

Advisory Committee of Council Staff Report



To	Committee of Adjustment
Date	Thursday, December 12, 2024
Subject	Proposed list and arrangement of Advisory Committees of Council (ACOCs) from 2025

Recommendation

1. That the Committee of Adjustment recommends to the City Council the creation of the Committee of Adjustment and Property Standards Committee.
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Executive Summary

Purpose of Report

- To inform the Committee of Adjustment about the proposed list and arrangement of Advisory Committees of Council (ACOCs) resulting from Phase Two of the ACOC Governance Review
- To seek feedback from the Committee of Adjustment on the proposed arrangements for the Committee of Adjustment from 2025

Key Findings

The proposed list of ACOCs and the corresponding arrangements with the existing ACOCs:

Recommended ACOCs be maintained (with updated terms of reference):

- Accessibility Advisory Committee (statutory)
- Heritage Advisory Committee (discretionary, but with statutory regulations once established)

Recommended new/revised ACOCs:

- Planning, Environment and Water Advisory Committee (planning is a statutory component, environment and water are discretionary)
- Arts and Culture Advisory Committee (there is statutory component regarding the Guelph Museum, arts and culture more broadly is discretionary)
- Transportation and Mobility Advisory Committee (discretionary)
- Business Development Advisory Committee (discretionary)

Recommended merged ACOCs:

- Committee of Adjustment and Property Standards Committee (statutory)

Recommended ACOCs shifted to alternative community engagement:

- Municipal Property and Building Commemorative Naming Committee
- Waste Resource Innovation Centre Public Liaison Committee

Proposed changes to Committee of Adjustment from 2025:

The Committee of Adjustment will merge with the Property Standards Committee to form the Committee of Adjustment and Property Standards Committee. The membership of both committees will be merged, while the mandates of each committee remain distinct to ensure legislative compliance. The new combined committee will fulfill all statutory requirements and create efficiency by consolidating the City's two quasi-judicial committees.

Strategic Plan Alignment

The proposed list and arrangements of ACOCs aligns with the [Governance Framework](#) approved by the Council on November 23, 2023, which is the City's first strategic document governing how ACOCs function and position as a form of on-going community engagement. While the majority of the proposed ACOCs meet statutory requirements or other legislative components, the proposed ACOCs' purposes and functions align with different strategic goals and priorities in the Strategic Plan.

Financial Implications

The proposed list of the ACOCs will be submitted to Council for its approval in March 2025. The budget will also be presented for approval together with the proposal.

Report

In January 2023, the City Clerk's Office, in collaboration with the Guelph Lab, launched the "Re-Designing Advisory Committees of Council (ACOCs)" project. The goal is to improve the effectiveness of ACOCs and ensure they meet the needs of residents, Council, and City staff.

Project Team

The Guelph Lab

- Dr. Leah Levac, University of Guelph
- Sam Laban, Guelph Lab
- Dr. Winnie Chan, University of Guelph
- Dr. Sean Geobey, University of Waterloo
- Dr. Anthony Piscitelli, Conestoga College
- Dr. Simon Pek, University of Victoria

City Clerk's Office

- Dylan McMahon, Acting General Manager / City Clerk
- Elizabeth Barber, Board and Committee Coordinator
- Dr. Winnie Chan, Board and Committee Coordinator

Timeline and Engagement

Phase One (complete): Culminated with Council's approval of the ACOC Governance Framework (the Framework) on November 23, 2023. The Framework is the City's first strategic document governing how ACOCs function and position ACOCs as a form of on-going community engagement where Council receives considered advice from a diverse group of residents. The creation of the Governance Framework was informed by a series of robust research and community engagement, including an online survey of 50 ACOC members, interviews with 40 stakeholders including Council members, city staff and ACOC members, community sessions with 32 residents from equity-deserved groups. Eight current ACOC members from seven different advisory committees formed a working group, volunteered to participate in a series of four meetings in 2023 summer, to provide main ideas and feedback to the resulting Governance Framework.

Phase Two (current phase): A review of current ACOCs based on the Governance Framework and allocated resources. Different groups of stakeholders are engaged to inform the development of a list of proposed ACOCs:

- January 2024: Information sessions for ACOC members and staff liaisons
- February – April 2024: Meetings with all 14 current ACOCs (attended by 70% of all ACOC members)
- June 2024: Meetings with ACOC Chairs and Vice-Chairs (10/14 ACOCs participated)
- July 2024: Meetings with members of the City Council (7/13 members participated)
- September 2024: Meetings with all impacted General Managers / departmental staff
- October 2024 – January 2025: Getting feedback from existing ACOCs

The Guelph Lab has recommended seven ACOCs to support the City's strategic priorities and public engagement efforts from 2025 onwards.

Details of Each Proposed Advisory Committees

Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) will continue to advise in support of the Strategic Plan objective of removing barriers by integrating Guelph's Equity Lens into everything the City do, in addition to its statutory duties under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. While the mandate of the AAC is not proposed to change significantly, the terms of reference for the AAC will be reviewed and updated.

Heritage Advisory Committee

The Heritage Advisory Committee will continue to advise on matters related to architectural heritage as defined in the Ontario Heritage Act. While the mandate of the Heritage Advisory Committee is not proposed to change significantly, the terms of reference will be reviewed and updated.

Planning, Environment, and Water Advisory Committee

The proposed Planning, Environment and Water Advisory Committee is formed by merging the Planning Advisory Committee (statutory) with the Water Conservation and Efficiency Public Advisory Committee, the Natural Heritage Advisory

Committee, and some aspects of the Waste Resource Innovation Centre Public Liaison Advisory Committee. This ACOC will provide advice on a variety of environmental issues connected to the Environment pillar of the Strategic Plan while also fulfilling the statutory requirements of the Planning Advisory Committee.

Arts and Culture Advisory Committee

The proposed Arts and Culture Advisory Committee combines the Guelph Museums Advisory Committee (statutory) with the Public Art Advisory Committee. This ACOC will meet the legislative requirements of the Museum Advisory Committee, while also providing strategic advice on the Culture Plan 2030 and the making downtown a vibrant space objective of the Strategic Plan. Some existing operational responsibilities of the Public Art Advisory Committee will be shifted to sub-committees of this ACOC, to other forms of engagement, or to staff to accommodate this expanded mandate.

Transportation and Mobility Advisory Committee

The proposed Transportation and Mobility Advisory Committee expands the existing Transit Advisory Committee to include other forms of transportation. This ACOC will provide strategic advice and community feedback regarding the implementation of the Transportation Master Plan, the Guelph Transit Future Ready Action Plan and the Strategic Plan objective to “make it easier to get around” in Guelph.

Business Development Advisory Committee (tentative name)

The proposed Business Development Advisory Committee is formed by merging the Guelph Economic Development Advisory Committee and Tourism Advisory Committee and amending the majority of the composition to include business representatives. This ACOC will provide strategic advice regarding the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy as well as “the growth of Guelph’s economy” and “make downtown a vibrant place for everyone” objectives of the Strategic Plan.

Committee of Adjustment and Property Standards Committee

The membership of the Committee of Adjustment and Property Standards Committee will be merged, while the mandates of each committee remain distinct to ensure legislative compliance. The new combined committee will fulfill all statutory requirements and create efficiency by consolidating the City’s two quasi-judicial committees.

Financial Implications

Based on the Governance Framework and the proposed list of ACOCs, the existing resources, particularly the number of staff required to provide full procedural and administrative support to seven ACOCs, are inadequate. To provide a full range of support to seven ACOCs, funding to cover an additional staff position, associated training, remuneration, reimbursement for mileage, transportation, childcare, etc. is needed. If an additional staff position is not approved in 2025, the City Clerk’s Office can only support statutory ACOCs. All other ACOCs would be disbanded (to comply with the resourcing requirements in the Governance Framework).

Attachments

Attachment-1 [12 Dec] ACOCs Updates at Committee of Adjustment

Departmental Approval

Dylan McMahon, Acting General Manager, City Clerk's Office / City Clerk

Report Author

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Winnie Chan, Board and Committee Coordinator

This report was approved by:

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