

Council Meeting November 28th

## 7.2 Redesigning Advisory Committees of Council A Governance Framework. 2023-413

Mr. Mayor, Councilor's and City Staff,

I am a former member of the Public Art Advisory Committee and a current member of the Tourism Advisory committee and Guelph Trail Users Coalition

I have been critical of various aspects of all 3 but have always felt the city staff were excellent and Chairs and members were respectful of each other and worked hard to make the committees run smoothly.

I appreciate the work that has gone into this report and how valuable it is as a piece of research. It is a great tool to guide the development of future ACOC's and the evaluation of current ACOC's.

I support Staff recommendation #2.

I don't support recommendations 1,3,4,5,6.

The recommendations are useful from a directional standpoint, but I feel much more discussion and consideration is needed. ACOC's are only one public engagement tool on the city menu of engagement tools, but council is at risk of going down an engagement rabbit hole that it has not had sufficient time to contemplate and evaluate. Elevating ACOCs mission and support requirements as proposed will inevitably lead to consequences council had not envisaged. Introducing this major change to council and the public in the middle of a budget crisis that has everyone's attention is not fair or reasonable. I do feel that we are charging into these recommendations without an opportunity for sober second thoughts. Recommendations 1,3,4,5, and 6 can all be reintroduced at the Q4-2024 report to council.

Here are just some of the questions that make me uneasy,

Commitment #2: ACOC's should shape the City's strategic goals;

"Broadly all ACOC's should have a similar overarching purpose which is to provide the city with considered long-term high-level guidance linked to strategic and other guiding priorities

Advancing the city strategic priorities and high-level policy directions"

Moving ACOC's away from technical advice and towards higher level policy making. (The top end of pyramid near masterplans and the strategic plan.)

WHY?

The city already puts an inordinate amount of staff, consultant and public engagement time into strategic plans, and Master Plans. They are utopian in scope. (We are all guilty here). They consistently lead to overpromises and under performance which results in disappointment and skepticism about the whole process.

Have you ever heard criticism that our Master Plans are lacking?

IMPLEMENTATION of the plans is the problem. In my experience ACOC's help keep the city on task.

Commitment #7: ACOCs should be adequately resourced.

Managers and General managers act as staff liaisons.

The highest paygrades in the city are to be asked to liaise with ACOC's. Is that really what council wants? And

"To meet the legislative compliance requirements and the recruitment training needs of a ACOC the Clerk's office will require more capacity additionally serving as a staff liaison (Managers and General Managers) to an ACOC will need to make up a sizeable component of a person's duties for them to be able to fully support ACOC as envisioned by the framework".

Council are being rushed into this decision. Comments regarding the threat of legislative non compliance if ACOC's are not fully resourced and "the Framework is not designed as a buffet" should not influence a more thorough review of the Framework.

The proposed solution to the problems with ACOCs is not proportionate.

My recommendation is council only pass Staff recommendation #2 and defer a decision on the other recommendations until Q4 2024 .

Sincerely

John Fisher