



**Council Member Motion**  
**For the Committee of the Whole Meeting of October 22, 2020**

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**To:** Committee of the Whole **Date:** Oct. 12, 2020  
**From:** Councillor Loveday  
**Subject:** Initiating a City of Victoria Governance Review

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**Background:**

The City of Victoria's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan includes a high-level priority of Good Governance and Civic Engagement and a 2021 action to "Complete a Governance Review". By conducting a targeted governance review, informed by Council, city staff, residents, and experts in civic governance, the City of Victoria has an opportunity to better align City processes with the City of Victoria's stated values and vision of inclusion, civic engagement, and good and open governance.

The City of Victoria's last governance review occurred in 2008, conducted by George Cuff, and much has changed since then, including demographic and population shifts, increased complexity of the issues facing Council, technological advances, and a new emphasis on diversity, inclusion, and reconciliation. Conducting a Governance Review in 2021 could help address governance challenges, improve transparency, and set up the next Council, to be elected in 2022, for success. To ensure the Governance Review is rooted in the espoused values of the City of Victoria, it is important that an equity lens is applied to this process.

Key Areas of Consideration for a Governance Review (to be fleshed out and added to through engagement with Council, City Staff, stakeholder groups, and residents):

1. Improving transparency and ensuring accountability  
Considerations:
  - Processes for effective Council decision-making including whose input is received and how that input is considered
  - Ensuring all correspondence and public input is received, read, and responded to appropriately and in a timely fashion
  - Clear definition of roles and responsibilities for Council, CAO, and staff
  - Improving transparency of work undertaken by Councillors on City appointed committees and boards.
  - Further limiting in-camera meetings and pro-active release of information
  - Tracking plans and reports and ensuring implementation of all approved plans
2. Appropriate, consistent, and highly functioning advisory committee structures  
Considerations:
  - The best process for advice and recommendations to flow to and from committees
  - Chairing of committees and role of council liaisons

- Adequate support from City Staff to support committees
  - Ensuring that the time and expertise of committee volunteers is respected and honoured
3. Length, frequency and scheduling of council meetings  
 Considerations:
    - Improving governance and access for residents by shortening the length of meetings and limiting how late meetings can run
    - Ensuring meetings are accessible and inclusive of residents from diverse backgrounds and lived experiences
  4. Technology and the changing nature of work  
 Considerations:
    - Role of virtual meetings and digital participation post-pandemic
    - Changes in governance, and expectations due to technological advances
  5. Respecting public input and building public trust  
 Considerations:
    - Public engagement that meets IAP2 standards
    - Council and staff hear from diverse populations representative of City of Victoria residents
    - Ensuring responsiveness to public correspondence and requests
    - Flexibility of City processes to work within Indigenous protocols and approaches in relationships with the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations and in activities relating to reconciliation efforts
  6. Defining the role Mayor and Councillors  
 Considerations:
    - What is the public expectation of the role(s)
    - What is the role of councillors as a neighbourhood liaison?
    - Is being a Councillor a full or part-time job?
    - If the role of Councillor is a part-time job, what can be done to limit the scope of work, provide support, or streamline processes?
    - If Councillor is full-time, what changes are required to recognize this expectation?
    - How should council evaluate its own performance?
    - Best practices for reviewing Council remuneration

It is recommended that an approach is undertaken that engages the working knowledge of mayor and council, city staff, residents, and an outside consultant with experience and expertise in civic governance. Consultation will be key to success and should occur in stages as the review process progresses. It is important that emerging governance issues can be tracked and considered as consultation advances.

### **Recommendation:**

That Council direct staff to schedule a Council workshop and a separate workshop for residents and stakeholders to provide input to further inform the scope and priorities of a Governance Review and the selection of a consultant;

And That Council direct staff to report back with a proposed work plan and engagement strategy for the Governance Review aligned to the scope outlined in this report and informed by input received at the workshops outlined previously;

And That Council directs staff to report back with a budget estimate for the Governance Review and include that estimate in the 2021 budget for Council's consideration;

And That Council appoints up 3 councillors as a sub-committee to guide the Governance Review process.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Loveday', written in a cursive style.

Councillor Loveday