

# Staff Report



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To	<b>Committee of the Whole</b>
Service Area	Corporate Services
Date	Tuesday, March 4, 2025
Subject	<b>Redesigning Advisory Committees of Council – Final Report</b>

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## Recommendation

1. That the Accessibility Advisory Committee Terms of Reference, included as Attachment-1 to report 2025-50, be approved.
2. That the Heritage Advisory Committee Terms of Reference, included as Attachment-2 to report 2025-50, be approved.
3. That the Planning, Environment and Water Advisory Committee Terms of Reference, included as Attachment-3 to report 2025-50, be approved.
4. That the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee Terms of Reference, included as Attachment-4 to report 2025-50, be approved.
5. That the Transportation Advisory Committee Terms of Reference, included as Attachment-5 to report 2025-50, be approved.
6. That the Economic Development and Tourism Advisory Committee Terms of Reference, included as Attachment-6 to report 2025-50, be approved.
7. That the Committee of Adjustment and Property Standards Committee Terms of Reference, included as Attachment-7 to report 2025-50, be approved.
8. That the Advisory Committee of Council - Administration Policy be repealed, as described in report 2025-50.
9. That the Advisory Committees of Council – Meeting Procedures, included as Attachment-8 to report 2025-50, be approved.
10. That the Advisory Committees of Council – Public Appointment Policy, included as Attachment-9 to report 2025-50, be approved.
11. That the following Advisory Committees of Council be dissolved, following the appointment of members to, and the first meeting of, the newly created Advisory Committees of Council:
  - Committee of Adjustment
  - Guelph Economic Development Advisory Committee
  - Guelph Museums Advisory Committee
  - Natural Heritage Advisory Committee
  - Planning Advisory Committee
  - Property Standards Committee
  - Public Art Advisory Committee
  - Tourism Advisory Committee

- Transit Advisory Committee
  - Water Conservation and Efficiency Public Advisory Committee
12. That the Waste Resource Innovation Centre Public Liaison Committee be dissolved, following the appointment of members to, and the first meeting of, the newly created Planning, Environment and Water Advisory Committee and the approval of the updated Public Liaison Committee Terms of Reference by the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks.
13. That the Municipal Property and Commemorative Naming Committee be dissolved, following its transition to an alternative form of community engagement.
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## **Executive Summary**

### **Purpose of Report**

To seek City Council's approval of the proposed list of seven Advisory Committees of Council (ACOCs), and to dissolve the current 14 ACOCs, as the culmination of Phase Two of the Redesigning ACOCs project. All 14 current ACOCs have reviewed this proposal and passed resolutions supporting the changes. The details of those resolutions, and additional feedback from ACOCs, are included in the body of this report.

### **Key Findings**

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

1. Accessibility Advisory Committee (statutory)
2. Heritage Advisory Committee (discretionary, but with statutory regulations once established)

#### **Recommended new/revised ACOCs:**

3. Planning, Environment and Water Advisory Committee (planning is a statutory component, environment and water are discretionary)
4. Arts and Culture Advisory Committee (there is statutory component regarding the Guelph Museum, arts and culture more broadly is discretionary)
5. Transportation Advisory Committee (discretionary)
6. Economic Development and Tourism Advisory Committee (discretionary)

#### **Recommended merged ACOCs:**

7. Committee of Adjustment and Property Standards Committee (statutory)

#### **ACOCs recommended to shift to alternative forms of community engagement**

1. Municipal Property and Building Commemorative Naming Committee
2. Waste Resource Innovation Centre Public Liaison Committee

### **Strategic Plan Alignment**

The Redesigning ACOCs project aligns with the foundations theme and lead with accountability objective of the Strategic Plan, and specifically the sub-objective to review the continued effectiveness of City Council and ACOC processes.

## **Future Guelph Theme**

Foundations

## **Future Guelph Objectives**

Foundations: Lead with accountability

## **Financial Implications**

No new financial resources are recommended through this report.

Funding for a Board and Committee Coordinator to support the newly created ACOCs was included in the 2025 confirmed budget and the annualization of that funding has been respectfully requested to be included in the 2026 budget update. City Council has also respectfully requested that \$50 thousand be added in 2026 for ACOC member expense reimbursements such as mileage, childcare, meals, etc. and training.

Staff will consider whether additional resources may be required to fully implement the proposed framework as part of the 2028 – 2031 multi-year budget cycle.

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## **Report**

In January 2023, the City of Guelph Clerk's Office, in collaboration with the Guelph Lab, initiated Phase One of the Redesigning ACOCs project. The goal of the project was to provide City Council with recommendations to improve the effectiveness of ACOCs and to ensure that ACOCs serve the needs of residents, City Council, and the City. Phase Two of the project was initiated in early 2025 and was led by City staff.

### **Phase One**

Phase One of the project culminated in November 2023 with City Council's approval of the [ACOC Governance Framework](#) (the Framework). The Framework was informed by a series of robust research and community engagement activities, including an online survey of 50 ACOC members, interviews with seven ACOC members, eight Council members, 20 City staff and five staff from other municipalities. The process also involved three community engagement sessions, including a dinner with 32 residents from equity-deserving groups who participated in a discussion about how to make ACOC membership more inclusive. Eight current ACOC members from seven different advisory committees formed a working group, volunteering to participate in a series of four meetings in the summer of 2023, to provide ideas and feedback during the development of the Framework. The Framework guides the City of Guelph regarding the creation and operation of ACOCs as a community engagement tool.

In summary, the Framework:

- moves ACOCs away from providing technical advice, toward higher-level policy making
- improves the reporting relationship with City Council and City Staff, highlighting the importance of transparency in reporting
- includes an evaluation process for each ACOC over a four-year cycle tied to the term of office of City Council
- devises recruitment strategies to attract a more diverse candidate pool, including the future use of representative random sampling

- provides adequate resources to assist ACOCs for long-term success in fulfilling their objectives and mandates

## **Phase Two**

Phase two of the project was the application of the Framework to current ACOCs. City of Guelph staff reviewed current ACOCs based on the Framework and resources allocated by City Council. Phase two included robust engagement with current ACOCs, ACOC members, City Council and City staff. The following is a summary of that engagement:

- January 2024: two information sessions on the Framework and phase two of the project
- February – April 2024: meetings with all 14 current ACOCs to solicit their feedback on how their ACOC contributes to the City’s strategic goals
- June 2024: two workshops with ACOCs chairs and vice-chairs to explore different scenarios for the future of their ACOCs and to discuss other priority topics or themes that could benefit from the advice of an ACOC (chairs and/or vice-chairs from 10/14 current ACOCs participated)
- July 2024: small group meetings with members of City Council to seek their views and recommendations for the future of ACOCs, and in particular to receive City Council member perspectives on topics faced by the City that would benefit from the ongoing, considered advice of an ACOC and how each current ACOC could continue, adapt, combine, or shift to other forms of community (7/13 members of City Council participated)
- October – December 2024: meetings with all 14 current ACOCs to solicit their feedback, recommendations and endorsement of the proposed changes to their ACOC

All impacted General Managers and/or departmental staff, as well as current ACOCs, unanimously support the proposed ACOC changes included in this report. Their feedback and motions have been included in the following section.

## **Details of Each Proposed ACOC and Resolutions passed by relevant current ACOCs**

### **Accessibility Advisory Committee**

The Accessibility Advisory Committee will continue to advise City Council and City staff in support of the Strategic Plan objective of removing barriers by integrating Guelph’s Equity Lens into everything the City does, in addition to its statutory duties under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. While the mandate of the Accessibility Advisory Committee is not proposed to change significantly, the terms of reference have been reviewed and updated for consistency with the Framework, City policies, provincial legislation and the Strategic Plan.

The Accessibility Advisory Committee passed the following resolutions on [December 17, 2024](#) in support of the proposed changes:

1. That Accessibility Advisory Committee recommends to City Council the continuation of the Accessibility Advisory Committee mandate.
2. The Accessibility Advisory Committee recommends to City Council that the Accessibility Advisory Committee be involved in a review of documents and mandates as outlined in the motions passed during item 3.1 of the October 2024 Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting.

Resolution two noted above relates to several motions passed by the Accessibility Advisory Committee on [October 17, 2024](#). More information on those resolutions, and the staff response, is included in the 2025 Governance Review going to Committee of the Whole on March 4, 2025.

The proposed Accessibility Advisory Committee Terms of Reference are included as Attachment-1.

### **Heritage Advisory Committee**

Heritage Guelph will continue to advise on matters related to architectural heritage as defined in the Ontario Heritage Act, and will be renamed the Heritage Advisory Committee for clarity and consistency. While the mandate of the Heritage Advisory Committee is not proposed to change significantly, the terms of reference have been reviewed and updated for consistency with the Framework, City policies, provincial legislation and the Strategic Plan.

Heritage Guelph passed the following resolutions on [November 4, 2024](#) in support of the proposed changes:

1. That Heritage Guelph recommends to City Council the continuation of the Heritage Guelph mandate as the Heritage Advisory Committee, that the Terms of Reference does not reduce Heritage Guelph's current workload, and that the final Terms of Reference be reviewed by Heritage Guelph in advance of Council approval.
2. That the environmental pillar from the strategic plan be recognized as part of Heritage Guelph's mandate.

Regarding resolution one, City staff did not bring the final copy of revised terms of reference back to any of the 14 current ACOCs because doing so would have added an additional 3-4 months to the project, which itself has already exceeded two years in duration. In keeping with the Framework, City staff sought to engage with ACOCs on the higher order strategic policy decision of whether to make specific changes to ACOC mandates. Staff then took that advice when drafting the relevant terms of reference.

Regarding resolution two, the Environment pillar of the Strategic Plan is included in the proposed Heritage Advisory Committee Terms of Reference.

The proposed Heritage Advisory Committee Terms of Reference are included as Attachment-2.

### **Planning, Environment, and Water Advisory Committee**

The proposed Planning, Environment and Water Advisory Committee is formed by merging the Planning Advisory Committee 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.

The four ACOCs noted above all passed resolutions in support of the proposed changes:

Planning Advisory Committee ([October 16, 2024](#))

1. That the Planning Advisory Committee recommends to City Council the creation of a Planning, Environment and Water Advisory Committee.

Waste Resource Innovation Centre Public Liaison Advisory Committee ([October 17, 2024](#))

1. That the Waste Resource Innovation Centre Public Liaison Advisory Committee (WRIC PLC) recommends to City Council the creation of a Planning, Environment and Water Advisory Committee.
2. That the WRIC PLC recommends to City Council to transition the statutory elements of the WRIC PLC to an alternate form of engagement.

Water Conservation and Efficiency Public Advisory Committee ([November 7, 2024](#))

1. The Water Conservation and Efficiency Public Advisory Committee recommends to City Council the creation of a Planning, Environment and Water Advisory Committee.

Natural Heritage Advisory Committee ([December 2, 2024](#))

1. That the Natural Heritage Advisory Committee recommends to City Council the creation of a Planning, Environment and Water Advisory Committee.

The proposed Planning, Environment, and Water Advisory Committee Terms of Reference are included as Attachment-3.

### **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 and expands the mandate to also include strategic advice on the Culture Plan 2030 and the making downtown a vibrant space objective of the Strategic Plan. Some current operational responsibilities of the Public Art Advisory Committee will be shifted to subcommittees of this ACOC, to other forms of engagement, or to staff to ensure the workload of the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee is reasonable given the expanded mandate.

The Guelph Museums Advisory Committee and the Public Art Advisory Committee passed resolutions in support of the proposed changes:

Guelph Museums Advisory Committee ([October 24, 2024](#))

1. That the Guelph Museums Advisory Committee recommends to City Council the creation of an Arts and Culture Advisory Committee.

Public Art Advisory Committee ([December 12, 2024](#))

1. That the Public Art Advisory Committee recommends to City Council the creation of an Arts and Culture Advisory Committee.

The proposed Arts and Culture Advisory Committee Terms of Reference are included as Attachment-4.

### **Transportation Advisory Committee**

The proposed Transportation Advisory Committee expands the mandate of the current Transit Advisory Committee to include other forms of transportation. This ACOC will provide strategic advice regarding the implementation of the Transportation Master Plan, the Guelph Transit Future Ready Action Plan, Guelph Transit Fare Strategy, Cycling Master Plan, Parking plans and policies, Vision Zero

Guelph - Action Plan for Safe Streets, Downtown Parking Master Plan and the Strategic Plan objective to make it easier to get around in Guelph.

The Transit Advisory Committee passed the following resolution on [November 21, 2024](#) in support of the proposed changes:

1. That the Transit Advisory Committee recommends to City Council the creation of the Transportation Advisory Committee, with 11 members, including representation from the University Administration, Central Student Association, GWTFPE and consideration of other relevant community groups.

The recommendations of the Transit Advisory Committee noted above have been fully incorporated in the proposed terms of reference.

The proposed Transportation Advisory Committee Terms of Reference are included as Attachment-5.

### **Economic Development and Tourism Advisory Committee**

The proposed Economic Development and Tourism Advisory Committee is formed by merging the Guelph Economic Development Advisory Committee and Tourism Advisory Committee. 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.

The Tourism Advisory Committee and Guelph Economic Development Advisory Committee both passed resolutions in support of the proposed changes:

Tourism Advisory Committee ([October 30, 2024](#))

1. That the Tourism Advisory Committee recommends to City Council the creation of the Business Development Advisory Committee.

Guelph Economic Development Advisory Committee ([December 10, 2024](#))

1. That the Guelph Economic Development Advisory Committee recommends to City Council the creation of the Economic Development and Tourism Advisory Committee.

The Guelph Economic Development Advisory Committee also recommended including members from the business, not-for-profit and charity sectors, as well as residents who have professional experience contributing to Guelph's economic development and tourism strategic priorities. Those inputs are reflected in the Economic Development and Tourism Advisory Committee Terms of Reference.

The proposed Economic Development and Tourism Advisory Committee Terms of Reference are included as Attachment-6.

### **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.

The Property Standards Committee and Committee of Adjustment passed resolutions in support of the proposed changes:

Property Standards Committee ([December 5, 2024](#))

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

Committee of Adjustment ([December 12, 2024](#))

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

The proposed Committee of Adjustment and Property Standards Committee Terms of Reference are included as Attachment-7.

## **ACOC Policy Changes**

### **ACOC Administration Policy**

City staff are recommending the repeal of the ACOC Administration Policy as it has been replaced by the Framework approved by City Council in 2023.

### **ACOC Meeting Procedures**

The ACOC Meeting Procedures, included as Attachment-8, has been updated to ensure consistency with the Framework and the Procedure By-law and to clarify ambiguous language. No significant policy changes have been made.

### **ACOC Public Appointments Policy**

The ACOC Public Appointments Policy, included as Attachment-9, has been updated to ensure consistency with the Framework and to clarify ambiguous language. No significant policy changes have been made.

## **ACOCs recommended to shift to alternative forms of community engagement**

### **Municipal Property and Building Commemorative Naming Committee**

The Municipal Property and Commemorative Naming Committee is recommended to transition into a different form of engagement, as needed. This committee is not required by provincial legislation, nor is it directly linked to priorities listed in the Strategic Plan. City Council members, chairs and vice-Chairs and committee members support a transition of responsibilities from an ACOC to an alternative form of community engagement.

The Municipal Property and Commemorative Naming Committee has passed the following resolution on [December 11, 2024](#) in support of the proposed changes:

1. That the Municipal Property and Building Commemorative Naming Committee recommends to City Council transitioning the Municipal Property and Building Commemorative Naming Committee to an alternative form of community engagement.

### **Waste Resource Innovation Centre Public Liaison Committee**

The broader environmental aspects of the Waste Resources Innovation Centre and Public Liaison Committee (WRICPLC) mandate are proposed to transition to the Planning, Environment, and Water advisory committee. The remaining components of the WRICPLC mandate will be transitioned into an alternate form of engagement. Provincial legislation requires that the City establish a public liaison committee to consult residents living near waste facilities on operational aspects of the site. An

ACOC appointed by City Council, however, is not a requirement. Accordingly, staff recommend that the statutory components of the WRICPLC be met through an alternative form of community engagement.

The current WRICPLC passed the following motion on [October 17, 2024](#) in support of the proposed changes:

1. That the WRIC PLC recommends to City Council to transition the statutory elements of the WRIC PLC to an alternate form of engagement.

### **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

As part of this project, there were several discussions about the possibility of a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Advisory Committee. The challenge of a single ACOC focused on DEI is that DEI intersects with all aspects of City operations. Instead of a single ACOC, staff are recommending the inclusion of the Strategic Plan Foundations pillar sub-objective of 'remove barriers by integrating Guelph's equity lens into everything we do' in all ACOC terms of reference. By doing so, City Council is signaling its expectation that all ACOCs consider diversity, equity and inclusion in the context of their specific mandate.

### **Housing and Homelessness**

As part of this project, there were several discussions about the possibility of a housing and homelessness focused ACOC. While a desire for more community engagement on these important topics is understandable, there are various dimensions of the housing and homelessness crisis which make it difficult for an ACOC to have a real impact. As an example, while an ACOC can provide advice to City Council, it is the County of Wellington that is the City's consolidated social services manager for Ontario Works and housing.

The City regularly conducts community engagement regarding efforts to increase the supply of housing and affordable housing (on the Housing Affordable Strategy, for example). As a result, City staff are not recommending the creation of an ACOC focused on housing and homelessness.

### **Next Steps**

- April 2025: public recruitment for positions on all seven proposed ACOCs
- April – May 2025: review of applications
- May 27, 2025: City Council meeting to appoint ACOC members
- June – September 2025: First meetings of ACOCs, including City Clerk's Office and departmental orientation and training

### **Financial Implications**

No new financial resources are recommended through this report.

The 2025 budget includes funding to hire a Board and Committee Coordinator to support the newly created ACOCs recommended in this report. That position is scheduled to be hired in Q3 2025, and the annualization of this funding has been respectfully requested to be included in the 2026 budget update. City Council has also respectfully requested that \$50 thousand be added in 2026 for ACOC member expense reimbursements such as mileage, childcare, meals, etc. and training.

There are components of the Framework which remain unfunded within the 2024-2027 budget. Understanding the financial pressures the City is under, City staff do not plan to bring forward additional funding requests related to ACOCs within that

time period. As part of the 2028-2031 multi-year budget, staff will consider how best to resource and implement the remaining components of the Framework.

## **Consultations and Engagement**

The following is an overview of the engagement conducted as part of phase two of the Redesigning ACOCs project.

### **Information sessions:**

Two information sessions on the Framework were held for ACOC members and staff liaisons.

### **First Meeting with all ACOCs:**

Meetings with all 14 current ACOCs from February – April 2024 to discuss their contribution to the City’s Strategic Plan, Community Plan and other City plans and policies.

### **Sessions for Chairs and Vice-chairs:**

Chairs and vice-chairs from ten current ACOCs attended (out of 14) to discuss different scenarios for the future of their ACOCs and other priority topics or themes that could benefit from the advice of an ACOC.

### **Sessions for City Council members:**

Seven members of City Council attended sessions to offer feedback on topics they believed to be most suitable and important for ACOCs to consider.

### **Second Meeting with all ACOCs:**

Meetings with all 14 current ACOCs from October - December 2024 to seek their endorsement of the proposed changes to ACOCs. All 14 ACOCs recommended to City Council the approval of the proposed changes.

## **Attachments**

Attachment-1 Accessibility Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

Attachment-2 Heritage Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

Attachment-3 Planning, Environment, and Water Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

Attachment-4 Arts and Culture Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

Attachment-5 Transportation Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

Attachment-6 Economic Development and Tourism Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

Attachment-7 Committee of Adjustment and Property Standards Committee Terms of Reference

Attachment-8 Advisory Committee of Council - Meeting Procedures

Attachment-9 Advisory Committee of Council - Public Appointment Policy

## **Departmental Approval**

Danna Evans, General Manager, Culture and Recreation

Terry Gayman, General Manager, Engineering and Transportation Services/City Engineer

Doug Godfrey, General Manager, Operations

James Goodram, General Manager, Economic Development and Tourism

Glenn Marcus, Acting General Manager, Guelph Transit

Jodie Sales, General Manager, Strategic Initiatives and Intergovernmental Services

Nectar Tampacopoulos, General Manager, Environmental Services

Antti Vilkkö, General Manager, Facilities and Energy Management

Krista Walkey, General Manager, Planning and Building Services

### **Report Author**

Winnie Chan, Board and Committee Coordinator

### **This report was approved by:**

Dylan McMahon

Acting General Manager, City Clerk's Office / City Clerk  
Corporate Services

519-822-1260 extension 2811

dylan.mcmahon@guelph.ca

### **This report was recommended by:**

Trevor Lee

Deputy Chief Administrative Officer  
Corporate Services

519-822-1260 extension 2281

trevor.lee@guelph.ca