
Service Area	Office of the Chief Administrative Officer
Date	Monday, December 6, 2021
Subject	2022 Intergovernmental Priorities

Recommendation

1. That Council approve the intergovernmental priorities proposed for 2022.
 2. That Staff prepare an Information Report outlining the Provincial Election Advocacy Strategy in advance of the dropping of the writ for the Provincial Election in 2022.
 3. That Staff provide an update on intergovernmental performance and priorities in the Fourth Quarter (Q4) of 2022.
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Executive Summary

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to confirm intergovernmental priorities for the City of Guelph in advance of the 2022 fiscal year and to provide Council with an update on Intergovernmental performance in 2021.

Key Findings

To advance the City's Strategic Plan, Staff recommend the following intergovernmental priorities for 2022. These items are organized according to their corresponding Strategic Plan priority area:

Powering our Future: 1) Promote the City's new Economic Development and Tourism Strategy; and 2) Position Guelph as a circular economy innovation hub.

Sustaining our Future: 1) Advance Guelph's Carbon Neutral by 2050 goals; 2) Call for upper-government support for brownfield remediation; 3) Work collaboratively to grow the City's tree canopy cover; and 4) Protect Guelph's natural heritage resources as a ground water-based community.

Navigating our Future: 1) Promote the ongoing electrification of the transportation sector, including Guelph Transit; 2) Grow the City's Active Transportation Network; and 3) Advocate for ongoing provincial and federal operational and capital support for Guelph Transit and for greater interregional connectivity.

Working together for our Future: 1) Develop and implement a City-specific Advocacy Plan for the 2022 Provincial Election that aligns with the Ontario Big City Mayor's caucus (OBCM), the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and other leading municipal voices; 2) Strengthen the City's

relationship with Indigenous Government partners and 3) Work with community partners to advance projects and policy that benefit Guelph in the spirit of community-based advocacy.

Building our Future: 1) Advocate for streamlined funding opportunities to build new community assets and maintain existing ones; 2) Promote housing attainability across the housing continuum leveraging a housing first advocacy approach; and 3) Push for provincial funding to address long-term care staffing challenges at the Elliott and to increase the total number of beds in our local community.

Intergovernmental Services (IG) will report back on the implementation of these priorities in the Fourth Quarter (Q4).

Financial Implications

None. The City's intergovernmental work in 2022 will be funded using existing budgeted resources.

Report

2022 Intergovernmental Outlook and Intergovernmental Services at the City of Guelph

The role of the City's Intergovernmental Services (IG) division is to engage in and support direct advocacy with federal, provincial, Indigenous and municipal counterparts to advance the City's strategic interests where these interests intersect with external policy, funding opportunities, and decision-making or where there are opportunities for external collaboration. IG also coordinates the City's submissions to provincial and federal consultation processes, organizes the City's applications to strategic grant funding opportunities, functions as a government liaison on behalf of the City, supports the City's participation in key municipal associations (i.e. OBCM, AMO and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities), and seeks to keep Council and other city leaders informed about the latest developments of the day.

The goal of the City's Intergovernmental Relations Strategic Framework approved by Council in December 2020 is for the City of Guelph to successfully leverage local, regional, provincial and federal partnerships to unlock opportunities to create a future ready and innovative community for all.

The IG Strategy has 4 key components/areas of activity with corresponding action items under these objectives:

Promote – To elevate the City's reputation as a 'future ready' thought leader, innovator, trusted government partner and responsible local government.

Advocate – To influence decision-makers to advance the City's strategic interests and the wellbeing of our local community.

Engage – To nurture relationships with other orders of government, municipal partners, associations and key community stakeholders to create broad-based support for our story, our priorities, challenges and ambitions.

Inform – To provide strategic information and advice to city leaders on the latest legislative and policy developments and challenges of the day.

Implementing a comprehensive and targeted intergovernmental approach is a necessity in the current political environment. Given the upcoming 2022 Provincial Election, and the realities of a recently elected minority Liberal government federally, it will be important for the City to strategically position its interests in the year ahead leveraging a combination of direct advocacy, a coordinated provincial election advocacy plan, strategic grant preparation, and other tactics aimed at influencing government decision-making. Action taken by the City in 2022 will also support how our community emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic, necessitating strong coordination with other orders of government and key community stakeholders to advance recovery and ensure a resilient community for all.

Proposed 2022 Intergovernmental Priorities and Outreach Plan

The City's Intergovernmental Relations Strategic Framework seeks to ensure alignment between the City's Strategic Plan, Guelph. Future Ready. and proposed intergovernmental priorities and outreach plans for a given year. If approved by Council, these priorities will guide the City's advocacy efforts in 2022, including in federal and provincial budget consultation submissions, AMO Conference delegations and other ministerial or high-level meetings, and in the event of an election. Proposed intergovernmental focus areas are listed under their corresponding Strategic Plan priority below:

Powering our Future: 1) Promote the City's new Economic Development and Tourism Strategy; and 2) Position Guelph as a circular economy innovation hub.

Sustaining our Future: 1) Advance Guelph's Carbon Neutral by 2050 goals; 2) Call for upper-government support for brownfield remediation; 3) Work collaboratively to grow the City's tree canopy cover; and 4) Protect Guelph's natural heritage resources as a ground water-based community.

Navigating our Future: 1) Promote the ongoing electrification of the transportation sector, including Guelph Transit; 2) Grow the City's Active Transportation Network; and 3) Advocate for ongoing provincial and federal operational and capital support for Guelph Transit and for greater interregional connectivity.

Working together for our Future: 1) Develop and implement a City-specific Advocacy Plan for the 2022 Provincial Election that aligns with OBCM, AMO and other leading municipal voices; 2) Strengthen the City's relationship with Indigenous Government partners and 3) Work with community partners to advance projects and policy that benefit Guelph in the spirit of Community-based advocacy.

Building our Future: 1) Advocate for streamlined funding opportunities to build new community assets and maintain existing ones; 2) Promote housing attainability across the housing continuum leveraging a housing first advocacy approach; and 3) Push for provincial funding to address long-term care staffing challenges at the Elliott and to increase the total number of beds in our local community.

In line with the City's Intergovernmental Strategy, staff will leverage a variety of tactics to advance these intergovernmental priorities, including:

- 1) Direct advocacy with key Ministers and other high-level officials (i.e. delegation meetings at AMO Conference)
- 2) Regular three-levels meetings between Mayor Guthrie, MP Longfield and MPP Schreiner;
- 3) Joint advocacy initiatives with community partners (i.e. Guelph-focused Ministerial roundtables)
- 4) Engagement meetings with Indigenous government counterparts;
- 5) Ongoing staff outreach with federal/provincial/Indigenous and municipal counterparts; and
- 6) Consultation submissions, advocacy letters, policy briefs, social media advocacy and other relevant communications approaches.

IG will also remain responsive to emerging issues that arise over the course of the year, including items such as Conservation Authority reform, airplane noise impacting Guelph residents and the ongoing evolution towards full producer responsibility, an approach to waste management where producers are fully responsible for the life cycle of their products and packaging including costs, diversion, and disposal.

2021 in Review

In 2021 IG created an index to measure annual performance. This development aligns with the City's shift towards a performance-based culture. The IG Index measures key performance indicators like the total number of high-level ministerial meetings organized by the City, total grant funding secured via applications coordinated directly by IG, the number of IG Updates shared with Council and senior leaders, and more.

In the spirit of sharing best practices and continuous improvement, the City of Guelph recently presented this sector-leading approach to measuring IG performance at the Fall 2021 Municipal Government Relations Network virtual meeting.

At the time of writing, IG has accomplished a score of 88.6/100 on the City's Intergovernmental Index for 2021. This is in the green range (meets target), of above 80. Working collaboratively across the corporation, IG worked diligently to advance key City priorities, including the Dolime Restructuring Proposal, Indigenous Relations, interregional transit, securing emergency pandemic supports, and seeking out numerous funding opportunities to help advance the City's objectives.

Key successes in 2021 include:

- Working cross-departmentally to coordinate advocacy and grant applications to secure \$17.3M in additional capital and operating grant funding with a 67% grant application success rate
- Securing 11 high-level intergovernmental meetings with Ministers and other senior-level officials
- Coordinating 17 submissions to federal and provincial consultation processes
- Delivering 13 Intergovernmental Updates, Info Reports and Council Reports to keep Guelph City Council informed
- Organizing 19 separate engagement sessions with Indigenous Government partners to advance 11 different City projects

- Developing and implementing an advocacy strategy for the 2021 Federal Election; and
- Negotiating agreements with First Nations partners to ensure the protection of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights during City-led capital projects.

Although Staff did not implement community-based advocacy as originally envisioned for 2021 due to the pandemic environment, the City did participate alongside key community stakeholders in 4 different political roundtables, including 2 directly organized by the City. Staff also worked collaboratively with community stakeholders to develop 5 different joint advocacy letters on topics ranging from interregional transportation to Guelph's Integrated Mobile Police and Crisis Team.

Financial Implications

None. The City's advocacy work in 2022 will be funded using existing budgeted resources.

Consultations

This report was developed leveraging intergovernmental engagements with the Ontario Big City Mayor's Caucus, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. IG also regularly engages cross-departmentally and with key community stakeholders to identify policy priorities for ongoing advocacy.

Strategic Plan Alignment

The proposed intergovernmental priorities for 2022 seek to advance key objectives under each priority area of the City's Strategic Plan.

Attachments

None.

Departmental Approval

Jodie Sales, General Manager, Strategy, Innovation and Intergovernmental Services

Report Author

Leslie Muñoz, Manager, Policy and Intergovernmental Relations

This report was approved by:

Jodie Sales

General Manager, Strategy, Innovation, and Intergovernmental Services

Office of the Chief Administrative Officer

519 822 1260 extension 3617

jodie.sales@guelph.ca

This report was recommended by:

Scott Stewart

Chief Administrative Officer

Office of the Chief Administrative Officer

519 822 1260 extension 2221
scott.stewart@guelph.ca