



**Burlington Agricultural and Rural Affairs Advisory Committee
Agenda**

Date: November 20, 2019
Time: 7:00 pm
Location: Room 305, Level 3, City Hall
426 Brant Street, Burlington, Ontario

Pages

1. Declarations of Interest:

2. Approval of Minutes:

2.1 Approve minutes from meeting held October 16, 2019 1 - 3

3. Delegation(s):

3.1 Community Gardens - Michelle Bennett

3.2 Notre Dame Secondary School Horticulture & Landscaping, Green Industries and Aquaculture Program - Allan Nason

3.3 Agri-Tourism - Mark Steffler 4 - 23

4. Regular Items:

4.1 Advisory Committee Review 24 - 54

4.2 Discussion re: Adopted Official Plan policies

Note: document will be distributed before next week's meeting

5. Other Business:

5.1 December meeting

6. Adjournment:



Burlington Agricultural & Rural Affairs Advisory Committee Meeting

Minutes

Date: October 16, 2019
Time: 7:00 pm
Location: Room 305, Level 3, City Hall
426 Brant Street, Burlington, Ontario

1. Members Present:

Dave Stanyar (Chair), Vanessa Warren, Maura Romanelli, Glenn Portch and Sarah Pralet

2. Others Present:

Councillor Angelo Bentivegna, Kelly Cook (Planner) and Jo-Anne Rudy (Clerk)

3. Regrets:

Jamie Fisher, Nancy Douglas, John Timmis and Norm Richardson

4. Declarations of Interest:

None

5. Approval of Minutes:

5.1 Approve minutes from meeting held September 24, 2019

On motion, the minutes from the meeting of September 24, 2019 were approved as presented.

6. Delegation(s):

None

7. Regular Items:

7.1 Discussion re: Adopted Official Plan policies

- The committee reviewed the draft recommendations and commented on the following items:

- 9.2.3a)(xvii) - Kelly clarified that the issue is based on "with the majority of commodities for sale, measured by monetary value, produced or manufactured on the farm". This is based on a Regional policy, yet Provincial policies may be less restrictive. **Action** - Kelly will do a cross comparison of Regional and Provincial policies outlining the requirements for on-farm diversified uses and will provide a summary and suggested revision.
- 9.5.6c) - Kelly clarified that this is an explanatory statement to ensure the reader is aware of other policies that apply, and that removing it would not change the applicability of the policies referenced. Through discussion, the committee agreed that this item could be removed from the list of recommendations and that the concerns with Natural Heritage System policies could be addressed through the Regional Official Plan Review process.
- Kelly suggested that she review all of the recommendations and provide suggested revisions, with a supporting table of proposed policy modifications, to the committee for consideration at the next meeting. **Action** - Kelly will provide a revised document in tracked changes form, in advance of the next meeting. Kelly will also investigate the appropriate process for bringing these recommendations forward to both City Council and the Region, and report back at the next meeting.

7.2 Agricultural Safety and Security

- Vanessa stated that there are concerns amongst the farming community that protesters could come onto private properties and asked if Council would pass a motion similar to what the Township of Warwick passed regarding enforcement for safety on family farms.
- Councillor Bentivegna noted that he will speak to police on how rural/agricultural property owners can be supported and will bring back information to the November meeting.

7.3 Allotments - Community Gardens

- Sarah shared that she has seen various corners of city properties throughout the City that could possibly be used for community gardens and asked about the process.
- Kelly advised that she reached out to Michelle Bennett, Community Garden Coordinator, who advised that to date community gardens

have been located in public parks/open space near higher mixed density areas where there was resident feedback indicating demand. Other considerations include level land, soil toxicity, sunlight, connection to water, parking, trails and access by public transit. **Action** - Kelly to invite Michelle Bennett to November meeting and Jo-Anne to email members link to community gardens webpage.

8. Other Business:

None

9. Adjournment: 8:30 p.m.

AGRITOURISM

A Development Guide for Farmers in Burlington



DRAFT November 2019
Burlington Economic Development Corporation

Understanding this Guide

Burlington Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) has identified agritourism as a potential growth industry in Burlington.

The potential for agritourism in Northern Burlington is great. The factors facilitating BEDC's interest in pursuing the industry outlined in this report are as followed:

1. Demographics in Burlington would support the development of agritourism
2. Support for agritourism comes from government funding, education and support, along with financing opportunities.
3. Farms in rural Burlington have the resources and potential to succeed in agritourism.

This guide is intended to help current and prospective farm operators develop an agritourism business plan and understand the relevant land use policies in place.

Support for agritourism in Burlington is not an endorsement or stated position of Burlington Economic Development Corporation on the viability of any individual business.

What is Agritourism?

Tourism that supports agricultural production

Agritourism falls under the broader category of rural tourism, referring specifically to farm related tourism uses including limited accommodation such as bed and breakfast, that promote enjoyment, education or activities related to the farm operation.

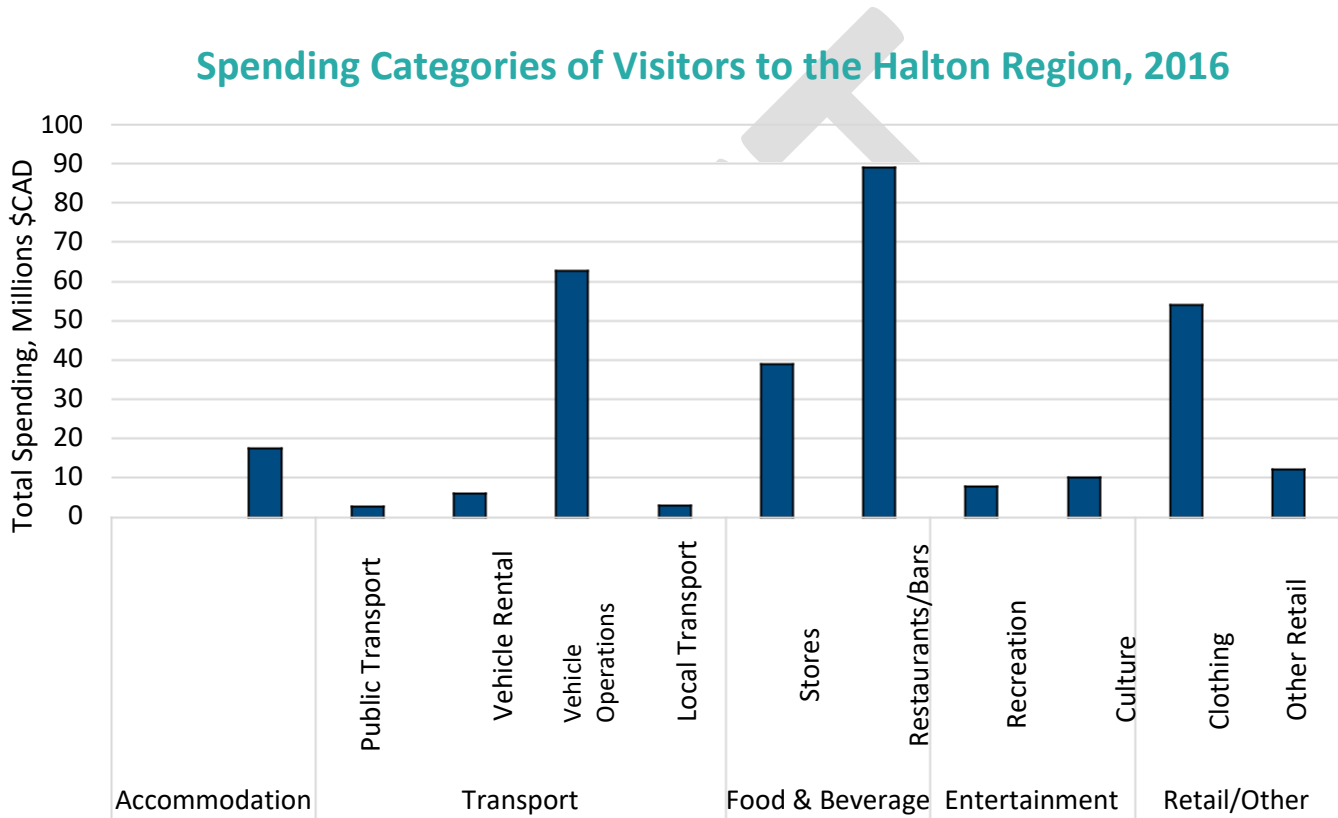
On-farm sales of agricultural products and overnight stays, while not falling under the strictest definition of agritourism, are often grouped with agritourism.



In past Canadian studies, pick your own operations have been found to be the most popular agritourism activity, offering a low-cost avenue to boost farm revenues.

The Benefits of Agritourism

Agritourism is an underdeveloped industry in Burlington, with other regions showcasing the potential benefits from developing agritourism operations. Niagara Region, for example, has a thriving wine industry. The chart below breaks down spending patterns in the Halton Region. Most money is spent at restaurants and bars with tourism to the wider Halton Region minimal across all forms of entertainment:



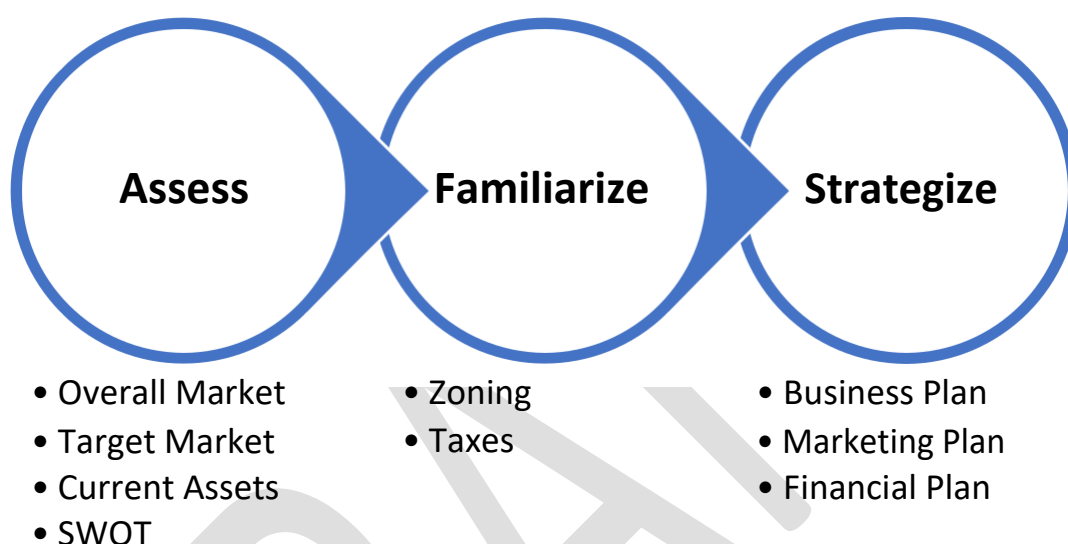
Agritourists primarily see value through spending time with family, relaxation, and educational benefits.

From BEDC’s review of outside research, 64.4% to 80.6% of farms that implemented agritourism operations saw their profits rise, by an average increase of 55.6% to 68.5%¹. These significant increases to revenue contribute to farm viability.

¹ Tew, C. Perceived Impact on Farm Economic Standing, Sales and Profits and Barbieri, C. Assessing the sustainability of agritourism in the US: a comparison between agritourism and other farm entrepreneurial ventures

How to Begin

While there are many resources to turn to, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) offers a starting point for farmers wishing to develop an agritourism business through their “Developing an Agri-Tourism Operation in Ontario” guide. Their guide is linked alongside other resources at this end of this guide.



Key Success Factors²:

There are several success factors that have been identified important for farm operators to consider:

1. Creating a visitor experience consisting of products and/or activities
2. Access to land and space
3. The farm is in an accessible location for visitors
4. Agritourism operation is marketed as a destination
5. Activities provided through experience match the visitors' expectations
6. Access to financial resources to cover start-up costs and invest in the future
7. Access to human resources
8. Activities adhere and comply with local government regulations
9. Presence of other agritourism operators

² British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture's Farm Diversification Through Agri-Tourism guide, there are nine key success factors for agritourism.

Burlington

While still a young industry, the potential for strong agritourism growth in Burlington is high. Nearby urban areas have easy access to rural Burlington, and the internal demographics closely match the sampled agritourist characteristics found in other regions in Ontario. Burlington's rural area is protected under Ontario's Greenbelt, and visitors can take advantage of a wealth of scenic attractions while remaining close to accommodations.

Municipality Demographic

Figures 1 and 2 below display the age and gender distribution and income of Burlington's population respectively, which are important to consider when pursuing new business opportunities. Along with this data, the population is educated, with the majority having some level of post-secondary education or technical training. Income of the population is an important factor to consider, as the main target markets for agritourism are young adults and young families with children who have disposable income to spend on experiences.

Burlington Community Profile

Figure 1³

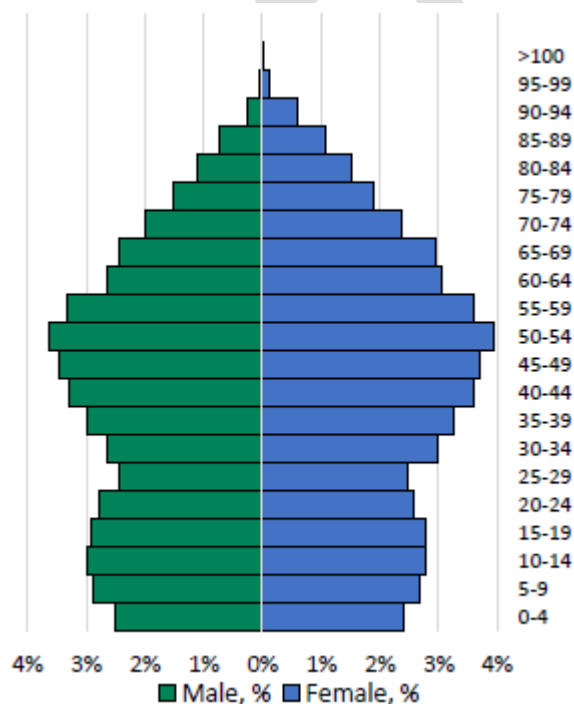


Figure 2³

Income

<\$5000	0.9%
\$5,000 to \$14,999	1.8%
\$15,000 to \$29,999	7.2%
\$30,000 to \$59,999	19.2%
\$60,000 to \$99,999	24.6%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	21.2%
>\$150,000	25.1%

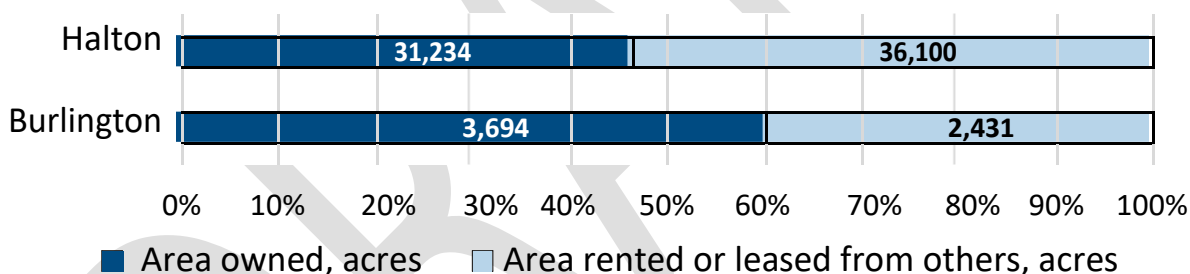
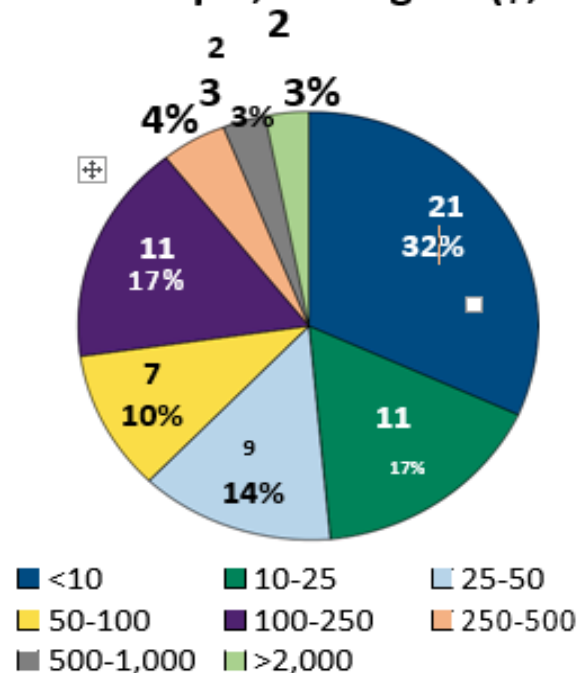
³Canada Census 2016

Burlington Agriculture

Agriculture land in Burlington amounts to over 6,458 acres of land, occupied by 66 farms⁴. While pressure from urban development is contained by protected areas, farmland has declined over past decades. Since 1981, land that is occupied by farms has decrease by 59% in Halton.

According to Statistics Canada, the average farm size in Burlington is 98 acres, significantly lower than the Halton average of 152 acres.

Gross Receipts, Burlington (\$,000)⁵

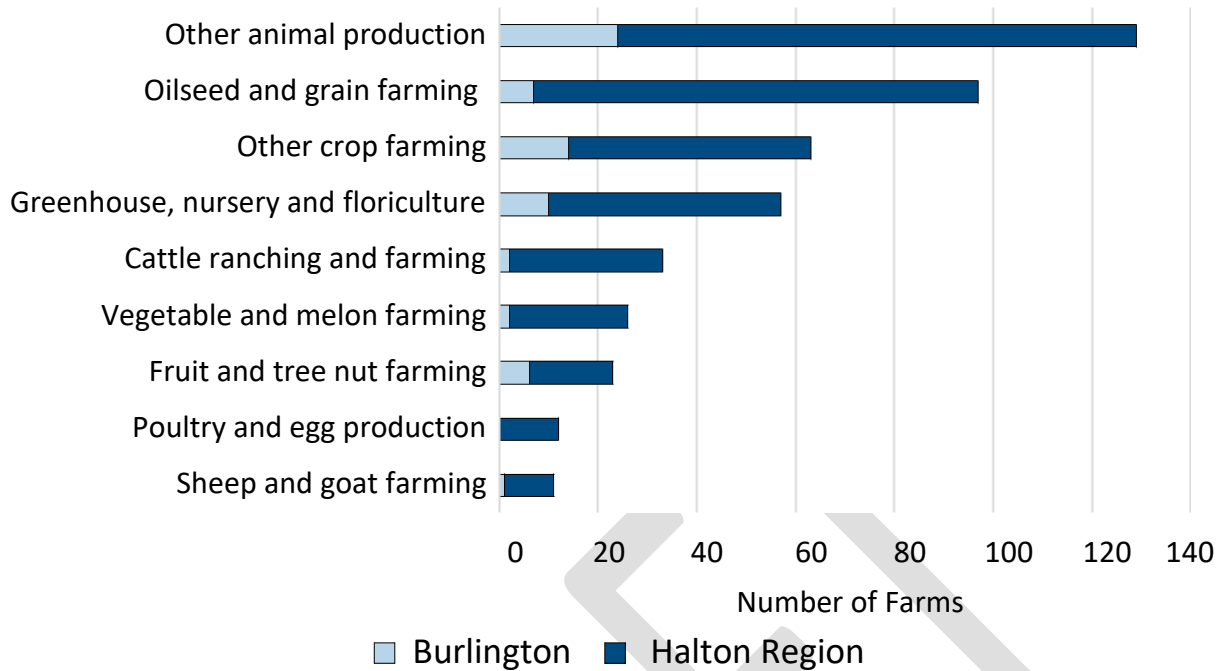


Farmland in Burlington is more likely to be operated by owners than across Halton as a whole, with roughly 60% of the total farming area owned and the remaining rented or leased from others.

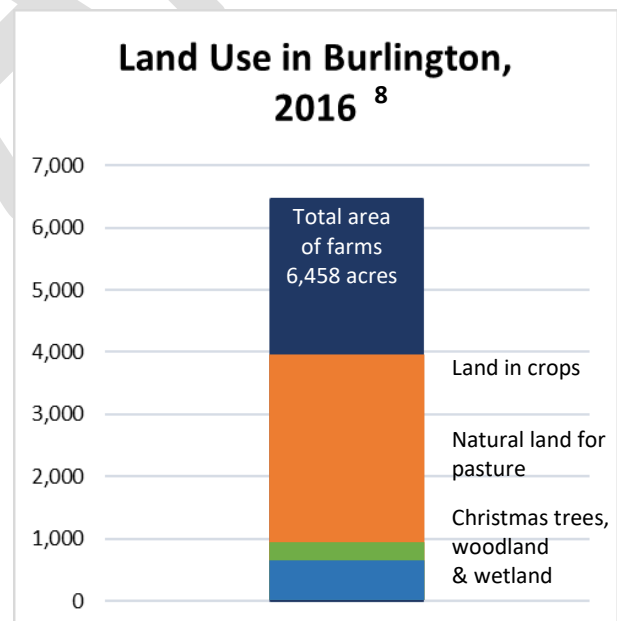
The graph on the following page breaks down the farm types in Halton Region as a whole and shows farm types specifically within the City of Burlington boundaries. Understanding the types of farms in Burlington will give insight on the opportunities

^{4,5} 2011 & 2016 Census of Agriculture and Strategic Policy Branch, OMAFRA

Farm Types in Halton Region⁶



Across South Central Ontario, land value per acre in 2018 was estimated to be \$16,535, with a 90% range from \$9,500 to \$24,000⁷. In 2018 Halton Region experienced a 6.2% increase in land prices compared to the rest of the province. Burlington land values range anywhere between \$500 per acre to \$16,000. Land values across the whole of Ontario are expected to continue their steady rise over the coming years. While it is expensive to farm in Halton there are also benefits to being close to the urban market. The value of land is driven by fewer, but more strategic investments undertaken by producers. Making the right investment decision is important for the continued success of farm operations.



Land use in Burlington has three main categories; those being crops, pastures and forests (including Christmas tree farms) and wetlands.

⁶ 2011 & 2016 Census of Agriculture and Strategic Policy Branch, OMAFRA

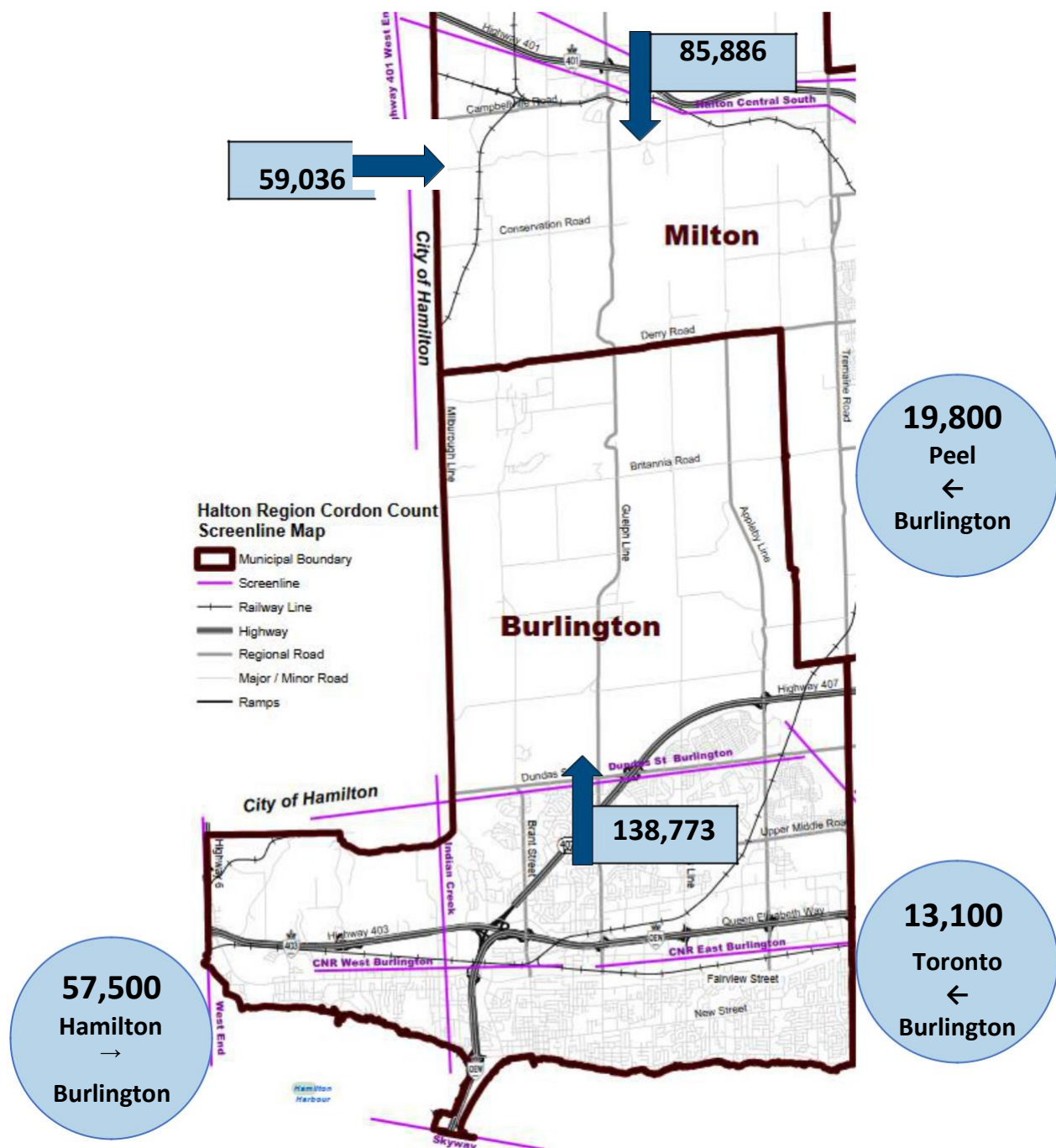
⁷ 2018 Farm Credit Canada Farmland Values Report

⁸ 2016 Census of Agriculture and Strategic Policy Branch, OMAFRA

Transportation Patterns

Burlington's location within the densely populated Greater Toronto Hamilton Area means that local businesses are ideally positioned to benefit from the high volumes of people traveling within the City and surrounding area. Peak travel times in the region are between 6am-9am on weekdays and varied on the weekends.

The daily counts from surrounding municipalities are showcased⁹.



⁹2016 Transportation Tomorrow Survey

10-Step Plan to Start Your Agritourism Venture

1

Know Your Market

Before making any time or infrastructure investments, it is important to know the market. From OMAFRA, the primary reasons for a farm visit include:

- To build and strengthen relationships
- To improve health and well-being
- To rest and relax
- To escape
- To learn

Visiting other agritourism operators in the area, conducting a survey on potential customers, and attending industry events are all ways to conduct an initial evaluation of the potential market.

Agriculture Guides and Resources

Conducting research to get a feel for the market is important before pursuing a new venture. From all levels of government, you can find support and resources that are provided to aid in your business success.

For great guides and market information please see:

Halton Region Simply Local

<https://www.halton.ca/The-Region/Explore-and-Enjoy-Halton/Simply-Local-Halton-s-Farms>

Initiative by the Region to promote the agriculture industry and connect Halton residents with their local farms. The website information is also available in an app that provides an interactive map where you can easily find pick-your-own farms, markets and other agriculture-related recreational activities. Can download the mobile app at: [OneHalton Regional App](#).

Greenbelt Fresh

<https://www.greenbeltfresh.ca/>

The Greenbelt is in the heart of the Greater Golden Horseshow and protects more than 2 million acres of land. The aim of it is to help consumers find local food grown in the Greenbelt. The Greenbelt Fresh makes it easy to find local farmers markets and offers “In-season” guides each month.

Ontario Agriculture System Portal

Provincial initiative recognizing the importance of accurate data about land use in the Golden Horseshoe. The database helps identify clusters of agriculture activity to promote economic growth in the sector. To access the resource visit: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/landuse/agsys-ggh.htm>

Market Statistics

BEDC is happy to assist in providing market statistics. The data centre can be found at <http://bedc.ca/data-centre/>, offering overall economic trends alongside demographic, workforce, and development figures. BEDC's economic development officers are also available to assist with more specific queries.

The Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance releases data on trends affecting the industry. Asset mapping and reports may assist in familiarizing yourself with a broader market. More information can be found at the end of this report.

Networking and Community Building

Prospective Business Owners may be interested in connecting with other local agricultural associations. Some examples in Halton are:

 Halton Region Federation of Agriculture	 HALTON SOIL AND CROP IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION	 ONTARIO FRUIT & VEGETABLE GROWERS' ASSOCIATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Highlights organizational news, farm success stories, member engagement events, county federation news and surveys➤ Member service information can be reached by contacting: henry.swierenga@ofa.on.ca	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Facilitating responsible economic management of soil, water, air and crops through development and communication of innovative farming practices➤ Provides agricultural news from the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ In association with the OFVGA, the Halton Wentworth Fruit and Vegetable growers Association gives members support and representation at all levels of government➤ For assistance in choosing a membership program contact: dhutton@ofvga.org

2

Identify Your Target Customers

- What kind of visitors do I want?
- What kind of visitors can my existing business cater to?
- What kind of visitors will I be able to grow my business to cater to?

Target customers are distinct groups of visitors that you hope to attract with targeted marketing strategies. Creating potential customer profiles can be one way to get in the right mindset and help clarify the target market.

Previous work cited that the typical agritourist characteristics are wide range. Visitors are likely to be middle-aged or older adults, with varying incomes and education levels.

Similar demographic analyses of agritourist profiles have found that most live within 65 kilometers of the farm visited, and that interest increases with household income.

Agritourism businesses typically target the young family demographic. This would include middle-aged adults and young children. However, some research suggests that older adults with children over the ages of 12 are most likely to participate in agritourism. Just outside of Burlington (Milton, ON) Springridge Farm offers a model example of an operation that successfully targets the family demographic. The farm offers direct sales, seasonal festivals, school tours, wagon rides, and other activities suitable for children of all ages.

Characteristic Attribute	Agritourists (n = 182)
Sex	
Male	46.7
Female	53.3
Age	
Young adults	17.0
Middle-aged adults	36.3
Older adults	46.7
Income	
Under \$40,000	34.6
\$40,000 to \$59,999	23.1
\$60,000 to \$79,999	13.5
\$80,000 to \$99,999	10.3
\$100,000 and over	18.6
Education	
High school or less	40.8
Post high school diploma	32.4
University degree	26.8

Lang Research Inc. Participating in Agro-Tourism Activities While on Trips of One or More Nights
University of Waterloo Agritourism Characteristics, 2010
Taken from the 2006 Canadian Travel Activities and Motivation Survey (TAMS) completed by 23,000 Canadians

3

Review Land Use Planning Framework

Burlington's agricultural area is subject to a variety of land use policies.

The staff at BEDC recommend making reference to the different land use policies including:

- Halton Agricultural Land Base
- Conservation Halton
- Greenbelt Plan
- Niagara Escarpment Commission

The applicable policies vary depending on the location.

Arrange to speak with planning staff from the Department of City Building to understand how various policies may apply. Contact information is located at the end of this document.

Working with staff from the Department of City Building is an integral for developing an agritourism business. The **Burlington Planning Process** has 10 steps:

1. Pre-consultation meeting
2. Pre-Application Consultation Meeting hosted by property owner/developer
3. Development application is submitted
4. Notification to neighboring property owners
5. Circulation of application to agencies
6. Preparation of information report for members of City Council
7. Statutory public meeting
8. Preparation of recommendation report to approve, modify or refuse the development application
9. Recommendation report to Planning and Development Committee and City Council decision
10. Notice of Council decision/appeal period

More details can be found at:

<https://www.burlington.ca/en/services-for-you/burlington-planning-process.asp>

4

Review Burlington's Tax Policies

The impact of taxation depends on whether the proposed use is agricultural-related, or an on-farm diversified use.

Knowing the distinction is important for your tax purposes:

- Agricultural-related use → local apples being used to make cider
- On-farm diversified use → imported apples (brought in from another farm elsewhere) sourced to make cider

Further guidelines are at:

<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/landuse/permitteduses.htm>

Generally, should a farm conduct a value-added activity on existing farmland, the buildings used for such operations will be subject to commercial or industrial tax rates. This may be the case even when the value-added activities relate directly to activities that make the food market ready. Burlington addresses this through subclasses for small scale-on farm diversified use, however the reduced rate still leads to a higher tax rate when compared to an agricultural use. The specific tax rate applied will vary depending on the nature of the agritourism operation.

5

Assess Your Existing Assets

Many farm operators have potential tourism assets already. How can you use your existing assets to engage the public – whether through workshops or outdoor activities such as mazes, tastings, or photo opportunities. A strong plan for developing an agritourism business can help realize this potential by focusing on the physical resources and owner strengths that are already present.

For those not currently operating a farm in Burlington, selecting a site can be the most challenging step. BEDC can assist in this regard, connecting prospective businesses to opportunities within the city.

An additional resource can be found at Farmlink.net. FarmLINK is a national land listing and linking tool that connects those looking for land to rent, lease, or buy, on farm employment, business partnerships in agriculture, or farm succession arrangements with landowners and retiring farmers who have farmland or other on farm opportunities.

What does my business provide and what needs does it fill?

Who are the potential customers for my product?

How will I reach my potential customers?

A business plan is an important step for any successful agritourism operation. It helps set realistic goals, secure funding, measure success, clarify operational requirements and establish reasonable financial forecast. The plan should tie together the previous steps into a cohesive strategy.

Securing finance is related to the strength of the business plan – having demonstrated your understanding of every aspect of your business and the ability to generate profit is important for both funding applications and investors.

Some of the things you should explain in your plan include:

- Is it a new business venture, a purchase of an existing business or the expansion of an existing business?
- The industry sector your business is in
- The uniqueness of your product or service
- The advantages that your business has over your competition
- The main objectives of your business
- Market projections for the future of the business
- Number of visitors and estimated revenues
- Your legal business structure (sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation)

Halton Region Small Business Center

The resource offered by the Region gives new small business owners and existing businesses owners the guidance they need to take their business to the next level. Halton Region does a great job at providing programs and training to help business owners explore new ideas and become successful.

All information can be found at:

- <https://www.halton.ca/For-Business/Halton-Region-Small-Business-Centre>

Additional links on how to prepare a business plan can be found at:

- <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/agbusdev.html>
- https://www.halton.ca/getmedia/a3e45954-f528-490e-9fb8-291b5b3e0caa/LPS-Business_Plan_template.aspx

7

Create a Financial Plan

- How much financing do I need?
- What costs do I need financing for?
- Where will I get the financial resources to start my business?

Developing a sound financial plan is key to ensuring that your agribusiness contributes positively to the farm's bottom line. Detailed financial statements should include:

- startup budget
- two-year projected cash flow and two-year projected income

In addition to start-up and construction expenses, costs can include signage, advertising, finding and training staff.

To help give you an idea of costs and forecasting cash flow for your business, Halton Region offers a template toolbox online at:

https://www.halton.ca/getmedia/57162cc1-ac59-4d6b-ad46-34e3298c9b0b/LPS-StartupCost_CashFlow_BalanceSheet.aspx

The following resources can assist in determining financing:

OMAFRA

The Farm Business Decision Calculator offers specific tools to help you create a budget, forecast harvest revenues or plan for expansion. The source is detailed and offers information based on farm type. More information can be found at:

<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/downtown.htm>

Fair Finance Fund

The Fair Finance Fund targets Ontario's local food and farm social enterprises that support local food systems and economies.

More information can be found at:

<https://fairfinancefund.org/loans>

Federal Grants, Subsidies and Contributions for Agriculture

AgPal can be used to search for programs and resources to help with business management, farming innovation and community support. Farm Credit Canada (FCC) Loan Program offers financing from the federal level.

More information can be found at: <http://www.cbo-eco.ca>.

Marketing is the number one problem faced by agritourism operators. Developing a strong marketing plan from the onset of a new agritourism operation is an essential part of ensuring success.

- Advertising- message, medium, and target audience
 - Focus on two or three strong selling points and additional information about your products and services. Keep your message simple.
 - Carefully consider all forms of media and focus on those that fit your budget, brand and can reach your target audience.
 - Which market segments you wish to target will determine the type of advertising and the best media placement
 - A solid marketing plan incorporates both online and offline tactics and leverages strategic alliances with other businesses and community organizations. A good marketing plan also considers cost/budget and should include a way of measuring its success (i.e. key performance indicators (KPIs) and return on investments (ROI))
- Relationship marketing- local customers are the easiest way to develop a solid, loyal customer base

The Halton Region Small Business Centre (HRSBC)

HRSBC is a free, confidential and self-directed support service and hub of local business startup resources. HRSBC offers a comprehensive resource centre that includes tools, training and expertise for small businesses in Halton. The Consultant on Site Program connects business owners and entrepreneurs with a business consultant at one of four locations across Halton, providing help with research, marketing plans, government regulations or any other questions you have about your business. One-hour consultations are provided at no cost. HRSBC also provides an ongoing series of seminars that include topics like sales and marketing, and business to business networking opportunities. HRSBC also works in partnership with local and provincial tourism organizations to provide training and workshops for Halton businesses to encourage and support agritourism development.

Visit www.halton.ca/smallbusiness for more information.

9

Launch Agritourism Business

It's time to launch your agritourism business!

Starting small will allow you to manage risk effectively and grow into areas that show the most promise. Burlington's Department of City Building, BEDC, the Halton Region Small Business Centre, and other external resources are available to provide support and guidance along each step of the way.

10

Monitor Your Business

Now that your agritourism business is up and running it is important to ensure it is successful. Monitoring your business requires having proper management and keeping a pulse on operations and financials.

Even after a successful launch, resources are available to help you maintain success for the future of your business. Having a good understanding of your ventures financials and position requires continuous monitoring.

The Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Program offers workshops to help in running an agritourism business.

- Grow Your Farm Profits
 - A great resource to you if you need guidance in how to do self-assessments offered in a two-day workshop
 - GYFP helps agriculture businesses improve their processes by combining self-assessment and action plan development with a range of cost-share funding through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership
 - Information about registering for an in-person or online workshop can be found at:
https://www.ontariosoilcrop.org/oscia-programs/workshops-webinars/gyfp-workshop/?tribe_paged=1&tribe_event_display=list&tribe-bar-search=GYFP

Resources to Use

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) is recommended to be your first point of research, specific links of interest are:

- Developing an Agri-Tourism Operation in Ontario
<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/facts/16-029.htm>
- Direct Farm Marketing Business Resources
<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/directfarmmkt/index.html>
- Agricultural Business Management
<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/agbusdev.html>

Farm Management Canada

- Cultivating Agritourism: Tools & Techniques for Building Success
<http://fmc-gac.com/publications/cultivating-agritourism-tools-techniques-building-success/>

Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance

- Golden Horseshoe Agriculture Research
<http://www.foodandfarming.ca/research/>

Ontario Farm Fresh Marketing Association (OFFMA)

- <http://ontariofarmfresh.com/about-us/>

Farmers' Markets Ontario

- <http://farmersmarketsontario.com/market-resources/>

Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance

- Grow Food Tourism
<https://www.growfoodtourism.com/about>

British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture

- Farm Diversification Through Agri-Tourism
https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/agriculture-and-seafood/farm-management/farm-business-management/business-planning-guides/agritourism_guide_2017.pdf

Burlington Economic Development Corporation Business Directory

- <http://bedc.ca/burlington-business-director>

Detailed Maps

Speaking with planning staff from the Department of City Building is the most effective way to determine zoning requirements and allowances. For an introductory overview however, the following maps may also be useful.

For an overview of which municipal zoning policies apply to your property:

City of Burlington Zoning

<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?appid=6e771e2593c043c3952c3cd324784dfd&extent=-8899194.8171%2C5376143.5095%2C-8898392.2283%2C5376540.6238%2C102100>

To determine whether your property is impacted by Conservation Halton's guidelines and restrictions, refer to the Planning & Permits map:

Conservation Halton

<https://conservationhalton-camaps.opendata.arcgis.com/pages/web-maps>

To understand which Official Plan policies may apply to a certain location, and to view the boundaries of the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area and the Greenbelt Plan Area in Burlington, refer to Schedules B and C of the Burlington Official Plan:

Official Plan Schedules

<https://www.burlington.ca/en/services-for-you/Official-Plan.asp>

Contact Information

To discuss land use planning, policies and process, contact:

Kelly Cook, Planner II, Department of City Building

905-335-7600 Ext. 7641 | kelly.cook@burlington.ca

To discuss business plans, site selection, or statistical queries, contact:

Andrew Elliston, Economic Development Officer

905-332-9415 Ext. 7248 | andrew.elliston@burlington.ca

To access small business tools, training and expertise resources, contact:

Halton Region Small Business Centre

905-825-6000 Ext. 7900 | smallbusiness@halton.ca



SUBJECT: Advisory Committee Review

TO: Committee of the Whole

FROM: Clerks Department

Report Number: CL-15-19

Wards Affected: All

File Numbers: 130-02

Date to Committee: November 4, 2019

Date to Council: November 18, 2019

Recommendation:

Approve the proposed Burlington Committee Structure as outlined in Appendix A to clerks department report CL-15-19; and

Direct the City Clerk to prepare a new corporate policy for the appointment of residents to committees following Council's approval of the new Burlington Committee Structure and report back to the December Committee of the Whole meeting; and

Direct the Chief Financial Officer to consolidate all current advisory committee cost centre budgets into one budget; and

Direct the City Clerk to establish a program where committees receive funding by submitting budget requests through Committee Clerks for special events and initiatives each year that align with committee workplans; and

Direct the City Clerk to draft an updated term of reference template for each committee in the proposed Burlington Committee Structure and report back to the Corporate Services, Strategy, Risk & Accountability Committee with membership appointments in January 2020; and

Direct the City Clerk to use a civic lottery approach for the recruitment of members to committees as outlined in CL-15-19; and

Sunset the existing Charter Action Team (ChAT) and appoint the team's current members to the proposed Vision to Focus Steering Committee; and

Sunset the existing Burlington's Best Committee; and

Direct the City Clerk to investigate best practices for resident involvement in the selection of Burlington's Best award recipients as outlined in CL-15-19 and report back in January 2020 with options.

Purpose:

An Engaging City

- Good Governance
-

Background and Discussion:

The City of Burlington currently has nine Council appointed advisory committees (ACs) that provide advice to Council on various topics. Historically, with every term of Council, a review has been completed to determine how effectively committees are meeting their mandate and if the committee is functioning well.

ACs are established by Council when deemed necessary and they operate within a mandate. They have an ongoing, formal structure that typically includes agendas, minutes and prescribed meeting structures. AC mandates also include community outreach to ensure they are collectively representing the residents of Burlington and are regularly providing advice to Council.

Each committee has a membership of between seven and fifteen members, most meet on a monthly basis, and some ACs have additional volunteers that are non-voting members who assist with initiatives. Applicants for ACs must be residents of Burlington, or owners or tenants of land in the municipality. Current practice requires applicants to be interviewed by an interview committee made up of one member of Council, the chair or vice chair of the committee and a committee clerk or staff member.

In December of 2018 Council approved Mayor's Office report MO-01-18 and directed staff as follows:

Approve the appointments to boards and committees contained in mayor's office report MO-01-18; and

Increase the composition of elected representatives to the Conservation Halton Board from 1 out of 4, to 2 out of 4, with the remaining two being citizen appointees, subject to an interview process at the beginning of each term of council; and

Decrease the composition of elected representatives on the Burlington Economic Development Corporation from 3 to 2; and

Establish a Waterfront Citizens Advisory Committee, and direct staff to report back with proposed terms of reference by Q2 2019; and

Establish a stand alone Transit Advisory Committee, and direct staff to report back with proposed terms of reference by Q2 2019, including cooperation between this committee, the Cycling Advisory Committee and the Integrated Transportation Advisory Committee; and

Establish the Millennial Advisory Committee as a permanent citizen advisory committee of council, and direct staff to consult with members and report back with proposed terms of reference by Q2 2019; and

Decrease the council appointees on the Downtown Parking Committee from two to one; and

Conduct an overall review of citizen advisory committees, including consultation with the public and citizen advisory committee members, and report back to council with recommendations and options for any changes to improve effectiveness by Q2 2019; and

Direct the City Clerk to report back through the overall review of citizen advisory committees to determine the feasibility of establishing a youth advisory committee to include the age demographic of 16-24 years of age; and

As part of the consultation with members of the Millennial Advisory Committee, consider a name change to ensure that the age demographic of 25-40 will continue to be represented.

Removal of the term “citizen”

It should be noted that the term “citizen” is not being referenced throughout this report and in the new committee structure. In a recent city hall tour of ESL (English as a second language) adult newcomers, they shared that the term “citizen” lead them to believe that only Canadian citizens could participate in engagement opportunities and on committees (similar to voting rights). To be inclusive, it was suggested by the ESL newcomers to remove the term “citizen”.

Strategy/process

The review process of ACs was comprehensive and included multiple surveys, community and staff consultation and striking an Advisory Committee Review Working Team (Working Team), including resident representatives from each of the six wards some of whom are current AC members, past members and a current member of ChAT. The Working Team reviewed the data collected and formed recommendations to present as part of this report. The effort behind this process was a true collaboration between staff and the community from start to finish. This would not have been possible if not for resident participation.

The review considered both governance issues (e.g., roles and responsibilities) as well as operational matters (e.g., selection of members, term length, mandate) of committees.

During the review, the Working Team recognized that local government is the closest government to the residents it serves and where resident involvement can have the greatest impact.

Specifically, the review was designed to:

- clarify the roles and responsibilities of members of ACs including members, staff and Council representatives; and
- review practices for recruiting members to ACs, terms of membership and the link to the community; and
- consider alternative options such as task forces, resident panels, ward groups, surveys or other types of mechanisms for gathering community advice on policy and program matters.

The recommendations and research in this document outline the recommendations resulting from the AC review. It also presents a brief outline of the implementation process for committee restructuring and next steps.

Engagement and Feedback

Many tools were used to inform the public about the review and to raise awareness about engagement opportunities to solicit a wide range of feedback. These included:

- public survey on GetInvolvedBurlington.ca
- existing advisory committee member survey on GetInvolvedBurlington.ca
- City of Burlington staff survey for those that support the various advisory committees
- one Action Lab session with city staff
- 3 Action Lab sessions with residents
- written correspondence
- open feedback on GetInvolvedBurlington.ca
- one on one meetings with various residents
- one on one meetings with members of Council
- social media posts
- call for expressions of interest to over 100 residents that attended the Action Labs to participate on a review working team
- establishing an Advisory Committee Review Working Team September – October 2019

In addition to action labs focused on the review of ACs, the city conducted a series of surveys to gather feedback from a broader set of residents and stakeholders. Surveys were shared with the general public (385 respondents), city staff (24 respondents), existing AC members (43 respondents), as well as one on one meetings with Council.

The full summary of action lab feedback can be viewed at:

https://www.getinvolvedburlington.ca/actionlabs/news_feed/this-is-what-we-heard-feedback-from-the-3-citizen-action-labs.

The following is a combined summary of the major themes which arose from the action labs and survey responses and which inform the recommendations contained within this report.

Clarity of Mandates and Roles

The mandates and terms of reference are not always clear – the role of ACs needs to be specific and actionable.

Also, ACs are not operational committees nor are they advocacy groups; however, sometimes they veer into these areas which can cause confusion.

Staff responses to the survey indicated confusion over the role of ACs, specifically how and when to leverage such groups to inform city projects and initiatives, and how AC recommendations should be considered in comparison to general public input.

Staff in many departments are assigned as staff liaisons on ACs, but in many cases are challenged to bring material on a monthly basis for committees to review and feel they have an obligation to bring material monthly. Responses also indicated the perception that there is overlap between AC mandates and that the work of ACs may reach beyond their intended scope from time to time.

These responses reveal a need for clear and actionable mandates when drafting terms of reference, as well as clarity on the role of staff liaisons and continued communications around the expectations of both AC members and city staff.

In addition, the level of engagement must be clear. It is recommended that the annual orientation for committee members include an overview of the full range of engagement tools used by the organization to provide a clear understanding about the process of decision making at the city.

Providing actionable mandates for committees, with workplan targets and deadlines around reporting to standing committees will assist in providing clear purpose for each committee.

Representation and Diversity

A major theme across all survey respondents was that advice and recommendations developed through ACs should consider diverse views that are representative of the whole city and the diversity of its residents. It was acknowledged that current committees and engagements are challenged to solicit views from segments of the population such as youth, women, visible minorities, and other under-represented groups.

There was also broad agreement that the recruitment process should better consider perceived conflicts of interest and avoid real conflicts of interest. Existing AC members and city staff also commented that the role of councillors on ACs should be to provide context to issues and guidance on how best to communicate recommendations back to Council, rather than to influence decision making.

Better enforcement of term limits for AC members and refreshing membership of ACs on a regular basis was indicated by staff as another way to provide more residents with the opportunity to participate. It is recommended to reduce membership term limits from the current 3-year term to a 2-year term to keep the membership renewed.

Recruitment and Awareness

The surveys and action lab feedback provided clear insight into the need for a more transparent and impartial recruitment and selection process of volunteers. Overall, the comments reflect the desire to ensure that committees are not driven by personal, political or professional agendas, but instead truly represent the views of all residents of Burlington.

Survey responses also revealed that more could be done to improve awareness of ACs and other engagement options for residents. Over 40% of public respondents indicated they did not know of or were unsure about ACs, and over 50% did not know how to apply to become an AC member. These responses represent missed opportunities for public involvement and collaboration that would greatly benefit the city.

Staff responses to the survey and action labs indicated a lack of awareness of ACs. Of the staff responses, almost 40% indicated they had not reached out to an AC for assistance with a project or initiative. To improve on this, the “Public Engagement Matters” section of the standing committee staff report template will be updated to include information for report writers about resident committees to provide awareness of the various committees and to prompt staff to engage with committees.

Civic Lotteries

The Working Group researched civic lotteries as a means of recruiting and appointing residents to committees and task forces. Using a civic lottery approach for recruitment would replace interviews by randomly selecting applicants for committees while ensuring the composition of committees still includes any specific requirements set out in the terms of reference (e.g. the Accessibility Advisory Committee requires some members to have a disability). In using this method,

- residents are made aware of the committees with current vacancies, along with the number of vacancies on each committee;
- residents complete an application form indicating a first and second choice of committee they are interested in;

- Clerks department staff review applications to ensure they meet eligibility requirements;
- applicants are sorted by terms of reference requirements for each committee; and
- applicant names would go into a “hat” and successful members would be randomly selected.

This recruitment method would ensure an impartial and fair balance of residents from all demographics across the city are selected for committees.

Civic lotteries are used around the world by all levels of government and have proved successful for short-term task forces and for advising on more complex issues such as changes to a national constitution. Appendix C “Civic Lotteries as a Method of Advisory Committee Selection” provides additional details and examples of civic lottery use around the world.

The Working Group recommends the use of civic lotteries for the 2020 recruitment process. In order to solicit a random selection of residents across the city and to attract people who may be unaware of ACs, the Working Group also recommends that the city mail out invitations to several thousand residents across the city. This is a typical method of recruitment for civic lotteries. It increases awareness about ACs in the community and will elicit applicants who have not volunteered with the city previously.

By sending out a letter of invite via the mail as well as using our traditional recruitment methods (newspaper, social media, Council newsletters, emails, City Talk, GetInvolvedBurlington.ca, etc.), and the newly purchased volunteer management software, Better Impact, there are multiple opportunities to attract new volunteers to committees.

The Better Impact volunteer management software will help to ensure consistency and accountability throughout the corporation. The current workplan is to launch the software in late 2019 or early 2020 and a Volunteer Action Team has been working to establish the volunteer management program, which includes various criteria such as the volunteer application forms, screening processes, the orientation and training process and policies.

Information Sharing, Transparency and Committee Reporting

Survey responses of existing AC members and city staff revealed that the city could do more in terms of proactively sharing information with ACs to ensure timely and impactful development of recommendations, and that more should be communicated from the city on what has been done with recommendations that have been provided.

The survey responses clearly indicated a desire from the public for the city to engage earlier in its deliberation processes in order to foster collaboration, co-development, and buy-in with residents rather than asking residents to comment on fully developed recommendations where the public may perceive there is little opportunity for their feedback to be incorporated.

There is also a lack of awareness by advisory committee members around how and when they are to be reporting to standing committees. There is a need to allow additional reporting depending on the situation – budget, policy, etc. and a need to have built-in systems for reporting that are regular and create opportunities to share information across committees, departments and with the public. It is being recommended that semi-annual reporting be implemented so committees are reporting and providing resident advice to their respective department and standing committee on the workplan for the year ahead and on the accomplishments of the past year.

Also, it is challenging for members of Council who are not on certain ACs to be kept informed about the activity of all ACs without regular reporting mechanisms in place. Many municipalities include AC minutes on standing committee agendas for approval as a way of informing all members of Council and the public of the committee's activities. It is recommended that AC minutes be included in Council Information Packages which would also formally approve them through City Council meetings, thus increasing awareness of AC activities for Council and the community.

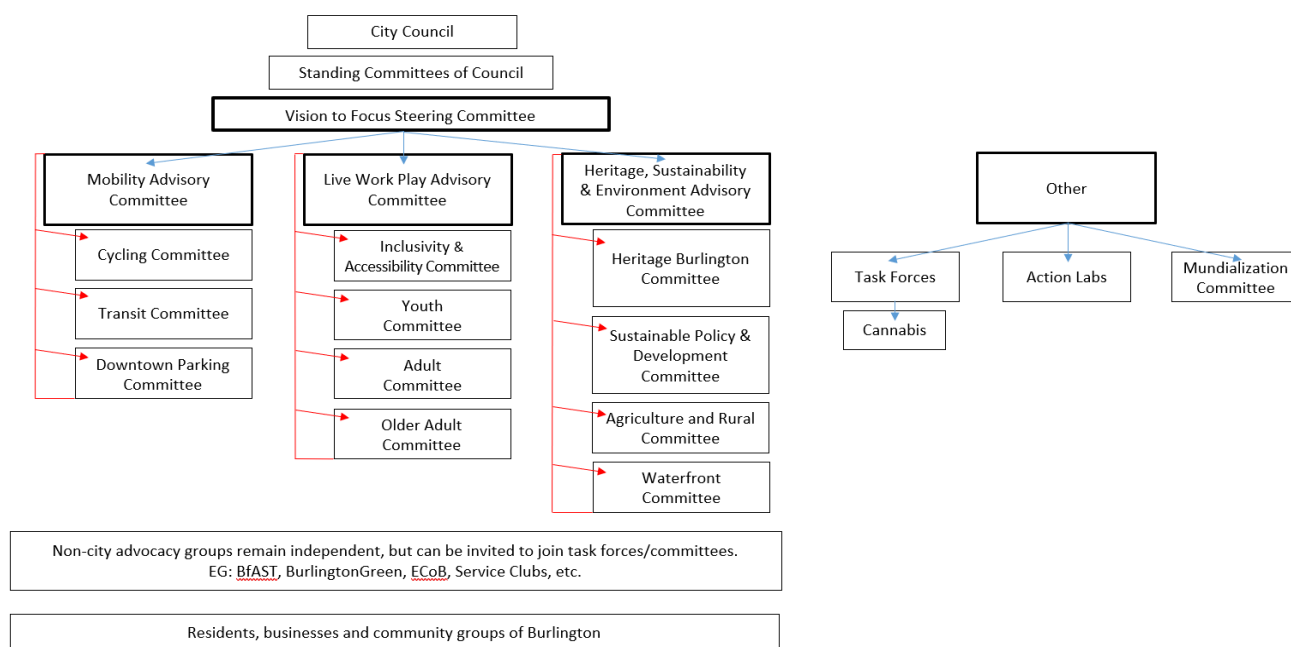
Value of Advisory Committees and Continued Engagement

Across all stakeholder surveys, there was acknowledgement of the value of ACs and broad support for the city to continue using ACs to inform city initiatives, programs, policies, and any other matters of interest. However, there was also acknowledgement that improvements can and should be made to the functioning of ACs and there was agreement in a significant majority of respondents across all groups that the city should consider including other methods of getting resident advice in addition to the current ACs.

Proposed Burlington Committee Structure

The proposed Burlington Committee Structure (below and attached as Appendix A) adjusts some of the functions and responsibilities of existing committees, effectively improving overall functionality through the implementation of a more collaborative approach. As shown below, this new approach includes three advisory committees, each with several working committees to provide feedback and insight on specific areas, as well as the opportunity to establish issue specific task forces on an as needed basis.

Proposed Committee Structure



The new structure also considers other volunteer-based groups in our community that often provide feedback to Council but are not necessarily connected to advisory committees (e.g. BurlingtonGreen, Burlington For Accessible Sustainable Transit and Engaged Citizens of Burlington). These groups have a great deal of connection to the community and can assist in gathering outreach by partnering with existing committees. Staff, committees and task forces are encouraged to engage with external groups when considering community outreach and building consultation plans.

The proposed committee structure is organized to align with the 2018-2022 Vision to Focus plan where not only are Council and staff working towards common objectives, the committees will also be aligned with the Vision to Focus plan and working towards the same vision.

Vision to Focus Steering Committee

The establishment of a Vision to Focus Steering Committee as an umbrella group to all committees will ensure everyone is working collaboratively on their mandates, and jointly providing outreach and engagement in the community. The composition of the steering committee would include the chairs of the three advisory committees plus one additional member of each advisory committee, and four resident representatives. It is proposed that the existing four members of ChAT be appointed to fill the resident positions and when membership terms for the ChAT representatives come to an end, new resident representatives would be selected.

The community consultation and review of ACs identified confusion about the difference between ChAT and ACs. Given that one of ChAT's roles is to provide advice to ACs

related to public engagement and in order to better align ChAT with ACs, to foster collaboration and to work towards building stronger resident engagement, it is recommended that the four resident members of ChAT be appointed to the proposed Vision to Focus Steering Committee, which will be the umbrella group for all advisory committees, and that ChAT be sunset.

In April of 2013, the city adopted the Burlington Community Engagement Charter. The charter was established by residents and supported by staff. Shortly after, the General Manager of Community Services assigned a task force of residents who had been involved in developing the Engagement Charter, as well as city staff responsible for coordinating engagement activities in the city to form ChAT (Charter Action Team). The team's role is to ensure that community engagement is part of everyday practice at the City of Burlington. In April of 2014, City Council received the Charter Action Plan developed by ChAT. The terms of reference for this team was revised in 2016 and includes a mandate to embed engagement into everyday practice at the City of Burlington (see Appendix B for ChAT Terms of Reference).

Since that time, city staff have done extensive training on engagement with many staff certified in the IAP2 model. In essence, ChAT has achieved their mandate and engagement practices are part of everyday business in Burlington.

Accessibility & Inclusivity Committee

The City of Burlington currently has an Inclusivity Advisory Committee and an Accessibility Advisory Committee. Every municipality with 10,000 people or more must establish an accessibility advisory committee as per the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA). The majority of the municipal accessibility advisory committee members must be people with disabilities. Accessibility committees give advice to municipal councils to help them carry out their responsibilities under the AODA and also provide advice related to site plans and standards.

The proposed committee structure recommends that the Inclusivity and Accessibility Committees be combined as they often have an overlapping lens (e.g. inclusive and accessible events, gender-neutral and accessible washrooms, etc.). The current mandate for Inclusivity is internal-facing and focuses on city policies, programs and services. It is recommended that when both Inclusivity and Accessibility are combined, they can jointly enhance awareness and provide education in the community, which is currently part of the Accessibility Committee's mandate.

As both committees are currently at full complement it is recommended that all members collectively become one working committee and as terms come to an end, the new terms of reference be adhered to.

Mobility Advisory Committee

The proposed committee structure changes the current Integrated Transportation Advisory Committee (ITAC) into the Mobility Advisory Committee and would also include members from the Cycling Committee, Downtown Parking Committee and new Transit Committee. This new approach provides a broader perspective of active transportation including human-powered methods of transportation such as walking, cycling, rollerblading and wheelchairs. Consideration should be given when drafting the terms of reference for the Mobility Advisory Committee to invite external community stakeholders to participate on the committee such as the Burlington for Accessible Sustainable Transit and Burlington Road Safety Committee.

Heritage, Sustainability & Environment Advisory Committee

Under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, municipal councils are required to have a Heritage Advisory Committee to consult on matters around heritage property designation. The proposed committee structure recommends combining the Heritage Advisory Committee and Sustainable Development Advisory Committee as both have a similar focus on planning and development matters. Currently, both committees are at full complement and it is recommended that all members collectively become one working committee. As membership terms come to an end, the new terms of reference would be adhered to.

Youth, Adult and Older Adult Committees

Council's December 2018 motion directed staff to investigate establishing a youth committee and to consider a name change for the Millennial Advisory Committee. The proposed committee structure includes three working committees to represent specific demographics in the community: a Youth Working Committee for those 16 - 24 years of age, an Adult Working Committee for those 25 - 54 years of age (previously the Mayor's Millennial Advisory Committee), and an Older Adult Working Committee for those 55 plus (previously called the Seniors' Advisory Committee).

Staff Resources on Committees

The proposed committee structure does include some changes to support and will involve additional staff resources from various departments.

It is recommended that the Vision to Focus Steering Committee include a Council representative, a committee clerk and staff liaisons (which would be determined as the terms of reference are created). The Corporate Public Involvement Consultant position from the City Manager's office would also be included as a staff liaison on the steering committee as the lead for engagement.

The three advisory committees would see no changes to resources and would continue to have one or more staff liaisons, a Council representative and a committee clerk.

The working committees that support the three advisory committees would receive support from a staff liaison and minimal administrative support from the Clerks department, such as posting of agendas and minutes, coordination with staff for any communication needs, etc. Appointments of members of Council to the current committees should remain in place and the Mayor may propose any changes to existing committees for new appointments.

Task forces may be established by staff or a member of Council but are to be resourced by department staff and/or Council staff as required. Task forces are project based and should be in place for a short period of time.

Each of the committee types, along with task forces, have distinct roles and principles. The following table clarifies these roles and mentions key principles associated with each.

Type	Role	Principle
Steering Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides opinions and advice on matters related to Vision to Focus within defined mandate Provides advice to committees on engagement Ensures collaboration amongst all committees Reports semi-annually to standing committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Composition to include chairs of advisory committees plus one additional advisory committee member and four resident members (initially ChAT members will fill these positions until their membership terms end) Designated Council member Terms of reference Agendas and minutes Staff liaison(s) Corporate Public Involvement Consultant Committee Clerk
Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides advice and opinions on topics or issues within its defined mandate Reports semi-annually to standing committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Composition to include members from each working committee in its group, as well as members of the public Designated Council member Terms of reference Agendas and minutes Staff liaison Committee Clerk

Working Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides resident views on matters relevant to the committee's mandate and the umbrella Advisory Committee's mandate • Provides information, receives or provides feedback representing the community at large 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports monthly to umbrella Advisory Committee • Designated Council member • Terms of reference • Agendas and minutes • Staff Liaison
Task Force	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides resident views on a defined topic/issue • Considers information, receives and provides feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defined timeline established prior to recruitment • May recommend series of items for implementation • Does not require a Council representative • Does not require Council approval or appointment by Council • Reports directly to staff department or standing committee
Action Labs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides an opportunity for large scale engagement and solution-based brainstorming • Considers information and provides feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composition to include members of the public and staff • Staff can organize Action Labs based on the need for feedback from the community to generate new ideas and gain insight on solutions using Innovation in a Box tools • Does not require a Council representative • Does not require Council approval or appointment by Council

Action Labs

The City of Burlington piloted the use of action labs as part of the AC review and it's a new concept to the engagement and innovation catalogue for our organization.

The action lab concept and how it was used in Burlington for this review for ACs was shared by facilitator Rick Boersma at the Association of Municipal Clerks and Treasurers

of Ontario Conference in June of 2019 as a case study of engagement with municipal innovation. The city has held additional action labs on the Private Tree Bylaw and Official Plan and is in the process of planning additional labs.

The tools used to run action labs are taught by staff to staff through corporate training and, to date, over 140 staff have received the training. Continued training to staff and the community will assist with plans to continue to grow this concept. This is another tool that can be used get the community involved and assist the city in problem solving, generating new ideas and brainstorming solutions with staff.

Action labs has been added to the proposed committee structure as another option for engaging with the community.

Burlington's Best Committee (Civic Recognition Awards)

In 2019, Council requested that the current civic recognition event, Burlington's Best, be broadened to attract more volunteers across the city and not to focus on a select few. This event program will be restructured and planned for late in 2020 to consider new categories, a broader attraction of volunteers, and a revised nomination and selection process.

The Working Team recommends that the Burlington's Best Committee be sunset, and that either:

- a task force be struck yearly with new residents selected through civic lottery to review nominations and select award recipients; or
- an alternative method be used to review nominations and select award recipients ensuring that a new group of residents are doing this work each year and are selected through civic lottery.

The recommendation in this report directs the City Clerk to investigate best practices for selecting award recipients while still utilizing residents to do this. As an example of an alternative method, one award program utilizes resident volunteers to select award recipients through an online portal. The volunteers do not meet each other; a certain number of volunteers are provided with all nominations in a category, along with guidelines and a matrix to follow; each volunteer follows the matrix and submits their individual recommendations electronically; the electronic program tallies the matrix and generates the winners based on the recommendations from each volunteer reviewing that category.

The Working Team considered the idea of having category sponsors choose the award recipients and were **not** in favour of this idea. Sponsors are required to contribute money in order to be a sponsor and they would presumably have an interest in the category they were sponsoring. The Working Team felt there was a bias with this and that the better approach would be to have randomly selected residents doing this work. Having a new

team of resident volunteers doing this work each year provides additional awareness about the awards and allows a larger number of residents to get involved.

Planning and logistics for the annual award event has been the responsibility of the Clerks department and it is recommended that a staff team coordinate future events. The team would consist of staff from the Clerks department, Special Events office, and the City Manager's office (communications, engagement and volunteer management staff).

Future events should also include a volunteer open house component where ACs and local non-profit organizations would be able to recruit members and share new initiatives prior to the start of the awards event.

Public Appointment Policy

A Public Appointment Policy will be prepared following approval of the new committee structure and will replace the city's current corporate policy "Appointment to Boards and Recruitment of Citizens for Committees".

The new policy will outline the roles and principles of the steering committee, advisory committees, working committees, task force and action labs.

The Public Appointment Policy will propose the following changes:

- membership terms reduce from 3-year to 2-year appointments;
- Members can serve for a maximum of 4 years on a committee (currently members can serve two 3-year terms);
- an annual review of committee Terms of Reference;
- semi-annual reports to standing committees (report at the beginning of the year on accomplishments of the past year and report at the end of the year on next year's objectives);
- a new Spokesperson role on committees;
- increased training for members to clarify roles and expectations; and
- recruitment through civic lottery.

The policy would also sunset all committees at the end of June in an election year. This practice is followed by many municipalities to decrease the potential of political discussion or situations at meetings. Also, city staff that support committees and a number of advisory committee members are involved in the election in a variety of roles, including working on campaigns or being registered candidates in the election. Sunsetting will allow Clerks department staff to re-evaluate all committees with the new term of Council.

Research

Key findings from other municipalities

Comparative research involved a review of best practices in Canadian cities including Guelph, Ottawa, Toronto, Saanich and St. John's as well as a review of websites and current advisory committee protocols in Kelowna, Victoria, Fort Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Guelph, London, Calgary and Waterloo.

Research into other municipalities suggested the following:

- cities are moving toward developing “public appointment policies,” with the general trend being to reduce the number of advisory committees and use other engagement tools;
- advisory committees report to standing committees of council and not directly to Council;
- it is typical for public members to chair committees, and in some instances, there is no Council participation (i.e. residents take the lead with staff support);
- governance reviews are in place with term limits, standardized recruitment and reporting processes;
- the organization of information presented to the public (i.e. websites, forms and resources) is very important in role clarification, recruiting and general awareness;
- the use of social media is starting to become a “game changer” in the advisory committee engagement process;
- once an advisory committee is established, they tend to not have an end point and it can be difficult to sunset;
- utilization of other engagement processes, e.g. task forces and neighborhood associations are popular.

Next Steps

Upon the approval of this report, a new Public Appointment Policy will be prepared for the December Committee of the Whole meeting. Also, new terms of reference will be developed for all committees and will be presented to the Corporate Services, Strategy, Risk & Accountability Committee in January of 2020. Recruitment for committees will also be undertaken for committee vacancies.

Financial Matters:

The report recommends consolidation of all AC budgets with committees submitting funding requests through their committee clerks based on approved workplans.

The exception to this is the following:

- grant funding secured by the current Heritage Burlington Advisory Committee related to recommendations approved by Council that Heritage Burlington has set out in their workplan;
- Mundialization Committee receives additional funding based on the City of Burlington's twinning relationships and activities that the committee undertakes on behalf of the city; and
- Civic Recognition (formerly Burlington's Best) event receives sponsorship funding for various categories and this will continue to keep the event successful.

Other Resource Impacts

As identified in this report, the proposed committee structure establishes added committees which will require additional time for staff liaisons representing those committees.

Connections:

The proposed committee structure has been aligned with the 2018-2022 Burlington's Plan from Vision to Focus.

Public Engagement Matters:

As outlined in this report, various public engagement methods were used to seek feedback into the advisory committee review, including surveys, action labs and the use of the Get Involved Burlington website. The surveys attracted more than 450 respondents and over 100 participants attended the action labs.

Conclusion:

The advisory committee review was undertaken to determine how we can best utilize committees in Burlington so that volunteers feel valued and that they are investing their time into something purposeful. It is also important that staff and the community work together to collaborate, share information and leverage opportunities for community feedback. The engagement initiatives, research and review of best practices informed the recommendations contained in this report.

Respectfully submitted,

Advisory Committee Review Working Team: Jim Young, Perla Lopez, Roland Tanner, Jason Manayathu, Ancilla Ho Young, Michael Budd, Danielle Manton, Briar Allison, Georgie Gartside

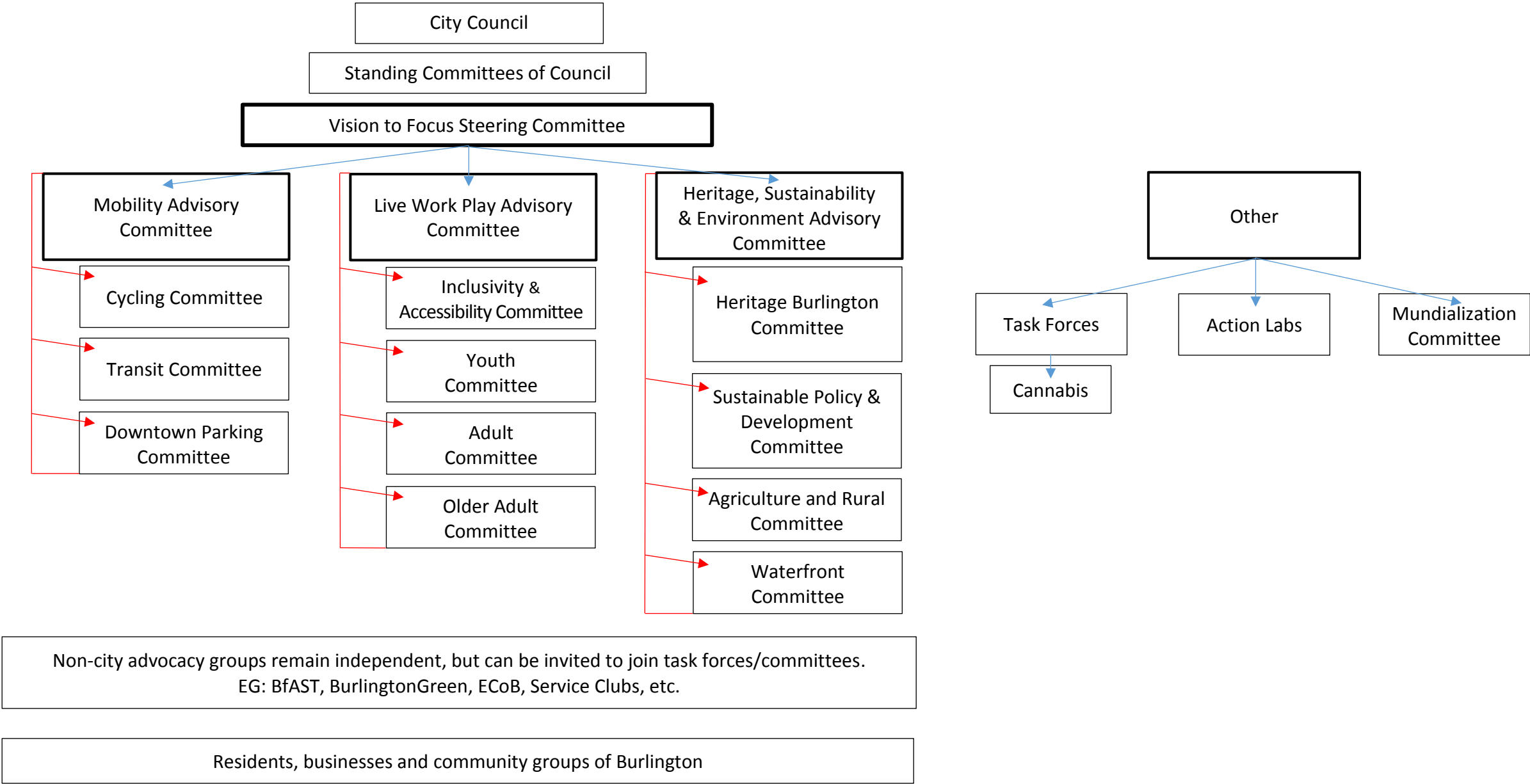
Appendices:

- A. Proposed Burlington Committee Structure
- B. ChAT Terms of Reference
- C. Civic lotteries as a method of advisory committee selection

Report Approval:

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, Director of Finance and Director of Legal. Final approval is by the City Manager.

Proposed Committee Structure



ChAT (Charter Action Team) (REVISED Jan 24/16)

Terms of Reference

NAME: Charter Action Team (ChAT)

REPORTS TO: City Manager, city council and the public

CLERK:

ESTABLISHED: 2013

BACKGROUND

In April 2013, Burlington City Council approved the first Burlington Community Engagement Charter. The charter was created by citizens with support from staff. It is an agreement between and among Burlington City Council and the community concerning citizen engagement with city government and establishes the commitments, responsibilities and fundamental concepts of this relationship.

To ensure the continued success of the charter, the city invited members of the charter team to help develop an Engagement Charter Action Plan. This team of community members and staff is known as ChAT, the Charter Action Team.

MANDATE

To bring the charter to life and to embed engagement into everyday practice at the City of Burlington.

The ChAT is an advisory body to the City Manager and city staff. Additionally, provides updates to Council on the Charter Action Plan and if needed propose modifications to the Engagement Charter. The Team will primarily:

- Provide advice to city staff on engagement matters.
- Provide advice and insight to the City of Burlington's citizen advisory committees, City Council and staff on city policies, services and programs related to public involvement
- Share information, best practices, trends, opportunities and challenges regarding public involvement. Represent the City of Burlington at public events where engagement is being promoted or is taking place.
- Respond to requests for input.
- Develop communication to help promote internal and external understanding and acceptance of the Community Engagement Charter., as well as increasing the number of residents who take an active interest in public involvement. Report annually to City Council and the community regarding the status of public involvement using defined metrics.

MEETINGS

An annual schedule of monthly meetings will be prepared by the team prior to December 31 of the preceding year. One meeting at minimum will take place in each of July and August unless otherwise decided by the team. Further meetings may be held at the call of the Chair. Meetings will be held at City Hall, or other convenient location and will be completed within 2 hours unless members agree to extend the time by a specific amount. Sub-committee meetings of volunteers or ChAT members will be scheduled as needed to complete the assigned work.

QUORUM

The group will meet when 50 per cent of both citizens and staff or more of its members are available unless otherwise decided by the team. The chair of ChAT will confirm attendance prior to meetings. Decisions are made by consensus. However a vote will take place when a consensus is not reached.

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

The fiscal year of the committee will be from January 1 to December 31. The team will submit a budget request. The team's budget will be part of the City Manager's budget.

WORK PLANS AND ANNUAL REPORTS

The team will prepare an annual work plan and budget to support its mandate as outlined in the terms of reference. The work plan will be from January 1 to December 31 each year. The workplan will consider alignment with both the City Manager's workplan and the strategic plan/corporate workplan.

The team will prepare an annual report outlining the activities/deliverables of the past year by December 15 of each year. The annual report will be provided to the City Manager's Office. The annual report will be presented to the appropriate standing committee of council.

COMMUNICATIONS

The team will work with the Communications section of the Clerks Department to prepare a communications plan to support its work plan. Graphics, editing, printing and advertising services are provided through corporate communications and funded by the team's annual budget allocation.

7. COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

Role		Voting	Non-Voting
Citizen	4 Burlington residents plus 2 alternates	✓	

representatives			
Staff representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 appropriate city staff as directed by City Manager plus 2 alternates 	✓	
Sponsor (City Manager)	City Manager	✓	
Designated Alternates	2 individuals in addition to the approved composition that have been selected through the interview process. Participation at meetings as requested with no voting privileges. Available to fill unplanned vacancies.		✓
Support Team	Individuals selected by team members and not through the interview process. Attend and participate on sub-committees only. Volunteers interested in public involvement activities		✓
Administrative Support	Determined annually		

MEMBER SELECTION

Team members, including members wishing to participate for a subsequent term, will be selected through an application and interview process. The interview panel should consist of a core resident and staff member as determined by the team. If a member is re-applying for a subsequent term, he/she is not eligible to participate on the interview panel. The interviewers will complete interviews for resident members and write report and rank the candidates for consideration of the larger team.

The team will be responsible for the creation of the interview questions and associated evaluation matrix. All applications to the team shall be kept confidential and restricted to the review of the interview panel. When the interview process is done, the interview panel will make recommendations to the team for final approval and appointment.

TEAM STRUCTURE

The team will meet with the chair presiding or vice-chair in his/her absence.

The **Chair** will be rotating positions (both resident and staff to share equally) as determined by team members. Schedule to be determined at the first meeting of the year.

Working Groups: The Team may set up working group as needed to consider specific issues. Members prepare their own agendas and minutes as required. Additional community volunteers may help with specific initiatives and are not required to be members of the Support Team.

TERM OF OFFICE

Team Members: Two (2) years from the date of appointment, with staggered terms planned to ensure continuity. Members are limited to a maximum of two consecutive terms.

Once a member has completed two consecutive terms, he or she has the option of volunteering on a working group or can apply again to the team one year following the completion of his or her terms.

Members of the team who have completed a first term of office and wish to reapply for membership must indicate their interest by responding to advertisements for membership and participating in the interview process.

Designated Alternates: If a member resigns before the completion of his or her term, a designated alternate (if one is available) will fill the vacancy for the remainder of that term and become a full-member of the team.

REFERENCE TO CITY'S STRATEGIC PLAN:

Strategic Plan 2015-2040

- A City that Moves ☐
- A City that Grows ☐
- A Healthy and Greener City ☐
- An Engaging City ☒ X "Community members are engaged, empowered, welcomed and well-served by their city. Culture and community activities thrive, creating a positive sense of place, inclusivity and community."

ChAT REVIEW DATE:

Beginning in January 2016 and every four years thereafter or as required the ChAT will review its mandate, terms of reference, value/effectiveness.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS:

All members of the Team will have read and understood the following reference documents:

Burlington City Charter – remainder to be determined after review

- Community Engagement Charter
- Charter Action Plan
- Plain Language Handbook
- Meeting Etiquette
- IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation
- Burlington Strategic Plan
- Handbook on Citizen Committees
- Code of Conduct, City of Burlington Corporate Policy
- Respect in the Workplace, City of Burlington Human Resource Policy
- Accessible Customer Service

Civic lotteries as a method of Advisory Committee selection

October 11, 2019

"[The selection process] determines whether the community at large perceives the Citizen Advisory Body as a legitimate voice for community interests or as a captive and docile tool of the parent agency" [*Citizen Advisory Boards: An Empirical Model for Choosing Goals and Methods*, Philip Kunsberg for US Dept of Energy, 1994, p 28 (https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc697755/m2/1/high_res_d/543603.pdf)]

Overview

Civic lotteries are emerging as a tool used at both a local, regional and national level around the world as a way to improve the input and recommendations different levels of government receive from the public.

In essence, a civic lottery is a method of randomized selection of citizens that replaces a traditional volunteer-based appointments process, panels of 'independent citizen experts' and 'blue ribbon commissions'.

On the surface, this selection appears counter-intuitive. Surely a committee made up not only of non-experts, but also of people who weren't even motivated enough to volunteer unprompted, cannot provide good advice to council?

The reasons why this perception is inaccurate, and a move to civic lotteries can bring numerous benefits to comprehensive and effective citizen engagement, are set out below.



Contents

1. Who do Citizen Advisory Committees represent?
2. Why 'experts' are the wrong choice for advisory committees.
3. Other problems with current selection methods.
4. The advantages of civic lotteries.
5. Operating a Civic Lottery correctly to ensure success.

1. Who do Citizen Advisory Committees represent?

Citizen advisory committees represent citizens. Their purpose is to reflect and represent the citizen point of view to municipal government in general, and especially to elected representatives. The intent is for them to provide insight to staff and council representing an accurate reflection of the points of view to be found across the city.

This is valuable from the perspective of both monitoring public opinion, and above all for representing the lived experience of those with the greatest stake in every city decision - the people who live, work and play there.


A successful citizen advisory committee assists staff in formulating balanced recommendations to council by interacting with staff early in the decision-making process. It should also be capable of providing independent and informed modifications, suggestions and 'dissenting views' on staff recommendations. Thus informed, elected representatives can make decisions based jointly on expert staff advice and insight only citizens can provide.

2. Why 'experts' are the wrong choice for advisory committees

As stated above, an advisory committee's purpose is to ensure the citizen perspective is included in decision-making, and that insights only citizens can provide are not overlooked. The purpose of their existence is to provide something staff and council cannot obtain anywhere else.

It cannot be overemphasized: Citizen Advisory Committees are not expert or professional advisory panels, and should not be expected to be so.

However, in a traditional model, and certainly in Burlington, it is assumed that 'qualified' or 'experienced' people should sit on committees with backgrounds of relevance to the committee.



This desire for 'expertise' seriously undermines and confuses the role of an advisory committee as an independent reflection of city residents. It can also, as was reflected in anonymous staff feedback on Burlington's current committees, lead to people with strong agendas volunteering and being selected to sit on committees. When this happens, the committee is no longer representative of the city, and only representative of people with motivation to apply. The advice staff and council will receive will be inherently distorted towards a particular agenda.

Theoretical Example:

A committee is created to provide advice on the colour of fire hydrants in reaction to a local controversy. Volunteers are asked to apply. 20 volunteers come forward, of which 10 are chosen following interviews as 'most expert', with the exception of two chosen to reflect diversity and youth.

Three volunteers are from the 'Campaign for Orange Fire Hydrants' association, they are all aged 55+ and from a part of town where orange is popular. Three are retired executives from a fire hydrant manufacturer. Two are from the 'Association for Defence of Blue Fire Hydrants'. One is a person of colour living on a low income. One is a youth who was asked to volunteer because they were already on another advisory committee, and there was a need to include youth representation.

Of the ten volunteers, 8 already have strong existing agendas that may be out of step with the community at large. With their prior knowledge of the field, they will tend to overwhelm the youth and person of colour and consider their input lacking in relevance. Yet those two volunteers bring perspectives the 'experts' can never have.


Furthermore, a committee made up this way will tend to be polarized, divided, and provide advice to council which is in no way representative of anything but the members' own opinions.

Staff are paid to be expert

Expertise is the staff's responsibility. City staff, independent contractors and consultants are paid to be expert, and should provide all the necessary professional expertise required.

A citizen advisory committee, even if made up of retirees from or enthusiasts in a given field, will never be able to compete on technical knowledge, and should not be expected to do so.

Citizen's strength is their local knowledge and their ties to, and reflection of, the community at large. A completely non-expert citizen who represents an important demographic (for instance, a person on low-income, recent immigrant, senior or youth) is far more valuable as an advisor than someone with decades of experience.



Furthermore, 'expert' knowledge, when volunteered rather than invited, will tend to come from demographic areas that are already well represented - those who are older, ethnically European, predominantly male and with the financial security and time available to make volunteering easy. New immigrants, indigenous residents, people of colour, non-native English speakers, commuters, parents with young children and people on low incomes will all tend to be excluded from participation by being unable to qualify as sufficiently expert, or be discouraged from volunteering in the first place.

3. Other problems with current selection methods

At present, Burlington selects citizen advisory committees based on volunteering for vacancies. All volunteers are interviewed, and recommendations are made to council, which then approves or rejects the recommendations.

This process creates numerous points of difficulty:

- Who decides the criteria for selection? What constitutes a good committee member?
- Who, if anyone, ensures selections are demographically balanced and inclusive of the full breadth of the population? If volunteers come from certain sectors of society or certain interest groups and levels of expertise, the committees will reflect those groups, and not be representative of the community.
- There is a potential for staff to wittingly or unwittingly shape committees to reflect their own preferences.
- There is a potential for councillors to wittingly or unwittingly shape committees to reflect their own preferences.
- Distorting the selections in this way undermines the committees' ability to provide representative insight of use and value to the city.
- A culture of 'citizen insiders' can develop whereby a relatively small group of perhaps no more than 50 to 100 people city-wide dominate advisory panels, municipal engagement, volunteer groups and community-building enterprises. Members of this group are routinely asked to join new advisory committees, or to take their turn on existing ones. Such volunteers are undoubtedly hard-working, committed, passionate and indispensable members of the community, but that does not make their insight more valuable than other citizens, and can be argued to make it less so when they have in effect become part of 'city hall culture'. In truth, such citizen activists already have, and always will have, a strong voice in shaping their community. Citizen advisory committees, by contrast, should represent a wider and largely silent voice of the entire community.

- Advisory committee membership is often sought out by people seeking to raise their local profile, add to their resume, or with a potential interest in municipal politics. While not disqualifying on its own, this tendency further skews the members away from being representative of the city.

4. The advantages of civic lotteries


Civic lotteries as a means to select 'citizen assemblies', 'advisory panels', 'reference panels', 'citizen task forces' or 'citizen juries' are an increasingly common tool used by all levels of government. Canadian jurisdictions have led the way in adopting civic lotteries as a method of creating citizen advisory bodies. They have proved successful as a means of selecting citizens to advise on issues of both short-term local significance, and to advise on issues as complex as permanent changes to a national constitution.

Examples:

- Toronto Planning Review Panel (permanent standing advisory panel on planning and development) (2015-present) (<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/outreach-engagement/toronto-planning-review-panel/>)
- The Citizens Assembly (Ireland, 2016-18) Tasked with making recommendations then put to referenda on legalizing abortion, preparing for an ageing population and on climate change (<https://www.citizensassembly.ie/en/>)
- Citizens Assemblies on Electoral Reform (BC, 2002; Ontario, 2007).
- Citizens' Reference Panel on Pharmacare in Canada (2006) (<https://www.crppc-gccamp.ca/>)
- Metrolinx Standing Reference Panel (2018) (permanent standing panel) (2018-present)
- City of Lethbridge Citizens' Assembly on Councillor Employment and Compensation (2016)
- St. Michael's Hospital Residents Health Services Panel (2016)
- Hamilton Citizens' Reference Panel on Cultural Policy and Planning (2011)

Burlington Context - Repeating the Mistakes of History?:

The failure of Citizen Advisory Committees to contribute effectively to city decision-making was identified in 1997 (Community-Based Government Committee), in 2005 (Inclusive Cities Canada study), and in 2010 (Mayor's Citizen Advisory Committee on Civic Engagement (*Shape Burlington: Creating and Engaged Community*, April 2010). Similar problems were identified with citizen advisory committees in all three reports, with two of the three recommending major changes to the advisory committee process (Inclusive Cities did not make specific recommendations, but inquired why the 1997 CBGC Report had not been implemented).



None of the recommendations pertaining to citizen advisory committees made by CBGC or Shape Burlington were ever implemented. The problems identified today are in essence the same as they were twenty-two years ago. The only difference today is the degree of urgency for a change of approach.

5. Operating a Civic Lottery To Ensure Success

Civic lotteries operate by random selection of citizens. Typically, personal invitations to participate are mailed out to several thousand residents. While the majority of people will not respond, those that do will consist of citizens from outside the usual demographic of people who approach the city to volunteer.

Committees are then selected randomly from the respondents. There is no interview process, and no one person is perceived to be 'better qualified' than another. The only criteria for selection is that the final committee must have members to meet specific composition requirements and the full diversity of the city in terms of race, cultural and religious background and age and potentially income and geographic considerations.

Advantages

- Committees are guaranteed to be impartial and free from prior agendas.
- Properly run committees will be more open-minded, willing to collaborate, compromise and discuss ideas hand-in-hand with staff.
- Properly run lotteries will create committees reflective of the full diversity of the city, and invite citizens who would never consider volunteering into active participation.
- Proper selection can potentially revitalize the entire process of citizen engagement in Burlington by opening participation to any citizen.
- Random selection replaces a process that encourages adversarial debate and an 'inner circle' of activist citizens who either support or oppose municipal policies both from inside City Hall advisory committees and from external activist bodies. Activists retain their voice, but the vast majority of non-activist citizens are given their proper place in the decision-making process.
- Staff and councillors are relieved of the need to spend time interviewing candidates.
- Once a database of volunteers has been created, replacement members or members for new committees can be found quickly and at no cost.



Resources and Costs

- There is a financial cost associated with random invitations. We suggest this could be mitigated by using the Get Involved Burlington website alongside a process of mailed random invitations. This needs to be done in such a way as not to undermine the ‘randomness’ of the process or create a bias towards appointing people who would have been appointed under the old system.
- Since the most important feature is that the city reaches out to citizens who traditionally will not participate, the cost of mailed invitations is an essential component. This relatively small cost will more than be recovered if advisory committees reduce or eliminate processes that create decisions that are subsequently reversed.
- Staff time and resources are required, but arguably less than for the current system of interviews. Councillors are relieved of a current time commitment.
- Appropriate training, education and support is imperative. Without it, this system of appointment will fail, committee members will lose interest, and committees will fail to provide the advice required.

Potential Problems

- Without the required resources in terms of staff support, documentation, education on committee processes, terms of reference, background information on committee mandate, this method of selection is likely not to provide the quality of insight advice needed.
- Invitations to participate in a committee or process without a clearly defined purpose will not attract responses.
- The balance of demographic requirements needs to be loose enough to be operable, but regulated enough to create a representative committee.
- The new advisory committees need to have the enthusiastic support of council, the City Clerk’s Office and the City Manager’s Office. City Hall staff and the public at large need to be educated as to the benefits of the method of selection, and why the change is being made. A failure to welcome the role of advisory committees, a perception of them as ‘rivals’ to staff, and a failure to understand the reason for appointment by civic lottery will all risk the success of committees.

More details on operating a civic lottery, and the advantages of civic lotteries as a tool of citizen engagement and democratic revitalization can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/yyywlkfb>.