

# Staff Report



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To	<b>Committee of the Whole</b>
Service Area	Corporate Services
Date	Tuesday, November 4, 2025
Subject	<b>Diversity Plan for the Guelph Police Service Board</b>

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## Recommendation

1. That the Diversity Plan for the Guelph Police Service Board, included as Attachment-1 to report 2025-470, be approved.
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## Executive Summary

### Purpose of Report

The Community Safety and Policing Act (CSPA) requires that City Council approve a diversity plan to ensure that the members of the Guelph Police Service (GPS) Board appointed by the municipality are representative of the diversity of the population in the municipality.

### Key Findings

The GPS Board is comprised of five members as follows:

- Two members appointed by the Province of Ontario
- The Mayor of the City of Guelph
- One member of City Council appointed by City Council
- One member of the public appointed by City Council

Section 28 of the CSPA requires that each municipality approve a diversity plan to ensure that local appointments are representative of the diversity of the population. Guelph City Council is responsible for two appointments to the GPS Board. One of those appointments must be a member of City Council.

To ensure diversity amongst the two members of the GPS Board appointed by City Council, City staff are recommending that the Diversity Plan for the GPS Board, included as Attachment-1, be approved.

### Strategic Plan Alignment

The Diversity Plan for the GPS Board supports the Future Guelph Strategic Plan objective of supporting community well-being by advancing the community plan value of inclusiveness.

## **Future Guelph Theme**

People and Economy

## **Future Guelph Objectives**

People and Economy: Support community well-being

## **Financial Implications**

None.

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## **Report**

The GPS Board plays a vital role in overseeing law enforcement and ensuring public safety. A Board that reflects the community's diversity strengthens public trust and legitimacy – key elements of effective policing. This principle underlies the unique requirement to maintain a diversity plan, a provision not mandated for other local boards.

### **GPS Board Composition and City Council Appointments**

The GPS Board is comprised of five members as follows:

- Two members appointed by the Province of Ontario
- The Mayor of the City of Guelph
- One member of City Council appointed by City Council
- One member of the public appointed by City Council

This composition is set by the Province through the CSPA and the Province itself is responsible for appointing two out of the five members. Of the remaining three positions, two are the responsibility of City Council (one member of City Council and one member of the public) and one appointment is selected by Guelph residents through the election of the Mayor, who sits on the GPS Board by virtue of office. This composition, which is mandated in the CSPA, limits City Council's ability to affect the overall diversity of the GPS Board.

The CSPA acknowledges this by indicating that the requirement for a municipal diversity plan applies only to members 'appointed by the municipality'. To that end, the Diversity Plan for the GPS Board applies only to the selection of one member of City Council (other than the Mayor) and one member of the public.

### **The Diversity Plan for the GPS Board Should Mirror the Approach Taken for Advisory Committees of Council**

The City has been working to increase the diversity of Advisory Committees of Council (ACOCs) for several years. Staff are recommending that City Council adopt the same approach for GPS Board appointments as ACOC appointments. That includes asking for self-disclosure of demographic data on application forms and prioritizing applicants from equity seeking groups, while remaining consistent with the skills needed on the GPS Board.

## **Diversity Plan for the GPS Board**

The Diversity Plan for the GPS Board, if approved, requires that City Council consider the demographic characteristics of individuals who apply to serve. The processes included in the Diversity Plan mirror those already used by City Council to appoint members of the public to ACOCs.

These processes require that City Council and City staff:

- Seek voluntary disclosure of demographic data from applicants interested in joining the GPS Board (including members of City Council).
- Consider the diversity of the GPS Board as it stands at the time of appointment.
- Prioritize the appointment of diverse candidates, where applicant skills are consistent with the needs of the GPS Board.

Because the GPS Board has only five members, and City Council appoints only two, it is not possible for the municipal appointees to be consistently representative of the broader community in all categories (gender, disability, indigeneity and ethnicity). Further complicating City Council's ability to appoint diverse candidates is the requirement that one of the two municipal appointments be a member of City Council. As City Council is selected by the electorate, there is no direct control over the diversity available on City Council.

Those limitations, however, do not change the fact that the GPS Board ought to be broadly representative of Guelph's residents. Although City Council does not have total control over the Board appointments, it can still meaningfully enhance representation through the two appointments it does oversee.

## **Financial Implications**

None.

## **Consultations and Engagement**

Gordon Cobey, Chief of Police, Guelph Police Service

Guelph Police Service Board

## **Attachments**

Attachment-1 Diversity Plan for the Guelph Police Service Board

## **Departmental Approval**

Sara Sayyed, Senior Advisor, Equity, Anti-Racism and Indigenous Initiatives

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