



**Council Member Motion  
For the Committee of the Whole Meeting of January 9, 2025**

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**To:** Committee of the Whole  
**From:** Mayor Alto  
**Subject:** Committees

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**Date:** January 02, 2025

**Background**

The City of Victoria has established and supported many committees over the years, some of which are advisory to the city, some of which create liaison between the city and various aspects and sectors of community. Most have been aligned with and reflect the strategic priorities of the council of the day.

City committees must conform to the current Council Committee Establishment Policy and the current Committee Terms of Reference Policy, in which criteria must be met, such as:

- a) A clear mandate must be articulated to address an emergent issue or problem the committee is being contemplated to address;
- b) The mandate must be aligned with at least one of Council's current Strategic Plan objectives;
- c) The mandate must fulfil a need for stakeholder advice for Council.

Council determines the mandate of advisory committees, and appoints and may remove members from advisory committees. As noted in current city policy, members of Council may not be regular members of advisory committees.

The following committees are currently or recently active:

- The Accessibility Advisory Committee comments on new provincial accessibility legislation to inform City planning and program changes.
- The Advisory Design Panel advises on the design merits of plans (Rezoning and Development Permits).
- The Board of Variance reviews appeals for minor variances where compliance with the Zoning Regulation Bylaw would cause undue hardship.
- The Citizens' Assembly Council Committee advises staff on the Saanich-Victoria Citizens' Assembly process on amalgamation.
- The City of Victoria Youth Council offers opportunities for civic engagement for youth on issues and initiatives in Victoria.

- The Heritage Advisory Panel makes recommendations to the Committee of the Whole respecting the designation of heritage buildings, structures and lands, and the preservation, alteration, renovation or demolition of heritage buildings, structures, or lands.
- The International Decade for People of African Descent Advisory Committee acknowledges and recognizes the International Decade for People of African Decent (2015-2024) for the purpose of promoting respect, protection and fulfillment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of people of African descent, as recognized in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.
- The Welcoming City Advisory Committee advises on the Welcoming City Strategy, to remove barriers to City services and foster a compassionate and neighbourly community where all residents are encouraged to participate in civic life.

The following committees are no longer active, primarily due to their purposes being accomplished, their timelines concluded and/or their mandates completed.

- The Active Transportation Advisory Committee provided ongoing input on the implementation of active transportation initiatives in the community.
- The Art in Public Places Committee proposed and supported activities, initiatives and events that benefit and advance art in the City.
- External Grant Review Committee reviewed all the Strategic Plan Grant applications and makes recommendations on which of the proposed community programs and/or projects should receive funding.
- The Renters' Advisory Committee provided advice and recommendations on policies to protect and improve the quality and affordability of existing rental stock and to improve conditions and well-being for renters living within Victoria.
- The Seniors Task Force's purpose was to inform the development of the City's Seniors Action Plan.
- The Urban Food Table brought together organizations, groups and individuals to work together to support increased urban food production as an important part of developing a healthy, ecological and sustainable food system in Victoria.

## Active Committees

With regard to the currently or recently active committees, some context may be helpful.

The Advisory Design Panel and the Heritage Advisory Panel are essentially “standing” committees of the city, appointments to which are made individually and specifically considering candidate qualifications needed for their duties and responsibilities.

The Board of Variance is a committee established by the province but whose members are appointed by the city, the latter of which has no authority over the Board's mandate or authority.

The Citizens' Assembly Council Committee remains active until a report is received from the Citizens' Assembly, expected in late spring 2025. This committee is *ad hoc* and acts whenever needed to share information from the Assembly with Council. Council appointees to this committee have recently been confirmed.

Existing Council policy limits Council committee establishment and operation to each Council term, and to the committee's relationship to the current Council's Strategic Plan. In that light, the following committees relate specifically to the current Council's Strategic Plan priorities and as such are proposed to remain in place until October 2026, (to coincide with the completion of this Council's term) with no changes to their terms of reference except updates to any reference to an end date, and any other changes as noted or required to meet the conditions of the current Committee Establishment Policy and the Committee Terms of Reference Policy:

The Accessibility Advisory Committee. The AAC responds to the provincial government's requirement for consideration of accessibility issues and responds to Council's Strategic Plan community wellbeing and safety priorities. No changes to this committee are proposed.

The Advisory Design Panel. The ADP provides expert advice on the merits of future city design, complementing the current strategic plan's housing and community wellbeing priorities. No changes to this committee are proposed.

The Board of Variance. The BoV is required by provincial regulation. No changes to this committee are proposed.

The Citizens' Assembly Council Committee. The CACC complements the independent Assembly and acts as a liaison as needed until any recommendations of the Assembly are received and considered by Council. No changes to this committee are proposed.

The City of Victoria Youth Council. The CVYC provides a living mechanic for interaction between the city and younger Victorians. While maintaining its existence, the recommendation below suggests an amendment to the CVYC's Terms of Reference to include a quarterly report to City Council from the Council liaison to the CVYC.

The Heritage Advisory Panel. The HAP provides expert advice on land use developments with a heritage impact, complementing the current strategic plan's housing and community wellbeing priorities. No changes to this committee are proposed.

The International Decade for People of African Descent Advisory Committee. While the original term of the UN Declaration of the Decade has very recently expired (2015-2024), the federal government has extended its acknowledgment of this initiative to 2028. While the term of this committee expired December 31, 2024, and its Terms of Reference note it is to be disbanded at that date, extending IDPAD to October 2026 recognizes federal government policy and complements the city's current strategic plan's accessibility, equity, diversity and inclusion policies. Should the IDPAD request a Council Liaison, to support the relationship with Council, one may be appointed.

The Welcoming City Advisory Committee. The WCAC advised on the Welcoming City Strategy which intended to remove barriers to City services and foster a compassionate and neighbourly community. While the term of this committee expired in October 2024, extending WCAC to October 2026 complements the city's current strategic plan's accessibility, equity, diversity and inclusion policies. Should the WCAC request a Council Liaison, to support the relationship with Council, one may be appointed.

## **Inactive Committees**

With regard to the recently active and inactive committees, considering existing Council policy limits Council committee establishment and operation to each Council term and requires a clear relationship to the current Council's Strategic Plan, the following committees do not relate to the current Council's Strategic Plan priorities, or have completed their mandate, and as such are proposed to remain inactive or conclude:

The Active Transportation Advisory Committee concluded its mandate, its advice and recommendations incorporated into ongoing city policies.

The Art in Public Places Committee has been brought "in-house", its purpose currently being accomplished by city staff while consideration of an emphasis on local Indigenous art is contemplated.

The External Grant Review Committee has been replaced by the city's new Major Grants Initiative.

The Seniors Task Force's purpose was to inform the development of the City's Seniors Action Plan. That plan has been completed and its recommendations incorporated into city policies.

## **Inactive Committees Relevant to the Current Strategic Plan**

While inactive, these committees could be reimagined to offer advice relevant to the current strategic plan while considering the practical realities of their capacity:

The Renters' Advisory Committee has been inactive for some time. It grappled with capacity and members' attendance. To acknowledge the significance of renters' contributions to the city, and the importance of renters' concerns, the Mayor's office could explore the Victoria Tenants' Union's (VTU) interest and capacity to share advice and suggestions to Council on renters' issues. If the VTU is agreeable, City Council would receive a quarterly update from the VTU on the needs, observations, and policy recommendations of renters, with modest annual compensation to the VTU for their time. Should the Victoria Tenants Union request a Council Liaison, to support the relationship with Council, one may be appointed.

The Urban Food Table (UFT) has continued to meet without city participation, brought together by community interests. UFT convenes organizations, groups and individuals to work together to support increased urban food production as an important part of developing a healthy, ecological, and sustainable food system in Victoria. To support this work and increase Council's awareness of food security and food systems, the Mayor's office could explore the Urban Food Table's interest and capacity to regularly share advice and suggestions for Council. If the UFT is agreeable, City Council would receive a quarterly report from the Urban Food Table on the state of food systems in Victoria, with modest compensation to the Urban Food Table for their time. The UFT would remain an independent forum of community members, meeting at their own discretion. Should the UFT request a Council Liaison, to support the relationship with Council, one may be appointed.

## **Committee Costs**

While committee costs vary, the commitment of community volunteers on Council-created committees\* remains consistent and strong. To ensure equity across Council-created committees, community appointees should receive honouraria for the time spent in attending committee meetings. A recommendation follows that any community member of a Council-created committee receive an honourarium for the time spent attending meetings, based on Victoria's hourly living wage.

\*Thus excluding the ADP, HAP, BoV and appointees to external organizations.

## **Council Liaisons**

Councillors are free to attend any meeting of any committee that interest any Council member, subject to that Committees Terms of reference, understanding that unless formally appointed by Council as a liaison, such attendance is voluntary and does not indicate Council decision-making, support, approval or commitment. No formal Council liaisons are appointed at this time, although such liaison appointments remain optional for several committees.

## **Committee Terms of Reference (ToRs)**

Each committee has existing Terms of Reference which will need to be updated subject to Council consideration of the recommendations included in this report. ToRs should be reviewed and revised by legislative services staff to ensure that such ToRs meet the conditions of the current Committee Establishment Policy, the Committee Terms of Reference Policy, and Council's decisions on these recommendations.

## **Recommendations**

1. That the following city committees remain active until October 2026, with no changes to their Terms of Reference except updates to any reference to an end date, and any other changes noted for each committee or necessary to conform to current Council Committee Establishment Policy and the Committee Terms of Reference Policy:
  - a) The Accessibility Advisory Committee
  - b) The Advisory Design Panel
  - c) The Board of Variance
  - d) The Citizens' Assembly Council Committee
  - e) The City of Victoria Youth Council, with an amendment to its Terms of Reference to include a quarterly report to City Council from the Council liaison to the CVYC
  - f) The Heritage Advisory Panel
  - g) The International Decade for People of African Descent Advisory Committee
  - h) The Welcoming City Advisory Committee.
  
2. That the following city committees be officially retired, concluded and/or "sunsetting", effective immediately:
  - a) The Active Transportation Advisory Committee
  - b) The Arts in Public Places Committee
  - c) The External Grant Review Committee

- d) The Seniors Task Force
3. That Council:
- a) directs the Mayor to explore the Victoria Tenants Union’s interest in presenting quarterly reports to Council with information, observations and policy suggestions, and
  - b) directs that \$250 be paid quarterly to the Victoria Tenants Union.
4. That Council:
- a) directs the Mayor to explore the Urban Food Table’s interest in presenting quarterly reports to Council on the state of food systems in Victoria, with observations and policy suggestions, and
  - b) directs that \$250 be paid quarterly to the Urban Food Table.
5. That all members of a Council-created committee receive an honourarium from the City for the time spent in attending committee meetings, based on Victoria’s hourly living wage.
6. That staff be directed to review and revise Terms of Reference for re-established and re-imagined committees to ensure that such Terms of Reference meet the conditions of the current Committee Establishment Policy and the current Committee Terms of Reference Policy, subject to Council approval of Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and/or 5, above.

Respectfully submitted,



Mayor Alto