

Committees of Council Review Project

September, 2023

Resort Municipality of Whistler
whistler.ca



1 Table of Contents

2	Introduction.....	4
2.1	Reason for the Review	4
2.2	Scope	4
	2.2.1 Future Phases.....	4
2.3	Current Committee Appointments	5
2.4	Project Timeline.....	5
2.5	Project Stakeholders.....	5
2.6	Process to Reach Recommendations.....	5
	2.6.1 Surveys & Interviews	5
	2.6.2 Workshops.....	6
	2.6.3 Background Research	6
2.7	Committee of Council List with Acronyms	8
	2.7.1 Standing Committees	8
	2.7.2 Select Committees	8
3	Key Findings and Recommendations	9
3.1	Theme One: Committees Add Value	9
	3.1.1 Provide advice	9
	3.1.2 Crucial for public engagement.....	9
	3.1.3 Allow for a deep dive.....	10
	3.1.4 Enhance partner collaboration	10
	3.1.5 Help solve complex problems	10
	3.1.6 Help move actions forward	10
	3.1.7 Provide insight into priorities and industry trends.....	10
	3.1.8 Provide access to professional advice.....	10
	3.1.9 Provide a political buffer	10
	3.1.10 Gauge interest in initiatives.....	10
	3.1.11 Dry run for staff	11
	3.1.12 Save time in public engagement.....	11
	3.1.13 Keeps a topic front and centre	11
	3.1.14 Theme One Recommendations	11
3.2	Theme Two: The Committee Program Lacks a Clear Purpose	11
	3.2.1 The Committee Program lacks a clearly articulated purpose.....	11
	3.2.2 Committee stakeholders are often unsure of what they are working to achieve or meant to deliver to Council.	11
	3.2.3 Several Committees do not function as advisory.	11

3.2.4	Some Committees exist, or meetings take place, to share information and updates with partners.....	12
3.2.5	Committee topics do not align with Council or organizational priorities.....	12
3.2.6	There are no criteria for forming new Committees.....	12
3.2.7	Theme Two Recommendations	12
3.3	Theme Three: There are Inconsistencies in How Committees Operate.....	12
3.3.1	The Committee Program lacks consistency.....	12
3.3.2	The Committee Program is Inefficient.....	13
3.3.3	The Terms of Reference (TOR) documents are all different	13
3.3.4	There are too many Committees.	13
3.3.5	Theme Three Recommendations	13
3.4	Theme Four: Committee Topics Need Review.....	13
3.4.1	There are too many Committees	13
3.4.2	Committee topics should align with Council priorities.....	13
3.4.3	Climate action and housing are missing Committee topics	13
3.4.4	Committee mandates are too narrow.....	13
3.4.5	Several Committees have completed the work they set out to achieve (met their mandate) and should be disbanded.....	13
3.4.6	Some of the current Committees should have been initiated as working groups (collaborative not advisory) or taskforces (narrow mandate with short-term timeline)	13
3.4.7	There is no consistent review schedule for Committees.....	14
3.4.8	Theme Four Recommendations	14
3.5	Theme Five: Roles and Responsibilities are Unclear.....	19
3.5.1	Roles and responsibilities of Committee members are not well understood	19
3.5.2	It is unclear who contributes to, sets, and drives Committee priorities, workplan, and meeting agendas.....	19
3.5.3	Roles between the Staff Liaison and the Chair are particularly unclear	19
3.5.4	Theme Five Recommendations	19
3.6	Theme Six: Process for Committee Recommendations is Unclear.....	19
3.6.1	It is not clear how Committee recommendations are put forward to Council.....	19
3.6.2	It is not clear what Council does with the recommendations they receive	19
3.6.3	It is not clear if Council uses the information provided by Committees when making decisions.....	19
3.6.4	Recommendations	19
3.7	Theme Seven: Committee Work Does Not Inform Council Decision-Making.....	20
3.7.1	It is unclear if Council is up to date on the work taking place on each Committee 20	

3.7.2	There is no formal reporting our process for Committees of Council to Council or the public	20
3.7.3	Theme Seven Recommendations	20
3.8	Theme Eight: Committees Lack Diversity	20
3.8.1	Committees lack diversity	20
3.8.2	Some Committees have no at large community representatives.	20
3.8.3	Theme Eight Recommendations.....	20
3.9	Theme Nine: Facilitation is Inconsistent	21
3.9.1	There is not a consistent approach to Committee meeting facilitation	21
3.9.2	Staff and Committee Chairs are not provided facilitation training.....	21
3.9.3	Not enough time for meeting preparation	21
3.9.4	The RMOW does not have a space appropriate for large meeting facilitation	21
3.9.5	Lack of coordination between the Chair and staff liaison.....	22
3.9.6	Theme Nine Recommendations	22
3.10	Theme Ten: There is no recruitment or training strategy.....	22
3.10.1	There is no coordinated recruitment strategy for all Committees	22
3.10.2	Committee members do not receive training when they join a Committee	22
3.10.3	Theme Ten Recommendations.....	22
3.10.4	Meeting schedules lack consistency	22
3.10.5	Meeting minutes lack detail	22
3.10.6	Meeting minutes take too long to get to the Council package.....	22
3.10.7	Lack of flexibility in permanent meeting schedules.....	23
3.10.8	Difference in opinion in regard to zoom versus in-person meetings	23
3.10.9	Committee remuneration needs to be clarified.....	23
3.10.10	There is no feedback loop from Council back to the Committee	23
3.10.11	There is no formal mechanism to evaluate Committee effectiveness.....	24
3.10.12	There is no consistent review schedule for Committees.....	24
3.10.13	Some Committees do not adhere to the mandate in their TOR.....	24
3.10.14	Conflict of Interest exists on some Committees	24
3.10.15	Committees are a limited way of engaging the community	24
3.10.16	Often projects do not go to Committees	24
3.10.17	Public are not always sure how to attend Committee meetings	24
3.10.18	Don't forget the history	24

2 Introduction

The Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW) has an existing Committee Program consisting of 20 Select and Standing Committees and two Boards that engage approximately 145 representatives from the community, partner organizations, Council, and staff. Committees cover a broad range of municipal areas of interest and provide an advisory role to Council. The Governance and Ethics Committee of Council (GAESC) is currently undertaking a review of the 20 Standing and Select Committees in the Committee Program. Committees utilize a lot of Council, staff, and community resources and as a result there is a desire to ensure this resource commitment is aligned with the value Committees provide to the RMOW operations and Council decision-making. The Committee Project is an opportunity to review the Committee Program as a whole and identify what is working well and what may be improved moving forward.

Specifically, the Committee Project purpose is to ensure:

- the Committee Program has a clear purpose;
- the Committee Program is efficient, effective, and coordinated;
- the committee topics are relevant and aligned with current municipal priorities that serve our community; and
- that input of committee members is captured and considered in the Municipality's work and that they feel their time given to committees is valued.

The purpose of this report is to share the key findings (what is working well and what requires improvement) and recommendations for improving the Committee Program.

2.1 Reason for the Review

Committees utilize a lot of Council, staff, and community resources and as a result there is a desire to ensure this resource commitment is aligned with the value Committees provide to the RMOW operations and Council decision-making. It has been many years since the Committee program has been comprehensively reviewed. The need for a review has been identified by Council, the GAESC and was also identified in the 2019-2020 *Community Engagement Review*.

2.2 Scope

The first phase of the review will include Standing and Select Committees of Council. Council Appointed Boards may benefit from some of the process and procedural improvements, but this is not the focus of this work.

2.2.1 Future Phases

There will be an opportunity for future phases of work, but these are currently outside the scope of the Committee Project. Two future areas will include:

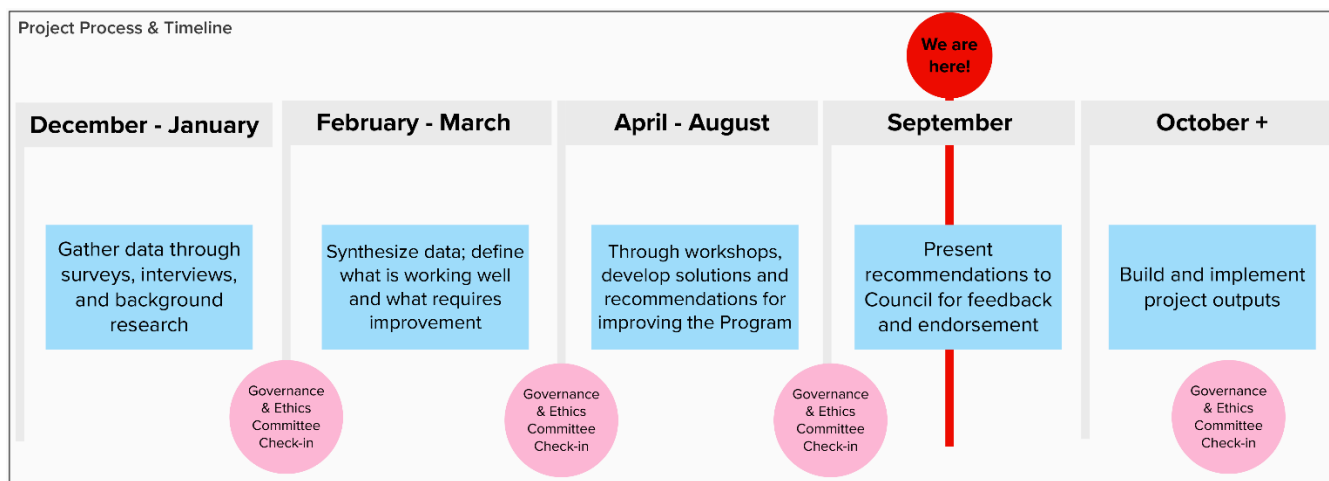
- Review of council board appointments
 - Review all Council member appointments to Council Appointed Boards and RMOW Partner Organization Boards including the role and expectations of the Council member on each, conflict of interest guidance, reporting duties, and the necessity of council appointments versus RMOW staff appointments.
- Review RMOW working groups and non-council committees
 - Complete inventory of all the working groups and non-council committees that exist within the RMOW to understand our level of engagement and collaboration with organizations outside the Committee program as well as staff resources committed to these.
 - Establish recommendations for potential required needs such as guidelines or tools.
 -

2.3 Current Committee Appointments

As this review takes place, Committees of Council are continuing as normal. However, because changes to the Committee Program may be required, some committee appointments for this term were done a bit differently. At the Inaugural Meeting of Council on November 1, 2022:

- Regular Council appointments were made to:
 - Audit and Finance Standing Committee (AFSC)
 - Human Resources Standing Committee (HRSC)
 - Governance and Ethics Standing Committee (GESG)
 - Accessibility and Inclusion Committee (AIC)
 - Advisory Design Panel (ADP)
 - Liquor Licence Advisory Committee (LLAC)
- One-year Council appointments were made to all other committees. These will be in place until such time Council resolves any changes arising from the review.

2.4 Project Timeline



2.5 Project Stakeholders

The GAESC is overseeing the Committee Program review; staff have reported into GAESC with project updates and recommendations and to seek feedback at regular intervals. Legislative Services and the Chief Administrative Office (CAO) Office are leading the Committee Project at the staff level. Final project recommendations will be taken to the GAESC for feedback and Council for final endorsement.

2.6 Process to Reach Recommendations

The process to inform the development of recommendations involved gathering data through surveys, interviews, and background research to define what is working well and what requires improvement. Workshops with staff and the GAESC were then hosted to develop solutions and recommendations for improving the Program.

2.6.1 Surveys & Interviews

To initiate this project, staff issued two surveys and completed a series of interviews.

The first survey collected feedback from Council, Sr. Managers, and select staff highly involved with committee work to help define the scope of work and priorities for project. A total of 19 people responded to the survey (6 Council members, 13 RMOW staff members).

The second survey was at the request of the GAESC as there was a desire to hear from all community members. This survey was sent to all members of all Committees of Council. A total of 56 people responded to the survey [16 RMOW staff members, 21 citizen representatives, 16 external representatives (members representing an organization that is not the RMOW), 3 committee members that identified as Board Members].

Both surveys had both sliding scale questions with room for comment after each question. Respondents left a lot of detail in the comments which proved very insightful.

As the surveys were more general to all Committees, interviews were completed to understand the context of each Committee and what was happening at the Committee level. A staff person from each Committee was interviewed, in most cases this was the staff liaison for the Committee. The interviews were semi-structured, meaning that the interviewer had a standard list of pre-determined, open-ended questions, but the discussion was informal, flexible, and free flowing.

What we heard from surveys and interviews was synthesized into themes, defining what is working well and what requires improvement.

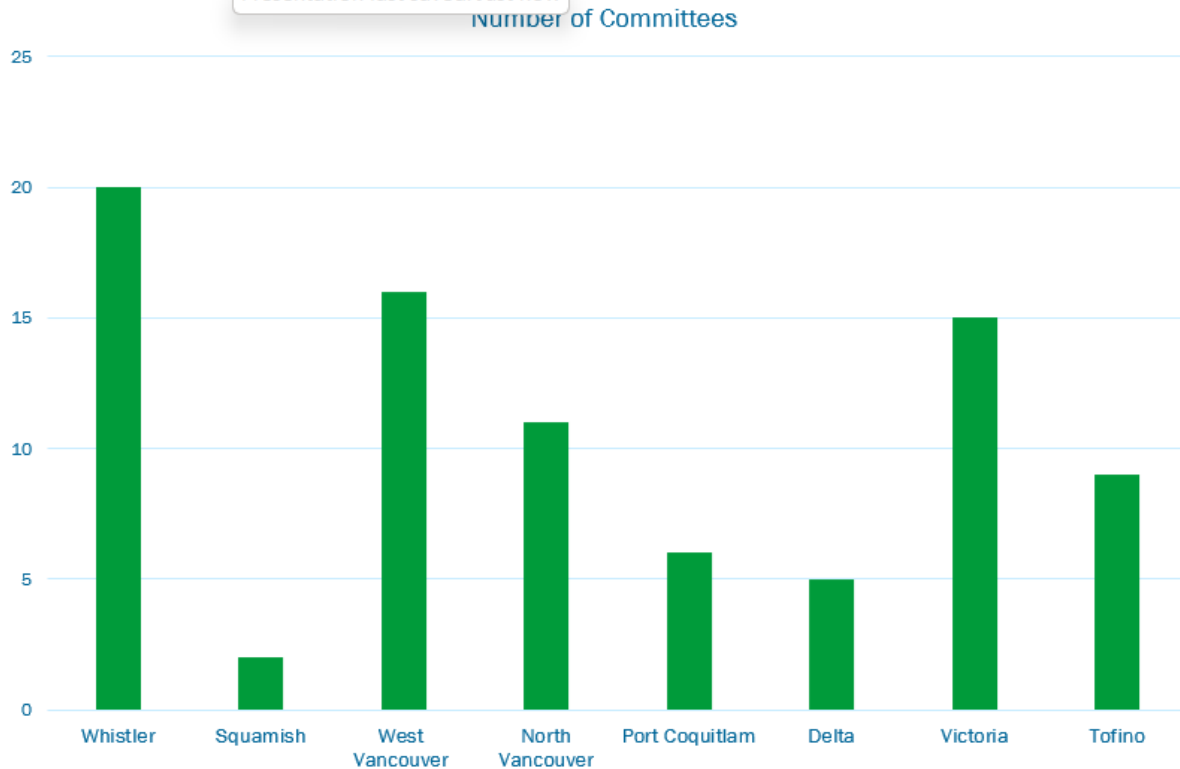
2.6.2 Workshops

Once the areas for improvement for the Committee Program were identified through the surveys and interviews, workshops were hosted to develop solutions and recommendations for improving the Committee Program. Workshop participants included staff and the GAESC.

2.6.3 Background Research

In addition to surveys and interviews staff gathered background data to better understand the context in which Committees operate and the legislative framework. This included looking at how other committees organize and execute their Committees of Council. Of note is the number of committees the RMOW facilitates compared to other communities and the amount of staff time dedicated to Committee meetings each year.

2.6.3.1 *Number of Committees*



2.6.3.2 Staff Time Dedicated to Committees

Staff completed a review of the hours of staff time spent on Committees in 2022. Staff considered:

- Number and length of each Committee meeting
- Number of staff in attendance at each meeting
- Administrative time before and after meetings

The approximate amount of staff time in 2022 was 1850 hours. This does not include Council member, external organization, or community member time or time spent on Committee work.

2.7 Committee of Council List with Acronyms

2.7.1 Standing Committees

Committee Name	Committee Acronym
Audit and Finance Standing Committee	AFC
Governance and Ethics Standing Committee	GAESC
Human Resources Standing Committee	HRSC

2.7.2 Select Committees

Committee Name	Committee Acronym
Accessibility and Inclusion Committee	AIC
Advisory Design Panel	ADP
Economic Partnership Initiative Committee	EPI
Emergency Planning Committee	EPC
Festivals, Events and Animation Oversight Committee	FE&AOC
Forest and Wildland Advisory Committee	FWAC
Liquor Licence Advisory Committee	LLAC
May Long Weekend Committee	MLWC
Mayor's Task Force on Resident Housing	MTFRH
Public Art Committee	PAC
Recreation Leisure Advisory Committee	RLAC
Strategic Planning Committee	SPC
Technology Advisory Committee	TAC
Transportation Advisory Group	TAG
Transit Management Advisory Committee	TMAC
Whistler Bear Advisory Committee	WBAC
Zero Waste Select Committee	ZWSC

3 Key Findings and Recommendations

Information gathered through surveys and interviews is summarized into key findings. The key findings are grouped into ten themes. It is important to reiterate that the themes are “what we heard” in the data gathering phase and are opinion not fact. Following each of the ten themes are recommendations to improve the program moving forward.

It is important to note that the themes that are identified captures something important we heard from respondents in relation to the project purpose. This does not mean that every person expressed each issue or that each issue was identified across all Committees; but rather what we heard in general.

The ten themes include:

1. Committees Add Value
2. Committee Program Lacks a Clear Purpose
3. There are Inconsistencies in How Committees Operate
4. Committee Topics Need Review
5. Roles and Responsibilities are Unclear
6. Process for Committee Recommendations is Unclear
7. Committee Work Does Not Inform Council Decision-Making
8. Committees Lack Diversity
9. Facilitation is Inconsistent
10. No Recruitment or Training Strategy

The themes listed above outline most of what we heard from the data gathering phase. However, there are some additional items of note that are either largely administrative or out of the scope of the themes above; these are captured in the section titled Additional Items of Note on page 22. These items are included in the document to demonstrate to Council that there are additional ways the Program can be improved and that these improvements will be incorporated into the final project outputs.

Council will be asked to endorse the project recommendations at the Regular Meeting of Council on Tuesday September 26, 2023. Staff will then work to build the project outputs and implement the recommendations. In addition to listing the recommendations at the end of the associated theme in this document, there is a **Error! Reference source not found.** table on page **Error! Bookmark not defined.** that compiles all the together.

3.1 Theme One: Committees Add Value

3.1.1 Provide advice

Committee stakeholders are trusted advisors to Council on important issues and specialized topics. Committee insights and recommendations influence Council decision-making. Several interview respondents noted that Council gives significant weight to the recommendations provided by Committees.

3.1.2 Crucial for public engagement

Committees are the RMOW's most important public engagement mechanism. They allow external Committee stakeholders to gain information, provide ideas, advice, and feedback on relevant topics, projects, issues, and initiatives. These insights are valuable and important to municipal transparency. Committees provide opportunities for external stakeholders to get involved in municipal affairs and influence public policy.

3.1.3 Allow for a deep dive

Committees allow stakeholders to specialize in responsibility assigned to the Committee. They do the detailed work so Council can focus on the recommendations, not the details.

3.1.4 Enhance partner collaboration

Committees provide a mechanism for staff and Council to build relationships and collaborate with partner organizations and understand their work; they are the RMOW's only touchpoint with some organizations and sectors. Pre-established relationships allow Committee stakeholders to identify gaps and overlap in services and connect quickly in times of crisis.

3.1.5 Help solve complex problems

Committees allow for multisector collaboration. Committee stakeholder's work together to solve complex problems that cannot be solved by one organization working alone.

3.1.6 Help move actions forward

Committees provide needed involvement from Senior Leaders (CAOs, Presidents, and General Managers) of partner organizations. Their involvement and buy-in into the project give them an in-depth understanding of the project or initiative, which is needed to implement resort-wide actions. Often, they take what they learned from the Committee and become advocates for the initiative within their organization and with peers. As an example, members of the *Transportation Advisory Group* became advocates for the implementation of pay parking which proved successful.

Having a Council member participate in Committee discussions to understand how recommendations are formed, and on what basis, helps once the issue reaches the Council table. The Council member understands the details and can share this and often becomes an advocate for the initiative.

3.1.7 Provide insight into priorities and industry trends

Committees allow the RMOW to understand the priorities and challenges of external Committee stakeholders. They provide insights into their experiences on the "front lines" of their sector and to market or other trends. Community members provide insight into their experiences and challenges living in Whistler – what is needed and what is important. For example, members on the *Liquor License Advisory Committee* are the voice of the food and beverage sector in a municipal context; their input allows the RMOW to understand how an application impacts the Village atmosphere and the larger market share. This is information that staff, or Council may not otherwise have access to. As one person noted, "input from stakeholders allows us to see what they are seeing."

3.1.8 Provide access to professional advice

Committees provide staff and Council access to technical experts like architects (*Advisory Design Panel*) that do not exist on staff or Council.

3.1.9 Provide a political buffer

Committees provide a political buffer for Council on contentious issues as recommendations are initiated at the Committee level and involve Committee stakeholders, rather than just staff and Council. This gives more transparency to decision-making, particularly for contentious issues.

3.1.10 Gauge interest in initiatives

Committee meetings provide staff a place to share ideas and projects and gauge the interest of external Committee stakeholders, Council and Senior Managers. Staff can present an idea or initiative and collect feedback before or during a project – rather than when it's nearing completion.

3.1.11 Dry run for staff

Committees give staff a place to test their presentation before going forward to Council. Often the comments and questions asked at the Committee meeting mirror the questions Council and the community will have. This gives staff insight into what changes and clarifications are needed before presenting to Council, thereby enhancing the presentation. We heard from staff that the Committee is a sounding board – it's your first outreach to Council and public feedback.

3.1.12 Save time in public engagement

Committees allow staff to meet partner and community engagement requirements on Council reports without needing to host a more formal community engagement strategy and process.

3.1.13 Keeps a topic front and centre

Having a committee, means that the topic is kept front and centre for Council and the community. It shows that the RMOW is doing something about a specific issue or topic. In addition, as there is an accountability that comes with Committees it means the meetings happen. The initiative and meetings don't get lost when people change positions, new Council members are elected, etc.

3.1.14 Theme One Recommendations

There is value in the Committee Program to the RMOW, Council, and the community. Do not remove the Committee of Council Program entirely. Maintain the parts of the Program that are working well.

3.2 Theme Two: The Committee Program Lacks a Clear Purpose

3.2.1 The Committee Program lacks a clearly articulated purpose.

The RMOW has a limited articulated purpose for the Committee of Council Program. It is unclear if the purpose of Committees is to advance Council priorities and organizational goals, align with the Official Community Plan, or other.

3.2.2 Committee stakeholders are often unsure of what they are working to achieve or meant to deliver to Council.

Survey results indicate the Program would benefit from a more comprehensive definition of the purpose and role of Committees including why they exist, what they are designed to achieve, and how they help the RMOW reach its mandate.

3.2.3 Several Committees do not function as advisory.

Despite RMOW Committees being "advisory in nature" several do not have advisory characteristics. Specifically, we heard that:

- Meetings are focused on information sharing (roundtable updates and staff presentations) not on agenda items that relate to policy/strategy
- Several Committees function as working groups; they do not put recommendations forward to Council to help inform Council decision-making
- Staff come to Committee meetings to share completed work with no room for input and feedback; the direction has already been determined and the Committee is asked to approve or support the pre-determined direction ("ticking the box")
- Committee members attend meetings to get intelligence and stay looped in but do not engage in discussion

- Committee members attempt to direct staff work plans or make Council decisions (rather than make recommendations)
- Committees discuss or aim to influence operational items or "get into the weeds"
- There is no space for Committee members, other than RMOW staff, to contribute to Committee work plans, meeting agendas, etc. Staff dictate, through the agenda, what the Committee will focus on

Note: This does not mean these groups do not do great work and add value to the organization. Many of them do. They just don't meet the criteria of an advisory Committee and should perhaps be re-termed as working groups.

3.2.4 Some Committees exist, or meetings take place, to share information and updates with partners

Too often, Committees are just keeping groups of people looped in on municipal work, often at a more detailed level, than would happen in a Council meeting.

Note: It was noted that Committees are the only place some partner organizations will share confidential information and updates as they can do this verbally and request that the information remains confidential. Without the Committee the RMOW may not be able to access this information which is often valuable. It may also be the only formal mechanism in place to ensure key partner meetings to occur and the role of keeping key organizations looped into municipal work has value.

3.2.5 Committee topics do not align with Council or organizational priorities.

Several respondents indicated that Committees should advance Council and organizational goals and priorities for the term.

3.2.6 There are no criteria for forming new Committees

Some of the current Committees are not advisory and perhaps should have been initiated as working groups or taskforces rather than Committees.

3.2.7 Theme Two Recommendations

Define a clear purpose for the Committee Program. Moving forward, keep this purpose front and centre as Committees do their work.

3.2.7.1 *Proposed Purpose for the Committee Program*

The GAESC drafted a clear purpose for the Committee Program. The primary purposes of Committees of Council are to:

- advance Council priorities,
- provide advice and recommendations to Council,
- help solve complex problems through collaboration,
- engage subject-matter experts, and
- collect community perspective.

3.3 Theme Three: There are Inconsistencies in How Committees Operate

3.3.1 The Committee Program lacks consistency.

We heard that:

- Each Committee operates in a different way and reinvents the wheel
- Each Committee has a different method of booking meetings
- Some Committees have pre-set meeting schedules, some do not
- Some Committees have hired facilitation and meeting preparation support and others do not

- Some Committees provide snacks/lunch, and some do not
- Some Committees provide onboarding training, a script to the Chair, others do not
- Meeting minute detail varies by Committee
- Some Committees post their digital meeting link publicly, others do not
- Some Committees meet in-person, some virtually, and some in a hybrid format

Note: While a desire for consistency was clear – it was also mentioned that flexibility is needed

3.3.2 The Committee Program is Inefficient

Every Committee operates in its own way and reinvents the wheel.

3.3.3 The Terms of Reference (TOR) documents are all different

The TOR are different for each Committee. There is not one consistent template. This results in each Committee operating in a different way.

3.3.4 There are too many Committees.

Twenty Committees is too many for the size of the organization. This makes the Program too cumbersome to coordinate.

3.3.5 Theme Three Recommendations

Develop standard operating procedures for Committees that outline consistent processes for tasks and activities (with flexibility). Develop a standardized TOR template (with flexibility) to create more consistency in how Committees operate.

3.4 Theme Four: Committee Topics Need Review

3.4.1 There are too many Committees

There are more Committees than needed for the current environment and priorities of the organization – fewer Committees with clearly defined mandates and roles would deliver more value to the organization and community. Too much time is invested in Committees compared to their current value; this impacts staff's ability to deliver core responsibilities.

There are a lot of Committees, some mandates and/or membership overlap. Some Committee topics are outdated - Council/RMOW priorities have changed but Committees have not (they were the "hot topics" of the day but are no longer).

3.4.2 Committee topics should align with Council priorities

3.4.3 Climate action and housing are missing Committee topics

Consider adding a Climate Committee and a Housing Committee. These are two of Council's top priorities for the term and they do not have Committees supporting this work.

3.4.4 Committee mandates are too narrow

Fewer committees with broader mandates could prove more valuable and be more efficient.

3.4.5 Several Committees have completed the work they set out to achieve (met their mandate) and should be disbanded

3.4.6 Some of the current Committees should have been initiated as working groups (collaborative not advisory) or taskforces (narrow mandate with short-term timeline)

Some of the current Committees perhaps should have been initiated as working groups or taskforces rather than Committees. The structure that best suits actual needs must be considered along with the level of importance or relevance of the topic at the time of creation. Some Committees function more as working groups and could be reclassified.

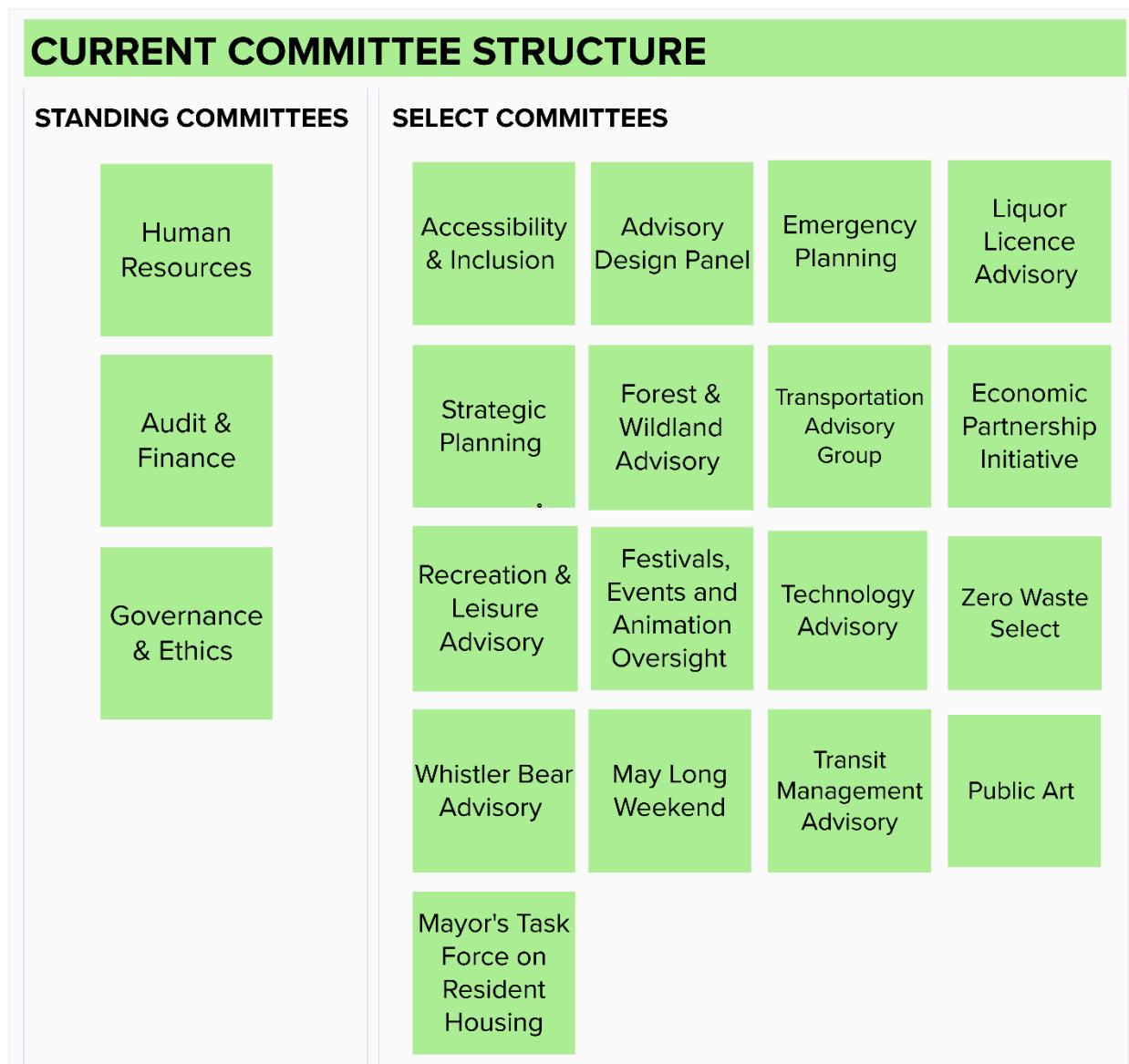
3.4.7 There is no consistent review schedule for Committees

Some Committee topics are outdated; Council and RMOW priorities have changed but Committees have not changed along with these priorities. Some Committees “stay alive” once their mandate to develop a strategy or plan has been completed to ensure the initiative is implemented, to monitor the implementation, or to keep pressure on Council and staff to implement. We heard that Committees are often most involved in the development of guiding documents, plans, policies and procedures. Once this work is complete then the Committee’s level of effort and engagement is reduced but the Committee is never disbanded. As a result, it turns into more of a working group.

3.4.8 Theme Four Recommendations

Review Committee topics for relevance and need. Adopt a smaller, more efficient model for Committees of Council focused on Council priorities. Shift some Committees to working groups.

3.4.8.1 Current Committee Structure



3.4.8.2 Proposed Committee Program Structure

Workshops were hosted to consider the recommendations for this theme. In both the staff and GAESC workshops, participants considered what we heard in the data gathering phase and how the Committee Program could be restructured to ensure it is efficient, effective, and aligned with current priorities of Council. Each Committee was assessed and assigned an outcome:

- The Committee is disbanded
- The Committee remains the same
- The Committee is amalgamated with other Committees with similar topics and/or memberships and aligned with current Council priorities
- The Committee is shifted to a working group
- The Committee is disbanded and the work is elevated to all of Council
- Are there any Committee topics that are missing?

Discussions in the workshops were centered around the following considerations:

1. Which Committees should be disbanded?
 - a. Has the Committee finished the work they set out to achieve in their mandate?
 - b. Is the topic still relevant or a priority of Council or the organization?
 - c. Is a committee still the best mechanism to engage the community on this topic?
Or are there other engagement mechanisms that are better suited?
 - d. Is the Committee advisory?
2. What Committees are still required by Council and should remain in their current form?
 - a. Is the Committee still effective?
 - b. Are the recommendations being put forward to Council being used as part of council decision-making?
3. Is it possible to reduce the number of Committees?
 - a. Can Committees with related mandates and/or similar memberships be amalgamated?
 - b. Can these Committees be aligned with current Council priorities?
4. Are there any Committee topics that are missing?
 - a. How do we introduce Climate Action and Housing as Committee topics?
5. Are there Committees that can shift to working groups?
 - a. Which Committees still provide value but are focused on collaboration and operations?

The outcomes of both discussions resulted in proposed Committee structures that similar with a few noted differences. The two proposed Committee structures are below.

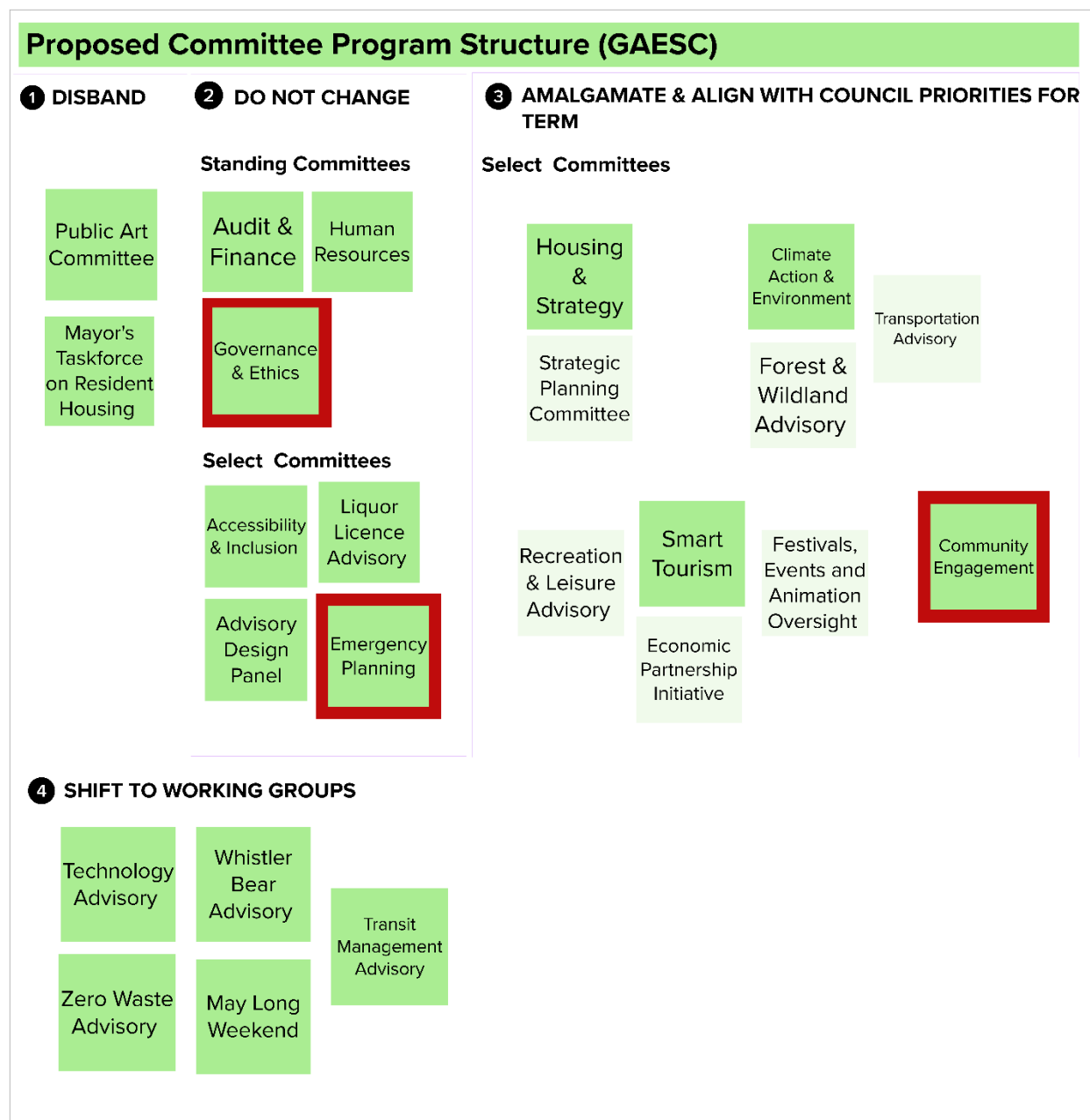
Proposed Committee Program Structure (Staff)



Proposed Committee Program Structure (GAESC)

The proposed structure put forward by GAESC is very similar with three noted differences:

- Governance & Ethics (GAESC) remains a standing Committee (is not elevated to all of Council)
- Emergency Planning (EPC) remains a Select Committee (does not shift to a Work Group)
- The new Community Engagement topic is a Committee not a Work Group



3.5 Theme Five: Roles and Responsibilities are Unclear

3.5.1 Roles and responsibilities of Committee members are not well understood

There is no formal onboarding or training program for new Committee members on things like the role of an advisory Committee, how Committees work, roles and responsibilities, Roberts Rules of Order, conflict of interest, confidentiality, formulating and elevating Committee recommendation's, etc. There is no clear definition of the expectations, roles, and responsibilities of Committee members.

3.5.2 It is unclear who contributes to, sets, and drives Committee priorities, workplan, and meeting agendas.

3.5.3 Roles between the Staff Liaison and the Chair are particularly unclear

There is no process for the staff liaison and Chair to coordinate and connect before the meeting, yet they work together in many cases during the meeting. This can make facilitation difficult for the Chair as they do not have input into the agenda or the background and context around the agenda items.

3.5.4 Theme Five Recommendations

Develop clear roles and responsibilities of Committee members. Provide clarity regarding who contributes to, sets, and drives Committee priorities (and workplan). Develop a process where all Committee members contribute to Committee priorities, workplan, and meeting agendas.

3.6 Theme Six: Process for Committee Recommendations is Unclear

3.6.1 It is not clear how Committee recommendations are put forward to Council

There is considerable confusion about how formal recommendations are put forward to Council for their consideration; this is contributing to the narrative that Committee work and recommendations do not influence Council decision-making. Sometimes Committees will include recommendations in their minutes – however as the minutes are only “received” this does not mean the recommendations within the minutes are endorsed by Council.

3.6.2 It is not clear what Council does with the recommendations they receive

Several respondents indicated they do not understand what Council does with the recommendations they receive from Committees.

3.6.3 It is not clear if Council uses the information provided by Committees when making decisions.

It is also not clear if Council really uses the information and recommendations provided by the Committee when making decisions.

3.6.4 Recommendations

Confirm the process for Committees to put recommendations forward to Council. Ensure each Committee is clear on the problem they are being asked to address, what level of influence they will have and how their input will be used by Council.

3.7 Theme Seven: Committee Work Does Not Inform Council Decision-Making

3.7.1 It is unclear if Council is up to date on the work taking place on each Committee

3.7.2 There is no formal reporting our process for Committees of Council to Council or the public
There is no formal process for Committees to report out on their work either to Council or the public.
It is unclear if:

- Council reads and considers the recommendations put forward by Committees
- The Chair or Council representatives share Committee updates (what the Committee is working on, current work plan, etc.) with the Mayor and the rest of Council
- There is a feedback loop from Council back to the Committee (after a recommendation has been put forward)

3.7.3 Theme Seven Recommendations

Develop a more robust reporting out process for Committees of Council to share workplans, learnings, and accomplishments with Council. Develop a feedback loop from Council back to the Committee.

Recommended approach: Each January, dedicate one Committee of the Whole meeting to Committee and Working Group updates. *Note: This may take more than one COTW meeting.*

3.8 Theme Eight: Committees Lack Diversity

3.8.1 Committees lack diversity

There is a lack of diversity from professional, race/ethnicity, age, etc. Committees are not currently representative of the community.

What we heard:

- Committee members need refreshing - some committee members stay too long.
- The same organizations and people are members of multiple Committees; term limits and how many Committees each person serves should be restricted.
- Many of the committees have similar members and partner participation is repetitive, can we give some other organizations a chance to weigh-in?
- Some committees have almost the same members.
- Many of the members at large come from a similar demographic (as Committees are part of public engagement this is an issue).
- Repetitive stakeholder participation on multiple committees is taxing for organizations.
Consider how we can reduce the burden on those organizations to have better participation?

Note: We heard that the timing of meetings can make participation on Committees difficult and impact Committee diversity. Constraints such as work and school schedules, childcare, eldercare, etc. can impact who can join a committee. We should be aware of whose participation will be compromised by the various meeting times proposed.

Note: Consider youth involvement in Committees.

3.8.2 Some Committees have no at large community representatives.

Several Committees have no community representatives on the Committee despite this being one of the main purposes of Committees.

3.8.3 Theme Eight Recommendations

Review Committee membership with the lens of diversity. Consider ways we can increase diversity on Committees, so they are more reflective of the community. Develop an Inclusion and Diversity Strategy for Committees.

3.9 Theme Nine: Facilitation is Inconsistent

3.9.1 There is not a consistent approach to Committee meeting facilitation

The approach to meeting facilitation for Committees is uncoordinated and inconsistent. Each Committee approaches facilitation differently depending on the staff on the Committee.

What we heard:

- Committee members would appreciate more room for discussion in meetings.
- Some Committees provide a lot of time for discussion, others do not.
- There is a lot of discussion at meetings, but not a lot of consensus and action.
- Often discussion is not encouraged, staff want approval.
- Sometimes it feels like the facilitator is directing.
- Staff set agenda and discussion; the Chair does not run the meeting.
- There isn't room for input/feedback from the Committee, rather staff come with already done work and don't seem interested in receiving feedback (or there isn't time to get feedback through discussion and no opportunity for written feedback). It feels like the direction has already been determined and the Committee is asked to approve or support the given direction so they can tick the community engagement box on their Council report.
- Facilitation by outside consultants feels unnecessary and not as effective as staff led meeting.
- Some members are dominant, and the Chair does not keep them in check.
- Committee members do not understand their role as "advisors" – they do set the agenda or provide direction to staff or Council, they provide "advice" to Council.
- Meetings are focused on information sharing (roundtable updates and staff presentations) not on agenda items that relate to policy/strategy.
- Committee members attend meetings to get intelligence and stay looped in but do not engage in discussion.
- Committee members attempt to direct staff work plans or make Council decisions (rather than make recommendations).
- Committees discuss or aim to influence operational items or "get into the weeds."
- There is no space for Committee members, other than RMOW staff, to contribute to Committee work plans, meeting agendas, etc. Staff dictate, through the agenda, what the Committee will focus on.

3.9.2 Staff and Committee Chairs are not provided facilitation training

In interviews, several staff members mentioned they felt unqualified to facilitate Committee meetings but were required to do so as part of their staff liaison role. Staff noted if facilitation training was offered, they would be interested in attending.

3.9.3 Not enough time for meeting preparation

Committee members would like more time to review agenda items and prepare for meetings. Also, some information could be provided beforehand for members to review so presentations did not take up most of the meeting.

3.9.4 The RMOW does not have a space appropriate for large meeting facilitation

3.9.5 Lack of coordination between the Chair and staff liaison

There is no process for the staff liaison and Chair to coordinate and connect before the meeting, yet they work together in many cases during the meeting. This can make facilitation difficult for the Chair as they do not have input into the agenda or the background and context around the agenda items.

3.9.6 Theme Nine Recommendations

Develop a consistent approach to facilitation for all Committees that gives room for discussion and feedback. Provide facilitation training to staff and Chairs. Develop a process for the Staff Liaison and Chair to connect before meetings.

3.10 Theme Ten: There is no recruitment or training strategy

3.10.1 There is no coordinated recruitment strategy for all Committees

There is no coordinated guidance for recruitment of Committee members as each TOR is distinct. As a result, recruitment takes place in silos and is administratively cumbersome for staff.

3.10.2 Committee members do not receive training when they join a Committee

There is no formal onboarding or training program for new Committee members on things like the role of an advisory Committee, how Committees work, roles and responsibilities, Roberts Rules of Order, conflict of interest, confidentiality, formulating and elevating Committee recommendation's, etc. There is no clear definition of the expectations, roles, and responsibilities of Committee members (ex. Chair, RMOW staff, external agency representative, community member, etc.).

3.10.3 Theme Ten Recommendations

Develop a more coordinated recruitment strategy for Committees of Council. Develop and execute a training and onboarding program for Committees of Council members (staff, Council and community representatives)

Additional Items of Note

The themes in the previous section outline a large majority of what we heard from the data gathering phase. However, due to the depth of comments provided by Committee members, the project team did capture several other items of note. These items of note are captured below to demonstrate to Council that there are additional ways the Program can be improved and that these improvements will be incorporated into the final project outputs.

3.10.4 Meeting schedules lack consistency

Some Committees lack a permanent meeting schedule making it difficult for both staff (it is more time consuming to book a meeting, especially with senior staff, within a month of the meeting) and Committee members to schedule their time.

3.10.5 Meeting minutes lack detail

Meeting minutes for some Committees lack detail and can be vague. This does not allow people reading the minutes to understand what discussions took place at the meeting.

3.10.6 Meeting minutes take too long to get to the Council package

As the current practice for most Committees is to have minutes approved at the next Committee meeting, minutes can take a long time to get into the Council Agenda (sometimes months or even years). As a result, the opportunity for Council as a whole and the public to get the benefit of the Committee information and work has passed. Also, Council representatives for the Committee have a difficult time recalling the context of the discussion when it is several months later, and as a result cannot share an effective update with the rest of Council.

3.10.7 Lack of flexibility in permanent meeting schedules

TOR documents dictate the number of meetings per year each Committee will have. However, respondents felt that in some cases this was too rigid.

We heard that:

- If there are not "advisory items" to discuss and provide feedback on, the meeting should be canceled:
 - Do not have meetings just because they are in the calendar – if there are no advisory items to discuss or the purpose is not clear then cancel the meeting or have a digital check-in
- If there is input needed but there is not a meeting for some time, add a meeting. Specifically, do not:
 - Delay project timelines (by waiting for a meeting),
 - "Skip out" on taking a relevant project to the Committee (because there isn't a meeting for several months),
 - Leave so little time before the project is due to go to Council that there is no time to incorporate feedback from the Committee into the project or report.

3.10.8 Difference in opinion in regard to zoom versus in-person meetings

Currently, some Committees are utilizing Zoom for meetings, while others are meeting in person. Several respondents asked what the guidance would be moving forward. Several staff members noted (in interviews) that they would prefer that the meeting format be at the discretion of each Committee (ex. that each Committee would vote on the meeting format at the beginning of each year). Several survey respondents (most were community members) indicated they would like to return to in-person meetings as they felt more engaged.

There are conflicting opinions around digital versus in-person. Some really wanted digital; others in-person.

Note: There are various reasons why some prefer to meet on Zoom:

- Meeting attendance improves for Zoom meetings, helping to meet quorum
- Remuneration requirements for some Committees makes it cost-prohibitive to host meetings in-person (ex. Advisory Design Panel, Board of Variance)
- Staff noted that Zoom was easier as discussions did not become as "heated" on Zoom and were not as lengthy

3.10.9 Committee remuneration needs to be clarified

Some Committees are required to provide remuneration for out-of-pocket expenses. Both ADP and BOV have remuneration for out-of-pocket expenses listed in their TOR. BOV remuneration is legislated. Currently, there is no formal process to budget for, and allocate, remuneration and as a result some Committee meetings are taking place virtually to avoid travel costs.

3.10.10 There is no feedback loop from Council back to the Committee

A feedback loop from Council back to the Committee is needed. Committee stakeholders need to know that Council has received the information, and that it was reviewed to feel the time and work they put into Committees is valued.

Note: Legislative Services confirmed they do connect with the recording secretary after Council minutes are formally received by Council. Minutes are then added to the website.

3.10.11 There is no formal mechanism to evaluate Committee effectiveness

There is no mechanism to evaluate the effectiveness of the Committee Program and individual Committees on a regular basis.

3.10.12 There is no consistent review schedule for Committees

Some Committee topics are outdated. Council and RMOW priorities have changed but Committees have not changed along with these priorities. A consistent review schedule is needed as well as a way of disbanding Committees with outdated mandates. Committees when work is done or issue resolved (sun setting procedure).

3.10.13 Some Committees do not adhere to the mandate in their TOR

There are Committees that do not align with the mandates in the TOR.

3.10.14 Conflict of Interest exists on some Committees

Some staff that were interviewed mentioned concern about conflict of interest on Committees. We heard that some Committees include organizations and members with a vested interest in the outcome of decisions.

3.10.15 Committees are a limited way of engaging the community

(We heard that) engaging the community via Committee is an outdated way of collecting input from the community. Committees are a small audience and lack diversity. Current communication tools like social media and online engagement platforms (i.e., Engage Whistler) reach a much broader audience and provide more diverse feedback than Committees.

We heard from several Committee members that it feels like staff bring initiatives to Committees so they can “tick the community engagement box on their Council report.” We heard from staff that Committees allow staff to meet partner and community engagement requirements on Council reports without needing to host a more formal community engagement strategy and process. (In some cases, this may be suitable, other times it may not.)

We heard that “it is a very limited group that you are reaching through Committees.”

Note: This issue may be resolved if diversity on Committees is addressed.

3.10.16 Often projects do not go to Committees

Some projects or initiatives that have very related Committees Topics do not go to the Committee before going to Council. This makes it feel like the Committee is not valued when it is not used.

3.10.17 Public are not always sure how to attend Committee meetings

Open Committee meetings are not well advertised.

3.10.18 Don't forget the history

As we move through this review, it was asked that we keep the history of the Committee Program top of mind. History from Mayor:

- Previous 2011 decision was to move away from task forces connected to Whistler 2020 towards a committee based system

- Taskforces provided robust public engagement – do not want to lose this in the Committee review
- Do not miss that the decision to become Committee based came at the expense of the replacement of Whistler 2020 taskforces
- As part of the Whistler 2020 model, there was a task force for each of the 17 strategies of Whistler 2020—it was a robust system of engagement that required substantial resourcing which was eliminated as part of an organizational review in 2011