



City of Victoria

Governance Review

July 18, 2022



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Executive Summary

‘Good governance and civic engagement’ is a strategic initiative in the City of Victoria’s 2019-2022 Strategic Plan, with a governance review identified as part of the 2021/2022 action plan. The City of Victoria engaged MNP LLP to conduct a review of the City’s governance structures and processes to consider ways the current model is working well and how to further enable efficient, effective and inclusive governance.

MNP recommended the scope of the review based on areas of council interest and stakeholder engagement. This report includes findings and recommendations based on the review of current documentation, internal, stakeholder and public engagement, insights from other municipalities across Canada and a scan of contemporary municipal governance practices.

Consistent with Contemporary Practice

The following aspects of the City of Victoria’s governance framework (formal structures and practices) appear to be consistent with or leading the practices of the other jurisdictions reviewed, and support principles of effective municipal governance.

- Established, current bylaws governing Council procedures
- Commitment from Council and the public service to effective, accountable municipal governance
- Open meetings and publicly posted council meeting schedules, agendas, information packages and minutes
- Adaptive response to continue the functions of government and support a rapid recovery from the pandemic
- A regular, predictable meeting schedule
- Active public engagement guided by IAP2 principles
- Deliberate efforts to support equity and inclusion of the diverse communities that make up the City of Victoria
- A commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous people and a respectful, collaborative relationship with neighbouring First Nations
- Use of public advisory bodies to provide advice and recommendations to Council
- A published strategic plan and annual report
- Proactive use of municipal tools to support community well-being
- Council member orientation processes
- Publicly posted information on council remuneration, at a level comparable to other municipalities

Recommendations

A summary of recommendations, high level rationale and required amendments is shown below. More detail regarding rationale and implementation considerations is included in each section of this report.

Recommendation	Rationale	Required Amendment
Section 5.1 Role of Mayor and Council		
1. Consolidate and expressly delegate administrative authority to the City Manager in an updated bylaw.	Efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, accountability	Bylaw 18-106
2. Establish processes for Council education and consensus-building regarding its governance role and relationship to management, and to enable continuous improvement. a) Expand Council orientation to emphasize and allow discussion of the governance responsibilities of Council, delegated authority to the City Manager, and the relationship between Council and management in the Council orientation materials. b) Incorporate an annual discussion of governance with members of Council as a general refresher, to share new insights and leading practices, and to identify opportunities to strengthen the shared understanding of effective governance.	Efficiency, effectiveness, learning	None
3. Establish a Code of Conduct and appoint an Integrity Commissioner.	Transparency, accountability, learning	New Bylaw
4. Consider establishing a policy regarding the City of Victoria's and Council's role in matters beyond core municipal responsibility.	Transparency, accountability, efficiency, effectiveness	New Policy
5. Evaluate the purpose of Council appointments to external Boards and Committees in the context of Council's governance role, general municipal mandate, and workload.	Efficiency and effectiveness	None
6. Amend the terms of reference for Councillor Neighbourhood Liaison to remove the expectation that a member of Council would convey the concerns of the Association to Council and to support an Association in advocating for and representing their priorities to Council	Accountability, transparency, impartiality	Terms of Reference

Recommendation	Rationale	Required Amendment
Section 5.2 Council Remuneration		
1. Adopt the recommendations of the UBCM for review of Council remuneration to be reflected in an updated Council remuneration bylaw to a) Conduct a formal review of base remuneration once per term, ordinarily in the last year of the term to enable adjustments to take effect for the next elected Council, based on an established review framework. b) Continue the use of an annual adjustment to base remuneration based on the change in the CPI for in between years. Include consideration of any significant external factors that may impact remuneration at that time.	Transparency, efficiency, impartiality	Bylaw 08-103
2. Maintain current levels of Council remuneration and apply the next annual adjustment according to the current by law for January 2023, pending completion of a more comprehensive independent task force review.	Accountability, efficiency	None
3. Strike an independent task force to review considerations of time commitment, principles for appropriate comparators and benchmark level (percentile) for an ongoing review framework, per diems for committee appointments and conferences, and diversity.	Transparency, impartiality	None
Section 5.3 Committees and Advisory Bodies		
1. Update Council committees and related processes to comply with bylaws, and to support efficient and effective use, including: a) Update the structure and terms of reference of the Heritage Advisory Committee, Advisory Design Panel, and Advisory Committees with council co-chairs to comply with and appropriately reference the City's bylaws. b) Enable greater transparency regarding City Family. c) Establish a process to review the purpose and mandate of committees with each term of Council as part of the strategic planning and budgeting process. d) Establish a standard policy for committee structure, Council member participation, role to advise council on policy matters,	Transparency, accountability, efficiency, effectiveness	Bylaw 97-104, Terms of Reference

Recommendation	Rationale	Required Amendment
open meetings, public agendas, minutes and staff support, and guidance to enable diverse and equitable participation.		
2. Relieve members of Council from formal appointments as liaisons to advisory committees	Efficiency, effectiveness	Terms of Reference
3. Formalize the expectations of the administration with respect to engaging and supporting Advisory Committees.	Accountability, effectiveness	New Policy
4. Formalize the process for bringing Advisory Committee recommendations to Council.	Accountability, effectiveness	New Policy
5. Publish meeting schedules, agendas and supporting materials for all Council committees.	Transparency	Website
6. Establish a policy for remuneration and to reimburse expenses for public members of Council committees to remove barriers to participation.	Equity and inclusion	New Policy
7. Develop and implement a common orientation process for Advisory Committees	Efficiency, effectiveness	None. Dependent on #6 above
5.4 Council and Committee Decision-making Processes		
1. Review the purpose and use of Committee of the Whole to reduce duplication, enable use of COTW for informal discussion on key issues requiring learning and development of consensus, and to receive public delegations on matters being considered by Council. Enable immediate ratification at Council for all matters concluded at COTW unless Council has identified a clear exception.	Efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, inclusion	Bylaw 16-011
2. Create a separate, distinct meeting for public hearings, and evaluate whether this may be suited for scheduling on a separate day.	Efficiency, effectiveness	Bylaw 16-011
3. Streamline land use matters by delegating more authority to staff where an application is consistent with the OCP and dispensing with public hearings where not required.	Efficiency, effectiveness	Bylaw 16-028
4. Streamline Council agenda materials to include a short, high-level summary of key decision considerations, following by detailed background with user-friendly cross-references.	Efficiency, effectiveness, transparency	None. Encode in procedure

Recommendation	Rationale	Required Amendment
5. Limit submissions to already published agendas to only matters that are determined to be emergent by the Mayor	Efficiency, transparency	Bylaw 16-011
6. Change the process for proclamations such that they are handled under the authority of the Mayor. Dispense with requiring a staff report, COTW review and separate Council decisions on proclamations.	Efficiency	Bylaw 16-011, Policy
7. Consider identifying specific meetings where citizens can bring forward issues that are not related to matters on Council's agenda.	Efficiency, effectiveness	Bylaw 16-011
5.5 Public Access and Input to Decision-Making		
1. Ensure engagement feedback is effectively summarized for Council materials. Include an analysis of how public and advisory committee input is reflected in recommendations to Council and the public report of what was heard.	Efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, accountability	Engagement Framework
2. Incorporate the principles for equitable engagement in the update to the Engagement Framework as planned. Consider ways to develop relationships within equity deserving communities and work with them to co-create inclusive engagement processes.	Effectiveness, Inclusion	Engagement Framework
3. Update technology so that the public addresses to Council, whether in delegation or at public hearing, may use video.	Transparency, inclusion	None
4. Continue to allow pre-recorded video submissions for public hearings and delegations on matters to be considered by council	Inclusion	None
5. Establish a requirement for recorded input from CALUC meetings to be posted to allow participants the opportunity to identify any errors or omissions before the information is officially submitted.	Transparency, accountability, inclusion	Policy
5.6 Transparency and Accountability		
1. Maintain a higher level focus for the municipal strategic plan. Clearly identify the target results and align specific measures to evaluate progress.	Efficiency, effectiveness, accountability	None
2. Develop user-friendly materials for public consumption for both the strategic plan and progress reports	Efficiency, effectiveness, accountability, transparency	Website

1 Introduction

'Good governance and civic engagement' is a strategic initiative in the City of Victoria's 2019-2022 Strategic Plan, with a governance review identified as part of the 2021/2022 action plan. In 2021 MNP was engaged to conduct a review of the governance structures and processes of the City of Victoria to consider ways the current model works well and how to further enable efficient, effective and inclusive governance.

At Council's request, MNP engaged internal and external stakeholders to help refine the final scope of the review, starting with an initial set of eleven areas of interest provided by Council. Eight were identified as priority areas for improvement, three were identified as lower priority. All eleven have been included within the five broad topics presented in this report.

This report includes findings and recommendations based on the review of current documentation, internal, stakeholder and public engagement, and a scan of contemporary governance practices in other Canadian cities.

The scope of the review included:

Role of Mayor & Council	Role and responsibilities
	Participation on committees
	Time commitment
	Remuneration
Council Meeting & Decision-Making Processes	Agendas and schedule
	Virtual participation
	Decision-making information
Advisory Committees & Task Forces	Structure, mandate and delegated authority
	Function, administrative support and processes, including flow of information
Public Access & Input to Decision-making	Equitable access
	Public participation in decision-making processes
	Virtual participation
Transparency & Accountability	Decision-making processes
	Public reporting on implementation of plans and progress
	Reporting on response to public input

Appendix B includes a table cross-referencing Council's initial topics and where they are addressed in this report.

2 Approach

Activities conducted for the review included:

- A targeted review of relevant provincial legislation and City of Victoria bylaws with respect to governance of the City of Victoria.
- Review of all documentation regarding Council and Advisory Committee processes, roles and mandates
- Reference materials for Council and citizens, organizational charts, and policies
- Engagement with members of the City of Victoria Council and senior leadership team to gather insights on current systems and processes
- A comparative analysis of governance systems and practices in other Canadian cities
- Development and execution of a public engagement strategy to allow for in-person and online feedback, in collaboration with the City's engagement department, and
- Development of recommendations for Council consideration.

A detailed list is included with References in Appendix A.

Internal Engagement

In total MNP conducted 30 individual or group interviews between October 29 and November 12 (scoping Phase 1) and between March 4 and April 12 (Phase 2), with supplementary discussion as required. These interviews included all Members of Council, the City Manager and Deputy City Manager, City Clerk and Legislative Services staff, directors and department heads.

Other Jurisdictional and Best Practices Research

MNP conducted secondary research and reviewed legislation, bylaws, and other published information to gain insight into governance structures, policies, and procedures for municipal governments in Vancouver, Kelowna, Regina, Windsor, Kitchen, Quebec City, Halifax and St. John's. Interviews to gain more in-depth information were conducted with the City Clerk and/or City Manager of Vancouver, Kelowna, Regina and Halifax. Focused research was also conducted related to council remuneration with the BC municipalities of Chilliwack, Kamloops, Nanaimo, North Vancouver District, Delta and New Westminster.

This information was used to identify contemporary practices and policies.

MNP also conducted research into contemporary practices and thought leadership surrounding municipal governance generally. A list of this information is included in the references section in Appendix A.

Public Engagement

Phase 1 – Defining the Scope of the Review

To help define the scope of the review, twelve participants, representing twelve stakeholder organizations attended a virtual group workshop.

Phase 2 – Governance Review

Public engagement activities included online and in-person options to provide input. Questions for engagement sought feedback on participants' experiences with and opinions of City governance processes, with an emphasis on transparency, accountability and how the public is able to participate in Council decision-making.

881 Victoria residents and business owners provided input through an on-line survey hosted on a Have Your Say project webpage, 865 were residents, 16 were non-residents that owned a property or business in the City of Victoria. Responses from 71 people that neither live in or own a property or business in the municipality have not been included in summary results.

A total of 13 individuals participated in two public events, three at the in-person event and ten at the virtual event. Nineteen (19) stakeholder organizations (25 individuals) representing business, community (including equity deserving groups), and planning and development provided input through four virtual focus groups. Three written submissions from stakeholder organizations were received.

Insights from public engagement are included in sections with this heading throughout this report. A Summary Report of Public Engagement activities and results, including how input was considered in the recommendations is included as an appendix to this report and will be posted on the City of Victoria's *Have Your Say* project page.

3 Regulatory Framework

Several acts and regulations prescribe what and how public services will be provided in the City of Victoria. The most relevant legislation and policies to the City of Victoria governance review are:

- ***The Community Charter Act* [SBC 2003] CHAPTER 26** – The primary provincial legislation that establishes the authority and responsibilities of municipalities in British Columbia.
- ***The Local Government Act* [RSBC 2015] CHAPTER 1** - The primary legislation for regional districts and improvement districts. Certain provisions also apply to municipalities including planning and land use, administering elections and other matters not covered by the *Community Charter*.
- ***Bill 26*** – Proposed amendments to the *Community Charter* (including Code of Conduct, streamlining development approvals)
- **Council Procedure Bylaw 16-011** - Under authority of *The Community Charter*, the Council Procedure Bylaw sets out the rules by which Council and committee meetings and hearings shall be conducted, and bylaws enacted. Amended by Bylaw 21-074
- **Land Use Procedures Bylaw 16-028** - Under authority of *the Local Government Act*, this bylaw defines the procedures under which an owner of land may apply for an amendment to the Official Community Plan, or zoning bylaws, to issue permits, impose application fees, specify notification requirements and delegate Council's authority in certain circumstances. It defines pre-application requirements including for community meetings and notification, approval authorities and the public hearing process.
- **Council Remuneration Bylaw 08-103** – Under authority of 165 of the *Community Charter*, this bylaw establishes the annual indemnity for members of Council, effective January 1, 2010, and the process for annual adjustment. This bylaw was amended by Council Remuneration Bylaw 21-015 such that the annual adjustment would not be applied for the year 2021.

Specific sections of provincial legislation, City of Victoria bylaws, and policies relevant to this governance review are included by topic in the sections that follow.

4 Principles of “Good Governance”

Municipal governments today are facing demands for more and better services, expectations of accountability, transparency, and value for taxpayer investment, increasing costs and sometimes decreasing resources. More and more, local governments are critically reviewing their programs, services and their supporting systems and structures, from governance and leadership to front line service delivery.

Municipal governance, like all governance, has a critical role in the leadership, stewardship, and oversight of the organization. It also sets the tone for organizational behaviour and is integral to creating a culture that will deliver sustainable performance. Openness and accountability matter at every level. Good governance means a focus on how this takes place throughout the organization and those that act on its behalf. Effective governance requires more than individual dedication and commitment to responsible and responsive decision-making. It requires a system and structure that provides clarity, informed, efficient, and democratic decision-making, and promotes accountability and performance in the organization.

The BC *Community Charter* identifies the following principles of municipal governance:

- 1(1) Municipalities and their councils are recognized as an order of government within their jurisdiction that
 - a) Is democratically elected, autonomous, responsible and accountable
 - b) Is established and continued by the will of the residents of their communities, and
 - c) Provides for the municipal purposes of their communities.

While there is no “one size fits all” model of governance, sound governance principles and processes help to guide those charged with governance. Principles applied in the review of the City of Victoria’s governance structures and processes were identified through a review of related literature as well as common expectations of government. They include the following:

Accountability – The ultimate accountability of an elected official or body is to their voting constituents, who may choose not to re-elect them. Between elections, accountability can be supported by related principles. *Oversight* is the ongoing monitoring to ensure policies are implemented and resources are used as intended, and related reporting to the public. *Recourse* includes the means of correcting either incorrect action or unintended impacts, and includes processes to investigate public complaints, protect whistleblowers, and provide access to appeal of municipal decisions (Taylor, 2016).

Transparency – Open access to information regarding decisions, the decision-making process, and the basis for or influences on decisions such as outcomes of consultation processes or lobbying activity allows citizens to evaluate the quality of decisions and implementation and satisfy themselves as to the fairness of governance processes (Taylor, 2016). While transparency is also a significant aspect of accountability, it has sufficient import in today’s society to merit separate consideration.

Efficiency – Efficiency in governance involves ensuring the best possible use of available resources (Council of Europe, 2008). This includes streamlined processes that minimize duplication and overlap, with only deliberate

redundancy. Timeliness of governance processes is included within this principle as a balancing factor for the time and resources needed to support accountability, transparency, and inclusivity. A perfect process is not valuable if decisions are too late to respond to urgent problems or if delays impose undue burdens on stakeholders.

Effectiveness – At its most basic, effectiveness means results meet the agreed objectives. It also includes the systems and processes to evaluate performance of the organization. Audits are carried out at regular intervals to assess and improve performance (Council of Europe, 2008).

Inclusivity – Inclusive processes are both an inherent good and a necessary condition of effective action, supporting social capital. People who feel they have had a reasonable opportunity to participate in a process are more likely to voluntarily comply with the outcome (Taylor, 2016) (Wilde, Narang, Laberge, & Moretto, 2009; Nogales & Zelaya-Fenner, 2012). For the purpose of this review, we consider inclusivity as the opportunity for citizens to provide input to decision-making processes, and the degree to which Council deliberations reflect democratic process.

Impartiality – Impartiality generally refers to fairness and objectivity in decision-making processes, without bias towards a particular interest. These are generally supported by codes of conduct that emphasize honesty, and impartial treatment, as well as a duty to follow political direction within the law (Taylor, 2016) (Council of Europe, 2008).

Learning – Includes the processes and degree to which the knowledge and skills of those charged with governance are continuously maintained and strengthened, and performance is reflected upon to identify opportunities for growth. It also includes how decisions may be informed by both information and lessons learned from past experience (Council of Europe, 2008)

The City of Victoria's governance structures, systems and processes were reviewed in the context of these principles, with consideration to the formal structures of legislation, regulation, bylaws and policies and informal organizational norms (practices) and culture.

5 Findings and Recommendations

The findings that follow reflect analysis of relevant legislation, bylaws, policies, insights from internal interviews and public engagement, and governance practices in other Canadian cities.

Findings are presented for each topic under the categories of:

- **Formal Structures** – Relevant legislation, bylaws, and documented policies.
- **Current Practice** – Current processes and practices identified through review of City of Victoria information such as meeting agendas, minutes, reports, recommendations, procedures, webpages etc. and interviews.
- **Insights from Internal Engagement** – Interviews with Council members, legislative services and senior leadership team
- **Insights from Public Engagement** – Results of a public survey, public and stakeholder organization discussions, and written submissions
- **Insights from Other Jurisdictions** – Information on corresponding approaches in other cities included in comparative research. Where applicable, insights from a research scan are also included here.

Recommendations, with associated rationale and implementation considerations are presented following each topic.

5.1 Role of Mayor and Council

5.1.1 Formal structures

Powers of the Municipality

Section 7 of the *Community Charter* specifies the purposes of a municipality as including:

- Providing for good government of its community
- Providing for services, laws and other matters for community benefit,
- Providing for stewardship of the public assets of its community, and
- Fostering economic, social and environmental well-being of its community

Council is responsible for exercise of the City's powers as a municipality. These Fundamental Powers are specified in section 8 of the *Community Charter* and include the authority to regulate, prohibit or impose requirements in specific areas. The *Community Charter* also includes a broad statement that a municipality may provide any service the Council considers necessary or desirable. For such matters and areas of concurrent jurisdiction related to public health, protection of the natural environment, wildlife, and removal or deposit of soils, any decision of Council must be in accordance with any provincial regulation or agreement or approved by the Minister responsible. A municipal by law has no effect if it is inconsistent with a Provincial enactment. The

Local Government Act also specifically authorizes municipalities to make decisions regarding planning and land use management and heritage conservation.

Role and Responsibility

As set out in Part 5, Division 1 of the *Community Charter*, Council is the governing body of the municipality. Consistent with the *Community Charter*, the City of Victoria Council consists of an elected Mayor and Councillors elected at large in the general election held every four years.

There are currently 13 neighbourhoods within the City of Victoria. *Per the Local Government Act Division 3, s. 12*, all Council members are elected at-large, unless the Council passes a bylaw to have members elected on a neighbourhood constituency basis (wards). Such a bylaw must be approved by the province. The City of Victoria has not established such a by law.

The *Community Charter* also establishes high level responsibilities for mayor and Council.

Every member of Council has the following responsibilities:

1. To consider the well-being and interests of the municipality and its community;
2. To contribute to the development and evaluation of the policies and programs of the municipality respecting its services and other activities;
3. To participate in Council meetings, committee meetings and meetings of other bodies to which the member is appointed;
4. To carry out other duties assigned by the Council;
5. To carry out other duties assigned under this or any other Act.

The *Community Charter* establishes the mayor as the head and chief executive officer of the municipality. In addition to the mayor's responsibilities as a member of Council, the mayor has the following responsibilities:

1. To provide leadership to the Council, including by recommending bylaws, resolutions and other measures that, in the mayor's opinion, may assist the peace, order and good government of the municipality;
2. To communicate information to the Council;
3. To preside at Council meetings when in attendance;
4. To provide, on behalf of the Council, general direction to municipal officers respecting implementation of municipal policies, programs and other directions of the Council;
5. To establish standing committees in accordance with section 141;
6. To suspend municipal officers and employees in accordance with section 151;
7. To reflect the will of Council and to carry out other duties on behalf of the Council;
8. To carry out other duties assigned under this or any other Act

Section 154 of the *Community Charter* allows Council to delegate any or all of its authority, with the exception of specific regulatory responsibilities. There are several current by laws which delegate authority to officers (see

"Officers and Employees" below).

The *Community Charter* also requires that Council designate a Councillor to act in the place of the mayor when the mayor is absent or otherwise unable to act, also included in Council Procedures Bylaw 16-011 (as amended).

Other Council Responsibilities:

Council Procedures Bylaw 16-011 specifies that Council must appoint the Mayor and three members of Council to the Capital Region District Board of Directors, plus four alternates. It also provides that the mayor or Council may establish a standing committee or select committee and appoint members to the committee. Members of Council who are not a member of a standing, select or advisory committee may attend a committee meeting, and may participate in the discussion only with the permission of a majority of committee members present.

Council also appoints a Councillor to act as a liaison to each community or neighbourhood association. These appointments are made at the beginning of a new term of Council and are for a two-year period. While there are Terms of Reference for these Liaisons, there does not appear to be a bylaw related to this practice.

Officers and Employees

Division 5 of the *Community Charter* provides that a Council must by bylaw establish officer positions in relation to the powers, duties and functions of a corporate officer and a financial officer. Council may establish other positions and assign other responsibilities to its officer positions.

Under the *Community Charter* s.147, the position of Chief Administrative Officer, if established by bylaw, includes the responsibilities for the following:

- Overall management of the operations of the municipality
- Ensuring policies, programs and other directions of the Council are implemented; and
- Advising and informing Council on the operation and affairs of the municipality.

Section 154 of *Community Charter* provides that Council may delegate authority to an officer or employee of the municipality, with certain exceptions regarding regulatory authority.

Officers Bylaw 18-106, as amended by Bylaws 19-027, 20-101 and 22-016, identifies the City Manager, City Clerk and Director of Finance as the *Statutory Officers* specified in the *Community Charter* for chief administration, corporate administration, and financial administration, respectively. The bylaw also identifies additional positions as *Officers*, specifically the Director of Parks, Recreation and Facilities, City Solicitor, and Director, People and Culture.

Bylaw 18-106 specifies that the City Manager has the powers, duties and functions set out in s. 147 of the *Community Charter* noted above, and in Bylaw No. 3470 established in 1949. It also expressly delegates authority to the City Manager to hire, appoint, or suspend employment of any employee other than a *Statutory Officer*. The City Manager may terminate employment of any employee other than a *Statutory Officer* or an *Officer*. By referencing Bylaw 3470, where not specifically overridden, this bylaw continues the authority provided under this 1949 bylaw, subsequently amended in 1953. There are additional bylaws with further specific delegations to the City Manager, such as 01-44 delegating authority regarding claims and

indemnification related to the City's use of property owned by others, Bylaw 19-116 providing signing authority for procurement contracts above \$500,000. The current full authority of the City Manager is not consolidated or reflected in a modern bylaw and must be found by referencing multiple historic sources.

Council has also expressly delegated signing authority to positions beyond the City Manager. Bylaw 09-031 delegates signing authority for agreements, land title documents to the Mayor and Corporate Administrator (City Clerk). This bylaw is amended by Bylaw 19-116 to include the City Solicitor as additional signing authority for land title documents. Bylaw 19-116 also includes a schedule of authorities that provide express authority for the Chief Financial Officer, Head of Strategic Real Estate, Director of Engineering and Public Works, and Director of Parks, Recreation and Facilities, as well as to the City Manager as noted above. Bylaw 21-039 provides further express authority to the Director of Engineering and Public Works and Chief Financial Officer. These express delegations to additional employees essentially 'reach past' the City Manager and by implication further limit the City Manager's authority.

The Council Procedures By Law authorizes a member of Council to make a request for information in writing at any time from the City Manager concerning the City's public business. The City Manager must make the best effort possible to obtain the information.

Code of Conduct

The *Community Charter* identifies the duty of Council to respect confidentiality and addresses conflict of interest. As of June 13, 2022, Section 5 of Bill 26, the *Municipal Affairs Statutes Amendment Act (No. 2)* amends the *Community Charter*, Part 4 to establish a requirement for municipal Councils to consider establishing a code of conduct for Council members, or to review an existing code of conduct, within six months after the first regular Council meeting following a general local election. If a Council decides not to establish a new code of conduct or review the existing one, the Council must provide reasons for the decision and make these reasons publicly available.

A code of conduct is a written document that sets shared expectations for conduct or behaviour. It is a general, well-established management practice to have a code of conduct for employees, and it is becoming increasingly common for municipal Councils to establish a code of conduct for elected officials.

An Integrity Commissioner is an independent and impartial position that reports directly to Council. In some jurisdictions the powers and duties of the Integrity Commission are set out in provincial legislation. The Integrity Commissioner is responsible for investigating complaints and alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct. While an integrity commissioner's inquiry into a possible contravention may lead to serious consequences for a Council member, the more significant ongoing responsibilities relate to their educational and advisory role regarding the Code of Conduct. Public confidence in Council accountability and transparency is supported by this independent office.

The City of Victoria does not currently have its own code of conduct for members of Council. The timeline for this requirement would be by April 15, 2023, as the next general local election is October 15, 2022.

5.1.2 Current Practices

Roles and Responsibilities

At the beginning of each term, the City provides Councillors with an orientation to their role. Information on role and responsibilities is as represented in the *Community Charter*. The framework for Council orientation includes the legal context of Local Government, Roles and Responsibilities of Council members, Conflict of Interest, Freedom of Information, Land Use Decision making, and meeting procedures, followed by departmental presentations, including an overview of each department, core services and current projects. There is no evident information in the presentations on delegation of authority to the administration, beyond an indication that it is a 'one employee' model, such that the City Manager reports to Council, and all direction to staff flow through the City Manager.

Material prepared by a law firm presents in detail the rights and responsibilities of Council under the Charter. With respect to the respective roles of Mayor, Council and city administration, this material indicates the responsibilities of the mayor regarding implementation of municipal policies and programs is to provide general direction to municipal officers on behalf of Council. While the material indicates "notably, the responsibilities of mayors do not speak to administration of the municipality" it leaves considerable room for interpretation regarding what general direction to municipal officers and 'liaising' between Council and municipal officers may mean. There is not currently a specific, detailed profile for the position of Mayor or Councillor. The Mayor maintains an active relationship and may interact individually with senior staff.

The City Manager position profile outlines extensively the responsibilities to provide advice to and support Council. The summary indicates that by so doing the City Manager provides effective leadership to management and staff. The profile identifies the responsibility to ensure effective leadership for senior management and employees, including clear definition of responsibility of each, and indicates the City Manager, "ensures the effective funding of all operations and that Council policy is implemented, objectives are achieved, and programs operate within approved funding limits". The specific authority delegated to the City Manager is not stated.

Board and Committee Appointments

All Councillors of the City of Victoria are assigned as the Neighbourhood Liaison to at least one of the 13 neighbourhoods, may be assigned as the Council Liaison on one or more Advisory Committees, and may serve on other City or Regional committees, boards, and commissions. The Capital Regional District Board itself has three regional boards and 27 standing and advisory committees as well as other committees and commissions.

Council member assignments to boards and committees are posted on the City of Victoria website on each Council members page. The number of boards, committees, and task forces (time-limited, project specific) that members of Council are assigned to varies from 5 to 20 whether as liaison or appointed as a member, not including 'alternate' assignments [see Appendix C for a list], Council members appointed to the Capital Region District (CRD) Board of Directors are also on from 7 to 10 additional capital region district committees for a total of 14-20 additional assignments. The Capital Region District Board provides remuneration to appointed Board members. Members of Council that are not directly appointed to the CRD board currently have between 5 to 10 additional assignments.

Terms of reference are in place and publicly posted for all Advisory Committees and where a Councillor role is specified, it is generally as a Council liaison, without further detail. Some identify the Council liaison(s) are to act as the chair or co-chairs of the Committee.

Terms of reference for Council Liaison to Neighbourhood Associations identify the Council member's role as being informed about the neighbourhood and its priorities, being available to attend meetings at the request of the Neighbourhood Association and to take feedback from the Neighbourhood Association to Council. Communication expectations of the member of Council include communicating the interests and concerns of the Neighbourhood Association to Council, being proactive on issues that matter to the neighbourhood, and supporting the Association in advocating for and representing their priorities to Council.

5.1.3 Insights from Internal Engagement

The most frequently described responsibilities of Council by members of Council included attending meetings and making decisions, engaging with citizens to hear concerns and priorities, ensuring effective service delivery and creating policy. Other functions identified included setting direction and strategic priorities, sitting on committees/liasing with other organizations, land use matters and advocacy to other levels of government. All senior administrative staff identified establishing policy and budgets as the role of Council, with setting direction and priorities for the City through the strategic plan as the next most frequently mentioned. Representing public needs and priorities, and advocacy to other levels of government were also mentioned multiple times.

In terms of strengths, both Council and senior staff agreed that things are 'getting done', and decisions are being made. The current mayor's emphasis on running effective meetings was also noted as a strength.

The most frequent challenges identified by Council included staying on top of citizen correspondence and the general volume of work without dedicated administrative support. Other challenges identified by multiple members of Council included spending too much time on matters that should be/are a management responsibility, and a tendency to be drawn into emerging issues or individual Councillor areas of interest versus focusing on strategic priorities.

Other identified challenges include concerns from citizens that decisions have already been made prior to hearings, a lack of common, strategic messaging in communication with the public, and concern with Councillor engagement when participating virtually in meetings with cameras off.

Multiple members of Council also expressed concern with the tone of some Councillor interactions with staff in meetings, described as at times disrespectful and demotivating.

All senior staff identified the challenge of Council becoming overly involved in operational details, whether a specific detail or design element within a land use application, in response to a citizen request to a member of Council for assistance on a matter, or in the long lists of detailed actions in the strategic plan. Different understandings of the role of the Mayor as CEO were identified as a related consideration, with the lack of clarity regarding the Mayor's authority to provide direction to senior staff at times confusing the authority of the City Manager.

Other identified challenges included time spent on issues within provincial jurisdiction, and at times struggling

with hard decisions where there may be mixed public opinion. Involvement in administrative and other jurisdictional matters were identified as a significant contributor to challenges keeping meetings on track or to a reasonable amount of time. Also mentioned as a challenge was the differing participation of members of Council with neighbourhood associations (some too much, some not enough), and the bias that may arise with a Councillor acting on behalf on an individual neighbourhood or problem.

Concerns with the adversarial and aggressive nature of some Councillor interactions with senior staff in meetings was also identified, to the point where some have characterized the behaviours as approaching the level of harassment.

5.1.4 Insights from Public Engagement

Concerns of Council focusing on the wrong things was a significantly strong theme in the public engagement, with extensive time in meetings and decision-making influenced by matters of more personal importance, select vocal stakeholder interests, or beyond municipal jurisdiction rather than focusing on the best interest of the municipality as a whole and core municipal priorities. Some stakeholders also commented that Council seems to become overly involved in operational matters.

Public survey respondents were also divided on neighbourhood associations. Forty-three percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that neighbourhood associations are an effective way to support community input to Council decisions while 47% of public survey respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed. Feedback from written submissions noted that stronger terms of reference are also required for neighbourhood associations to help better understand the roles and responsibilities and how they interact with Council. Focus group participants noted inconsistencies between how the neighbourhood associations operate and their involvement with Council. Public session participants also noted some neighbourhood associations are given more opportunity to interact with Council than others.

5.1.5 Insights from Other Jurisdictions

Roles and Responsibilities

Similar to Victoria, high level roles and responsibilities for Council in reviewed municipalities are typically in municipal legislation, whether provincial or a local charter. Additional detail is specified for the mayor in the Vancouver Charter. Mayoral responsibilities as Chief Executive Officer are delegated to the City Manager as indicated below. Windsor includes additional detail on the role of the mayor, Councillors and staff in its Code of Conduct, an Appendix to its Procedure Bylaw.

All reviewed municipalities have some form of orientation process, similar to Victoria. Of note

- The City of Kelowna has developed its orientation process over time, evolving from an overview of city departments to have more emphasis on Council responsibilities, and includes a full day session with a municipal governance expert as well as a second day with senior management on governance processes.
- Regional Municipality of Halifax holds an update session six months into the term of Council.

- The City of Regina uses the Saskatchewan Council Members' Handbook, which includes a link to the Municipal Leadership Development Program developed for Saskatchewan Municipalities. Modules include Municipal Leaders' Roles and Responsibilities.

Vancouver, Halifax and Regina have developed specific guidance regarding the distinction between Council and administration roles (see detail in Appendix D)

- Vancouver Bylaw 7034 establishes the duties and delegated responsibilities of the City Manager (see appendix D).
- The *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter*, Part II establishes the position of Chief Administrative Officer for the municipality, and specifies the relationship between Council and the CAO, such that:
 - The CAO is the head of the administrative branch of the government of the municipality and is responsible to Council for the proper administration of the affairs of the municipality in accordance with the bylaws of the municipality and the policies adopted by Council.
 - Council shall communicate with the employees of the municipality solely through the Chief Administrative Officer, except to receive or provide information.

The *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter* also details the responsibilities of the CAO, including the authority to appoint, suspend and remove all employees of the Municipality. It further makes clear the accountability of all departments of the municipality to the CAO.

The City of Regina identifies the City Manager as the administrative head of the City, responsible to City Council. "The City Manager ensures the City is a well-run organization that focuses on citizen experience. Officers of Council, comprised of the City Manager, City Clerk and City Solicitor, provide support and strategic advice to Council and the senior leadership team."

The terms 'City Manager' and 'Chief Administrative Officer' are often used interchangeably, with greater authority being applied at times to either title. Contemporary municipal practice is a CAO/Council model where the CAO has full managerial authority for the daily operation of municipal government and for managing its staff. The position of mayor is first-among-equals on municipal Council with responsibility for political leadership, but with no managerial responsibilities beyond those associated with good governance^[1].

A StrategyCorp survey of 25 CAOs indicated that the definition of the boundary between elected Council and staff is a matter of significant interest (Strategy Corp., 2018). The majority try to establish and maintain the clear division of responsibility between council and administration. Problems can arise where the mayor adopts a more hands on approach dealing with staff. In many cases the CAO must explain roles and duties to both Council and staff. "The CAO must champion municipal 'good governance' practices so that the Council itself runs efficiently and effectively, and that Council-staff relations are productive and respectful. Embracing 'good governance' practices, including periodic training sessions and addressing problems forthrightly at an early stage will make a municipality more successful. Conversely, it will avoid the operational, human resource and reputational problems encountered by those municipalities that fail to do so."

Council Code of Conduct

Six of eight cities (Vancouver, Regina, Windsor, Kitchener, Quebec City, Halifax, St. John's) have a Code of Conduct for Council members. Four of eight cities (Vancouver, Regina, Windsor, Kitchener) have an Integrity Commissioner, one (Quebec) is under the jurisdiction of a provincial commissioner.

Code of Conduct	Integrity Commissioner	Neither
Vancouver, BC	Vancouver, BC	Victoria, BC
Regina, SK	Regina, SK	Kelowna, BC
Windsor, ON	Windsor, ON	
Kitchener, ON	Kitchener, ON	
Quebec City, QA	Quebec City, QC	
Halifax Regional Municipality, NS		
St. Johns, NL		

5.1.6 Recommendations

1. **Consolidate and expressly delegate administrative authority to the City Manager in an updated bylaw.**

Rationale:

The relationship between a municipal Council and the public service is critically important to the success of any municipality. Clear delegation of authority as has been provided for the Halifax CAO, with specific exceptions as required, would enable such clarity.

While the City Manager's position profile dated April 2018 indicates the individual is to ensure effective leadership and operations of the City, the full extent of authority to do so is not clear, and the bylaws providing authority are not referenced. Historic bylaws referenced in the current Officers Bylaw indicated council approval was required for many administrative decisions, and the authority under the *Community Charter* is fairly general. The lack of clarity in delegated authority contributes to challenges for staff when receiving direction from the mayor or other members of Council and invites members of Council to weigh in on administrative matters. When Council provides direction or becomes involved in matters that would ordinarily be within administrative authority, it makes accountability for achieving results unclear. Council's involvement in administrative matters also impedes its ability to focus on its governance and policy responsibilities, extends the time spent in meetings, and encourages citizens to 'go around' existing structures to address citizen service complaints.

Implementation Considerations:

It is available under the *Community Charter* for Council to assign powers, duties and functions to its officer positions. Options for implementation include a blanket delegation with specific exceptions, or express, specific authority such as for the Chief Administrative Officer of Halifax or the City Manager of Vancouver. This delegation should be established in a bylaw. A user-friendly public facing position profile for Mayor, Council

and the City Manager (or CAO) would also assist in general understanding of the respective roles.

2. Establish processes for Council education and consensus-building regarding its governance role and relationship to management, and to enable continuous improvement.

- a) Expand Council orientation to emphasize and allow discussion of the governance responsibilities of Council, delegated authority to the City Manager, and the relationship between Council and management in the Council orientation materials.
- b) Schedule an annual discussion of governance with members of Council as a general refresher, to share new insights and leading practices, and to identify opportunities to strengthen the shared understanding of effective governance.

Rationale:

Council members are frequently noted as becoming involved in administrative matters. Once the delegation of authority is clear per recommendation 1 above, allowing for discussion and understanding of the important distinctions between the roles will allow Councillors to navigate their complicated role more effectively. An annual discussion will allow Council to receive information throughout the term instead of just all at once at the very beginning. It would also allow Council to reflect and generate consensus on ways to maximize the efficiency, effectiveness and tone of Council discussions and the relationship with management.

Implementation Considerations:

Clarifying delegated authority prior to the upcoming general election will allow this information to be included in the orientation for the next elected Council. The orientation should allow for discussion of the differences between policy and operational matters, when a matter is appropriately before Council or the administration, and processes for effectively referring citizen concerns on operational matters.

3. Establish a Code of Conduct and appoint an Integrity Commissioner.

Rationale:

As the City's political leadership, Council sets the tone for the City of Victoria, and ethical conduct of Council is critical for citizen confidence in their municipal government. Concerns regarding elected official behaviour across Canada and the U.S. are frequently in the news. A code of conduct and Integrity Commissioner to support its application are mandatory in other Canadian jurisdictions and is a means of demonstrating accountability and transparency to citizens. The process of developing a code of conduct also enables discussion regarding general behaviours and the desired level of decorum in Council chambers.

Implementation Considerations:

Guidance is available from the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) for development of a Code of Conduct, including a model that can be used as a starting point, and related topics for discussion with Council to ensure a clear understanding of the purpose for developing a Code of Conduct, what it will and will not do, and consensus on the process for developing it.

4. Consider establishing a policy regarding the City of Victoria's and Council's role in matters beyond core municipal responsibility.

Rationale:

The *Community Charter* includes a broad statement that a municipality may provide any service the Council considers necessary or desirable, with the limitation that it may not contravene provincial legislation. Municipal government and members of Council are often the closest to citizens, and citizens may bring forward their concerns on issues impacting quality of life in the municipality. While primary responsibility for many social matters is provincial jurisdiction, Council members may feel there is an important role for the municipality, including aspects of municipal policy or how it is implemented that can contribute to improving social conditions. Whether Council should become involved in these matters has been identified as a matter of concern in both internal and public engagement. A deliberate debate and policy position regarding whether and how the City may become involved in a social matter may assist in providing clarity and guidance regarding future debates.

Implementation considerations:

This type of policy may be best considered following the election, in the context of an update of the City's strategic plan. The City of Kelowna has an example of such a policy.

5. Evaluate the purpose of Council appointments to external Boards and Committees in the context of Council's governance role, general municipal mandate, and workload.

Rationale:

There are many organizations that may be important to achieving municipal goals. While many organizations would seek to have access to influence by having a member of Council on their Board, the City may not be equally served by all such appointments. A large number of committee appointments may create workload challenges for members of Council or impact the reputation of Council if the member is unable to regularly attend. The inclusion of each committee appointment as part of a member of Council's role should be carefully considered.

Implementation Considerations:

There is a natural opportunity to consider the fit of committee appointments with the role of a member of Council with the need to renew committee appointments following the upcoming election.

6. Amend the terms of reference for Councillor Neighbourhood Liaison to remove the expectation that a member of Council would convey the concerns of the Neighbourhood Association to Council and to support an Association in advocating for and representing their priorities to Council

Rationale:

Members of Council are responsible for considering the overall best interests of the City in decision-making. While the Councillor may gain important insights from the Association that would inform their decision-making, obligating the Councillor to formally advocate for an association's position places the Councillor in a challenging position to freely vote on a matter should it come before Council. It also invites the Council member to become involved in operational matters of the City if that is the nature of the concerns. Communication that relies on a member of Council's recall or interpretation of the Association's concerns may also not fully represent a topic as

the Association themselves would.

Implementation Considerations:

Instead of representing the Association's concerns, the member of Council could assist by directing the Association to the existing channels through the City Clerk to bring matters to Council's attention or an appropriate operational contact. A new procedure would need to be established for the City to receive information or advocacy positions from the Neighbourhood Association so that there is a record of the information being received by Council.

5.2 Council Remuneration

5.2.1 Formal Structures

Under its statutory powers, including section 165 of the *Community Charter*, Council establishes remuneration to be paid to mayor and Council for discharge of their duties of office. A base amount for mayor and Council remuneration was established by Bylaw 08-103 in December 2008. Remuneration for the mayor is set at 2.5 times remuneration to other members of Council. Councillor remuneration is adjusted annually on January 1 by the Consumer Price Index (All Items) for Victoria.

In the midst of the pandemic in 2021, Council passed by law 21-015 to forgo the increase for 2021.

The bylaw also provides that members of Council will be paid for travel expenses related to City business. While not referenced in the bylaw, Council members are also eligible for dental, extended health and life insurance benefits for elected officials through the Union of BC Municipalities. These benefits are paid by the City.

The *Community Charter* requires Council to prepare a report annually listing remuneration, expenses and benefits paid to members of Council.

5.2.2 Current Practices

Remuneration has been fully taxable since 2009, so the adjustment in federal tax legislation effective January 1, 2019, did not impact net remuneration.

Council base remuneration is reported publicly on the City of Victoria website. This published information does not include any per diems that may be received from board or committee roles, expenses or benefits.

Remuneration for 2022 is \$118,739 for the mayor, and \$47,496 for other members of Council. This is generally seen as reflecting a part-time role. For context, the median income for full year full time workers in Victoria BC was \$49,464 in 2016 (2021 data not yet released). Council member expenses are reported with triannual reports on the strategic plan and as part of the Annual Statement of Financial information.

The most significant additional, external remuneration relates to membership on the Capital Regional District Board and committees. The mayor and three members of Council hold these appointments.

The time required to fulfill Council responsibilities is a consideration in Council remuneration. A review of

meeting minutes indicates a total of 396 hours in Council and Committee of the Whole meetings from April 2021 through March 2022. It is reasonable to estimate a minimum of 1 hour per meeting hour for preparation time, totaling a meeting related time commitment of at least approximately 800 hours. Council members indicated meeting packages can be very large, with extensive reports which may mean significantly more time is required for preparation. Council members also participate on a range of committees – excluding the Capital Regional District Board and its committees, this ranged from 5-10 committees for each Councillor. This may minimally account for 10 to 20 hours per month at an average of 2 hours each per month. One day per week to communicate with constituents or participate in civic events would add another 400 hours. This creates an approximate expectation of 1300-1400 hours per year for Councillors not involved on the CRD board, for which separate compensation is provided. This is approximately 25-30 hours per week, based on 50 weeks per year, before considering conferences or professional development, additional preparation time on complex issues, or miscellaneous administrative tasks. In BC a role of 30 hours per week or more is considered full time.

5.2.3 Insights from Internal Engagement

The majority of members of Council and senior staff indicated that most Councillors are putting in full time hours to fulfill their roles. Responding to correspondence, reading extensive agenda materials, and long meetings were frequently identified as requiring a significant amount of time. Some members of Council indicated they are able to choose where and how much time they need to spend.

The level of current remuneration was identified as a potential barrier for candidates who may otherwise be interested in running for Council, as the demands of the role mean most would not be able to maintain other regular employment, and economic circumstances may limit who can be a member of Council. Remuneration should be part of creating conditions that allow broad diversity of candidates.

Time commitment was identified as a key consideration for determining appropriate remuneration, particularly to reflect the full-time nature of the role. One member of Council indicated the role should be made more efficient so that it could be conducted as a part time role. The scale and scope of the responsibility (size of the city) and complexity of issues should also be considered. Some felt that these issues are more significant for Victoria as a capital city than for others of similar size. Fair remuneration to attract candidates for Council in the context of other professional positions was identified as important.

5.2.4 Insights from Public Engagement

Council remuneration was not addressed directly in public engagement for this review. Some comments were offered in focus group discussions acknowledging that while members of Council are technically considered part time, many are putting in full time hours. Comments from the on-line survey questioned whether the time is all necessary, with Councillors themselves driving longer meetings and spending time on issues beyond core municipal services.

5.2.5 Insights from Other Jurisdictions

In all instances, Council remuneration is established by bylaw. Council remuneration generally consists of a base rate plus expenses and often benefits. Mayor remuneration is typically higher, representing the additional demands of the role. Councillors may receive additional remuneration for roles as deputy mayor or committee chair roles. It is common for municipalities to include an annual adjustment factor, for example by the change in consumer price index (CPI), such as Victoria, Vancouver and Kelowna or Average Industrial Weekly Earnings, (Halifax), or the non-managerial staff increase (Windsor).

There have been recent reviews in various jurisdictions regarding Council remuneration, some by provincial municipal associations (AMCTO, UBCM), citizen task forces (Windsor, Sturgeon County) or professional firms. Citizen reviews typically included benchmarking, a review of the workload and responsibility of members of Council, and other considerations, including equity and diversity. These reviews were in part triggered by the change in federal legislation to remove the provision allowing a portion of Council remuneration to be exempt from tax.

- **Windsor, ON** – A citizen council was struck in November 2021 to review council remuneration. The five month review included research and benchmarking by a compensation consultant, incumbent interviews, public feedback, and a series of meetings to generate a consensus on recommendations. The Windsor review resulted in a specific recommendation for updated remuneration levels, but also recommended that a further review be initiated during the next term of Council with a broader mandate and more time to consider questions regarding workload and the need to establish a full-time Council, the impact of committee appointments on workloads and compensation, and a ward boundary review. In determining an appropriate benchmark for mayor, the Council considered population, community characteristics (e.g., Windsor is a border city), and whether the mayor role had the support of a deputy mayor and full time Council. The Council report also notes that public feedback identified that having a diverse group of opinions around the Council table is important, and the Council members should be paid sufficiently and not just treating their work as a public service or volunteering. The public also acknowledged the increasing hostile nature of the role in the public space and the impact of negative interactions with the community on Council members sense of personal security.
- **Sturgeon County, AB** – In 2018 a professional compensation firm was engaged to conduct an independent review of the elected official remuneration levels. Following Council consideration, no decisions were made. In 2019 Council directed that a citizen task force be struck. The task force used the benchmarking information from the 2018 review, met with various departments to understand the impacts of future growth on the Council and implications for Council member workload, and interviewed members of Council. Guiding principles of the task force included:
 - The work of Council is important, demanding and time-consuming work
 - Remuneration should fairly reflect the value of the contribution of the mayor and Councillors to the democratic system and allow for the retention and attraction of a diverse and representative pool of candidates
 - Council should be fairly compensated as public servants, acknowledging that a portion of their time and effort is considered a service to the community
 - Remuneration should be sensitive to local market conditions and to compensation levels for

these roles in comparable communities

- Remuneration should demonstrate fiscal responsibility and align with the strategic plan
- Remuneration paid to Council members should be clear, transparent and understandable to the public
- Principles should be established for regular review of Council remuneration where there are criteria to initiate a review and where the evaluation is repeatable and based on specific factors.

Recommendations included:

- Adjusting Councillor base salaries to a similar percentile of comparator municipalities as the overall compensation philosophy of the municipality, in this case the 67th percentile.
- The position of mayor be considered a primary responsibility and position of Councillor a non-primary responsibility (able to maintain other primary career or other responsibilities)
- Members of Council should be eligible for per diems for attendance at conferences, Council retreats, formal in-person professional development, and external board and committee meetings where the Council member is appointed by Council and not otherwise compensated by the external board.
- Council members receive a technology allowance and support
- Create position profiles for the offices of mayor, deputy mayor, acting mayor and Councillor to ensure the work of these roles are well-defined to the public.

In 2019, the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) researched best practices and prepared a *Council & Board Remuneration Guide*. Identified factors to consider in determining fair remuneration include^[2]:

- Time commitment – To review agenda packages, attend Council or board meetings and public hearings, engaging with residents, participating in civic events and a variety of other tasks
- Employment and financial impacts –To mitigate the reduced time available for other paid work or career development
- Responsibility – For funding, policy and service delivery decisions that affect the lives of residents and the long term prosperity of communities
- Representative government – to enable diversity on Council, fair remuneration is important to help reduce barriers in attracting capable people from a variety of backgrounds, demographic groups, socio-economic classes and employment types.

A key consideration in determining fair compensation generally is what is offered by other comparable jobs. The UBCM guide discusses options for comparisons as a reference point when considering base compensation, including similar jurisdictions, local labour force, provincial MLAs, or municipal staff (for adjustment factor vs base pay).

Based on the review of pros and cons for these options the UBCM report recommends use of base remuneration paid to elected officials in similar local government jurisdictions as the preferred basis for determining remuneration. A base of five to seven comparators is recommended, with a minimum of five.

Factors to consider when selecting comparators include population combined, as deemed necessary, with other factors such as location, geographic size, scope of services, growth rate and operating budget.

Data for the selected set of comparator municipalities used to gather insights for the overall governance review are as shown below:

Selected Comparators	Population	Budget (Millions)	Remuneration	
			Mayor	Council
Vancouver	662,248	1,747	185,585	91,879
Kelowna	144,576	344	113,691	38,639
Regina	226,404	670	151,015	57,660
Windsor	229,660	887	199,167	52,000
Kitchener	256,885	441	107,139	55,120
Quebec City	549,459	1,666	187,410	67,367
Halifax	439,819	1,100	190,072	92,258
St John's	110,525	320	129,672	46,526
Average	327,447	897	157,969	62,012
Median	243,273	778	168,300	55,120
Victoria 2022	91,867	268.5	118,739	47,496
Median vs Victoria*	2.65	2.90	1.42	1.16

* Median is selected as the appropriate reference point given the wide range and dissimilarity of data

There is a significant difference in median compensation of the selected comparator set and the City of Victoria. Two of the eight municipalities have full time remuneration rates for Councillors, both with populations of over 400,000. The median Councillor remuneration of the others is 9% higher than the City of Victoria. There is also however a significant difference in median population (2.65 X Victoria) and operating budget (2.9X Victoria). Given these dissimilarities, this particular set of comparators is not a defensible set to be used. In addition to population and operating budgets there are differences in the mandate provided to local governments in each province. An alternative set of comparators is needed.

Six municipalities in southern BC have a similar population to Victoria (+/- 10%):

	Population (2021)	2016-2021 Growth (%)	2020 Municipal Expenses (\$millions)	2022 Remuneration ¹	
				Mayor	Council
Victoria	91,867	7.1	210.98	118,739	47,496
Chilliwack	93,203	11.2	147.42	125,874	46,165
Kamloops	97,902	8.4	203.77	99,460 ²	39,784
Nanaimo	99,863	10.3	166.6	115,981	44,774
North Vancouver -D	88,168	2.9	189.18	134,449	44,905
Delta	108,455	6.1	241.7	154,264	62,788
New Westminster	78,916	11.2	195.67		
Average³	94,418	8	191	127,361	48,885
vs City of Victoria	102.8%	+ 1%	90.4%	107.3%	102.9%

1. Data included in table where publicly available.

2. 2020 published rate and reported by Kelowna as this amount for 2022. Unable to verify with Kamloops.

3. Average is selected as the reference point as the set is already selected based on similarity and the range of data is much smaller

Compared to the City of Victoria, average mayor remuneration is 6.7% higher and Council remuneration is 2.4% higher. While the average population for this set of comparators is within 3% of the City of Victoria, and average growth within one per cent, the average municipal expenses of this set are almost 10% lower.

An adjusted set of comparators that replaces Chilliwack with Saanich is shown below:

	Population (2021)	2016-2021 Growth (%)	2020 Municipal Expenses (\$millions)	2022 Remuneration	
				Mayor	Council
Victoria	91,867	7.1	210.98	118,739	47,496
Kamloops	97,902	8.4	203.77	99,460	39,784
Nanaimo	99,863	10.3	166.60	115,981	44,774
North Vancouver -D	88,168	2.9	189.18	134,449	44,905
Delta	108,455	6.1	241.70	154,264	62,788
New Westminster	78,916	11.2	195.67		
Saanich	117,735	3.1	207.02	124,602	49,243
Average	106,366	7	202	126,385	48,606
vs City of Victoria	115.8%	=	99.6%	107.1%	104.0%

* Data included in table where publicly available.

This set has a higher average population than Victoria, but a very similar level of expenses. Compared to

Victoria, average mayor remuneration was 7% higher and Council was 4% higher. Mayor remuneration in Victoria is set at 2.5 X Council. The calculated average multiple of mayor vs Council was slightly higher (2.6) among the comparator municipalities. The difference between the comparator set and Victoria for Councillor remuneration is similar to the increase in CPI that Council voted to forgo in 2021 (2.8% for BC; 2.5% for Victoria^[5]).

Of the municipalities listed above, the level of remuneration for 2022 was not adjusted from 2021 in Nanaimo and Saanich. Abbotsford, considered for and withdrawn from this comparable set as too large for comparison, has not increased Council remuneration since 2020. Of these municipalities, four provide additional remuneration for acting mayor. None provide additional per diems for conference attendance or appointments to external committees.

5.2.6 Recommendations

1. **Adopt the recommendations of the UBCM for review of Council remuneration to be reflected in an updated Council remuneration bylaw, including:**
 - a) Conduct a formal review of base remuneration once per term, ordinarily in the last year of the term to enable adjustments to take effect for the next elected Council, based on an established review framework.
 - b) Continue the use of an annual adjustment to base remuneration based on the change in the CPI for in between years. Include consideration of any significant external factors that may impact remuneration at that time.

Rationale:

Establishing a policy that specifies an ongoing cycle for review will ensure that remuneration levels do not fall too far behind and create a need for a large adjustment, and potentially public concern in future. It also removes the awkwardness of Council determining when they should receive higher remuneration. Establishing a standard review framework, principles and the basis for determining the set of comparators enables a transparent, administrative review process. The need for an independent task force can then be reduced to more periodic review when circumstances have significantly changed. Structuring the reviews to update base remuneration for the next Council after an election also helps to reduce the public perception of conflict of interest.

Implementation Considerations:

The impact of this current recommendation is essentially no change in the immediate future. The update to the remuneration by law could be done following the review of the independent task force, as recommended below.

2. **Maintain current levels of Council remuneration and apply the next annual adjustment according to the current by law for January 2023, pending completion of a more comprehensive independent task force review.**

Rationale:

Council made a decision in 2021 to forgo the annual increase during the pandemic. It is reasonable to believe Council understood this would place it behind inflation. The difference between current remuneration and a set of municipalities comparable in population size and expenses is close to the amount of inflation for 2021. Applying a 'make up' adjustment could be considered contrary to Council's decision and is not sufficiently consequential to warrant a second adjustment in a year pending a more comprehensive review.

Implementation Considerations:

The recovery of the forgone adjustment to set fair base remuneration may be considered as part of the more comprehensive independent task force review recommended below.

- 3. Strike an independent task force to review considerations of time commitment, principles for appropriate comparators and benchmark level (percentile) for an ongoing review framework, per diems for committee appointments and conferences, and diversity.**

Rationale:

Comparison to other municipalities can provide only continued common practice. Remuneration for members of Council currently assume, in the majority of municipalities, that position of Councillor is not a full-time role. A review of the time commitment and the implications for a full-time Council should be more fully considered than is available through this overall governance review. Other recommendations from this review if implemented may also reduce the time commitment.

Appropriate comparators and/or the benchmark level may also take into consideration the scope of services delivered and economic differences between municipalities such as average household income and average home price. If there is a significant change recommended to Councillor income, it may be better received by the public if it is the result of a thorough, independent task force review. Considerations of whether current remuneration creates barriers to participation on Council, and appropriate measures to mitigate these barriers also requires further review. While current remuneration is not dramatically less than the 2016 full time full year median income from employment in Victoria, it may be insufficient for younger candidates who may have families to support, or who may need to interrupt building a career.

Implementation Considerations

While the timing for a regular review is best in the last year of Council, to be applied to the next term of Council, a more immediate review is currently warranted given the concerns regarding fairness for the time commitment and the barriers to diversity on Council.

5.3 Committees and Advisory Bodies

5.3.1 Formal structures

Part 5, Division 4 of the *Community Charter* provides authority to establish committees of Council. Procedure bylaws required under Division 2, s 124 apply to Council committees in conducting their business, including a requirement that meetings are open to the public, minutes are taken and certified, and the public has advance notice of the time, date and place of committee meetings. Section 124 of the *Community Charter* applies to Committees of Council, which includes Standing Committees, Select Committees or other committees comprised of Council members.

Council Procedures Bylaw sections. 47 (1) (2) establishes rules of procedure that apply to standing, select and advisory committees, including that a member of an advisory committee may speak any number of times on the same question for a total of 10 minutes per question, and voting by a show of hands if requested. Specific procedural rules for Council meetings also apply, including:

- Schedule and public notice of meetings
- Application of rules of procedure
- Minutes of meetings
- Points of order
- Conduct and debate
- Motions
- Amendments
- Privilege

Standing Committees

The *Community Charter* establishes that the mayor must establish standing committees for matters the mayor considers would be better dealt with by committee and appoint persons to those committees. At least half of the members of a standing committee must be Council members.

Select Committees

A municipality may establish and appoint a Select Committee to consider or inquire into any matter and to report its findings and opinion to the Council. At least one member of the select committee must be a Council member.

Other Advisory Bodies

The Advisory Committees and Task forces established by the City of Victoria have been done so as "Other Advisory Bodies". While the *Community Charter* is silent on the composition other advisory bodies, requirements for open meetings do apply (Part 4, Division 3, Section 93). Council must provide for the taking of minutes of the meetings and the minutes must be certified (Division 4, Section 145 (1), unless the municipal procedure bylaw provides for other procedures for the taking of minutes by another body.

Council Procedures Bylaw 16-011 S 45 indicates that Council may appoint an advisory committee to provide advice and recommendations to Council regarding any matter within the committee's terms of reference and to report to Council or another committee designated by Council for that purpose. The Bylaw also stipulates that all members of an advisory committee must be members of the public. Members appoint a chairperson from among themselves, and a quorum is a majority of the committee members. Per s. 48 (1) of the Bylaw, While Council members may attend meetings of any committee, they may only participate in the discussion with the permission of a majority of the committee members present.

5.3.2 Current Practices

The City's Boards and Committees webpage lists a variety of advisory bodies, including panels, task forces, City advisory committees and City and Regional boards. As noted above, the Council Procedures Bylaw specifies that Council may establish advisory committees, defines membership and associated rules of procedure. The Bylaw is silent on task forces, which have been generally established to address a specific issue or initiative for a defined period of time.

In practice there are a number of established bodies that do not fully align with the formal structures:

The ***Committee of the Whole*** tends to be used as a standing committee.

The ***Canada Day Sub-committee*** is chaired by the mayor and composed of up to three additional members of Council appointed by a motion of Council. While this membership would be consistent with the definition of a standing committee, the mandate of the committee is limited to five meetings in advance of Canada Day 2022 celebrations, and as such could be considered a select committee. The terms of reference for the Canada Day sub-committee specifies activities that would normally be considered the purview of staff, for example developing program content, securing sponsorship opportunities, etc.

Heritage Advisory Committee: Bylaw 97-104 establishes the Heritage Advisory Committee (HAC) as a standing committee, referencing authority under sections 188 and 953 of the *Municipal Act*. The *Municipal Act* referenced in this bylaw was amended to become the *Local Government Act* in 2000 and mostly revised in 2016. There do not appear to be sections in the new legislation that would correspond to the HAC, other than regular committee structures.

The HAC mandate is to consider and provide advice and recommendations to the Committee of the Whole on matters related to heritage properties referred by Council or the Committee of the Whole. The HAC has specific obligations to provide its reports on specific dates and must schedule regular meeting dates and times.

The Heritage Advisory Committee appears to align most closely with the City's definition of an advisory committee, with the exception of the Council member's participation in debate. The Bylaw establishes that a member of Council shall be appointed by the mayor as Council's representative, may participate in debate, but may not vote.

Advisory Design Panel: While not termed a select committee, the Advisory Design Panel meets the definition of such with an appointed member of Council. Terms of reference dated 2008-2009 identify citizen representatives that include three registered architects, three residents with professional design qualifications,

and one member of Council. The mandate of the committee is to advise on the design merits of plans referred to the Panel by Council or City staff as part of a re-zoning application, development permit application, development variance permit application, statutory building scheme, board of variance application or special projects referred by Council.

Advisory Committees

Terms of reference for all Advisory Committees are posted on the City of Victoria website. There are seven bodies deemed advisory committees by their terms of reference, and two task forces:

- Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)
- Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC)
- Art in Public Spaces Committee (AIPSC)
- Honorary Citizen Award Committee (not specified as either Advisory or Task Force)
- Renters Advisory Committee (RAC)
- Strategic Plan Grant Review Committee (SPGRC)
- International Decade for People of African Descent (IDPAD) - Advisory Committee
- Welcoming City Implementation Advisory Committee
- Community Wellness Peer-Informed Task Force
- Seniors Task Force

Documented rules for advisory committees are included in their individual Terms of Reference. The terms of reference for each advisory committee vary with regard to committee purpose, responsibilities, authority, communications and reporting to Council, length of term, attendance and staff resources.

Task Forces are intended to perform or inform a specific initiative, such as informing or creating a strategy (Seniors Task Force, Community Wellness Peer Informed Task Force). A body with a time defined mandate may also be identified as an advisory committee in its Terms of Reference, such as the IDPAD, established in 2022 to be disbanded at the end of 2024 and the Welcoming City Implementation Advisory Committee established to oversee execution of the Welcoming City Strategy and Welcoming City Action Plan from 2021-2024.

Role of Council on Advisory Bodies

Council has established that each Advisory Committee will be assigned one or more Council Liaisons, per the Terms of Reference established for the Advisory Committee. Some terms of reference specify the role as 'non-voting Council liaison', others simply indicate 'Council liaison'. The IDPAD indicates the Council member will speak to committee recommendations at Council. The Welcoming City Implementation Advisory Committee, Seniors Task Force and Honorary Citizen Award Committee and are to be co-chaired by the Council Liaisons or the mayor and appointed Council liaison. As noted previously, under the Bylaw, Council members may only participate in discussion at the advisory committee meeting with majority permission. The role of chair would generally be considered inconsistent with this role. The Council Procedures Bylaw s. 25 (3) further stipulates

that Council members attending a meeting of a committee of which they are not a member [which applies to the advisory committee Council Liaison], must not vote on a question.

Committee Mandates

The Procedural Bylaw states that advisory committees are to provide advice and recommendations to Council. , Advisory Committees and Task Forces are also often tasked with responsibilities that are generally the responsibility of administrative staff, including conducting public engagement, evaluating grant applications according to Council policy, preparing (not just informing) an action plan for the city, and reporting on city accomplishments. The Welcoming City Implementation Advisory Committee is to participate in and oversee execution of the city's strategy and action plan. Oversight is a function of senior management and ultimately Council. The IDPAD specifies that the committee will provide semi-annual updates on accomplishment resulting from the implementation of the IDPAD proclamation.

Advisory Committees and Task Forces often are tasked with consideration of topics that include areas of provincial jurisdiction. For example, the purpose of the *Community Wellness Peer-Informed Task Force* is to engage stakeholders from healthcare, social services and housing providers to provide input and recommendations to establish a Community Wellness Strategy, including Education, Prevention, Integration of Services and Advocacy. The IDPAD's mandate includes supporting positive outcomes in areas of housing, employment and entrepreneurship. The Renters' Advisory Committee mandate also includes broader housing concerns than relate to municipal land use policy.

There are also established bodies that do not fit the categories of either Advisory Committee or Task Force. For example,

The *City Family* was established in 2017 as a gathering of members from the City, the Songhees and the Esquimalt Nations as well as urban Indigenous Peoples to follow an Indigenous-informed and Indigenous-led approach to relationship building and problem resolution. As such, City Family gatherings do not have formal agendas, no meeting minutes are kept and there is no formal decision-making such as motions or votes. Direction from the Mayor has clearly stated that the City Family is **not** and is not intended to be an advisory body or committee of Council. It is intended only to improve understanding and relationships between the City and Indigenous communities.

The *Urban Food Table* is not clearly established by Council, but its purpose is to help build the City of Victoria's strategic direction and guiding documents, work with the city to meet targets, and advise the City on pollinator policies. Staff from relevant departments and members of Council are invited to attend meetings to help align the work with current City priorities and initiatives, and meetings take place at City Hall. The Terms of Reference indicate the Urban Food Table is an autonomous group which may align itself with other organizations and make decisions that may be different from positions taken by the City. The Urban Food Table is listed among City Advisory Bodies for appointments of members of Council, versus another available category of external committees/boards.

City of Victoria Youth Council is a youth-driven, grassroots program funded by the City of Victoria and hosted by Volunteer Victoria. The Council offers opportunities for young people to get involved and act as leaders in

their community and share youth perspectives and experiences with Victoria City Council. The Victoria Youth Council is listed among City Advisory Bodies for appointments of members of Council, versus another available category of external committees/boards.

Community Association Land Use Committees (CALUC) – While not advisory committees established by Council, according to Terms of Reference approved by Council in 2016, a CALUC must be endorsed by Council before they can participate in review of land use applications. The role of the CALUC is to facilitate dialogue between applicants and the community to identify issues regarding Official Community Plan amendment, rezoning, variance and liquor license applications. CALUCs may comment on the interpretation of the relevancy of policies and whether development applications fit with the spirit and intent of the Neighbourhood Plan. The CALUC is also expected to communicate to everyone involved regarding issues identified related to the proposed amendment and the adequacy of community consultation.

Staff Support

Terms of reference for some committees (ATAC, RAC, STF, Welcoming City) identify that staff from specified City departments will act as a resource to the committee as appropriate and at the direction of the City Manager. Others (AIPSC) identify a staff liaison, without further detail, or to assist with meeting facilitation and represent recommendations of the committee to Council (SPGRC). The by law establishing the HAC specifies staff shall act as secretary and administrative liaison.

The Heritage Advisory Committee schedule and minutes are posted on the City of Victoria website. Agendas, minutes and meeting schedule are posted for the Advisory Design Panel and Renters Advisory Committee. Agendas only are posted for the External Grant Review Committee. Minutes are posted for the Active Transportation Advisory Committee, IDPAD, Seniors Task Force (meeting notes) and Welcoming City Advisory Committee. There are no schedules, agendas or minutes posted for the Art in Public Places Committee, or the Community Wellness and Peer-Informed Task Force. The Accessibility Advisory Committee schedule is not posted.

Committee Remuneration

Members of IDPAD receive an honorarium for their participation equivalent to the Living Wage in British Columbia. It is unclear if the honorarium includes participation beyond committee meeting attendance. Council approved a similar honorarium for the Accessibility Advisory Committee in June 2022 on a temporary basis, pending the recommendations of this governance review. The Community Wellness and Peer Informed Task Force (now complete) terms of reference indicate members received an unspecified honorarium for participation.

5.3.3 Insights from Internal Engagement

Because terms of reference are not clear or consistent, Council and staff are unsure what the role of a Council member is on advisory bodies, how the committee should be used to help in Council's decision-making and how recommendations of the committee are to flow to Council. Committee mandates were noted as being

subject to interpretation and overlapping committee mandates can make it difficult for staff to determine which committee a matter should be referred to.

Internal stakeholders expressed concern that Councillors have too much influence on what are intended to be citizen committees. This is of most concern with advisory committees of equity deserving groups, who may not understand the role of the Council Liaison or may be reluctant to exercise their authority. Generally, training for committee chairs on effective meeting management is needed.

Internal stakeholders also noted that because the committee mandates and authorities are not clear, some committee members appear to view their role as advocacy vs. providing policy advice to Council. Some committees were noted as requiring significant staff resources to manage agenda and meetings, take minutes and develop and implement plans. Some members of Council expressed concern that Committee input/recommendations are not being included in staff reports if staff does not agree with the recommendation. Members of Council also noted that there is inconsistent staff support across the various committees, which limit the committee effectiveness.

5.3.4 Insights from Public Engagement

External stakeholders expressed mixed opinions on the effectiveness and their experience sitting on advisory bodies. Attendance by the Council Liaisons was reported as inconsistent. Citizen committee members echoed Councillor concerns that committee input may not be reflected in staff reports to Council. They commented further that despite efforts to improve the process for communication of committee motions to Council, through the tri-annual reports or through the Council Liaison where deemed urgent, committee recommendations are still getting lost.

Committee members expressed frustration, feeling their input is not valued. Some matters within a committee's mandate are not being brought to them by staff for input or are being brought to them very late in the process. It was felt that recommendations from staff sometimes miss the mark on important aspects either because their input was misinterpreted or not sought.

Advisory Committee members reporting having difficulty achieving quorum.

Focus group participants and written submissions indicated that the terms of reference and role of advisory committees with Council is unclear. Feedback received included having a better understanding of the advisory committees' roles and how they can support Council, broader terms of reference, and an outline of when advisory committees are required to be engaged. Additionally, advisory committees would like to receive better access to information about Council initiatives. Feedback received from stakeholder groups and public also indicated that advisory committees should be engaged and consulted with earlier to ensure that there is stronger engagement on projects that effect various populations.

Concerns were expressed by the public regarding the lack of transparency related to City Family, with reference to concerns regarding 'secret' meetings, and the decisions about events, public art and policy that arise from these meetings without a public record.

Public survey respondents were split on their response regarding CALUCs. Thirty-six percent of the public survey

respondents agreed or strongly agreed that CALUCs are an effective way to support community input to City and land use decisions while 46% of the public disagreed or strongly disagreed. Feedback from focus groups participants and open-ended survey comments was that CALUCs often represent a very small demographic of a neighbourhood and do not represent the views of all residents. It was also noted that CALUCs get very involved in technical details outside the scope of their expertise. Feedback from written submissions also indicated that feedback is not received from the City on how CALUC feedback was used in the decision making process. Feedback from public survey respondents also indicated that land use process issues can be a point of frustration.

5.3.5 Insights from Other Jurisdictions

Advisory committees serve an important role of making recommendations on issues relating to policies impacting the welfare and quality of life in the community. The volunteers on these committees provide a link between residents of the community and government. The fundamental purposes for engaging committees in support of local government are to (Williams, 2022):

- Ensure full representation of residents of the community, in its diversity, in government decision-making processes
- Ask residents to help define community standards and norms
- Provide technical expertise in certain areas
- Provide an independent sounding board for issues, ideas and policy matters
- Make recommendations to elected officials and city administration.

Use of Committees

The City of Vancouver has established standard guidelines for Advisory Bodies in addition to specific terms of reference. Council liaisons and staff resources are assigned to support the advisory committees. A recent report to Council by the Clerk regarding proposed future structure of advisory bodies (City of Vancouver, March 2022) included recommendations to clarify terms of reference, enhance orientation and training, standardize staff liaison criteria and provide annual training for staff liaisons, improve staff engagement processes and develop a motion tracker tool to ensure the impact of Advisory Body recommendations are communicated back to Advisory Body members, simplifying and clarifying recommendation processes.

Regina has disbanded all but its accessibility advisory committee and city centre core development advisory committee in the last few years. Per Council direction, matters that would have been referred to their advisory committees in the past are now referred to Committee of the Whole, so that Council members are actively involved in discussion. The City of Kelowna has significantly reduced the number of advisory committees, as they did not find many of them useful. Advisory committees for the region of Halifax are established to provide input to Community Council or Standing Committees of the regional Council. In Halifax, advisory committees typically include a member of a provincial body.

Council Role

The City of Kelowna no longer includes Council members on their advisory committees as they were finding that the elected officials had too much influence on the discussion. Like Victoria, Vancouver is seeking clarity on the role of Council Liaisons on advisory committees. Generally, advisory bodies in Halifax do not include Council members, however they have recently been considering establishing an active role for members of Council on advisory bodies.

Flow of Recommendations to Council

Vancouver circulates motions made by advisory committees to all members of Council, however noted similar issues with lack of follow-up on advisory committee motions. They are currently developing a motion tracker. They have found that using the advisory committees as panels for engagement and including their input in staff reports is the most effective way of incorporating the advice of advisory bodies in Council decision-making.

In Kelowna, matters are referred to advisory committee agendas by the relevant administrative department and committee input is included in Council decision-making through staff reports. Council referrals to advisory committees are rare.

Remuneration

The Ontario Human Rights Commission (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2010) defines inclusion as meaning all members of a community have equal access to the resources of their community and the opportunity to participate in all areas, regardless of their race, gender, social class, religion, sexual identity or other dimension of diversity. Economic capacity can be a significant barrier to participation.

None of the jurisdictions included in the standard set for comparison provide remuneration to members of advisory committees. The City of Vancouver received a report from the City Clerk on March 30, 2022, that recommended development of policy options for covering expenses of attending or participating on advisory committees.

Some examples can be found in other municipalities or related organizations.

Members of the Vancouver Police Board, other than the Mayor as chair, are eligible to receive a per diem. "The per diem is not designed to compensate a Board member for actual hours worked. Rather it is "...a token payment designed to express appreciation for voluntary hours and to cover out-of-pocket and incidental expenses (parking, transportation, printing costs, cell phone and child care) incurred by the member in the course of carrying out their board duties (Vancouver Police Board)".

The Township of Oro-Medonte (ON) provides for remuneration for public members of the Heritage Committee, Property Standards Committee, and Fence Viewers at a rate of \$80 for each half day or evening meeting, and \$160 for each full day meeting.

The City of Toronto has had a policy since 2003 for remuneration for citizen members of its agencies, boards, commissions and corporations. As part of the 2022 budget, the City of Toronto approved honoraria for public members of Council advisory bodies, in recognition of their contributions to the decision-making processes of

the City. The report noted “Honoraria may remove barriers to participation, support diverse engagement of equity deserving communities, and give recognition to the value of perspective and lived experience to Council’s decision-making.” Payments are \$125 per public member per meeting attended to the maximum number of meetings specified in the terms of reference for each advisory body. Honoraria is not intended for members who serve on advisory bodies as representatives of organizations or businesses where they are employed. There are no additional honoraria for public members who serve as chair or co-chair. Honoraria is not paid for attendance at sub-committee meetings or events.

The Town of Georgina Equity and Diversity Advisory Committee Terms of Reference provides for remuneration of \$40 per meeting, not to exceed eight (8) meetings per year.

City	Number of Advisory Committees	Role of Council member on Committee	Remuneration for public members of committee
Victoria, BC	7 Advisory Committees, 2 Task Forces	Council Liaison, non-voting; 3 committees co-chaired by Council liaisons	Community Wellness Task Force, IDPAD, Accessibility Advisory Committee
Vancouver, BC	12 citizen advisory committees + speciality committees	Council and Board Liaisons, non-voting	None
Kelowna, BC	3 Advisory Committees 1 Select Committee (Airport Advisory Committee)	No Council member on Advisory Committees	None
Regina, SK	2 Advisory Committees	Council Member Liaison, non-voting	None
Windsor, ON	6 Advisory Committees	Council Appointed Member(s) on some, voting	None
Kitchener, ON	7 Advisory Committees	Council Appointed Member(s) on most, voting Assigned as co-chair on some advisory committees	None
Quebec City, QC	None		None
Halifax, NS	4 citizen Advisory Committees + technical advisory committees Recent provincial legislation disbanded land use advisory committees	Council member(s) on some	None

City	Number of Advisory Committees	Role of Council member on Committee	Remuneration for public members of committee
St. John's, NL	4 Advisory Committees	Council Member Liaison, non-voting	None

5.3.6 Recommendations

8. Update Council committees and related processes to comply with bylaws, and to support efficient and effective use, including:

- a) Update the structure and terms of reference of the Heritage Advisory Committee, Advisory Design Panel, and Advisory Committees with council co-chairs to comply with and appropriately reference the City's bylaws.
- b) Enable greater transparency regarding City Family.
- c) Establish a process to review the purpose and mandate of committees with each term of Council as part of the strategic planning and budgeting process.
- d) Establish a standard policy for committee structure, Council member participation, role to advise council on policy matters, open meetings, public agendas, minutes and staff support, and guidance to enable diverse and equitable participation.

Rationale:

There are inconsistencies among committee terms of reference, City bylaws, and the *Community Charter*, including Council appointments and roles on Advisory Committees.

- The bylaw establishing the Heritage Advisory Committee should be updated to reflect the appropriate regulatory references, confirm the intended role of Council on the committee, and align the committee with the appropriate structure.
- The nature of the Advisory Design Panel as a select committee should be identified in its terms of reference, or the structure amended to fit the intended type of committee.
- Council members acting as co-chairs on Advisory Committees is not consistent with the bylaws which limit the role a member of council can play on an Advisory Committee.

The City of Victoria 'leans' heavily on its Advisory Committees, both in the number of committees established and the work they are expected to do. Council should evaluate the intended work of these committees to ensure it is consistent with advising Council on policy matters and not interfering with administrative responsibility or accountability for interpretation or implementation of Council approved policy.

A review of committees with each refresh of the strategic plan will help ensure mandates are aligned with municipal priorities. The demands on Council and administrative resources should be considered as part of establishing committees and related budgets.

Frequently mentioned reasons for public dissatisfaction in the online survey related to Council straying into matters 'belonging' to other levels of government and listening only to select stakeholders. The current use and mandate of Advisory Committees may contribute to this dissatisfaction. The 'secretive' nature of City Family was also identified as a concern. While not defined as a committee, Council's obligation for transparency and accountability to the public remain and should be discussed with City Family in a problem-solving manner.

Council indicated the scope of this review should include ensuring persons with disabilities can participate on Advisory Committees. As a valuable method of gaining public insight, particularly on issues impacting equity-deserving groups, a 'diversity, equity and inclusion' lens should be applied to all processes associated with Advisory Committees.

Implementation Considerations:

A full review and alignment of advisory bodies should be scheduled following the next general election and refresh of the municipal strategic plan. An 'end of term' update from each committee will allow the next Council to understand what remains of the committee's work plan as referred by Council, recommendations the committee has put forward on matters not yet considered by Council, and other advice or recommendations the committee may wish to provide.

Engaging the Equity Diversity and Inclusion Office in the review of Committee terms of reference and appointment processes may help to identify any barriers to equitable participation and options to improve inclusion.

9. Relieve members of Council from formal appointments as liaisons to Advisory Committees

The purpose and value of the Council liaison to Advisory Committees intended to be made up of members of the public is not clear. Attendance by members of Council is reported to be inconsistent and Council members speak of the high demands on their time.

Other jurisdictions have found that assigning Councillors to committees, even as a liaison, can unduly influence the committee. This would be particularly likely where members of Council chair the committee. When an elected official is present, sometimes others on the committee will look to them for leadership, which can diminish the voices of others.

Including the responsibility of a member of Council to represent recommendations of a committee at Council creates challenges on the Council member's obligation to consider all information, and not only the perspective of a citizen Advisory Committee.

Implementation Considerations:

If a member of Council is interested in hearing a committee's discussion directly, the current by law provides that any member of Council may attend any committee, with process requirements for participation. If it is determined that the Committee warrants more substantial participation from one or more members of Council, it could be established as a Select Committee, as defined in *Community Charter* and in Council Procedures Bylaw.

10. Formalize the expectations of the administration with respect to engaging and supporting committees.

Where the administration is preparing recommendations on policy matters related to the committee mandate, the expectation for early engagement, and consistently including a summary of committee input with the administrative report should be an explicit, expected part of the process as the commitment back to the committee members. Making clear in the committee's terms of reference the level of intended engagement and corresponding commitment from the City to consider the input will help prevent misunderstandings.

As Council-established committees, matters required to be put to Advisory Committees for input should be limited to matters that require approval of Council, such as policy, service standards or related principals, not matters within the authority of the administration as noted above. On matters within administrative authority, it is the administration's responsibility to determine whether and how to seek such input. This may include an Advisory Committee but would not be required.

Terms of reference should also make clear the staff support to be provided. Consistent administrative support to Advisory Committees should at minimum include coordinating meetings, posting agendas, taking and posting minutes. Staff resources beyond this should be determined in discussion with the City Manager, documented as part of the committee's minutes, and where significant subject to Council approval as a budget consideration. The demands on administrative resources should be considered as part of establishing committees and related budgets.

Rationale:

Advisory committees have been identified as a tool for public engagement. The City of Victoria Engagement Framework is guided by IAP2 principles. Advisory committees are identified in the Engagement Framework at the Collaborate level of engagement, with the corresponding promise to the public of *"We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible."* Advisory Committee feedback indicates they are not feeling the promise has been kept. Reflecting back 'what we heard' to stakeholders is important for accountability and transparency.

Concerns were also expressed by stakeholders that staff support is inconsistent across committees and is impacting the effectiveness of committees without staff support.

Implementation Considerations:

A summary of 'what we heard' could be provided back to the committee early in the process, particularly when the recommendation to Council may be some months away. Providing back a timely summary would allow the committee to have confidence their input was received, or to correct any errors or omissions before the report is submitted to Council.

The direction for the administration to include a summary of Advisory Committee input on policy issues with the administrative report can be implemented with reasonably short notice (i.e., reports that have not yet been submitted to Council or are not imminently due). If no input was sought or received on a policy matter, that should also be referenced in the report to be transparent to both Council and the public. Where Council has requested an expedited report from the administration, the impact on being able to effectively engage an Advisory Committee on the matter should be considered and noted.

Any formal updates to terms of reference could occur with the overall review in recommendation 1.

11. Formalize the process for bringing Advisory Committee recommendations to Council.

Committees may wish to bring recommendations directly to Council on matters identified by the committee itself, or to ensure input provided to staff is received unfiltered by Council. The ability of an Advisory Committee to do so should be reflected in its terms of reference, and if to be allowed, a process should be established such that committee recommendations reliably are received by Council.

Rationale:

Committees identified concerns that their recommendations are not being reflected in staff reports and that recommendations are not being received or considered by Council. If it is the intent of Council to receive unsolicited recommendations, the process should be clear and reliable. The current process to include all motions by Advisory Committees with the tri-annual reports is ineffective and an unnecessary amount of detail, as it includes all motions such as acceptance of minutes, not just recommendations to be directed to Council.

Implementation Considerations:

Unsolicited Advisory Committee motions are currently included with the tri-annual review of the strategic plan but are not expressly acknowledged. Including Advisory Committee minutes, reports or recommendations with regular Council packages as information on the consent agenda would make it transparent that Council has received the information in a timelier manner. The regular motion process could be employed if Council feels action is warranted, i.e., whether to refer the matter to the tri-annual review of the strategic plan, or to engage Council in immediate discussion. While it is important for Council to determine its own priorities and agenda, it is reasonable for an Advisory Committee to expect that its input is heard and considered.

12. Publish meeting schedules, agendas and supporting materials for all Council committees.

Rationale:

Part 5, Division 3 of the Charter – Open Meetings applies to all committees of Council, including Advisory Committees and provides that meetings must be open to the public. Allowing the public to be aware of matters the Advisory Committee will be addressing increases transparency. It would also allow the public to attend a meeting, consistent with the open meeting requirement.

Implementation considerations:

Additional staff support may be required and should be considered as part of planning and budgeting for Council committees.

13. Establish a policy for remuneration and to reimburse expenses for public members of Council committees to remove barriers to participation.

Rationale:

Members of the public may need to forgo income, have limited personal income, or incur direct costs to participate on an Advisory Committee. Establishing a per diem for meeting attendance, with a half day and full day rate (to include meeting preparation) will help to offset loss of income. Committee members may also

incur parking or travel expenses, or other expenses directly related to participation (e.g., childcare) that may create barriers to participation.

Implementation considerations:

Per diems would only be paid for meetings attended. Individuals appointed to a committee as an employee of an organization that includes participation in such committees as part of their employment would not be eligible for meeting per diems but may be eligible for reimbursement of expenses.

The City of Victoria has established remuneration for members of the IDPAD committee. A consistent policy should be established for all committees that involve appointed members of the public

Estimated costs for per diems and reimbursement of expenses should be considered as part of establishing committees and related budgets. The remuneration policy could include a cap on the number of meetings for an Advisory Committee for which per diems would be paid. Per diems for an expanded meeting schedule or sub-committee meetings would be subject to approval by Council.

14. Develop and implement a common orientation process for Advisory Committees.

Rationale

Council, staff and committee members expressed frustration with the lack of clarity around committee purpose, mandates, roles and reporting structures. Orienting all involved to the established structures, policies and norms before the work of the committee gets underway will help support an effective working relationship where all parties feel valued. .

Implementation considerations

A standard set of orientation materials can be developed and expanded as necessary for individual committees. Standard orientation topics should include: review of the Terms of Reference, how the work supports policy decisions of Council, clarify the extent and limits of authority, specifics of available staff support, meeting procedures, effective meeting management and other relevant policies and practice. The orientation should take place at the beginning of each Advisory Committee term with annual refreshers.

5.4 Council and Committee Decision-Making Processes

5.4.1 Formal structures

As required by the *Community Charter*, the City of Victoria has established Council Procedures Bylaw 16-011 for the conduct of Council and committee business.

The Council Procedures Bylaw amended by Bylaw 21-074 does not specify the schedule of Council meetings, rather it states that Council must establish a schedule of meetings and make it available to the public. The bylaw further outlines the order of business and rules of procedure for participation, delegations, conduct, debate and voting, motions and amendments to motions.

During the pandemic, two ministerial orders were made to permit changes to procedure regarding public

attendance at meetings, permitting electronic meetings and public hearings, amending timelines for passage of bylaws, and deferral of annual requirements during the state of emergency. The ministerial orders expired September 28, 2021, and amendments to the *Community Charter* under Bill 10 were approved by BC Reg 235/2021 effective September 29, 2021, to allow local governments to continue to conduct meetings and public hearings electronically, as well as other provisions related to election bylaws and emergency related borrowing. The order stated that when conducting electronic meetings, municipalities must use best efforts to allow members of the public to attend the part of the meeting that is open to the public. Guidance from Municipal Affairs in July 2021 was that municipalities would have the flexibility to choose whether to allow electronic meetings, however by law amendments should not be made until the legislation was in force.

16-011 s. 36 allows for Council by resolution to go into Committee of the Whole (COTW) at any time during a Council meeting. It also provides that any other meeting, other than a statutory, standing or select committee meeting to which all members of Council are invited to consider, but not decide on matters of City business is a meeting of COTW. Section 40 of the Procedure Bylaw specifies that regular meetings of COTW must begin at 9:00 a.m. and adjourn at 2 p.m. unless there is a motion for continuation. The order of business for a regular COTW is listed and includes approval of the agenda, consent agenda, reading of minutes, unfinished business, land use matters, and staff reports. Per s. 38 of the Procedure Bylaw, no action may be taken on the reports [recommendations] of the COTW until they have been approved by Council.

Open-meetings

Per the *Community Charter*, all meetings of Council and its committees must be open to the public. The Charter lists a series of exceptions whereby the meeting may move into a closed session (in-camera) to discuss confidential matters. Per the City's Open Meeting policy dated January 1, 2014, Council will deal with information presented to it for consideration in open session, except when the matter must be considered in a closed meeting, or when Council considers it necessary to protect the City's interests. Prior to moving into closed session to receive a staff report, staff will explain the reasons for consideration in closed session and outline the harm that would come to the City's interests if such information were considered in open session, or the specific enactment which prohibits the consideration of the information in open session. The City's Open Meeting policy indicates that at the end of each quarter of the calendar year, Council will review meeting minutes to consider publicly disclosing Council business that was considered in a closed meeting. In practice this has been done as part of the tri-annual review.

Meeting Agendas and Minutes

The Council Procedures Bylaw states that COTW Meetings commence at 9:00 a.m. and must adjourn at 2:00 p.m. unless by approval of 2/3 of the members present. Daytime Council meetings are not specifically referenced except for s. 4 (1) which states that daytime Council meetings must end by 4:30 p.m. unless an extension is approved by 2/3 of the members present. Evening Council meetings must adjourn by 11:00 p.m., unless an extension is approved.

The *Community Charter* requires that the public is provided with advance notice of the time, date and location of Council and committee meetings. It does not specify a period of notice. Council Procedures Bylaw s.

7,(amended by Bylaw 21-074) specifies the City Clerk must give advance notice of the agendas to Council and the public at least 48 hours before the meeting. Copies of the agenda must be delivered to Council members. The public is to be notified by posting the agenda on the notice board at City Hall and leaving copies of the agenda at the public counter in City Hall. The bylaw refers to the agendas without specific reference to supporting materials. The Council Procedures Bylaw does not specify who is responsible for developing agendas.

Late Items

The Council Procedures Bylaw s. 15 states that Council must not consider any matters not listed on the agenda unless introduction of the late items is approved by the Council at the time allocated on the agenda for such matters. If a late item is approved, the supporting information must be distributed to Council. Section 19 of the Council Procedures Bylaw provides for two options for adding "late items" to the agenda; 1) by providing notice and a copy of the motion in writing to the Corporate Administrator by 11:00 a.m. on the Monday before the meeting, or 2) by providing notice at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting along with rationale for the time sensitivity for the matter to be considered at the meeting. It will be included as an item under New Business on the agenda.

The *Community Charter* requires that the minutes of Council and committee meetings are taken and certified, it also requires in s. 97 that all minutes of Council and committee meetings must be available to the public upon request. It is silent on agendas and supporting materials.

The frequency, scheduling, notice and order of proceedings for Committee of the Whole and Council Meetings are set out in the Procedure Bylaw.

Virtual Participation by members

The *Charter* allows for Council and committee meetings to be conducted virtually by municipal bylaw. Virtual meetings must ensure that all participants, at a minimum, can hear the meeting. Council Procedures Bylaw s. 9, amended by Bylaw 21-074 specifies that two Council members may participate virtually in Council and Committee meetings. The mayor may also authorize more than two members to participate virtually in the case of an emergency or other extra-ordinary circumstances that make it unsafe or impractical for Council members to participate in-person. Section 9 of the Council Procedures Bylaw requires that any written material that was not included in the agenda package or provided to Council members as an inclusion in late agenda items must be audibly read into the record if the meeting has electronic participation. Council members who are participating in a meeting virtually must audibly state their vote in favour or in opposition of a matter.

Land Use Matters

Board of Variance

Per s. 901 and 902 of the *Local Government Act*, an applicant may apply to the Council appointed Board of Variance for a hearing where strict compliance with a bylaw would cause undue hardship. Hearings of the Board of Variance are open to the public and their decisions are final.

CALUC Process

Per the Land Use Procedures Bylaw s. 6 applicants whose proposal involves revisions to the Official Community Plan (OCP) or zoning bylaw must arrange and participate in a Community Meeting not more than six months prior to submitting their application. The community meeting may be waived by the CALUC or Council, or by the Director if the applicant has made reasonable attempts to hold the community meeting. The City will provide owners and occupiers of property within a specified distance with notice of the community meeting date or how they can otherwise provide comments to the CALUC if a community meeting will not be held. Further detail on public participation in the CALUC process is included in section 5.5 Public Access and Input to Council Decision-making.

Delegated Authority

If authority has been delegated to the administration (Director of Sustainable and Community Planning), the administration may refer the application for recommendation to other agencies or associations, including the Advisory Design Panel (ADP), the Heritage Advisory Panel (HAPL) or the Technical R Group (TRG). The Director must consider but is not bound to accept the recommendations or comments of the advisory body.

Per Land Use Procedures Bylaw s. 40, if an application is refused, or if the applicant objects to a proposed provision of the permit, the applicant may request that Council reconsider the decision of the Director. The applicant may appear before Council to make representations concerning the application.

Opportunity for Public Comment

The Land Use Procedures Bylaw s. 31 allows for Council to provide an Opportunity for Public Comment before passing a resolution to issue various development permits that do not vary a bylaw. If Council intends to provide an Opportunity for Public Comment the City will mail or otherwise deliver notice of the opportunity to the owners and occupiers of adjacent properties and the subject property. Opportunities for Public comment are not specifically identified in the documented order of proceedings for regular Council meetings in the Council Procedures Bylaw, however it is understood that "Public and Statutory Hearings" includes Opportunities for Public Comment.

Public Hearings

The Local Government Act s. 464 requires public hearings prior to Council adoption of official community plans (OCP), zoning bylaws, use or density amendments to land use contracts, and heritage revitalization agreements not otherwise authorized by the applicable zoning. A public hearing is not required if the municipality has an OCP for the subject area and the proposed bylaw is consistent with the OCP. The hearing must be held after first reading of the bylaw and prior to third reading. The *Local Government Act* refers to minimum notice requirements included in *the Community Charter*. If Council opts not to hold a public hearing on a zoning bylaw, as permitted above, it must give similar notice to the public. A municipality may establish bylaws specifying further notice details and for the conduct of public hearings. A written summary of the nature of the representations made at the hearing must be maintained as a public record. After the public hearing, Council may adopt or defeat the bylaw, or revise (within certain limitations) and then adopt the bylaw. The City's Land Use Procedures Bylaw 16-028 specifies that the notice of public hearing must be delivered to owners and occupiers within 100 metres of the subject property.

Per the Council Procedures Bylaw s. 15 public hearings are a standing item on the evening Council meeting agenda.

Public Participation in Council Decision-Making Processes

The legislation and bylaws provide for numerous opportunities for the public to observe or actively participate in Council decision-making processes. These opportunities are described in more detail in section 5.5 of this report (Public Access and Input to Council Decision-making) and include:

- Attendance at open Council and Committee of the Whole meetings
- Addressing Council at regular Council meetings through Request to Address and Question Period
- Participating in Public Hearings and Opportunities for Public Comment on land use matters
- Engaging with the Council Liaison and City administration at Neighbourhood Association meetings
- Participating in CALUC meetings and providing written comments on land use matters
- Participating in City-directed public engagement processes

5.4.2 Current Practice

City of Victoria Council conducts three regularly scheduled meetings - Committee of the Whole at 9:00 a.m., Council to Follow (daytime Council meeting) and regular Council meetings at 6:30 p.m. (evening Council meeting). Creating a daytime Council meeting for regular business of less public interest was implemented as an effort to reduce the time commitment required of members of the public interested in public hearings scheduled for evening meetings. Amendments to the Procedure Bylaw to formalize the schedule of Council meetings were proposed in April 2021 but have not yet been approved by Council, pending the recommendations of this report.

Currently, all Committee of the Whole and Council meetings are scheduled on Thursdays. Committee of the Whole and Council to Follow meetings each occur weekly (4 per month), and evening Council meetings occur

bi-weekly (2 per month). Council and Committee of the Whole meeting schedules, agendas, agenda materials and minutes are posted on the City of Victoria website in a searchable format. A video recording of these meetings is also available for public viewing.

The Council Procedures Bylaw establishes the order of business for Committee of the Whole and regular Council meetings. In practice, public hearings are held at evening Council meetings. The items for consideration at each of the meetings is outlined in the table below, as confirmed through review of published meeting agendas.

Committee of the Whole	Council to Follow	Council (evening)
Approval of Agenda	Approval of agenda	Approval of agenda
Consent Agenda*	Reading of minutes	Reading of minutes
Reading of Minutes	Proclamations	Requests to address Council (up to 6)
Unfinished Business	Unfinished Business	Proclamations
Land use Matters	Reports of Committee	Public and statutory hearings
Staff Reports	Bylaws	Requests to Address Council (if more than 6)
Notice of Motions	Closed Meeting	Unfinished Business
New Business	Unfinished Business	Reports of Committees
Late Items	Correspondence	Notice of Motions
Closed meeting (if required)	New Business	Bylaws
Adjournment	Consideration to Rise and Report	Correspondence
	Adjournment	New Business
		Late items
		Question Period
		Closed meeting (if required)
		Adjournment

**Consent agendas at Committee of the Whole meetings most typically include approval of minutes, proclamations, administrative items, land use matters*

Committee of the Whole meetings are the longest of the three on average and have lasted as long as 13.65 hours. MNP reviewed the posted meeting minutes for the period March 2021 to February 2022 to determine the duration of meetings. The results of our analysis are included in the table on the next page

Table 1 - Duration of Council meetings March 2021 to February 2022

	Duration in hours		
	COTW	Council To Follow	Council (evening)
Average	5.5	2.6	3.7
Maximum	13.7	6.2	6.6
Minimum	0.9	0.43	1.7

All senior management staff attend all the meetings, whether to present a report or to be available to answer questions from Council.

COTW has been used as a means of pre-considering all items to be considered by Council. This includes proclamations, staff reports, land use matters and Council member motions, as well as broader issues such as the 'missing middle' housing strategy. Any item requiring a resolution of Council must be referred to a Council meeting. Staff reports received for information may be limited to COTW and not referred further. A sample review of Council member motions indicated topics such as requests for information from staff, recommended policy or bylaw amendments, advocacy related to provincial legislation or policy or endorsement of actions by another body.

A review of COTW meeting minutes from September – December 2021 identified a total of 117 matters on COTW agendas. Thirty-two (27%) were planning and development matters and 68 (58%) were presentations and staff reports, administrative matters and proclamations. Fifty-seven items (33%) were consent agenda items. Thirteen items (7% of total) were Council member motions. A staff report accompanying a proclamation (often a consent item) identified the policy requirements that a staff report be prepared on all community requests for a proclamation for presentation to COTW, a COTW motion to refer to Council, and a separate Council vote on each proclamation. A list of 55 proclamations to date was included with the agenda.

Reports from COTW may be considered at daytime Council. For example the COTW recommendation that the 'missing middle' housing strategy 'be referred for public engagement' was received by daytime Council. COTW reports on land matters or recommendations for Bylaw amendments may be directly decided or referred to the administration to prepare the associated materials for a bylaw and hearing.

Evening Council meetings are where hearings are held for land use matters, and public delegations may be received. Fifty-two matters were on evening Council agendas from September to December 2021, including 223 (42%) land matters. Requests to address Council are a standing agenda item for all regular City Council meetings after approval of the agenda and before regular items are considered. If more than six requests are received to speak to Council the remaining requests are placed on the agenda after any public hearings. Statistics provided by the City administration for regular Council meetings from January 17, 2019, to December 9, 2021 indicate some meetings have very high numbers of delegations. As many as 64 speakers have been

recorded at a single meeting. In 2019 prior to the pandemic, 195 speakers were received at Council meetings from January to December. Removing the outlier of 64, the average was six per meeting. In 2020, removing an outlier of 26, the average was 7 per meeting with a total of 124 speakers. The average in 2021 was 3, with a total of 69 speakers.

Decision-making Information (Agenda packages)

Agenda packages for COTW and Council meetings are distributed to Council members and posted on the City website the Friday prior to the meeting (4 business days in advance). Generally, materials to be included in the agenda package, including submissions from the public, are to be received by the City Clerk two weeks in advance. Additional “late” items from Council members are added to the agenda if submitted by 11:00 a.m. the Monday prior to the meeting, video submissions for public hearings will be included in the agenda if received by 2 p.m. Tuesday. Revised agendas are published Wednesday, 24 hours in advance of the meeting. Written submissions for public hearings will be published on the agenda if received by 2 p.m. the day of the meeting.

Agenda packages are characterized as “hundreds” of pages long, with extensive presentation appendices and materials. Staff reports include a section entitled Executive Summary, however upon review, contents of this section are inconsistent, and may not be sufficient to understand the nature of the decision and its impact. Stakeholders advise that results of public engagement are typically included as an appendix in their entirety, without summarization.

An Accessibility Impact Statement for inclusion in staff reports was developed and operationalized in June 2021. Council also adopted an Interim Equity Decision-making Tool on September 2, 2021 to assist Council and staff in assessing the legal requirements, barriers, and adverse impacts on equity deserving groups of decisions related to projects, policies, bylaws or other City actions requiring a decision. Council also directed staff to provide recommendations and a template for incorporating the decision-making tool in staff reports. Work on this task is underway.

5.4.3 Insights from Internal Engagement

Internal stakeholders frequently commented on the extreme length of Council and COTW meetings. The sequence of meetings, beginning with COTW in the morning, Council to Follow and evening Council meetings makes for a very long day. Fourteen of the 24 evening Council meetings between March 2021 and March 2022 (13 months) ended after 10 pm, creating a 13 hour meeting day with the 9:00 am start. Five of these meetings ended after the 11 pm maximum in the Procedure Bylaw. Two ended after midnight.

Re-debating matters that were previously discussed at Committee of the Whole, Council members delving into details at an operational level, and Council member speech-making were often noted as frequent drivers of meeting time. Concern was expressed regarding the impact of these lengthy meeting days, including:

- The effect of fatigue on effective debate and decision-making.
- Reducing the public’s ability or interest to participate or watch meetings, particularly if decisions are being made after 11 p.m.

- Consuming significant staff resources (all senior staff attend all meetings) and impacting their ability to attend to other work.
- Overall time commitment for Council members (preparation and attendance).

All matters to be considered by Council are first placed on COTW agendas. Even if there was extensive debate at COTW, Council members may seek to re-open the discussion or amend the motion based on input received from members of the public in the two weeks between the COTW and Council meetings. Discussion at times repeats the prior discussion.

The COTW may recommend matters be referred for a public hearing in more circumstances than required under provincial legislation, including minor land matters, increasing the volume of hearings and time required from Council members and staff. Council members may also seek to provide direction to staff and reports back on design details that do not require Council approval. The purpose is believed to be an interest in allowing maximum public input and transparency.

Evaluating opportunities to clearly delegate more responsibility to the administration, particularly on land issues was also identified.

The current policy to allow members of the public to address Council on any topic was also identified as a potential driver of time.

5.4.4 Insights from Public Engagement

Efficiency of Council Meetings

Seventy-seven percent of public survey respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that matters to be considered by Council are dealt with efficiently. Additionally, 74% of public survey respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that matters to be considered by Council are dealt with in a timely way.

Open-ended responses to the survey also expressed dissatisfaction regarding the length of meetings, and the late hours. Last minute motions, nitpicking small details, grandstanding and meetings that 'veer off course' were seen as affecting efficiency and extending the length of meetings. The length of meetings was also noted as discouraging public participation and future candidates for elected positions. Some concern was also expressed regarding the number of closed agenda items.

Feedback received from stakeholder groups experienced with Council processes indicated timeliness of decisions is impacted by lack of clarity on advisory committees' role in supporting initiatives, input from the public being taken into consideration only at the end of the decision-making process sometimes causing a change of opinion with some Council members, and lengthy delays in receiving reports. These stakeholders explained that lengthy delays can negatively impact initiatives if new issues have arisen, or data supporting the recommendations is no longer relevant or accurate.

Decision-making

Public survey participants were asked to provide input on the alignment of Council's decision-making with citizen priorities for the city. Sixty-seven percent of respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed that Council

overall makes decisions based on what they believe is in the best interest of the city. Seventy-one percent of survey respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that public input is considered by Council in its decision-making process. The most frequent comment made by survey respondents is that Councillors appear to make decisions based on personal agendas or stray into matters beyond municipal jurisdiction (262 combined mentions). Comments in the survey also expressed concern that Council is disregarding staff advice, or not effectively relying on professional staff, and tending to become involved in matters that should be delegated to staff.

Some stakeholder meeting participants noted that some Councillors appear to let their bias sway their decision or only consider the opinion of the squeaky wheel rather than considering the opinion of the broader public.

Some concerns were also raised in open-ended comments in the public survey regarding a lack of transparency in council decision-making, including reference to the frequency of in camera meetings and how decisions are made that seem contrary to broader public input or interest.

5.4.5 Insights from Other Jurisdictions & Contemporary Practice

A committee of the whole is different from regular committees as it includes all members of Council. The purpose of such a committee generally is to allow all members of Council an opportunity to engage in informal discussion to learn and build consensus on matters that may result in a recommendation to Council. Roberts Rules of Order describes how a Council may use a committee of the whole during the meeting, essentially as a temporary suspension of more rigid rules of procedure to more informal discussion and consensus building. In practice, committees of the whole have taken the form of a standing committee, with a regular schedule of meetings, order of business and committee rules of order. A committee of the whole allows for the whole Council to work towards common understanding of an issue by listening and reviewing reports together in the same room at the same time, instead of through separate delegated committees. Working in a committee of the whole can help Council reach consensus and develop recommendations for action over a series of meetings and should expedite business overall. Suggestions for effective use of committee of the whole (Pioche, 2013) include

- Having another member preside over the meeting instead of the mayor. This allows the mayor to participate more freely in the debate, makes it clear to members of the public that this is a committee vs a Council meeting, and allows an opportunity for other members to gain experience in presiding
- Set a time of day and duration that allows for discussion of issues, taking care not to load too much work into one meeting.
- Ensure public access to agendas and materials to be discussed. Consider inviting delegations to this forum to inform the discussion. The media and public may find this forum to be more interesting as it is where the essence of issues can be more fully discussed.
- Time the meetings to allow for issues discussed in committee to be brought forward to Council for decision in a timely way, for example immediately following or within a few days. Matters that require preparation and public release of material may need to be placed on the next agenda to allow for required notice period.

- A contentious issue that does not achieve consensus, or where the majority determines it should not be recommended for adoption, should still be taken to the regular Council meeting so the Council can vote on its final disposition.
- Use of a consent agenda in a Council meeting is an efficient way to carry information forward from a committee of the whole to the Council. Issues that have been thoroughly discussed or otherwise not in need of further debate can be placed on the consent agenda for quick approval.

Council and Committees

Other municipalities reviewed have a mix of structures, including committee of the whole and standing committees as part of the decision-making process. Vancouver, Regina, Windsor, Kitchener and St. John's use committees of the whole.

City	Standing Committees
Victoria, BC	Committee of the Whole (all Council members)
Vancouver, BC	2 Standing Committees (Committee of the Whole)
Kelowna, BC	none
Regina, SK	Executive Committee (Committee of the Whole); Planning Commission
Windsor, ON	4 Standing Committees (1 Committee of the Whole and 3 with 5 members only)
Kitchener, ON	3 Standing Committees (Committee of the Whole)
Quebec City, QC	1 Standing Committee
Halifax, NS	6 Standing Committees; 4 Community Councils
St. John's, NL	Committee of the Whole (Council members assigned to portfolios)

The City of Vancouver has two standing committees of the whole, Finance and Services and Policy and Strategic Priorities. In practice, agenda items are divided between these two committees regardless of topic, to optimize the available time and ensure that all agenda items can be completed. Standing Committees may receive reports and presentations from staff and make recommendations to Council. A Council meeting convened immediately following the standing committee receives its recommendations on matters considered at the meeting just concluded and votes to approve them. Council may also refer matters to these committees for the purpose of hearing staff presentations and speakers on specific topics, to be followed by a decision made by the Committee. Examples of meetings included a single topic addressed over multiple meetings. Council meetings are scheduled on Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m. There were two Council meetings per month from March to June 2022, except May with only one. These meetings adjourned in all but two cases before 6:00 p.m.; the latest adjourned just after 8 p.m. Vancouver schedules its public hearings separately. Hearings are scheduled at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays and may be adjourned to continue on another day. The Procedure Bylaw

provides that meetings must recess or adjourn at noon, 5:00 p.m. or 10:00 p.m. Special Council meetings may also be convened for in-camera meetings or a Council workshop (e.g., on the Capital Plan) on dates and times required by the mayor. Of the sample reviewed, these meetings were scheduled at 3:00 p.m. and adjourned at or before 5 p.m. Special Council meetings scheduled for a business licence hearing, were convened at 9:30 a.m. or 6:00 p.m.

Regina holds regular Council meetings twice monthly on alternate Wednesdays at 1 p.m. A review of minutes from January to June indicated Council meetings adjourned before 5 p.m. half the time or between 6 p.m. and 7 p.m. The meeting extended to just past 9 p.m. in one instance. Council agendas and meeting materials are released 13 days prior to the meeting. Regina received a report to reform the procedural bylaw in December 2021 and amended their structure to disband some committees to incorporate them into the revised mandate of the Executive Committee (of the whole). Regina Council also considered a change to limit public delegations to Executive Committee with written submissions only to Council but retained the status quo. The Executive Committee is held on alternate Wednesdays. These meetings are convened at 9 a.m. and in all cases January to June 2022 adjourned before 5 p.m., many in mid-afternoon. Special Council meetings are held less than 10 times per year and may include in-camera meetings or single matters with public delegations. The Regina Planning Commission is the only other main committee of Council and is responsible for review of land use matters, with recommendations made to Council. Three members of Council are on the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission meets once per month.

At the time of this report Regina is proposing training for staff report writers to ensure Council decision making materials efficiently and effectively convey the required information. Reports will include summary information only in the body, including impact sections. Internal experts will be established for key areas of impact to provide advice to report writers.

Kitchener has three Standing Committees, including community and infrastructure services, planning and strategic initiatives and finance and corporate services. All are committees of the whole and generally meet once per month. Regular Council meetings are once per month at 7 p.m., with additional special Council meetings for in camera matters or to receive delegations. Public delegations are encouraged to attend Committee meetings and may address regular Council only on matters already listed on the agenda. Delegations may not address both a Committee and Council on the same matter, unless providing new information. If a delegation wishes to present to Council on a matter that is not on a meeting agenda, and it is questionable whether it falls into the City's jurisdiction, the matter is referred to the next agenda setting meeting for consideration by Committee Chairs. If deemed an inappropriate matter to address Council, the delegation will be notified with an explanation. On any matter on the agenda, Council members are allowed a total of five minutes in each of a first and second round of questions on a matter. If an answer to the question is in the agenda materials, the question is deemed out of order.

Kelowna discontinued its Committee of the Whole meetings as they found that Council was duplicating the COTW debate at the Council meeting.

Consent Agenda

Halifax has recently established the use of a consent agenda to streamline meeting processes. By default, all agenda items that are eligible for inclusion on the consent agenda are listed as such. The agenda review committee includes the CAO, Clerk, City Solicitor and a small number of Council members.

Proclamations

Vancouver, Kelowna, Halifax and Windsor all have processes where the public may request a proclamation from the Mayor. None require staff reports or approval by Council. These four cities also list significantly fewer proclamations than Victoria. Vancouver lists 17; Kelowna none.

5.4.6 Recommendations

1. **Review the purpose and use of Committee of the Whole to reduce duplication, enable use of COTW for informal discussion on key issues requiring learning and development of consensus, and to receive public delegations on matters being considered by Council. Enable immediate ratification at Council for all matters concluded at COTW unless Council has identified a clear exception.**

Rationale:

The City of Victoria is employing its COTW for advance consideration of all items going to Council for approval, essentially as a form of agenda management. By doing so, it creates large agendas that limit the time available at COTW for fuller discussion and consensus building, create additional administrative workload to prepare materials for both meetings, and duplicates effort of Council for both preparation and meeting time. It also slows matters down as there is a two-week delay on bringing forward items from COTW to Council.

Many items are referred to the daytime Council meeting or placed on a consent agenda, implying that the matter is of less public interest, or straightforward and advance discussion is unnecessary.

Allowing for immediate ratification at the Council to Follow meeting reduces the need for Council to re-read the materials while preparing for a future meeting and lessens the potential for a repeat of the same debate. Currently Council members may individually receive information from the public during the period between COTW and the Council meeting that causes the Councillor to want to re-open the debate. This information taken out of context of the full discussion may be given too much weight.

Implementation Considerations

A change in matters to be considered by COTW will require an amendment to the Council Procedures Bylaw which lists the order of proceedings and business at Committee of the Whole meetings. Publishing agendas for COTW with greater advance notice (two weeks vs one) and opening the agenda to delegations on the matters to be addressed will allow the Council to receive public input at the same time as it considers technical or professional advice from administrative staff. It will also help to address the public concern that by the time they are able to present to Council, the matter has already been decided. Receiving delegations on the matter to be discussed at the COTW will also allow Council to consider all information at the same time and allow all members of Council to receive the same information. Limiting the agenda only to matters that require such

discussion will reduce the unproductive time of members of the public wishing to speak to a matter.

Public communication of any change in Council meeting and decision-making processes will be important to maintain transparency.

2. Create a separate, distinct meeting for public hearings, and evaluate whether this may be suited for scheduling on a separate day.

Rationale:

The current meeting schedule of COTW, followed by daytime Council, followed by regular Council where hearings are held creates an extremely long day. This creates undue fatigue among members of Council and staff that can reasonably be expected to reduce the quality of engagement and decision-making. It also frustrates members of the public that are interested in watching Council meetings. Allowing for a Council meeting immediately following COTW has benefits in enabling immediate ratification of COTW recommendations. Creating a separate, distinct meeting for a hearing, instead of in the middle of a Council meeting, will provide more scheduling certainty for members of the public and allow for efficient use of staff time (so that only affected staff need to attend). Placing hearings on a separate evening will provide more certainty in scheduling and reduce waiting time for attending members of the public and allow Council to devote its full attention to the hearing.

Implementation considerations:

A change in scheduling for public hearings will require an amendment to the Council Procedures Bylaw which lists the order of proceedings and business at Council meetings. Public communication of any change in Council meeting and decision-making processes will be important to maintain transparency.

3. Streamline land use matters by delegating more authority to staff where an application is consistent with the OCP and dispensing with public hearings where not required.

Rationale:

Council currently requires a public hearing on more matters than are legislatively required. Requiring Council review and a public hearing of land use applications that are consistent with the OCP or involve a minor variance slows down the process for desired development and invites Council to create precedent by making decisions that are inconsistent with policy that had broader public input in its formation. It also creates a public expectation that their input at a hearing will enable an exception to a policy. Optimizing administrative authority to address matters without Council approval will improve the timeliness of the municipal response to land use applications and remove some 'red tape' that may constrain desired development. The current land use application tracker provides publicly available information on requests very early on and all the way through the process, supporting transparency objectives.

Implementation considerations:

Specific policies to identify matters within administrative authority would be required. Such policies may include

required processes for public input.

4. Streamline Council agenda materials to include a short, high-level summary of key decision considerations, following by detailed background with user friendly cross-references.

Rationale:

Council members indicated that agenda materials often include very long reports that make it difficult to fully read all materials to prepare for a meeting. Questions also arise at Council meetings that are answered in the agenda materials. Large volumes of information without such a summary analysis can be overwhelming, increase the time necessary to understand it, and have each member of Council needing to personally analyze what is important in the material.

A standard item should include a brief background on why the matter is before Council, the motion recommended, associated regulatory authority, and impacts of the decision, including specific stakeholder, financial and administrative impact. A standard section specifically addressing stakeholder impacts, including as related to equity-deserving groups, is consistent with Council direction in September 2021, and will enable balanced consideration. This will help Council to quickly understand the nature of the decision and seek additional details where required. Clearly stating what requires Council approval and what is within administrative authority will also enable a point of order if a member of Council strays into operational details. Background materials should include analysis, not raw data, including the results of stakeholder engagement.

This type of decision-support material would also be more user friendly for the public and help to better understand the nature and significance of matters before Council. A clear summary of what was received through public engagement may also increase the public's sense of being heard.

Enabling earlier access to COTW materials for matters requiring more discussion per recommendation 1 above will allow both Council and members of the public to focus attention on these matters, as would reducing the volume of duplicate materials by streamlining COTW agendas.

Implementation Considerations:

Standard templates, administrative staff training and/or coaching would facilitate this change in how agenda materials are prepared. A trial period with feedback from Council will allow for continuous improvement and better achieve a set of materials that meet needs and expectations.

5. Limit changes to published agendas to only matters that are determined to be emergent by the Mayor.

Rationale:

Currently under s. 19 of the Procedure Bylaw Council members may give notice of a motion to be introduced at a Council meeting on the Monday after the agenda is published on Friday (three days prior to the meeting) to be included as an item of New Business. Items can be submitted up to 24 hours before the meeting with a rationale noting the reason for the time sensitivity of the matter to be considered at the meeting. Including additional materials after the agenda has been published diminishes transparency to the public, who may have accessed the materials when they were released. It also reduces the time available to Council to consider this

material and increases administrative handling of the agenda and related postings. There is currently no obligation to demonstrate the urgency of items presented three days prior, and as such any such submissions should be received by the clerk on the same schedule as all other materials. If a member of Council believes a matter requires such urgency, the matter should be referred to the mayor to determine whether it must be placed on the immediate agenda or can be deferred to the next. Such matters should require a resolution by Council to be included on the agenda.

Implementation Considerations:

A change in the Procedure Bylaw is required.

6. **Change the process for proclamations such that they are handled under the authority of the Mayor. Dispense with requiring a staff report, COTW review and separate Council decision on proclamations.**

Rationale

The *Community Charter* states that "Council may declare **or the mayor may proclaim** a day of recognition to be observed in the municipality." Council has established a policy whereby any publicly requested proclamation requires a staff report and consideration by Council on at least two agendas. With 55 proclamations in the past year, this creates an undue administrative effort and clogging of agendas with items that may have little to do with municipal government. Council may also hesitate to publicly decline such a requested proclamation. Public perceptions of Council making a high volume of proclamations on a wide variety of issues may be contributing to the expressed public concern that Council is not focused on municipal priorities. Other cities reviewed all have a process where such proclamations are requested from the mayor. Where desired for public profile, the proclamations may be read at the beginning of a meeting.

Implementation considerations:

A Council resolution to acknowledge the change in process and the authority of the mayor to make proclamations may be warranted as it is a change in established practice regarding matters that have previously come to Council.

7. **Consider identifying specific meetings where citizens can bring forward issues that are not related to matters on Council's agenda.**

Rationale:

Council may by resolution allow an individual or delegation to address Council on a matter provided a written application is received by 11 a.m. the day before the meeting. Members of the public may also submit matters for inclusion on a Council meeting agenda up to 11 a.m. the day before the meeting. There is no requirement for such matters or topics to be addressed by a delegation to be related to matters on Council's agenda or municipal authority. Most jurisdictions only allow public delegations or submissions on matters before Council.

At times there have been high numbers of delegations that may introduce a wide variety of topics. While Council is prevented in the Council Procedures Bylaw from considering any of these issues unless approved by unanimous vote, the introduction of such issues can be a distraction from Council business. If Victoria is

unwilling to limit input from the public to matters before Council, designating certain meetings for this purpose would allow for improved management of incoming information.

Implementation Considerations:

Council currently reviews progress against its strategic plan three times per year. Receiving public input at these meetings would allow consideration in the context of established priorities. The opportunity for members of the public to submit information to Council at any time outside of a meeting could be maintained.

5.5 Public Access and Input to Council Decision-Making

5.5.1 Formal structures

As noted previously, provincial legislation and City bylaws provide for numerous opportunities for the public to observe or actively participate in Council decision-making processes.

Attendance at Council and COTW Meetings

The *Community Charter* mandates that all Council and Council committee meetings are open to the public, that a schedule of meetings is available to the public and that minutes of the meetings are available. The City has established in their Council Procedures Bylaw that agendas for Council and COTW meetings are posted at least 48 hours in advance on the public notice board at City Hall and copies available at the public counter. It does not provide for posting on the City website.

As noted in section 5.4 members of the public may request to address Council at a regular Council meeting. Those wishing to address Council must submit a written application by 11:00 a.m. the day before the meeting. Any supporting materials must also be submitted by 11:00 a.m. the day before the meeting in order to be included with the agenda package. Each speaker is limited to five minutes unless a longer period is unanimously agreed to by Council. It also allows, again upon unanimous agreement, for the public to address Council without having submitted the requisite application. Addresses by those who did not submit the application are limited to two minutes each.

Per s. 16 (5) of the Council Procedures Bylaw, Council must not take any action on an address by the public at the meeting, unless the proposed action is approved by unanimous vote. The bylaw prohibits the public from addressing Council on matters that have been the subject of a public hearing, or the promotion of commercial goods or services. The bylaw does not require the subject of the public address to be related to a matter on that meeting's agenda. The order of proceedings for regular Council meetings (s. 15(1) also includes a [public] Question Period. It does not provide further detail. A Request to Address Council Policy – 2016 provides guidance on topics that cannot be raised as noted above, and how to handle a Council request to action an item at the meeting.

Participation in CALUC processes

The City of Victoria website indicates that one of the main roles of the CALUC is to facilitate the dialogue

between applicants and the community in order to identify and resolve issues (both positive and negative) regarding land use applications. Prior to the City accepting an application for rezoning or Official Community Plan (OCP) amendment the proponent must present the proposal at a community meeting.

The definition of Community Meeting in the Land Use Procedures Bylaw is “a public meeting held in association with a Community Association Land Use Committee operating under the Community Association Land Use Committee Procedures for Processing Rezoning and Variance Applications”. Applicants are required to contact the applicable CALUC representative to initiate this process.

The procedures for processing rezoning and variance applications require that the CALUC host a Community Meeting on all proposed Rezoning applications in order to ensure the community is notified about proposed land use applications. Direct notice is to be provided to owners and occupiers of property within 100m to 200m of the subject property, depending on the nature of the application. By amendment 21-055 to the Land Use Procedures Bylaw, applicants must also post information at the proposed development site to notify the public of opportunities to provide input.

Representation at Public Hearing or Opportunity to Comment

Public hearings are a key component of municipal planning and land use matters that provide the public with a forum to express their views on proposed plans and bylaws before their adoption. Per *the Local Government Act* s. 465 “all persons who believe that their interest in property is affected by the proposed bylaw must be afforded a reasonable opportunity to be heard or to present written submissions respecting matters contained in the bylaw that is the subject of the hearing”. The *Local Government Act* mandates that notice of the hearing is provided to area residents by advertising in the local newspaper or by alternative means, including delivering individual notices. The City’s Land Use Procedures Bylaw 16-028 specifies that a notice of public hearing is to be delivered to owners and occupiers within 100 metres of the subject property.

Opportunity for Public Comment

Beyond what is legislated by the province for Public Hearing, the City provides in its Land Use Procedures Bylaw s. 31 an Opportunity for Public Comment on matters related to variance permits and temporary use permits. Individual notice of the Opportunity for Public Comment is to be mailed to owners and occupants immediately adjacent to the subject property.

Participation on Advisory Committees and Task Forces

As noted previously in section 5.3 by authority of the Council Procedures Bylaw 16-011 s. 45 Council may appoint advisory bodies to provide advice and recommendations to Council. All members of advisory committees must be members of the public. Advisory Committees have been used as a means of targeted public input to Council decision-making. In some cases the Advisory Committee’s mandate includes reaching out to the community and gathering input such as the International Decade for People of African Descent (IDPAD) Advisory Committee. While meetings are open, there is currently no provision to allow members of the public to address Council committees.

5.5.2 Current Practice

Council and Committee meetings can be viewed live on the City's webcast. Recorded video of past meetings are posted along with the meeting agendas and supporting and minutes.

Requests to Address Council

Per information on the City's website, requests to address council may be submitted using the online form or in person at City Hall. The request must outline the subject matter to be discussed and the action being requested of Council. The Procedures Bylaw does not specify that the topic of a request to address council must be a matter included on the current agenda, therefore, addresses may be on any subject (abiding by the limitations noted previously).

Generally, requests are handled on a first come, first served basis, however according to the City's Requests to Address Council Policy, exceptions may be made for individuals who would be significantly inconvenienced if scheduled later on the agenda. More than one individual may address Council on the same topic at the same Council meeting. An individual may only address Council once at the same meeting. The policy further advises that generally, Council members will not respond to an individual making an address. If the address raises an operational matter, the individual may be directed by the Mayor to contact the Director of the responsible department. Council members who wish to propose action in response to an individual's address will generally do so by submitting a motion at a subsequent COTW or Council meeting. If a Council member wishes to propose an action in response to the address at the same meeting, upon approval of the Mayor, they may make a motion during the new business portion of the meeting. The motion must be passed unanimously.

As noted in section 5.4.1 of this report, statistics provided by the City administration for regular Council meetings from January 17, 2019, to December 9, 2021, some meetings have very high numbers of delegations. In 2019 prior to the pandemic, 195 speakers were received at Council meetings from January to December. As many as 64 speakers were recorded at a single meeting. Removing the outlier of 64, the average was six per meeting. In 2020, removing an outlier of 26, the average was 7 per meeting with a total of 124 speakers. The average in 2021 was 3, with a total of 69 speakers.

Neighbourhood Association and CALUC processes

Councils Liaisons and City staff attend Neighbourhood Association meetings to provide information and respond to inquiries. Councillors may also relay neighbourhood issues to Council if they determine an issue requires Council attention.

Per Terms of Reference for CALUCs, they are established by Neighbourhood Associations and must be endorsed by Council. Membership, terms and board representatives are determined by the individual CALUCs. Information on land use processes and contact information for the CALUCs can be found on the City's website. CALUCs help to coordinate and communicate the required community information meetings, record public input and submit a summary of the input to the developer and City staff.

Beyond CALUC processes initiated to review specific development applications, the City has developed guidelines for involving CALUCs in broader project and policy initiatives, recognizing that CALUCs offer an important voice and perspective in the process of city building. The guidelines refer to the IAP2 spectrum of participation, noting that the level of engagement with CALUCs will be appropriate to the scale and complexity of the project. Engagement strategies are subject to the approval of Council and may include:

- Participation in advisory groups or steering committees
- Partnerships or co-sponsorships of engagement activities
- Acting as or facilitating focus groups on key topics
- Hosting of public meetings or other outreach activities
- Acting as a conduit for distribution of information

Development Tracker

Development plans and applications are also posted on the City's Development Tracker. Plans are posted on the tracker at least 30 days before a development application is submitted. During the pre-application period members of the public may submit comments on the development using a linked feedback form. Feedback collected through the online forms is included with the feedback received at the community meeting and provided to the developer, CALUC and City staff. The public may sign up to receive automatic email updates on development applications, such as when revised plans have been received and when an application is scheduled to go to a public meeting.

Public Hearings and Opportunities for Public Comment

Per information included on the City's website, the public may express their support or opposition of an application in a variety of ways, including in-person at the meeting, live via telephone during the meeting, through a written submission (which may include a PowerPoint presentation) and/or through submission of a pre-recorded video submission. Speaking time or pre-recorded videos is limited to five minutes per individual. Pre-recorded video submissions are played live at the Public Hearing. Submissions must include first and last name, home address and position on the application (support or oppose). The public is not able to appear virtually with video capabilities at this time. Pre-registration is encouraged, but not required. There is no limit to the number of speakers and submissions that will be heard.

Participation in public hearings via telephone or other electronic means was originally included as an interim measure in late 2019 to accommodate members of the public who could not attend public hearings in person due to accessibility barriers. In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic the practice was extended to include all members of the public and to include pre-recorded video submission.

Other Public Engagement

The City of Victoria established an Engagement Framework in 2017 in response to a priority in the 2016-2018 Strategic Plan. The framework is guided by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) principles. The City of Victoria was awarded Canadian Organization of the Year by IAP2 in 2015.

The purpose of the framework is to establish a consistent, transparent approach to public participation, to

enable the public to share their ideas with staff and elected officials, and “to assist decision-makers as they explore ways to improve plans, programs and services”. The framework identifies why the City would engage, how the public can provide input and how the input will be considered. Updates to the Engagement Framework are currently in progress, including an inclusion and equity update and an overall update in collaboration with Simon Fraser University.

Engagement activity is hosted on an online platform ([Have Your Say](#)) and includes background information and tools to gather public input. It also includes sample tools to assist staff and other bodies plan and implement engagement activities. Public engagement summaries that include themes and detailed responses are posted on the Have Your Say project pages to “close the loop”. These summaries do not indicate how public input was considered in the recommendations to council.

The **Have Your Say** icon is spotlighted throughout the City of Victoria’s website. The site indicates three current projects open for public engagement, including the Official Community Plan Update, Missing Middle Housing, and Village and Corridor Planning, and 20 past initiatives (including this review) from April 2021 to date. Background materials are posted to support the engagement, including an overview of the timeline for engagement and decision-making. As available, information on upcoming engagement projects is also included on the Have Your Say website.

The Engagement Framework states that the City of Victoria aims to create many more opportunities than those required by provincial legislation like the *Community Charter* and *Local Government Act*. It also states, “Our commitment to the community is that we will listen and review the feedback we receive with equal consideration as part of the City’s decision-making process.”

In 2021 the City of Victoria conducted engagement on a proposed Inclusion and Equity Update to the Engagement Framework. Community conversations were held in 2021, followed by a public survey and roundtable discussions in spring of 2022. The draft update is to be prepared and presented to Council for approval in the fall of 2022.

Contact Members of Council

Members of the public are invited to contact Mayor and Council or individual Councillors via email or phone. Contact information is provided on the City’s website. Per the City’s Correspondence Management policy, If a Council member wishes to bring forward correspondence for Council to consider, they can do so through a member motion or notice of motion. The policy cautions that correspondence brought forward for Council consideration should be related to policy matters, not operational matters.

5.5.3 Insights from Internal Engagement

Members of Council generally felt the opportunities for the public to participate were good, and strides to increase accessibility, including closed captioning on the webcast were positive steps. Some expressed a need for more deliberate efforts to ensure diverse, equitable representation of the public as Council often hears repeatedly from the same people. Some indicated an interest in increasing opportunities for more active dialogue with members of Council such as at COTW or throughout the process of considering an issue

(beginning, middle, end). Staying current with the volume of direct emails received from the public was identified as a challenge, and that there seems to be a somewhat unrealistic expectation for public engagement.

Some concern was expressed that at times the City may be dismissive of public opinions and input provided by advisory committees, and Council doesn't always listen to the results of engagement.

Online surveys are seen as helpful in getting more diverse perspectives, with the caution that questions can at times be leading. A need to make engagement tools more user friendly and meaningful was identified. Often the public does not have the context or information needed to participate meaningfully. Background information for public engagement is not summarized or written in plain language. Agenda items can also be very lengthy and create an unnecessary barrier that could be addressed with a short covering summary.

Internal stakeholders identified concerns regarding an imbalance in whose voices are heard, whether at a CALUC (mostly landowners; fewer young people, renters), the undue influence of individual voices between a discussion at COTW and the Council meeting. Some redundancy was noted. Requests to address council tend to become repetitive if multiple members of a group register individually and all have five minutes to say the same thing, particularly when topics may have nothing to do with Council business. More effort is needed to reach equity-deserving people who are currently not at the table.

Allowing virtual participation was generally seen to be positive, increasing accessibility for people with lessened mobility or who may otherwise find it easier to participate from home. The increased participation and diversity was generally felt to outweigh challenges from technology glitches. There were mixed views regarding pre-recorded video. Some felt just another means of providing information in advance, others identified the potential for inequity if some have means to create professionally-produced videos. Other concerns were that it may invite comments from non-residents, and it may be difficult to verify unless stated in the video.

5.5.4 Insights from Public Engagement

While the majority of public survey respondents (56%) agreed or strongly agreed they understood how to communicate with Council on issues they are concerned about, a similar number (58%) did not agree they can effectively participate in City of Victoria public engagement activities.

Seventy-two public survey respondents commented that improvement needs to be made on processes for providing input in Council decision making. Some of the barriers that were noted by focus group and online participants included access to information, lack of understanding of how to navigate the City of Victoria website, lack of awareness of initiatives taking place, short time frame to develop a response or consider information, and the time and length of Council meetings. Public session participants also voiced that although agendas are posted for Council meetings, the large amount of information and the way it is presented can be difficult to comprehend. Participants in the public session as well as focus groups indicated that virtual participation has increased the ability to attend Council meetings

Stakeholder written submissions echoed the same sentiments as the public sessions and focus group participants. Written submissions also noted the need to be included earlier in the engagement process with the City. Stakeholders commented that in some instances they have not been engaged on matters directly

affecting them until the media release. Earlier communication would allow sufficient time to develop a response to the matter.

As noted in section 5.3.4, members of advisory committees expressed frustration with the effectiveness of the committees as a means of providing public input to council. Matters within a committee's mandate are not being brought to them for input or are being brought very late in the process. Committee input is often not reflected in staff reports to Council, and committee recommendations seem to get lost.

Survey respondents and meeting participants commented that restricting public comments to Council meetings only limits the ability to influence Council decisions, as matters have already been discussed at COTW.

5.5.5 Insights from Other Jurisdictions and Contemporary Thinking

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) states the principle that public engagement is premised on the belief that everyone has the right to be involved in decisions that will affect their life. Just as the City of Victoria has, many municipalities have adopted IAP2 principles in design and implementation of their public engagement processes. Ensuring an authentic and accountable engagement process is critically important to foster trust. This includes a sincere interest in listening to public input and being prepared to act on it, setting realistic expectations regarding how the input will be used, and communicating back both what was heard and related outcomes.

The SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue has published a Guide for Practitioners [Beyond Inclusion, Equity in Public Engagement](#). The guide notes that "public engagement initiatives often struggle to draw participants who truly represent the demographic, attitudinal and experiential diversity of the communities that may be impacted by a decision." There may be many reasons for these challenges, including exclusion from the design of the engagement process, and systemic, societal barriers. In addition to basic IAP2 principles, recommendations in the guide include

- planning early and proactively to anticipate and address potential barriers before people become frustrated,
- establishing respectful, reciprocal and collaborative relationships with Indigenous Peoples,
- seeking diverse input from within as well as between communities,
- dedicating time and resources to build relationships and co-create mutually beneficial and accessible engagement processes, and
- tailoring engagement plans and materials to the context.

Only two (Regina, Halifax) of the eight cities reviewed allow members of the public to speak to matters that are not on the meeting agenda.

Kelowna enables video participation for the public at public hearings. In Halifax all virtual participants, including members of the public making a submission, "must be seen" per their Charter. Vancouver and Regina enable voice only for public submissions at public hearings due to current system limitations.

Similar to Victoria, Kelowna and Vancouver allow the public to submit pre-recorded video submissions for public

hearings, however Vancouver includes pre-recorded videos in agenda materials only and does not play the videos live during the hearing.

5.5.6 Recommendations

See also recommendations 1, 2 and 4 in section 5.4.5 permitting public delegations to the Committee of the Whole, adjusting the meeting schedule and streamlining council agenda materials, and recommendations 3, 4 and 5 in section 5.3.6 regarding Advisory Committees.

- 1. Ensure engagement feedback is effectively summarized for Council materials and include an analysis of how public and advisory committee input is reflected in recommendations to Council and the public report of what was heard.**

Rationale:

Public respondents indicated concerns that Council is not considering input received from the public. This undermines trust in the process and discourages future participation. Ensuring there is a sincere interest in the input before it is requested and providing back the results of how it was used is important to fulfill the commitment back to the public who has taken the time to provide input. Engagement feedback included with Council decision materials often includes long lists of verbatim comments that is difficult for both the public and Council to see the themes that arose from public input. Clear, concise summaries of what was heard and how it informed the recommendations will better allow it to be considered by Council and allow the public to feel their input was heard and valued.

Implementation Considerations:

The planned update to the Engagement Framework should include the requirement to communicate back to participants how input has been reflected in recommendations to Council.

- 2. Incorporate the principles for equitable engagement in the update to the Engagement Framework as planned. Consider ways to develop relationships within equity deserving communities and work with them to co-create inclusive engagement processes.**

Rationale:

Formal engagement processes are only one of the ways in which the public may access council decision-making processes. Equity considerations should be applied to all.

Implementation Considerations:

The City of Victoria has already taken a number of steps to reduce barriers to public participation in council processes, including continued virtual participation. Training for staff involved in public engagement (beyond the public engagement office) and time to enable development of valuable relationships may assist in supporting inclusive, authentic engagement. Advisory Committees may also be able to help develop relationships within equity deserving communities to help co-create inclusive engagement processes.

3. **Update technology so that the public addresses to Council, whether in delegation or at public hearing, may use video.**

Rationale

The ability to include visual capabilities will enhance the quality of the communication and engagement with the public. This ability is limited by the City's current technology. It has become a broad public expectation to be able to see a speaker in virtual sessions.

Implementation Considerations

The cost of upgrading current technology, if significant, may need to be considered as part of overall budget considerations.

4. **Continue to allow pre-recorded video submissions for public hearings and delegations on matters to be considered by council**

Rationale

A pre-recorded video is just another tool to enable communication from the public and may be helpful to remove barriers to participation. Addressing Council "live" in a public setting may be intimidating to many. Not all members of the public may be comfortable or experienced with public speaking and would be able to better communicate their information efficiently with the opportunity to practice and edit their submission. A recorded video may also be much easier for people with literacy barriers, or simply less experience with written communication, than providing a written submission.

Implementation Considerations

Pre-recorded video submissions could be treated in the same manner as a written submission, and used for advance viewing, not live at the hearing. The process for submitting a video could include requirements to provide information along with the video that identifies the residency status or other necessary information.

5. **Establish a requirement for recorded input from CALUC meetings to be posted to allow participants the opportunity to identify any errors or omissions before the information is officially submitted.**

Rationale

Respondents to the public engagement expressed concerns that the CALUC would prepare a full and fair record of all community input received at the meeting, as those responsible for doing so would have their own views. Posting the notes from the meeting to allow participants to read them and make sure their input is reflected before the notes are submitted will help to establish trust in this process

Implementation considerations

The CALUC could use several methods, similar to posting the notice of the meeting. Meeting participants that register with their email addresses could also request to receive the notes directly by email.

5.6 Transparency and Accountability

Transparency and accountability are basic principles of effective municipal governance. Transparency generally includes public access to information related to municipal finances, performance, plans, policies and bylaws, and decision-making processes. Accountability generally refers to reporting on the effective use of City resources and achievement of results. These principles are relevant through all aspects of governance addressed in this governance review and related comment is provided in each section, particularly regarding visibility of council processes and public access to information. This section addresses aspects of transparency and accountability that are not included in previous sections, including as relates to decision-making processes (see section 5.4) and reporting on response to public input (see section 5.5)

5.6.1 Formal structures

The *Community Charter* contains a number of provisions for transparency and accountability. These include requirements for open meetings and public access to information, a public process for development of the financial plan and annual financial statements including reporting of council remuneration, expenses and contracts, disclosures of conflict of interest, and an annual report.

Per the *Community Charter* Part 4, Division 5, Council must prepare a publicly available report before June 30 each year that must include:

- a) Audited financial statements
- b) Report of tax exemptions granted
- c) Report on municipal services and operations for the previous year
- d) Progress report on objectives and measures established for the previous year.
- e) Declarations of any council member disqualifications in the previous year
- f) A statement of municipal objectives, and the measures that will be used to determine progress respecting those objectives, for the current and next year.
- g) Other information Council considers advisable

The *Community Charter* further states that Council must consider the annual report and submissions or questions from the public at a Council meeting or other annual public meeting. The annual report must be available to the public at least 14 days prior to the date of the meeting.

The *Local Government Act* also includes requirements for public hearings on certain land use and heritage conservation matters.

Council Procedures Bylaw 16-011 includes a number of provisions for transparency, including public notice of meetings and proposed bylaws, public access to meeting agendas and materials, enabling the public to hear the participation of Council members during open council meetings, and availability of bylaws for public inspection. The Bylaw also includes requirements for the timing of receipt of late items for Council meeting agendas.

5.6.2 Current Practices

Annual Reporting

The City Hall home page on the City of Victoria's website has direct links to the City Budget and Annual Report. The 2021 Annual Report is posted as required by June 30 and includes financial statements. Introductory commentary speaks to the standards and controls and performance related to financial management, reasonably meeting the obligation for transparency and accountability in financial reporting.

The Annual Report also includes highlights of the strategic objectives and outcomes identified in the strategic plan and highlights of what was achieved in 2021. While related references are included in the highlights of what was achieved, the report does not explicitly report on services and operations of City departments, associated service standards or performance against these standards. While there are measures of departmental activity, such as permit application volume and inspections performed, there are no targets listed to determine whether the volume is meeting expectations,

Performance measures and statistics are listed under each section but are not connected to the listed outcomes. While a few statistics obviously match (e.g., vacancy rate), most listed measures are not as obvious and are not reported against the desired outcomes. Some outcomes specify a measure that is not reported at all, for example the decrease in homelessness, and number of businesses engaged in reducing GHG or urban agriculture. Some measures may be reliant on Statistics Canada data not yet released, such as the number of people spending more than 30 percent of income on housing, but this is not indicated, and the average citizen may not be aware. Several outcomes speak to how residents or businesses 'feel', yet there is no report of such related feedback.

As illustration, identified outcomes and performance measures for Good Governance and Civic Engagement are as seen in the table below.

Table 2 – Performance Measures for the Strategic Objective of Good Governance and Civic Engagement

Measurable Outcomes (from the strategic plan)

- There is clear, open and transparent two-way communication between the City and the public, with the ability for public input to effect change
- There is broad engagement with a diversity of participants conducted in a respectful and inclusive way
- The community feels heard
- The City demonstrates regional leadership in transparency and open government initiatives
- There are clear, relevant measurable outcomes for each objective that Council measures and reports on.

Performance Measures	2021	2020
Participatory budgeting proposals	14	44
Engagement activities	337	147
Participants in engagement activities	49,736	18,637
Social media audience	102,208	97,009
Social media engagement	90,171	65,682
Website user sessions	1,479,705	1,323,861
% actual rate of return on investments	0.98	1.72
% home owner grants claimed online	100	73
% property taxes collected by due date	94.54	89.1
Assessed properties	31,431	30,786
Value of investment interest earned	\$3M	\$5.2M
Hours sick time used per FTE	60.78	63.7
Time loss injury claims	58	79
Work Day Lost (Injury Incurred in Prior Year)	398	501
Days lost to workplace injury	1,478	1,895

Gaps between what is expected in the outcomes and what is reported reduces the ability for the public to understand what progress has been made on Council's commitments. The degree of detail in the specified outcomes and the ability to measure it is contributing to the challenge.

Interim Reporting

Triannual Accountability reports (quarterly reports prior to 2020) are published along with the strategic plan on the City webpage, approximately 2 months after the completion of the period being reported. The City webpage states that the accountability reports are designed to inform Council and the community on the progress of those initiatives that are key to achieving the City's objectives. The report comprises an introductory memo from the City Manager and extensive detail in the following appendices:

- A. Strategic Plan Progress Report
- B. Operational Plan Highlights, Achievements and Metrics
- C. Core Service Delivery Work Plan
- D. Budget Update
- E. Council Member Expenses
- F. Contracts Awarded
- G. Grants Update
- H. Council Motions Approved in Third Period

- I. Advisory Committee Motions Passed in Third Period
- J. Sustainable Planning & Community Development Consolidated Reports
- K. Victoria Conference Centre Event Listing
- L. Council Motions Referred to the Triannual Report

The strategic plan progress report listed as Appendix A, lists the staff led action items from the strategic plan and the status of each (on track, some challenges, major challenges, complete, on hold). The triannual report for the four month period September to December 2021 was 129 pages in total.

Objectives and Measures for Current and Future Year

The City has published a 2019- 2022 Strategic Plan that sets out eight Strategic Objectives, five to eleven Measurable Outcomes for each Objective and a set of action items. The Strategic Plan includes a total of 179 action items. Some are quite operational, such as 'deliver the experiential portion of reconciliation training to those interested participants first' or highly specific. While a year has been identified for some, the relative priority of all the actions in a particular year, or for the 66 actions identified as 'ongoing' have not.

5.6.3 Insights from Internal Engagement

Feedback from internal engagement indicated concern with the volume of actions listed, without priorities being identified. The volume of actions was felt to be impossible to accomplish within the 4-year term. A significant amount of administrative effort is required to prepare the detailed report against this list of actions three times per year.

5.6.4 Insights from Public Engagement

While some survey respondents (24, or 3%) indicated the City of Victoria was forward looking and socially responsible, a common theme that emerged in the survey comments was that the strategic plan priorities do not always align with broader public needs in the City of Victoria. Meeting participants felt the strategic plan was unfocused and unclear.

In spite of the extensive materials described above, 75% of survey respondents did not feel Council effectively reports to the public on city performance and initiatives. Some stakeholders acknowledged and appreciated that tri-annual reports are available. These stakeholders would like to see further follow up on action items reported in challenge status for an extended period of time, for example prioritizing these items for the next period.

Public session and focus group participants commented that reporting is very delayed in providing updates to the public, making it difficult to monitor outcomes and understand progress on the initiatives.

5.6.5 Insights from Other Jurisdictions

All compared municipalities publish a strategic plan. Two publish an annual plan, four have a 4-5 year strategic plan and two have longer term plans. Six of the eight provide at minimum annual reports; St. John's reports quarterly.

City	Strategic Plan	Reporting	Level of Detail
Victoria, BC	Yes – 4 year strategic plan	Tri-annual update plus Annual Report	Detailed (56 pp) 8 strategic objectives; 7 operational priorities. 179 Action items
Vancouver, BC	Yes – Annual Corporate Plan	Annual	10 goals; 37 initiatives Detailed (44 pp); Healthy City Dashboard
Kelowna, BC	Yes – 4-year Strategic plan	Annual	6 priority areas; 26 Council Priority Results; 13 Corporate results with examples of what doing Summary sheet and detailed report (20 pp)
Regina, SK	Yes – 4-year Strategic plan	Annual	2018-2021- 5 targeted outcomes; 12 objectives. Both a summary page and detailed report (16 pp) 2021 Annual Report identifies progress on 3 priority areas established with the budget and the 8 goals of the OCP
Windsor, ON	Yes –Community Strategic Plan (outdated; last update 2015)	No	
Kitchener, ON	Yes – 4-year Strategic Plan	Annual	News release and You Tube Video
Quebec City, QC	Yes – Annual Corporate Strategic Plan	No	
Halifax, NS	Yes – 5-year Strategic Plan	Annual	Strategic Priorities Plan (25 pp) 4 Council priorities; 3 Administrative priorities Strategic Performance Dashboard and detailed reports for each area of the plan
St. John's, NL	Yes – 10-year Strategic Plan	Quarterly	Detailed report (16 pp) 4 strategic directions with 3-4 goals each. 'Red-yellow-green' progress on detailed objectives in the quarterly report

Plan and report styles vary by municipality. Several include high level snapshots for quick reference.

Kelowna's plan titled "Council Priorities 2019-2022" includes a one-page summary of Council and corporate priorities that is updated as a one page graphic progress report (see Appendix F). Areas of focus include community safety, transportation and mobility, vibrant neighbourhoods, economic resiliency and environmental protection. Kelowna posts an interactive progress report that allows viewers to click on each priority area to see performance statistics on the identified result area, with the ability to drill down into explanations of why this is important, how the City is doing, what the City is doing and what's next.

The Vancouver strategic plan identifies a total of 10 strategic goals. Five council priorities relate to the housing crisis, economy, diversity, equity and social issues, climate change and reconciliation. A second set of five strategic goals are aligned with municipal functions, including community safety, assets and infrastructure, civic amenities, financial health and administrative efficiency, and workplace excellence. Each goal has between 2-5 identified initiatives for a total of 37. Vancouver also publishes a Healthy City Dashboard that includes 12 goals and 23 indicators, with links to related strategic priorities.

Regina's 2021 Annual report reports progress toward three priority areas set in the 2021 budget, including responsible, inclusive governance, advancing economic development, and strengthening partnerships. The 2021 Annual report also includes results of a citizen satisfaction survey, and reports on progress on the eight goals in the Official Community Plan. Regina reports participating in the Municipal Benchmarking Network for comparative performance.

The Halifax Strategic Priorities Plan identifies four council priorities, including a prosperous economy, communities, integrated mobility and the environment. Each Council priority area has 3-4 priority outcomes and a set of strategic initiatives aligned to each outcome (2-10 for each outcome), and a total of 15 initiatives for 3 administrative priorities (responsible administration, our people, service excellence).

5.6.6 Recommendations

1. **Maintain a higher level focus for the municipal strategic plan. Clearly identify the target results and align specific measures to evaluate progress.**

Rationale:

A strategic plan has greater value when it supports clear communication and enables a shared focus on key areas. Five to ten strategic goals and three to four measurable outcomes for each would be a reasonable level for municipal accountability to the public. The current plan becomes unwieldy with the detailed list of actions, emphasizes activity over results, and limits the opportunity for innovation in ways to achieve the desired results. It also creates a significant administrative burden for both implementation and reporting. If actions must be listed, it should be a much shorter, prioritized set that likely does not include ongoing actions.

The current lack of clear indicators matched to the measurable outcomes limits the ability of Council or the public to evaluate progress. The specificity of the current measurable outcomes also creates challenges in measurement and should be taken up a level. For example co-op housing may be just one of many ways to achieve a desired result. Some of the specific measurements may not be currently available and require

significant resources to develop and monitor.

A short set of high priority measures will help to focus resources on both achieving and measuring the result. It will also allow the public to evaluate the effectiveness of the City in addressing citizen priorities. Maintaining a focus on results versus actions enables the professional public service to identify the best way to achieve the desired results within the available budget. If Council specifies the specific actions to undertake, management can no longer be held accountable for the results.

Implementation Considerations:

A general election is scheduled for the fall of 2022. A full update of the strategic plan will be an important exercise for the next elected Council.

2. Develop user-friendly materials for public consumption for both the strategic plan and progress reports.

Rationale:

The strategic plan and annual report are primary tools for accountability to the public. The utility of the tri-annual report is significantly reduced by the volume of information. While the intent is to be more transparent, it actually reduces the ease of understanding and 'buries' the essential message. Providing user friendly summary information will better deliver on both transparency and accountability.

Implementation Considerations:

User-friendly interactive materials on the City's website will require some investment, offset by a reduction in administrative burden of the current reporting requirements.

Appendix A – References

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City of Victoria

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Appendix B – Original Topics Cross-Referenced

Council's Original Topics	Where Found in this Report
Improving transparency and ensuring accountability	Section 5.6 Transparency and Accountability pages 72 to 78
Appropriate, consistent and highly functioning advisory committee structures	Section 5.3 Committees and Advisory Bodies pages 34 to 47
Length, frequency and scheduling of Council meetings	Section 5.4 Council and Committee Decision-making Processes pages 48 to 63
Technology and the changing nature of work	Section 5.4 Council and Committee Decision-making Processes Section 5.5 Public Access and Input to Decision-making pages 49 and 71
Respecting public input and building public trust	Section 5.5 Public Access and Input to Decision-making pages 63 to 71
Defining the role of Mayor and Councillors	Section 5.1 Role of Mayor and Council pages 15 to 26
Holding public hearing only Council meetings	Section 5.4 Council and Committee Decision-making Processes page 60
Public submissions by pre-recorded video or live-stream	Section 5.5 Public Access and Input to Decision-making page 71
Measures to ensure persons with disabilities can serve on all boards, task forces and advisory committees	Section 5.3 Committees and Advisory Bodies pages 43
Late items to Council and Committee of the Whole Agendas	Section 5.4 Council and Committee Decision-making Processes page 61
Council remuneration, expense policy, constituency fund	Section 5.2 Council Remuneration pages 26 to 34

Appendix C – City of Victoria Council Committee Assignments

Council Member (# of Assignments)	Committee Assignments
Lisa Helps, Mayor (12)	• Capital Regional District Board of Directors*^ • Capital Region Housing Corporation Board* • Capital Regional Hospital District Board* • CRD Core Area Liquid Waste Management Committee* • CRD Environmental Services Committee* • CRD Hospitals and Housing Committee (Chair) * • CRD Regional Arts Facilities Select Committee* • CRD Tenant Advisory Committee (Chair) * • Greater Victoria Commission to End Homelessness* • Victoria Regional Transit Commission* • City Family • Welcoming Cities Task Force
Marianne Alto (10)	• City Family • CRD Arts Commission • Community Action Plan on Discrimination • Neighbourhood Liaison – Burnside Gorge Community Association* • Greater Victoria Public Library Board* • Greater Victoria Harbour Authority Board* • Royal and McPherson Theatres Society Advisory Committee* • South Island Prosperity Project* • Te'mexw Treaty Advisory Committee*
Stephen Andrew (5) [2020 By Election]	• Renters' Advisory Committee • Canada Day Subcommittee • Neighbourhood Liaison – James Bay Neighbourhood Association* • Destination Greater Victoria Board of Directors* • Royal and McPherson Theatres Society*
Sharmarke Dubow (9)	• Welcoming Cities Task Force • Neighbourhood Liaison – Fernwood Community Association • Neighbourhood Liaison – Victoria West Community Association • Capital Region Emergency Services Telecommunications* • CRD Regional Water Supply Commission * • Royal and McPherson Theatres Society Advisory Committee* • University of Victoria Liaison* • Victoria Civic Heritage Trust*

Council Member (# of Assignments)	Committee Assignments
Ben Isitt (20)	• Accessibility Advisory Committee • Active Transportation Advisory Committee • Urban Food Table (Advisory Committee) • City Family • Honorary Citizens Committee • Seniors Taskforce (to be made ongoing) • Neighbourhood Liaison – Fairfield Gonzales Community Association* • Neighbourhood Liaison – Hillside-Quadra Neighbourhood Action* Committee • Capital Region District Board of Directors*^ • Capital Regional Hospital District Board*^ • Capital Region Housing Corporation Board*^ • CRD Core Area Liquid Waste Management Committee *^ • CRD First Nations Relations Committee*^ • CRD Regional Parks Committee*^ • CRD Regional Water Supply Commission*^ • CRD Transportation Committee*^ • Greater Victoria Airport - Consultative Committee* • Greater Victoria Harbour Authority – Member Representative* • Victoria Regional Transit Commission* • Municipal Insurance Association of BC*
Jeremy Loveday (17)	• Active Transportation Advisory Committee • City of Victoria Youth Council (Advisory Committee) • Urban Food Table (Advisory Committee) • Neighbourhood Liaison – Oaklands Community Association* • Capital Region District Board of Directors*^ • Capital Region Hospital District Board*^ • Capital Region Housing Corporation Board*^ • Climate Action Inter-Municipal Task Force*^ • CRD Arts Commission*^ • CRD Core Area Liquid Waste Management Committee*^ • CRD Finance Committee*^ • CRD Hospitals and Housing Committee*^ • CRD Planning and Protective Services*^ • CRD Regional Arts Facilities Select Committee*^ • CRD Regional Water Supply Commission*^ • CRD Transportation Committee*^ • Canadian Capital Cities Board Organization*

Council Member (# of Assignments)	Committee Assignments
Sarah Potts (9)	• Accessibility Advisory Committee • Renters' Advisory Committee • City Family^ • Neighbourhood Liaison – North Park Neighbourhood Association* • Community Action Plan on Discrimination* • CRD Regional Housing Trust Fund Commission* (Chair) • Board of Cemetery Trustees of Greater Victoria* • Greater Victoria Family Court and Youth Justice Committee* • Victoria Parks and Recreation Foundation*
Charlayne Thornton-Joe (8)	• Honorary Citizens Committee • Canada Day Liaison • Neighbourhood Liaison – North Jubilee Neighbourhood Association* • Neighbourhood Liaison – Rockland Neighbourhood Association* • Neighbourhood Liaison – South Jubilee Neighbourhood Association* • Victoria Civic Heritage Trust* • Victoria Heritage Foundation* • Victoria Regional Transit Commission*
Geoff Young (14)	• Art in Public Places Committee • Heritage Advisory Panel • Seniors Taskforce (to become ongoing) • Neighbourhood Liaison – Downtown Residents Association* • Capital Region District Board of Directors*^ • Capital Regional Hospital District Board*^ • Capital Region Housing Corporation Board*^ • CRD Core Area Liquid Waste Management Committee*^ • CRD Finance Committee*^ • CRD Governance Committee*^ • CRD Planning and Protective Services Committee*^ • CRD Regional Parks Committee*^ • CRD Regional Water Supply Commission*^ • Downtown Victoria Business Association • CRD Municipal Finance Authority • Canadian Capital Cities Board Organization
Source: Council member web pages, updated June 24, 2022	

* Committees external to the City of Victoria

^ Honorarium for meetings

Appendix D – Other Jurisdiction Roles and Responsibilities

Vancouver

The *Vancouver Charter* specifies the powers and duties of Council. Part IV specifies the responsibilities of the Mayor as CEO of the City and President of Council. It also identifies responsibilities of the Director of Finance, City Clerk, City Treasurer, and Auditors. Information on the role of the Mayor and the Mayor's office and related budget is posted on-line^[6].

As available under the Charter, Bylaw No. 4017 delegates authority of Council under the Charter and establishes the powers and responsibilities of the City Manager. The City Manager is responsible for:

5. (a) Supervising and directing the affairs of the City and the employees thereof in accordance with the policies of Council established from time to time.

(b) Advising and assisting the City Council.

6. (1) The City Manager also shall exercise the following powers and shall be responsible for the following duties:

- a) To develop a plan for the proper organization of the civic departments and to review such plan periodically in order to ensure that it is functioning efficiently.
- b) To exercise a general control and supervision over the City Hall and other places maintained by the Council in the exercise of its powers, and the arrangement of offices therein.
- c) To recommend the appointment or removal of department heads.
- d) To supervise the development and administration of a sound personnel programme throughout the city service.
- e) To present to Council from time to time proposals for the development and improvement of the City and its services and suggestions for the financing of the same.
- f) To present to Council, as soon as practicable in each year, and in any event by the thirtieth day of April, the anticipated revenues and expenditures for that year, and thereafter to review the estimates in accordance with the policies and procedures laid down by Council.
- g) To recommend expenditures within a capital programme previously approved by Council.
- j) To establish effective internal controls to safeguard assets under the control of the City Council against loss through dishonesty or negligence.
- m) To recommend to Council the sale or other disposition of real property owned by the City or the acquisition of real property required for civic purposes *[additional detail in Charter]*.
- o) The City Manager, or a person delegated by the City Manager, or both of them when necessary, shall attend all meetings of Council and meetings of its Committees. The City Manager or both of them, as the case may be, may, at such meetings, speak to their reports and advise Council as to the technical, financial and administrative aspects of any other matter

under consideration, but shall have no right to vote.

- p) To approve applications for remission of taxes levied during the year in which a building has been demolished or removed upon the order of the City Building Inspector, such remission to be on a proportionate basis calculated from the day upon which the City Building Inspector certifies that the building has been satisfactorily demolished and that the property has been properly cleared of all debris.
- 1. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (1), the CAO shall not exercise any direction or control over the City Clerk or any other official in the performance of their statutory duties

Halifax

Responsibilities of Chief Administrative Officer as identified in the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, s35 are as follows:

- 1. The Chief Administrative Officer shall
 - a. coordinate and direct the preparation of plans and pro-grams to be submitted to the Council for the construction, rehabilita-tion and maintenance of all municipal property and facilities;
 - b. ensure that the annual operating and capital budgets are prepared and submitted to the Council;
 - c. be responsible for the administration of the budgets after adoption;
 - d. review the drafts of all proposed bylaws and policies and make recommendations to the Council with respect to them;
 - e. carry out such additional duties and exercise such addi-tional responsibilities as the Council may, from time to time, direct.
- 2. The Chief Administrative Officer may
 - a. attend all meetings of the Council and any board, committee, commission or corporation of the Municipality and make observations and suggestions on any subject under discussion;
 - b. appoint, suspend and remove all employees of the Municipality, with power to further delegate this authority;
 - c. act, or appoint a person to act, as bargaining agent for the Municipality in the negotiation of contracts between the Munici-pality and any trade union or employee association and recommend to the Council agreements with respect to them;
 - d. subject to policies adopted by the Council,
 - i. make or authorize expenditures, and enter into contracts on behalf of the Municipality, for anything required for the Municipality where the amount of the expenditure is budgeted or within the amount determined by the Council by policy, and may delegate this authority to employees of the Municipality,
 - ii. sell personal property belonging to the Munici-pality that, in the opinion of the Chief Administrative Officer, is obsolete, unsuitable for use, surplus to requirements of, or no longer needed by, the Municipality, and may delegate this authority to employees of the Municipality,
 - iii. personally, or by an agent, negotiate and exe-cute leases of real property owned by the Municipality that are for a term not exceeding one year, including renewals,

- iv. establish departments of the municipal administration,
- v. adopt a system of classification of positions of municipal officers and employees and specify offices that must not be filled by the same person,
- vi. determine the salaries, wages and emoluments to be paid to municipal officers and employees, including payment pursuant to a classification system,
- vii. where not otherwise provided for, fix the amount in which security is to be given by municipal officers and employees, the form of security, the manner in which security is to be given and approved and the nature of the security to be given;
- e. authorize, in the name of the Municipality, the commencement or defence of a legal action or proceedings before a court, board or tribunal, including reporting the commencement of the legal action, defence or proceeding to the Council at the next meeting and may, where the Council so provides by policy, delegate this authority to employees of the Municipality;
- f. where the Council so provides by policy, settle a legal action or proceeding in accordance with the policy.

A lease executed by the Chief Administrative Officer is as binding on the Municipality as if it had been specifically authorized by the Council and executed by the Mayor and Clerk on behalf of the Municipality.

Reporting and Accountability Requirements

The directors of departments of the Municipality

- a. are accountable to the Chief Administrative Officer for the performance of their duties; and
- b. shall submit the reports and recommendations required of them to, and through, the Chief Administrative Officer.

A report or recommendation from the solicitor of the Municipality shall be presented to the Council by the solicitor and the Chief Administrative Officer shall be informed of the contents in advance of the presentation to the Council, unless the report or recommendation is with respect to the Chief Administrative Officer.

Where a director of a department of the Municipality disagrees with a recommendation of the Chief Administrative Officer, the objections may be provided to the Chief Administrative Officer who shall present them to the Council. 2008, c. 39, s. 36.

Clerk

The Chief Administrative Officer shall designate an employee of the Municipality to perform the duties of the Clerk of the Municipality. The Clerk shall

- a. record in a minute book all the proceedings of the Council;
- b. account for the attendance of each Council member at every meeting of the Council;
- c. keep the bylaws and policies of the Municipality; and
- d. perform such other duties as are prescribed by the Chief Administrative Officer, the Council or an enactment.

Appendix E - City of Victoria Advisory Committees

Name	Terms of Reference	Meeting Frequency	Committee Chair	Agendas / Minutes Published?	Council / Staff Role	Compensation for meetings
Accessibility Advisory Committee (interim)	Yes (interim) pending Governance Review	Monthly	Chair and vice chair selected by members	Agendas and Minutes posted on COV website	2 Council Liaisons Staff support for meeting logistics,	Yes (temporary). Equivalent to Living Wage
Active Transportation Advisory Committee	Yes	Monthly	2 co-chairs selected by members	Minutes posted on COV website	2 Council Liaisons Staff support assigned as appropriate	No
Art in Public Spaces Committee	Yes	3 meetings per year	Chair and vice-chair chosen by members.	No	Council may appoint one Liaison One staff liaison	No
Community Wellness Peer-Informed Task Force	Yes	4 – 5 sessions to review draft strategy	No chair designated Led by Council Liaisons	No	3 Council Liaisons to lead stakeholder engagement and reporting Staff support assigned as appropriate	Yes, unspecified
Honorary Citizen Award Committee	Yes	Unspecified	Co-chaired by the Council Liaisons	No	Co-chaired by the Council Liaisons	No

Name	Terms of Reference	Meeting Frequency	Committee Chair	Agendas / Minutes Published?	Council / Staff Role	Compensation for meetings
International Decade for People of African Decent (IDPAD)	Yes	monthly	2 co-chairs selected by members	Minutes posted on COV website	2 Council Liaisons Staff support for meeting logistics; staff liaison from Office of EDI	Yes. Equivalent to Living Wage
Renters Advisory Committee	Yes.	Monthly	2 co-chairs selected by members	Minutes posted on COV website	2 Council Liaisons Staff support assigned by City Manager	No
Senior's Task Force (pending conversion to Advisory Committee summer 2022)	Yes Task force	4 meetings and 3 public engagement sessions	Co-chaired by the Council Liaisons	Meeting notes published on COV website.	2 Council Liaisons Staff support assigned as appropriate.	No
Strategic Plan Grant Review Committee	Yes	Unspecified	Chair and Vice Chair selected by members	Agendas and minutes posted	2 staff liaisons	No
Welcoming City Implementation Advisory Committee	Yes	Bi-monthly until Oct. 2022, then re-assess	Mayor and Council member as co-chairs	Minutes posted on COV website	Mayor and Council member as co-chairs Staff support for meeting logistics; staff liaison from Office of EDI	No

Appendix F - Example Plans and Reports

City of Kelowna Progress Report

Progress on results summary 2021

- ✓ **On track:** trending in the desired direction
- ↔ **No change:** not a significant change in 2020
- ✗ **Needs improvement:** not trending in the desired direction

Community indicator: measure of community well-being where the City is working alongside its many partners to influence the trend

March 2022

Imagine Kelowna: vision into action	Council priorities	Community safety	Social & inclusive	Transportation & mobility	Vibrant neighbourhoods	Economic resiliency	Environmental protection
		Crime rates are decreasing	Homelessness is decreasing	Investments are connecting high density areas More trips by transit, carpooling, cycling & walking	Number of urban centre development plans is increasing Site design & architecture is high quality, context sensitive	Infrastructure deficit is reduced City policies are enabling investment	Resiliency & adaptability to climate change Greenhouse gas emissions are decreasing
		Residents feel safe	Policy guides where the City invests resources	Travel times are optimized Emerging technologies make it easier to get around	Affordable & attainable housing mix options Accessible and multi-purpose amenities	Top talent is living in Kelowna	Predictive modelling & forecasting
		Data and analysis is used to understand problems & target responses	Inclusivity and diversity are increasing	More opportunities to learn about transportation People of all ages & abilities can easily get around	Animated parks & public spaces Key sites are proactively planned	Key economic sector impact is increasing	Emergency response & preparation
		Financial management					
	Lower value activities are improved or stopped	Non-tax revenues are increasing	Cost to deliver services is quantified				
Corporate	Clear direction						
	Common understanding of future direction	Progress on results is measured, monitored & reported	Divisional business plans are created	Divisions have a use performance measures	Innovation is encouraged and supported	Services, processes & business activities are transformed	
	People						
	Ability to attract, select & retain talent	Collaboration is improving problem solving	Staff engagement has increased	Organizational values prepare us for the future			

City of Kelowna - Sample metrics from annual report

CITIZEN SURVEY

The most recent (2020) City of Kelowna Citizen Survey gauged public satisfaction with municipal programs and services. According to the survey:

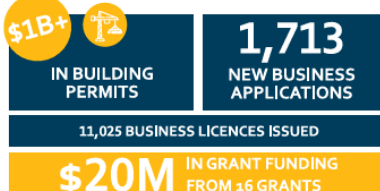


#1 FASTEST GROWING CITY IN B.C.

13.5% INCREASE IN POPULATION SINCE 2016



SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

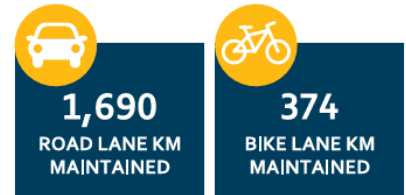


3

SMART RIGHT TURN INTERSECTIONS

197,711 TRANSIT HOURS OF SERVICE REGION-WIDE

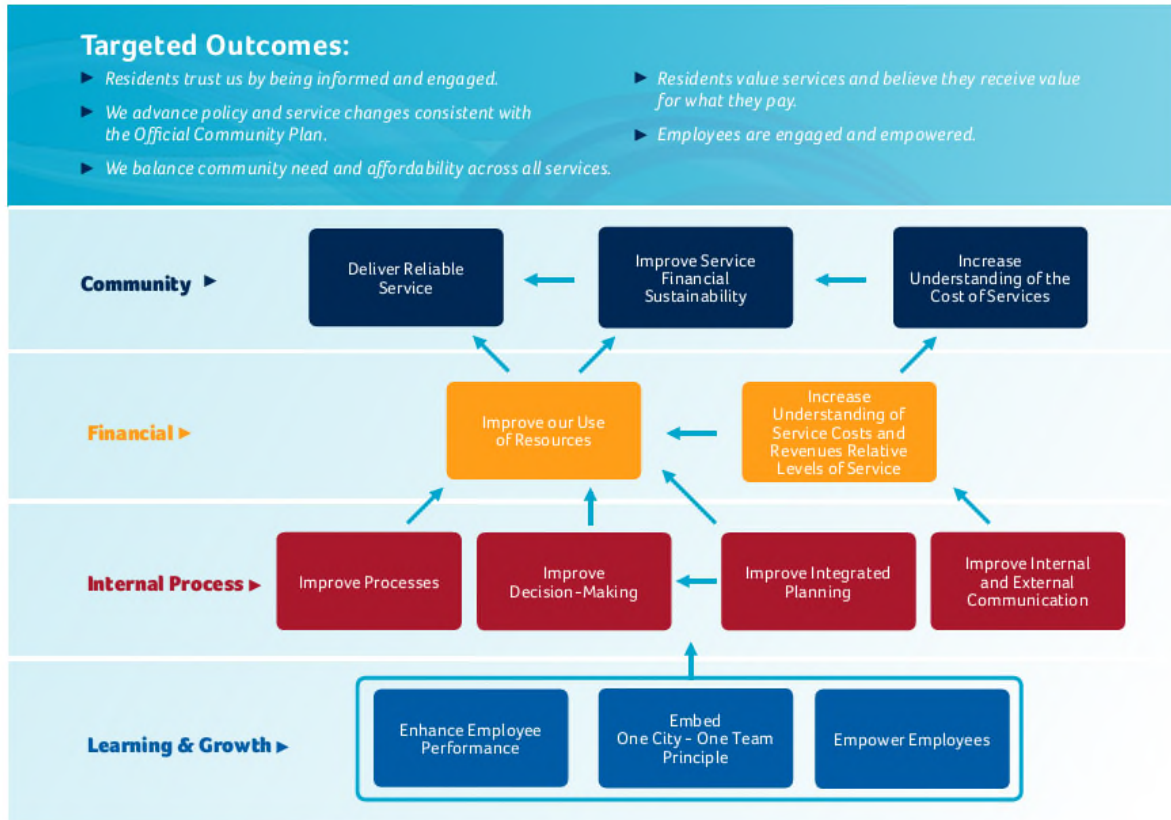
32.6 KM OF ROADS RESURFACED



City of Regina Strategy Map, Strategic Plan 2018-2021

Strategy Map

This Strategy Map is a tool for visualizing and following the strategic plan.
For ideas on how to read it, see **Appendix B**.



Excerpt from Vancouver 2022 Strategic Plan

1

WE'RE ADDRESSING AFFORDABILITY AND THE HOUSING CRISIS

In collaboration with senior governments and key partners, the City is working to address affordability challenges in Vancouver, and to ensure that over time, appropriate housing options are available in Vancouver for individuals and families across the income spectrum.

MEASURED BY

- Housing units approved (share of affordable units)
- New and replacement childcare spaces approved
- Housing units approved (all units)
- Low-income residents enrolled in the subsidized recreation pass (Leisure Access Program)



1A. Vancouver Plan

Advance work on the Vancouver Plan, with a current-year focus on the final phase of engagement, Council approval of the Plan, followed by initiating implementation.



1B. Broadway Plan

Finalize the 30-year Broadway Plan and, once approved by Council, work with TransLink, the Musqueam Indian Band, the Squamish Nation, the Tsleil-Waututh Nation and other partners to execute the plan, with a focus on supporting the construction of the Broadway Subway, siting and development of the new subway stations, and opportunities to integrate new housing, jobs, and amenities around the stations.



1C. Vancouver Affordable Housing Endowment Fund (VAHEF) Strategy

Advance the objectives of the VAHEF, with a current-year focus on preparing VAHEF-specific housing targets to support the upcoming Housing Vancouver Strategy refresh, updating the VAHEF deployment plan, and establishing a sustainable and resilient portfolio strategy that maximizes social return and financial performance.



1D. Single Resident Occupancy (SRO) Revitalization Strategy

Lead the City's contributions toward the development and implementation of a federal, provincial and municipal SRO Revitalization Action Plan, and implement the next phase of the City's Supportive Housing Strategy, including the development and implementation of a complex care pilot program.

Example measures from Vancouver 2021 plan, as reported in 2022 Strategic Plan



Appendix G – Public Engagement Summary Report

(see separate PDF document)

Background

Governance involves the structures and processes for decision making, focusing on openness and accountability. A governance review provides the opportunity to consider opportunities to modernize the City of Victoria's governance systems. A governance review was identified as a strategic initiative in the City of Victoria's 2019-2022 Strategic Plan. MNP was engaged to conduct a review of the City's governance structures and processes to consider ways the current model is effective and how it may be improved to further enable responsible and accountable governance.

Engagement

Public engagement aimed to understand residents' opinions of City of Victoria governance structures, processes, and priorities for improvement. Residents were invited to provide input through an online survey (self-selected participation), an in-person public event, and an online public event.

Table 1: Public and Stakeholder Engagement Opportunities

Date	Activity	Details
April 14 – May 13, 2022	Public Survey (self-selected participation, registration on Have Your Say site not required)	881 responses (resident or property/business owner)
April 14 to May 13, 2022	Written Submission	3 submissions
May 2, 2022	In-Person Public Session	3 participants
May 4, 2022	Virtual Public Event	10 participants
April 29, May 6 (2), May 9	Stakeholder Focus Groups (4)	23 participants from 18 organizations

Who We Heard From

881 City of Victoria residents or property/business owners completed the survey (not all participants answered all questions), 13 participants in total attended the public sessions and 23 individuals representing 18 stakeholder organizations participated in a focus group.

Survey Respondents

- 46% Female, 45% male; 7% prefer not to disclose, 1% non-binary, 1% prefer to self-describe.
- 33% of survey respondents were 65 years old or older

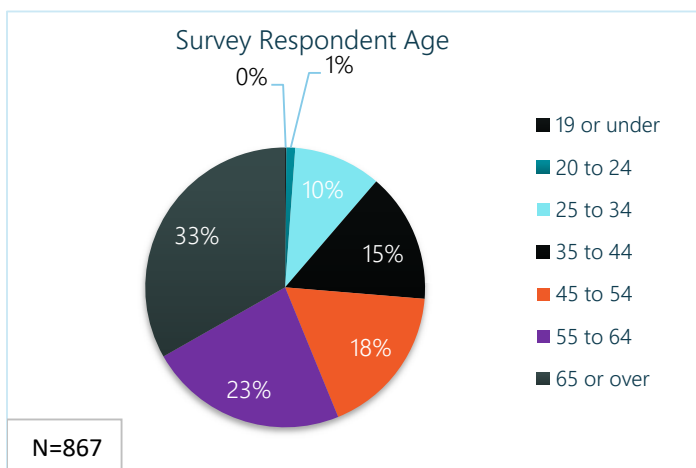
Stakeholder organizations were also invited to provide input through focus groups and written submissions. Details on engagement opportunities are outlined in Table 1.

Promotion

Public engagement opportunities were promoted using the following methods:

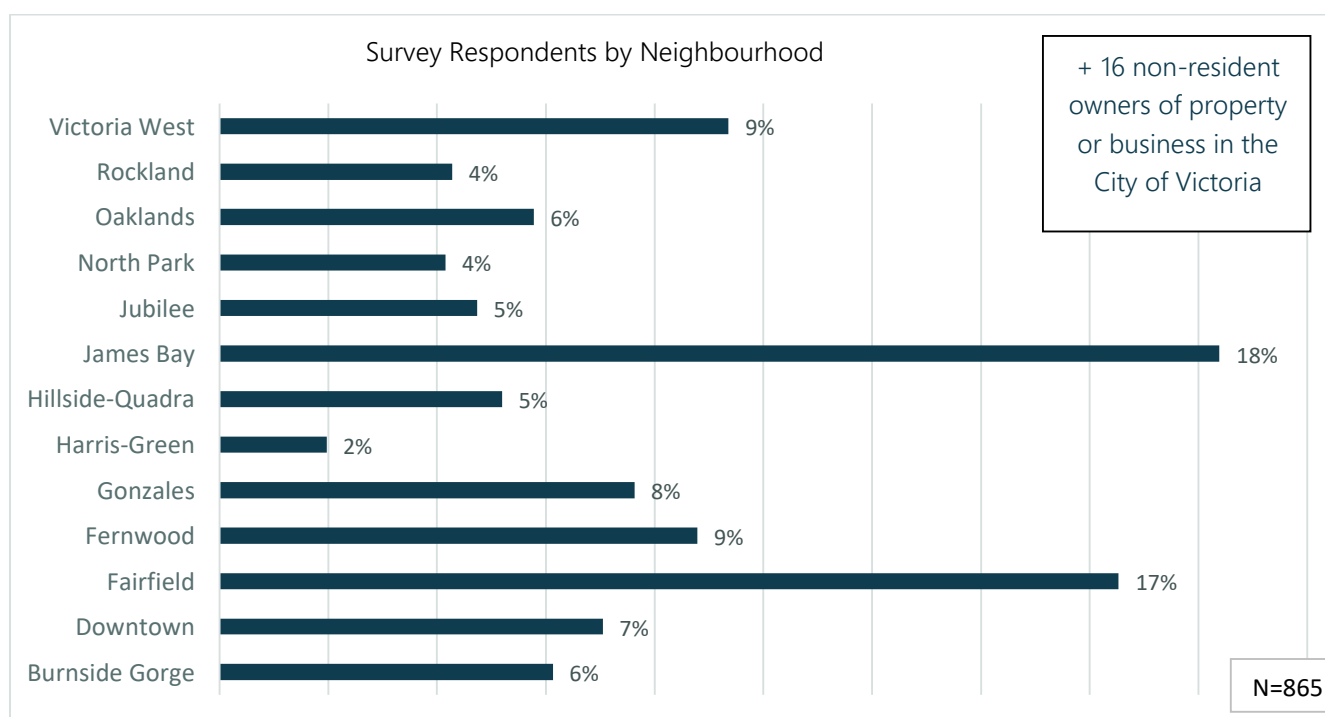
- City of Victoria website – launched April 14, 2022
- News release – April 21
- Facebook and Instagram posts with over 4,300 views
- Twitter posts with over 25,000 views
- Email to 42 identified governance stakeholders
- Newspaper advertisements in The Times Colonist on Saturday, April 16, April 23, and April 30 and The Victoria News on Thursday April 21
- Have Your Say Newsletter – Issued April 20

- 40% of respondents have a bachelor's degree or college diploma, 30% have an advanced degree (Masters or Doctorate)
- 25% of respondents have an annual household income above \$125,000
- Survey responses were reasonably representative of the breakdown of city population by neighbourhood (Census, 2016)



Focus Group Participants

Participants in the stakeholder focus groups represented neighbourhood associations, CALUCs, persons with disabilities, seniors, active transportation, other vulnerable populations, business, and planning and development organizations. (See the complete list in Appendix C)



Key Findings

Each section presents survey results and related themes from input received through the public events, focus groups and written submissions. A summary table of key themes from what we heard and how it has been incorporated in MNP's recommendations for improvement to the City's governance structures and processes is included in each section.

Detailed results and additional information are included in the appendices.

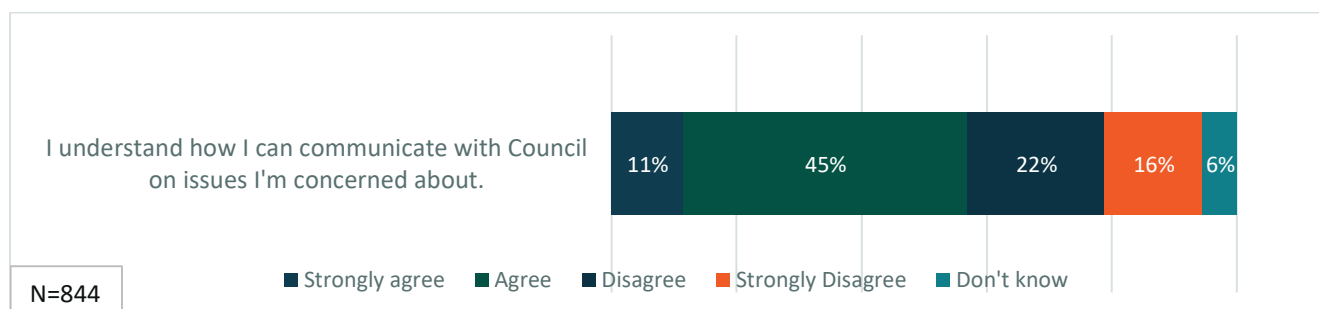
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Participation in Council Decision-making Processes

The majority of survey respondents (56%) agreed or strongly agreed that they understand how to communicate with Council on issues they are concerned about. Communication with Council outside of formal Council meetings was noted by some public session participants as being less accessible and effective.

**Council and Committee of the Whole Meetings / Hearings**

Stakeholder focus groups, public session participants and written submissions noted that generally, there is reasonable opportunity to participate in Council decision-making processes, however identified barriers to effective participation. Most participants acknowledged that virtual participation has increased the ability to participate in Council meetings and public hearings, and that video submissions are especially helpful for individuals who may not be comfortable speaking in public. It was noted by groups representing persons with disabilities that the City has made progress in implementing technologies to facilitate participation for individuals with visual or hearing impairments and hope to see improvements as technologies evolve. They did note however, that not all policies and practices are followed consistently, such as verbalizing council votes and amendments to motions, or ensuring that all supporting documents meet accessibility standards.

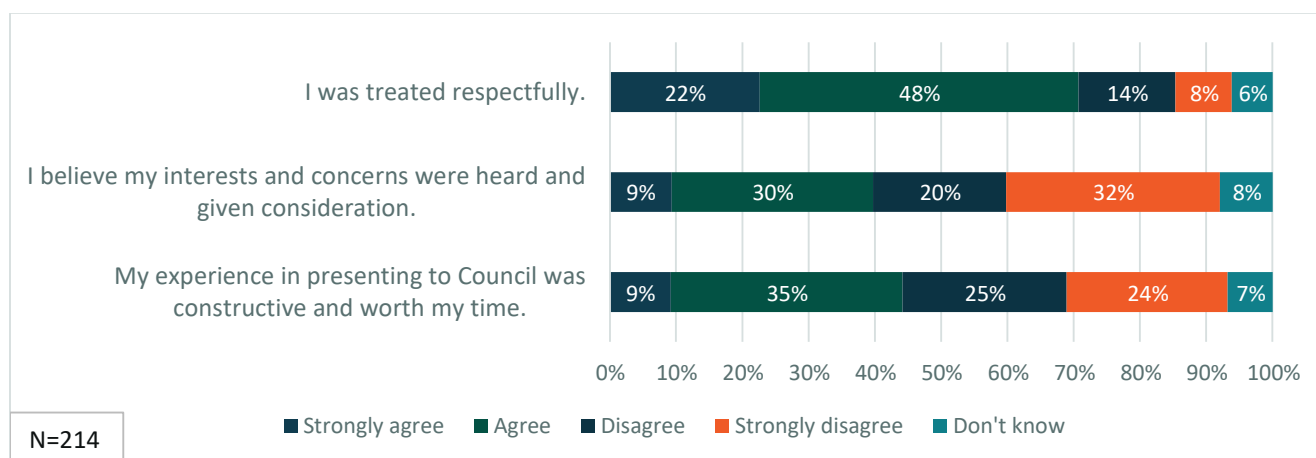
Sufficient time to consider Council agenda items and prepare a response was mentioned frequently by individual and group participants and included in open-ended survey comments, as was the length of meetings, which can go late into the evening. Access to user-friendly information, difficulty navigating the City of Victoria website and website search functionality were mentioned in focus groups and public sessions in terms of information to support participation in Council decision-making processes. (further detail is included on page 6 of this report).

Twenty-six percent of survey respondents (219) have presented to Council either in person or virtually. These respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with the following statements regarding their experience.

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Among survey participants that had presented at a City Council meeting (request to address Council or speak at a public hearing) the majority (70%) felt that they had been treated respectfully. However, only 39% agreed that their interests and concerns were heard and given consideration. Survey respondents were split on whether the experience was constructive and worth their time, with 49% disagreeing and 44% agreeing. Further insight provided by focus groups participants and some public session participants indicated the opportunity to appear before Council occurs too late in the decision-making process and it appears that Council has already made up their mind on the matter prior to hearing from the public. Two major themes in open-ended survey comments were that Council's decisions appear to be made based on personal agendas and are not aligned with public opinion; and that public input is not considered in Council decision-making. Further detail on Council decision-making is included on page 11.

Barriers to Presenting at Council

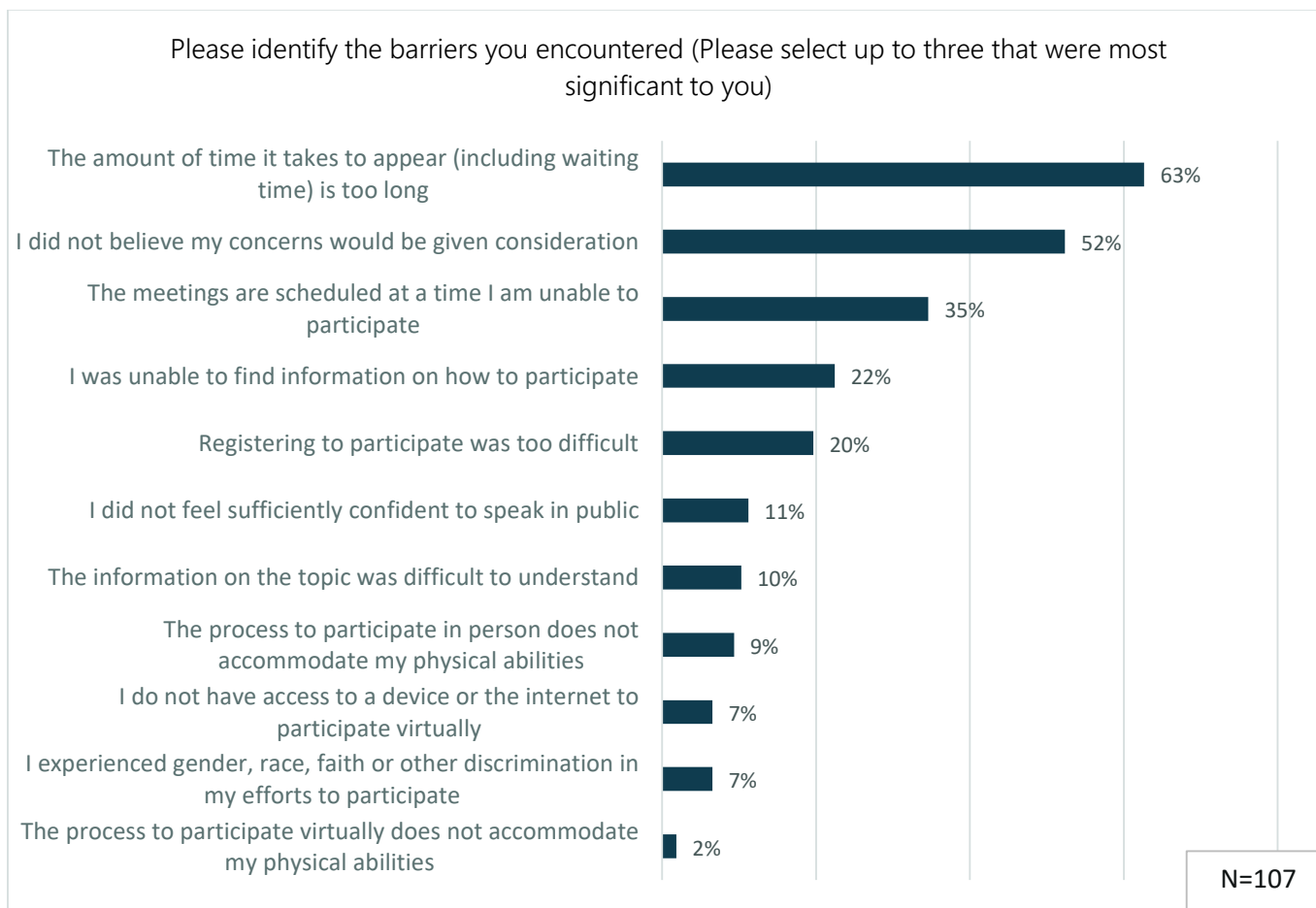
The set of survey respondents who had presented to Council were asked if they had experienced barriers with this activity and if so, to identify the most significant. Fifty-one percent (107) of this set of respondents indicated that they had encountered a barrier that made it difficult to present to Council. The three most frequently selected barriers were the amount of time required to appear (including waiting time) (63%), a belief that input would not be considered (52%) and Council meeting times (35%).

Stakeholder, public session and written submission feedback elaborated on barriers to participation in Council decision-making processes. These participants also identified lengthy meetings and late start times (for public hearings). Additional barriers identified were lengthy and difficult to digest Council agendas and challenges navigating the City website to find information on matters before Council, lack of ASL interpreter, imperfect accessibility features of online platforms, difficulty hearing in Council chambers, and safety, health, financial and transportation issues related to attending in-person meetings. Some focus group and public session participants added that the five-minute presentation time limit may not be adequate, adds pressure and can be a source of discomfort for public presenters.

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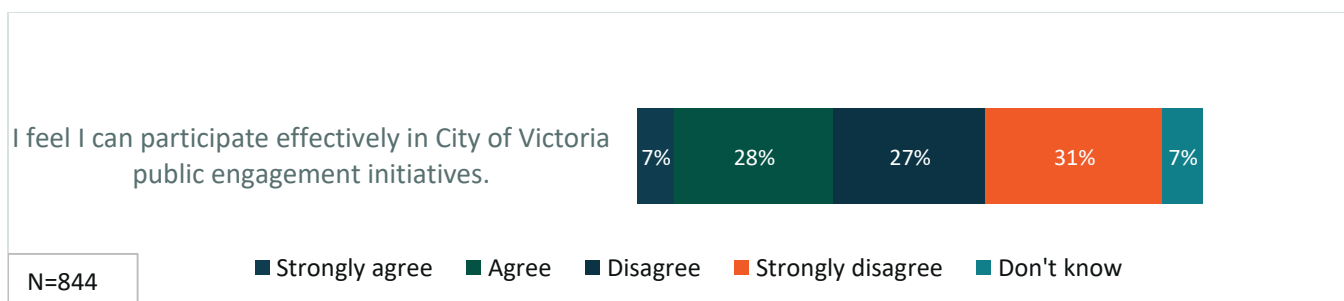
Public Engagement Summary

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Public Engagement

Fifty-eight percent of survey respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that they can effectively participate in City of Victoria public engagement activities.



Seventy-nine survey respondents commented on improvements they would like to see in Council's processes for gathering public feedback including continued efforts to reach a more diverse group of citizens and creating earlier and greater awareness of initiatives and input opportunities. There were mixed opinions in survey responses on engagement with neighbourhood associations and CALUCs, with some feeling there should be more engagement

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with them and others feeling there should be less emphasis, as membership often does not represent the diversity of neighbourhood demographics.

Stakeholder groups provided further insight, commenting that current practices are insufficient to engage marginalized groups, who are often the most impacted by initiatives and decisions. Specifically they noted communities such as lower income, newcomers, and property renters. In addition, they would like to see more proactive features to enable accessibility and inclusion, including interpretation, transportation, access to computers, verbal explanation of graphical information etc.

Stakeholders and the public commented frequently that there are many opportunities for public engagement with the City of Victoria, however, input is often taken into consideration too late in a project process, for example during the implementation phase, to be fully considered by Council. Stakeholder groups also specified that advance notice or longer engagement periods would allow time for them to engage their members and provide collective feedback.

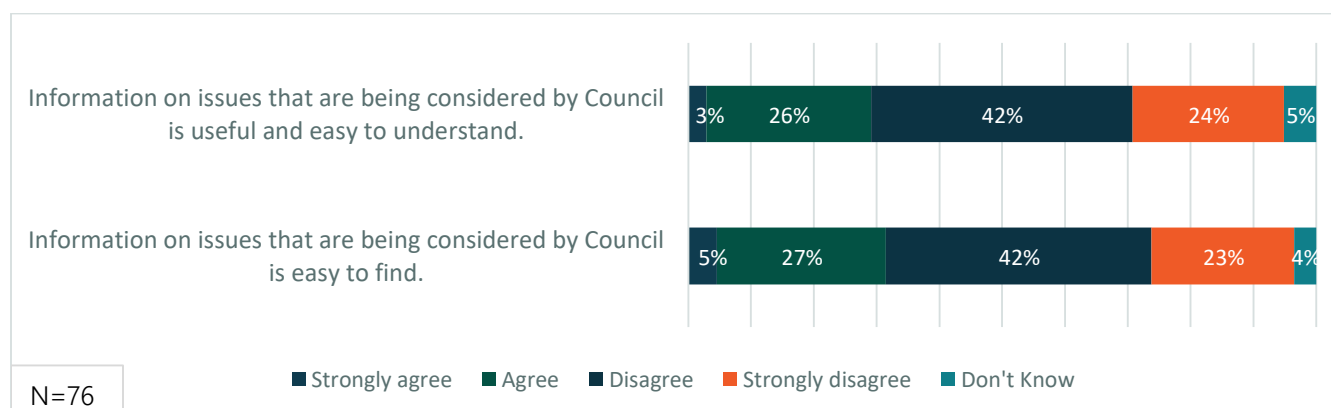
Members of the public and stakeholders expressed their frustration with taking the time and effort to provide input that does not appear to be considered in Council decision-making.

Twenty-six survey respondents commented positively on the City of Victoria's current public engagement practices, citing the many opportunities available to provide input.

Further feedback on Council decision-making is included on page 11 of this report.

Information to Support Public Involvement in Council Processes and Public Engagement

Sixty-six percent of public survey respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that information on issues that Council is considering is useful and easy to understand. Additionally, 65% of public survey respondents do not consider information on issues that are being considered by Council easy to find. Comments provided in the public survey indicated that communication to the public is not user friendly or widely accessible. Specific reference was made to the inability for members of the public to devote the time and energy to review and provide comment on voluminous documents such as the 120- page budget document or 1200+ Middle Middle document. As mentioned previously, complex agenda materials are one of the barriers to effective public participation in Council meetings.



Feedback in focus groups, written submissions and survey comments suggested that materials be written in plain language, summarized, in accessible formats and available in advance. Some participants suggested that more time

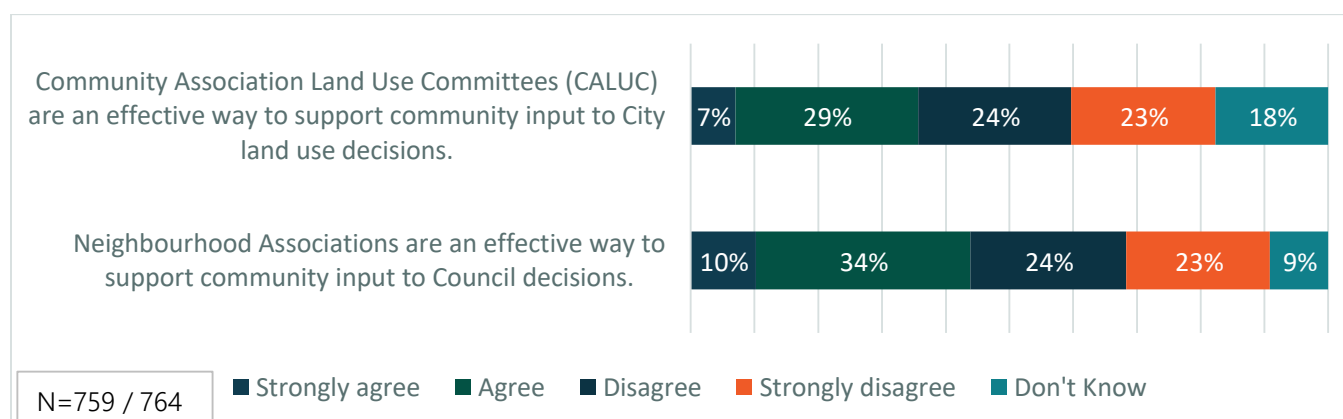
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is required to understand complex materials before providing feedback, a suggestion was put forward that a City staff member present the materials in advance to help increase understanding.

Neighbourhood Associations/CALUCs and Advisory Committees

*CALUCs*

Public survey respondents were split on their response regarding CALUCs. Thirty-six percent of the public survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that CALUCs are an effective way to support community input to City and land use decisions while 46% of the public disagreed or strongly disagreed. Feedback from focus groups and survey comments indicated CALUCs often represent a very small demographic of a neighbourhood and therefore do not represent the views of all residents. Feedback from written submissions indicated it is unclear how input from CALUCs is considered in Council decision-making.

There were mixed opinions in survey comments on the effectiveness of engagement with neighbourhood associations and CALUCs on land use matters, with some feeling there should be more engagement with them and others feeling there should be less, due to the narrow demographic represented, and/or a desire to streamline approval of development applications that are consistent with the OCP.

Neighbourhood Associations

Public survey respondents were also divided on the effectiveness of neighbourhood associations. Forty-three percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that neighbourhood associations are an effective way to support community input to Council decisions while 47% disagreed or strongly disagreed. Feedback from written submissions and stakeholder groups noted that stronger terms of reference are required for neighbourhood associations to better understand the roles and responsibilities and how they interact with Council, including expectations for association input on relevant initiatives. Some members of the public and stakeholders stated that there are inconsistencies support for neighbourhood associations and the extent of their involvement with Council. Public survey respondents indicated some lack of connection between the neighbourhood associations and City staff and/or Council Liaisons.

Advisory Committees

Participants in focus groups, public sessions and written submissions also provided feedback on advisory committees. Focus group participants, and written submissions indicated that the role of advisory committees in Council decision-making is unclear, and that terms of reference are not clear or consistent. Specific concerns include having a better

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understanding of the advisory committees' role in supporting Council, a desire for broader terms of reference, and clear expectations for when advisory committees are to be engaged on relevant matters. A clear and consistent process for including advisory committee input in staff reports was a common theme, as was a process for bringing forward recommendations directly to Council if a committee does not believe their input has been allocated sufficient weight in City reporting to Council. Stakeholder groups indicated advisory committees should be engaged earlier to ensure that there is stronger engagement on projects that effect various populations.

Table 2 –Key themes from public engagement about participation in Council decision-making

What We Heard	How it is Reflected in Recommendations
The public is not provided with adequate time and information to effectively participate in Council decision-making. Time between published agendas (and updates) and meetings is not enough time to absorb lengthy, complex materials. <i>Challenges with advance notice and information available also apply to public engagement.</i>	<i>Recommendations include</i> - Streamline Council agenda materials to include a short, high-level summary of key decision considerations, followed by detailed background with user-friendly cross references. - Limit late submissions to already published agendas to only matters that are determined to be emergent by the Mayor
Long, lengthy Council meetings are a barrier to participation by members of the public.	<i>Please see Table 3 – key themes about Council Decision-making</i>
Public engagement would be improved through greater engagement with marginalized groups and the residents most affected by a decision. Technology has enhanced the ability to participate in Council decision-making processes, however could be improved.	<i>Recommendations include:</i> - Incorporate and apply the updated principles of equitable engagement in the Engagement Framework and more broadly to other ways of providing access to Council decision-making. e.g. engage Advisory Committees as a means of developing relationships within equity deserving communities and work with them to co-create inclusive engagement processes. - Update technology so that the public address to Council, whether in delegation or at a public hearing, may use video. - Allow pre-recorded video submissions for public hearings and delegations on matters to be considered by Council.
Stronger terms of reference and understanding of roles and responsibilities are required for Advisory Committees.	<i>Recommendations include:</i> - Review terms of reference for alignment with requirements in City bylaws (open meetings, publishing agendas and minutes etc.). - Relieve members of Council from formal appointments as liaisons to Advisory Committees. - Formalize the expectations of the administration with respect to engaging and supporting Advisory Committees.

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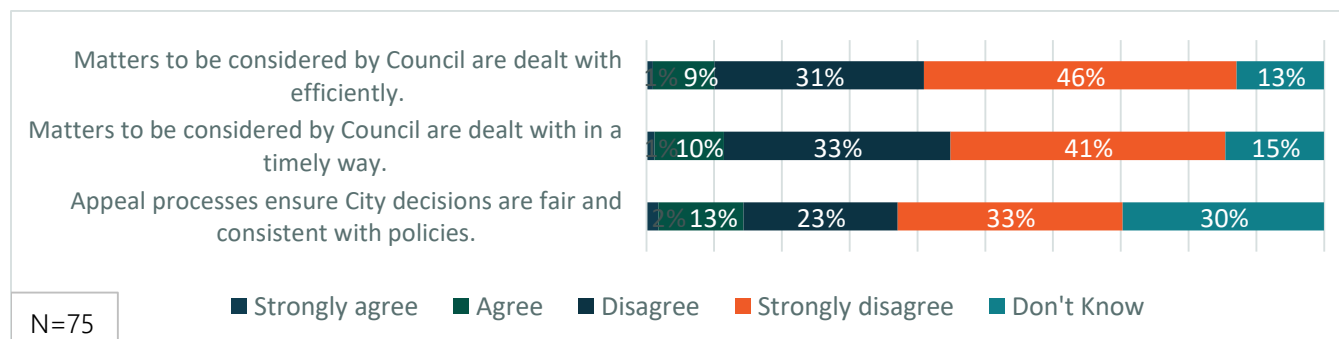
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What We Heard	How it is Reflected in Recommendations
Forgoing income, low income or incurring direct costs to participate on an Advisory Committee may be a barrier to participation.	Establish a policy for remuneration and to reimburse expenses for public members of Council committees to remove barriers to participation.
Feedback from Advisory Committees, and Neighbourhood Associations is not incorporated into staff reports. Advisory Committee recommendations are not being received or considered by Council.	<i>Recommendations include:</i> - Formalize the expectation that staff work on policy matters related to an advisory committee mandate will include early engagement with the committee including a summary of committee input with the administrative report. Include a summary of “what we heard” back to the committee to correct any errors or omissions prior to finalizing the report - Formalize the process for Advisory Committee recommendations to be brought to Council with regular Council packages, including minutes, reports or recommendations. - Remove the expectation that the Council Neighbourhood Liaison will convey the concerns of the Neighbourhood Association to Council and establish a procedure to receive information or advocacy positions from Neighbourhood Associations so that there is a record of the information being received by Council
Reporting from CALUC meetings may be influenced by the personal views of the CALUC members.	Establish a requirement for recorded input from CALUC meetings to be posted to allow participants the opportunity to identify any errors or omissions before the information is officially submitted.

Council Decision-Making Processes

Efficiency of Council

Public survey respondents were asked to provide their input on the efficiency of Council.



Seventy seven percent of survey respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that matters to be considered by Council are dealt with efficiently. Additionally, 74% of public survey respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that

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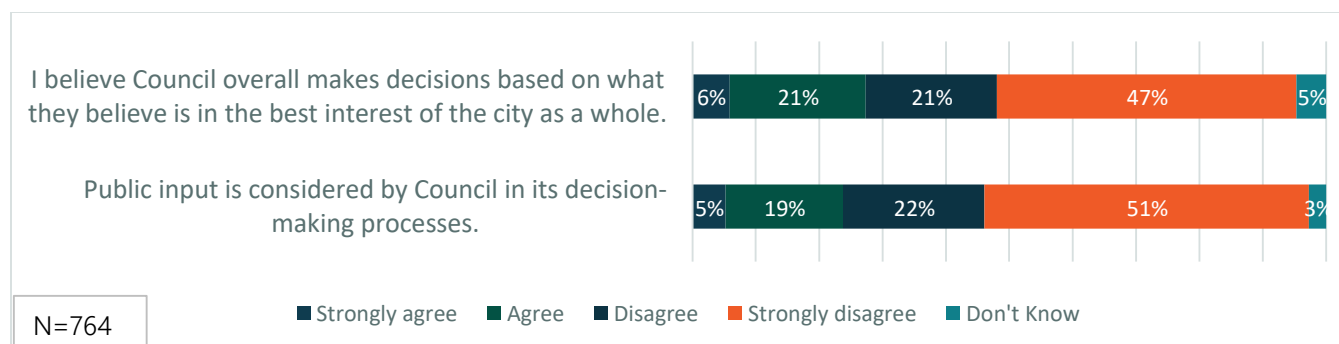
matters to be considered by Council are dealt with in a timely way. Feedback received from stakeholder groups with experience with Council processes indicate that Council decisions may be delayed if a matter gets sent back to the administration for advisory committee input or further public engagement. The timing of public input at the end of a decision-making process may also cause delay if it causes Council to reconsider their position on a matter. They also noted there can be lengthy delays in receiving staff reports. Stakeholders commented that lengthy delays in Council decision-making can negatively impact initiatives if new issues have arisen, or data supporting the recommendations is no longer relevant or accurate.

Fifty-six percent of survey respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed that appeal processes ensure that City decisions are fair and consistent with policies; a substantial percentage of responses to this question (30%) indicated "don't know".

Thirty-three survey respondents commented on Council meeting processes, noting that meetings are too long and can go late into the evening. These respondents stated that the meetings may be longer than required due to Council getting into administrative details, grandstanding, endless debate and veering off-course in discussions. Some respondents also commented that last minute Council member motions add to meeting length.

Effectiveness of Council Decision Making

Seventy-three percent of survey respondents also disagreed or strongly disagreed that public input is taken into consideration during Council's decision-making processes. Sixty-eight percent of respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed that Council overall makes decisions based on what they believe is in the best interest of the city.



The most frequent mention in open-ended survey comments is that Councillors appear to make decisions based on their own personal agendas rather than aligning with the priorities and needs of the public majority. Another frequent mention was that Council seems to only consider the opinion of the loudest rather than considering the opinion of the broader public. Some respondents also commented that staff expertise seem to be discounted in the Council decision-making process.

A major concern raised by many who engaged is that the City does not appear to use the feedback collected through engagement processes. Meeting participants noted that stakeholder input is not consistently reflected in reports, resulting in a lack of transparency regarding how public input was considered. Several comments noted that requesting public input is just an exercise to "check the box". Many also commented that Council decisions on matters appear to have been made prior to the public being able to provide any input. This leaves many members of the public feeling disrespected and that their time was not constructive. Meeting participants also commented that

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Council may not recognize that volunteer groups do not always have the resources to respond to requests for input with the timeframes set by Council.

As mentioned previously, there were mixed opinions among survey respondents on the effectiveness of CALUCs in land use decisions. Some comments in surveys and written submissions favoured delegating more land use decisions to staff.

Table 2 - Key Themes from Public Engagement about Council Decision-Making Processes

What We Heard	How it is Reflected in Recommendations
Council meetings are overly long partially due to Council digging into administrative details, grandstanding, endless debate and veering off-course. Long, late Council meetings are a barrier to participation by members of the public.	• Enable immediate ratification at Council of COTW recommendations to eliminate duplication of debate at Council meetings. • Delegate more authority to staff to reduce the number of matters to be considered by Council and eliminate discussion of administrative details. • Create a separate, distinct meeting for public hearings.
Council appears to make decisions based on personal agendas, the vocal interests of a few rather than the majority of the public. Public input (individual and representative) does not appear to be considered in Council decision-making.	• Receive public delegations on agenda items at COTW to enable fuller consideration of input • Ensure engagement feedback is effectively summarized for Council materials. Include an analysis of how the input is reflected in recommendations to Council and the public report of what was heard.
Public engagement would be improved through greater engagement with marginalized groups and the residents most affected by a decision.	• Incorporate and apply the updated principles of equitable engagement in the Engagement Framework and more broadly to other ways of providing access to Council decision-making. e.g. engage Advisory Committees as a means of developing relationships within equity deserving communities and work with them to co-create inclusive engagement processes.

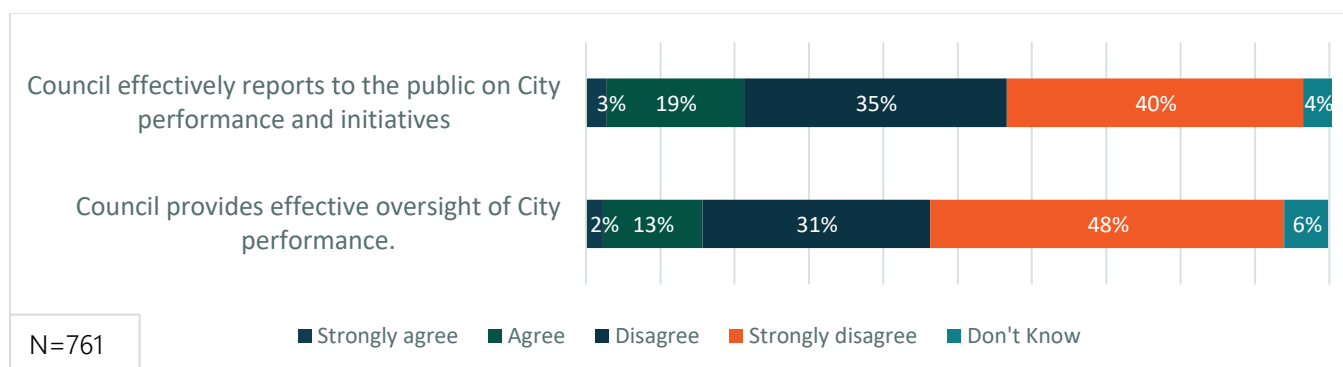
Council Oversight of City Performance

Survey respondents were asked to provide their input on Council's oversight of City performance. Seventy-five percent of public survey respondents did not feel that Council effectively reports to the public on City performance and initiatives. 79% of survey respondents also did not feel that Council provides effective oversight of City performance. Meeting participants commented that reporting on progress is very delayed and measures appear be output based vs. outcome based, which makes it difficult to monitor outcomes and understand progress on the initiatives. Participants in focus groups and the public sessions noted that the Tri-Annual reports which report on many of the city's initiatives are not widely reviewed by the public and stakeholder groups. Focus group participants noted that action items not completed do not appear to be prioritized for follow-up.

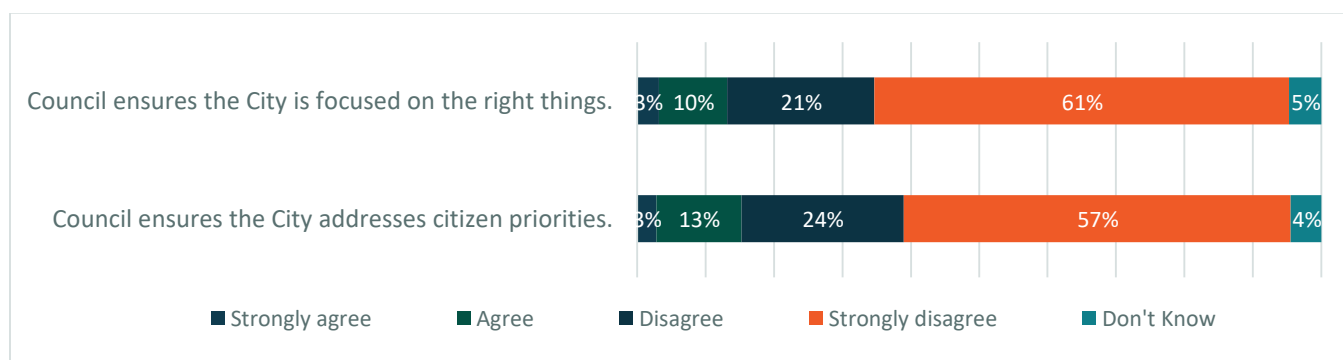
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Overwhelmingly, 82% of online survey respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that Council ensures that the City is focused on the right things. Additionally, 81% of survey respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that Council ensures the City addresses citizen priorities.



A common theme in survey comments is that Council priorities, represented in their agendas and decision-making, seem misaligned with broader public needs. A smaller number of survey comments expressed a different view with 24 respondents commenting on their satisfaction with Council's forward looking and socially responsible priorities. Some focus group participants commented that the strategic plan seems unfocused with its long list of objectives (action items).

Table 3 - Key themes from public engagement about Council oversight of City performance

What We Heard	How it was reflected in recommendations
- The Cities strategic plan is very detailed and not overly strategic. - Progress measures appear to be outputs rather than outcomes. Tri-annual reports include significant detail and are widely accessed by the public.	- Maintain a higher level focus for the municipal strategic plan. Clearly identify the target results and align specific measures to evaluate progress. - Develop user-friendly materials for public consumption for both the strategic plan and progress reports.

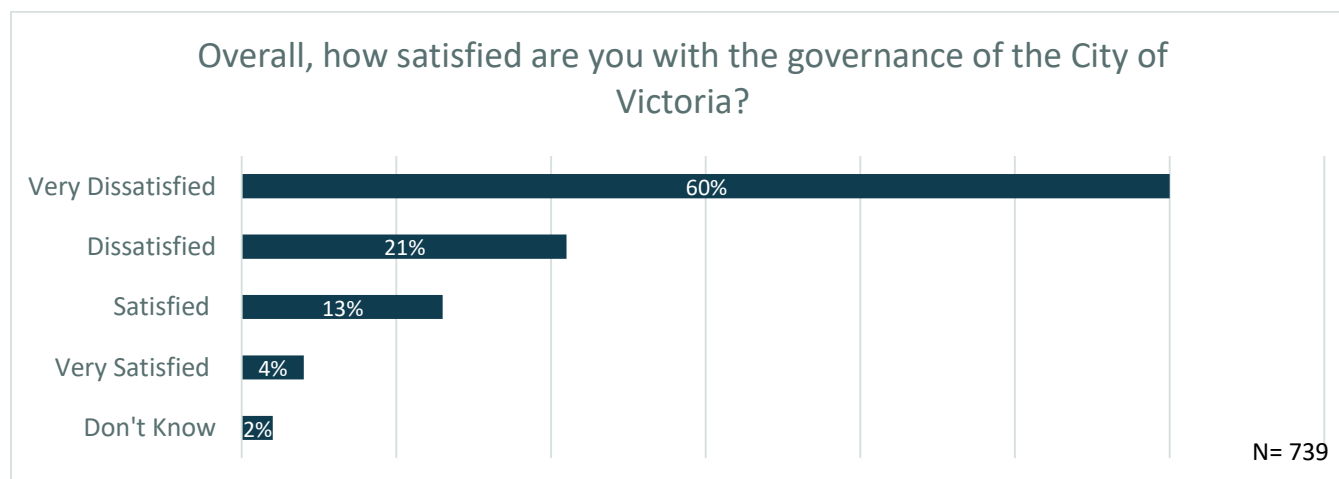
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Overall Satisfaction with the Governance of the City

Public survey respondents were asked to provide their input on the overall satisfaction of the governance of the City of Victoria. Sixty percent of respondents were very dissatisfied, 21% were dissatisfied, 13% were satisfied and 4% were very satisfied.



Top Themes from Survey Open-ended Questions

Following the overall satisfaction question, survey respondents were asked to respond to two open-ended questions that asked what they are most satisfied with and what they would most like to see improved in the City of Victoria's Governance. Over 675 survey participants provided a response to one or both questions. Respondents tended not to differentiate between the two questions, ie. many commented on something they were dissatisfied with when asked what they were satisfied with. Therefore, the responses have been combined and results reported according to the nature of the comment. Responses also covered many topics not related to City governance, such as police, parks, and infrastructure. These comments have not been included in the summary analysis. Common themes related to governance from the open-ended responses are provided in the table below.

Table 5 – Top Themes from Survey Open-ended Questions

Most Satisfied With	#
Progressive, forward-looking Council with socially responsible priorities	39
Variety of opportunities for public input; addition of online options has increased access	28
Individual access to Mayor and Councillors to discuss concerns	19
Communication with the public including videos, social media, newsletter, townhalls	19
Council that is getting things done	8

CITY OF VICTORIA GOVERNANCE REVIEW

Public Engagement Summary

July 2022

Most Needs Improvement	#
Councillors' personal, ideological agendas impact their decision-making - Decisions may not be in the best interest of the whole city and/or aligned with majority public opinion - Often focusing attention on ad-hoc, pet-projects vs. long-term, core municipal needs	186
Council straying into matters beyond its municipal mandate - Stick to core services e.g. road maintenance, parks, framework that supports local businesses - Concerns that taxpayer money being spent on initiatives that are provincial or federal responsibility (e.g. addictions, health, public housing, social justice matters)	125
PUBLIC INPUT Public input not considered in decision making process - Concerns raised by neighbours/CALUCs not reflected in reports and Council decisions - Generally, requesting public input is just "checking a box", decision has been made prior to requesting public input. Public input processes - Communication of input opportunities not always timely or reaching all who would be interested in participating - Further efforts to facilitate input from more diverse, harder to reach public required - CALUC / neighbourhood association demographics not representative of neighbourhood population and opinions	118
Council decision-making overly influenced by squeaky wheel - should consider majority public opinion, staff advice, not just loudest voices Staff expertise discounted; more decisions should be delegated to staff	64
Land use specific public input processes - Mixed opinions on use of CALUC / neighbourhood input - Neighbourhood input should be sought on all development - Development that aligns with OCP should be approved, to speed up the process and increase consistency	19
Lack of transparency - Would like more information on reasons for decisions that went against public opinion - Too many decisions made in-camera - City Family process lacks transparency	61
Council meeting management - Meetings are too long, made longer by Council nitpicking small details, grandstanding, endless debate, veering off-course - Last minute motions consume Council time and do not provide an opportunity for the public to weigh in.	43
Better connection with neighbourhoods	33
	28

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Most Needs Improvement	#
- Ward system - More engagement with Council neighbourhood liaison Neighbourhood associations that better represent the demographics of community	
Accountability for performance - Measurement and reporting on progress towards goals, outcomes is lacking - Outstanding items do not appear to receive follow-up - More honesty in reporting progress, review policies and admit when something is not working	26
Information available to the public - Need user friendly, summarized, accessible information on matters being considered, decisions that have been made by Council, and for reporting on significant initiatives - e.g. 120 budget document or 1200+ page Missing Middle documents too long for the public to review and comment on.	24
Council member conduct and conflict of interest Disrespectful behaviour, involvement in external groups that may be in conflict of interest	19

Next Steps

Key findings from stakeholder and public engagement have been considered along with a review of current documentation, engagement with City of Victoria Council members and senior leadership and comparison with other Canadian cities to inform MNP's Report of Recommendations to improve the City of Victoria's governance structures and processes. The report of recommendations is expected to be submitted to Council at the Committee of the Whole meeting on July 21, 2022 for their consideration.

Appendices (separate document)

Appendix A – Survey respondent demographics

Appendix B - Written Submissions

Appendix C – List of organizations that participated in a focus group

Appendix D - Promotional Material (Facebook & Twitter Ads, Newspaper Ads)

Appendix E – Comparison of City of Victoria and Other Jurisdictions Governance Processes

Appendix F - Data Collection Tools

- Survey
- Written Submission Guide / Focus Group Question Guide
- Public Event presentation and questions