

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