



COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date: May 8, 2025
Contact: Katrina Leckovic
Contact No.: 604.873.7998
RTS No.: 17610
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: May 20, 2025

[Submit comments to Council](#)

TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: City Clerk
SUBJECT: Report Back – Review of City of Vancouver Committee Structures and Systems

Recommendations

THAT this report be received for information.

Purpose and Executive Summary

This report assesses the sustainability and effectiveness of the City of Vancouver's current advisory committee system, due to the continuous need to evolve and adapt municipal governance structures to meet the changing needs and demands of the city and its residents. While advisory committees have existed at the City for at least the past 50 years, the current committee framework (Type A, B, C and D committees) was established in 2006 and adjusted incrementally over time to capture diverse community insights and inform decision-making. This framework faces ongoing challenges such as overlapping scopes, resource constraints, and misalignment with Council's strategic priorities, including the need to balance committee-identified issues with Council's established focus areas.

Drawing on internal evaluations, previous reform efforts, and a jurisdictional scan of Canadian municipalities, this report presents a comprehensive overview of the issues. It outlines three alternative options for reform:

- Transition from advisory committees to task forces;
- Consolidate into a reduced number of strategically defined committees;
- Retain the current structure with continuing incremental enhancements.

Council Authority/Previous Decisions

- [Section 159 of the Vancouver Charter](#) empowers Council to establish committees as it sees fit and to refer matters to committees for report.

- [On February 14, 2023](#), Council established 11 “Type A” Council Advisory Committees with a term ending November 1, 2026.
- [On October 9, 2024](#), Council directed staff to report back in Q1 2025 with an assessment of the current committee structures and to explore alternative approaches that better align with the City’s strategic priorities.

City Manager’s Comments

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendation.

Context and Background

Council Advisory Committees are comprised of highly engaged individuals—residents and subject-matter experts—who bring lived experiences and unique perspectives to municipal decision-making. These members volunteer their time to provide input on Council priorities and decisions.

These committees are part of the City’s broader Civic Agency system, which includes:

- Type A: Committees that provide advice to Council
- Type B: Committees that provide advice to staff
- Type C: Legislated and/or planning-oriented committees
- Type D: Mayoral task forces
- External: Bodies like the Vancouver Public Library Board and the PNE Board, to which Council appoints members and which provide governance or advisory functions for external organizations.

This report focuses on the City’s Type A Council Advisory Committees.

Reform Efforts

City staff have identified challenges and potential for improvement in the advisory committee system for over 20 years. As early as 2006, an [Advisory Bodies Review](#) (Report Date: October 2, 2006, RTS No. 5468, Author: Janice MacKenzie) highlighted the urgent need for reform. The report observed that:

“The City of Vancouver’s current advisory body system needs a number of important changes that should be undertaken as soon as possible. Civic governance is changing and the advisory committee system must keep pace. Some of Vancouver’s advisory bodies are currently weakened by their lack of integration with broader civic goals and Council priorities, unclear relationships with Council and staff, and a lack of clear, appropriate and manageable mandates.”

Building on these observations, the more recent 2022 [Type A Advisory Body Review and Improvement Report](#) provided an in-depth examination of 12 Type A and 3 Type B advisory bodies. It identified persistent challenges related to the following, and initiated related, incremental improvement measures:

- **Clarity and Scope:** Despite revisions, many advisory bodies continue to operate with scopes that do not fully align with current Council priorities, resulting in recommendations that Council is not prepared to action.
- **Support and Training:** Although significant resources have been dedicated to training members and liaisons, gaps persist in training continuity and the maintenance of knowledge of committee processes.
- **Administrative Processes:** Efforts to streamline reporting have been partially successful yet overlapping scopes and inconsistent reporting continue to strain staff capacity.
- **Resource Constraints and Accessibility:** Despite measures to improve accessibility, such as introducing virtual/hybrid meetings supporting certain expense reimbursements, resource and capacity limitations still restrict the effective integration of diverse community insights into decision-making.

Despite numerous reviews and incremental changes over the past two decades, the advisory committee system has struggled to consistently provide the targeted, actionable feedback most useful to Council's decision-making. While committees often raise important community issues, frequent efforts to introduce new priorities—rather than align with Council's existing strategic direction—can lead to frustration on both sides. Such recommendations may be set aside not due to lack of merit, but because Council's agenda is limited by its current focus, resources, and capacity. As a result, Council may feel the advice is not actionable, while committees may feel their contributions are being overlooked. These findings point to the need for more substantial changes to the system to better meet Council's and committees' needs and honour the valuable time and contributions of all participants.

Jurisdictional Scan

Staff conducted a scan of 14 Canadian municipalities to assess committee structures and extract lessons applicable to Vancouver. Although council sizes and local contexts differ, several common challenges emerged—including overlapping scopes, resource constraints, and misalignment with strategic priorities. The review identified five primary types of advisory bodies:

- **Informal and Temporary Engagement Groups:** Loosely organized bodies (e.g., town halls or ad hoc committees) that provide focused input on specific issues without long-term commitment.
- **Citizen Advisory Committees:** Formally recognized groups that serve as a bridge between communities and Council, offering ongoing, non-binding advice.
- **Task Forces or Limited Scope Committees:** Bodies established temporarily to address urgent issues or specific projects, such as budget reviews or targeted social initiatives.
- **Professionalized or Decision-Making Boards:** Committees with binding decision-making authority or expert evaluations, often governed by statutory frameworks.
- **Standing or Select Council Committees:** Permanent committees composed of elected Councillors providing continuous oversight.

Key examples of approaches to reform include:

- [City of Ottawa \(2023\)](#): Recommended procedural reforms and restructuring into statutory, policy-based bodies to address overlapping scopes and resource challenges.
- [Halifax Regional Municipality \(2024\)](#): Suggested dissolving redundant committees and amending terms of reference to better align with municipal priorities.
- [City of Victoria \(2022\)](#): Advocated refining meeting structures and delegating authority, while standardizing terms of reference and enhancing staff support.
- [City of Guelph \(2023\)](#): Proposed a governance framework that consolidated advisory bodies—reducing from 14 to 7—while emphasizing a deliberative, inclusive approach and clear communication with Council.

These findings resonate with the challenges identified in previous reviews and underscore the need for further innovation in Vancouver’s advisory committee framework.

Engagement with Advisory Committees

In accordance with Council direction, staff conducted consultations with advisory committee members in preparing this report. Approximately 25% of members (37 respondents) participated in a survey. Key findings include:

- **Participation and Value:**
 - Members value the diverse expertise and collaborative, inclusive environment that the committees foster.
 - The committees are seen as a valuable channel for capturing community insights and lived experiences.
 - Members expressed concern about low levels of liaison attendance and participation.
- **Concerns on Impact and Follow-Up:**
 - Many members expressed uncertainty regarding how their recommendations are integrated into Council and staff decision-making.
 - There is a strong call for more robust and visible follow-up mechanisms to ensure that input translates into actionable outcomes.
- **Need for Clarity and Training:**
 - Respondents noted that clearer role definitions—particularly for committee chairs and liaisons—are necessary.
 - Enhanced training programs could improve members’ understanding of their responsibilities and ensure alignment with Council priorities.

In addition to the above engagement, two committees have passed related recommendation motions—these are included as Appendix A.

Overall, while advisory committees are appreciated for the quality and dedication they bring to their work, to fully harness their potential and enhance their impact, there is a need to define scope, strengthen feedback loops, clarify roles, and provide targeted training. These improvements would support a clearer understanding of how committee efforts align with established Council priorities, helping to reduce frustration when well-intentioned recommendations fall outside of Council’s current strategic goals objectives and priorities.

Public Engagement Mechanisms

In addition to advisory committees, the City employs a variety of methods to capture community feedback, with each reaching distinct audiences, that were not available to the City when the original Council advisory committees were established. These new and evolving community engagement processes widen opportunities for community input and make contribution to Council decision making more accessible. Key methods of engagement include:

- **Diverse Engagement Channels:**
 - **Direct Submissions:**
Residents can submit feedback via Council forms.
 - **Planning and Development Feedback:**
Community members may comment on rezoning applications and City planning initiatives.
 - **Departmentally Organized Engagement:**
City departments conduct targeted advisory committees, workshops, and consultations on specific topics.
 - **Speak at Council, Standing Committee and Public Hearings:** Residents may speak at Council and standing committee meetings for certain report types. Vancouver is unique in this regard, as individuals and group representatives have the opportunity to speak directly on a wide range of agenda items, whereas some municipalities only permit speakers for a set time during meetings or not at all. Since 2021, the number of registered public speakers for Council and Standing Committees has ranged between approximately 600 and 800 per year.
 - **Council Correspondence:**
Council receives over 10,000 pieces of correspondence from the public each year, in the form of emails, phone calls, and 3-1-1 calls.
- **Reach and Frequency:**
 - The City conducts between 25 and 30 public engagement surveys annually.
 - Neighbourhood-level engagements typically receive around 500 responses per event, while city-wide surveys attract between 2,000 and 5,000 responses.

While there are many touchpoints for public interaction with the City, certain groups remain underrepresented in surveys, engagement events, and direct speaking opportunities. The existing advisory committees are mandated to serve as an additional channel for diverse perspectives—including those of traditionally underrepresented groups such as Urban Indigenous peoples, 2SLGBTQIA community members, and individuals from various ethnocultural backgrounds—to be incorporated into decision-making by Council.

Discussion

The analysis of Vancouver's advisory committee framework indicates that while these bodies are intended to provide Council with the benefit of valuable insights reflecting the expertise and

perspectives of Vancouver residents, the system is currently constrained by fragmentation, overlapping scopes, and misalignment with Council’s evolving strategic priorities. This often leads to gaps between the issues committees raise and Council’s focus areas. Even where the framework functions well—for instance, by enabling community feedback early in staff project development—these successes are often not clearly visible to committee members or Council.

These challenges reduce the effectiveness of advisory committees as conduits for targeted, actionable feedback. As a result, several alternative approaches have been developed for Council’s consideration.

Option 1: Transition from Advisory Committees to Task Forces

Overview:

This option involves dissolving 10 of the 11 current Council Advisory Committees (excluding the Urban Indigenous Peoples’ Advisory Committee), to be replaced as needed with task forces formed to address specific, time-sensitive priorities.¹ In this model, each task force would have a narrowly defined scope and be composed of members selected through a nomination process to ensure a structured and impartial selection process.

Benefits	Risks
<p>Agility and Responsiveness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task forces can be quickly assembled to address emerging issues, ensuring that input is provided in a timely manner for urgent policy decisions. 	<p>Lack of Continuity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The temporary structure may hinder long-term strategic engagement, resulting in weaker relationship-building or the loss of systems knowledge once the task force dissolves.
<p>Targeted Expertise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With each task force focusing on a specific issue, it is possible to assemble a group with specialized expertise tailored to that subject, resulting in more focused and actionable recommendations. 	<p>Risk of Exclusion or Tokenization:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a potential risk that historically marginalized voices may be underrepresented if inclusivity is not actively and consistently prioritized.
<p>Cost Efficiency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources are only allocated when a task force is active, potentially reducing ongoing administrative costs compared to maintaining permanent committees. 	
<p>Clear Scope and Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The temporary nature of task forces ensures that their scopes remain narrowly 	

¹ Regardless of the advisory committee structure selected by Council, Indigenous Relations does not recommend eliminating the Urban Indigenous Peoples’ Advisory Committee (UIPAC), or consolidating it with any other committees. UIPAC serves as a critical link with Urban Indigenous Peoples in Vancouver, and removing it could foster mistrust within the Indigenous community regarding the City’s ability to fulfill its Reconciliation commitments.

While UIPAC has faced many of the same issues outlined in this report, staff will work to address these challenges by ensuring culturally appropriate meeting spaces and protocols, clearly defining and communicating recommendations and follow-up actions, and strengthening alignment with the work on UNDRIP being conducted by Indigenous Relations staff and the MSTV Intergovernmental Table. It is important to note that UIPAC is not a decision-maker in the same way as the Local Nations, though its role remains vital.

Benefits	Risks
defined, which can lead to more precise and relevant feedback for Council and staff.	

This option offers a flexible, responsive approach to capturing community input, with the potential to deliver focused, actionable recommendations on pressing issues. However, it also raises concerns regarding continuity, relationship-building, and inclusivity, which would need to be carefully managed to ensure that the quality and breadth of community feedback is maintained.

Option 2: Consolidate into a Reduced Number of Advisory Committees

Overview:

This option involves dissolving the current Council Advisory Committees and consolidating them into a smaller number—a maximum of four is suggested, inclusive of the Urban Indigenous Peoples’ Advisory Committee—each with a clearly defined scope directly aligned with Council priorities. The aim would be to streamline processes, reduce redundancy, and ensure that the committees’ outputs are directly aligned with Council’s priorities, thereby providing more focused and actionable feedback.

Benefits	Risks
<p>Enhanced Strategic Alignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer committees can be designed to target specific strategic priorities, ensuring recommendations are more directly relevant to Council’s decision-making. 	<p>Risk of Reduced Diversity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidation may narrow the range of perspectives if the broad expertise of the current committees is not adequately preserved, potentially underrepresenting specialized or niche community issues.
<p>Improved Efficiency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidation reduces administrative burdens by minimizing overlapping functions and duplication of efforts. • Fewer committees allow for more concentrated staff support, clearer reporting lines, and simplified management of community input. 	<p>Transition Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restructuring would entail an adjustment period, risking disruption to ongoing advisory processes.
<p>Better Resource Allocation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reduced number of committees enables more effective use of City funds and staff resources by focusing efforts on a smaller set of high-impact areas. 	<p>Potential for Over-Concentration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the consolidated committees’ scope is defined too narrowly, they may fail to capture broader community concerns or miss nuances that inform complex policy discussions.
<p>Stronger Accountability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly defined scopes can improve role clarity, facilitate better follow-up on recommendations, and enhance overall accountability in the feedback process. 	

Consolidating advisory committees into a reduced number of committees with clearly defined strategic scopes offers the potential to enhance the alignment of community feedback with Council’s priorities while streamlining operations and resource allocation. However, careful consideration would be needed to preserve the diversity of community input and manage the transitional challenges associated with such a structural change.

Timing is also an important consideration when establishing new committees. Following Council’s approval of the current committee terms of reference in February 2023, it took approximately five months to complete recruitment and training, with regular meetings beginning in July 2023. Assuming a similar process, new committees may not begin regular operations until late 2025 or early 2026—leaving less than a year in the current Council term.

Option 3: Retain the Current Structure with Continuing Incremental Enhancements

Overview:

This option involves retaining the current structure of 11 advisory committees without undertaking major structural changes. While some reporting and meeting procedures could be streamlined, full realization of the benefits outlined in the previous options would be constrained by capacity and resource limits.

Benefits	Risks
<p>Continuity and Stability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preserves existing relationships and established processes. 	<p>Persistent Misalignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current framework may continue to operate with scopes that are not aligned with evolving Council priorities, resulting in less actionable recommendations.
<p>Incremental Improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor adjustments can be made to improve efficiency without causing significant disruption. 	<p>Limited Capacity for Change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fundamental inefficiencies and overlapping scopes may remain unaddressed, reducing the overall effectiveness of the advisory committee system.
<p>Simplicity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoids the complexities and transitional challenges associated with a complete structural overhaul. 	<p>Fragmentation of Feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple independent committees may continue to produce diverse inputs that are difficult to synthesize into a coherent set of recommendations for Council.
	<p>Missed Opportunities for Innovation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining the status quo may fail to capture emerging trends in community engagement or adapt to changing stakeholder needs.

This option preserves the existing advisory committee system, ensuring continuity and stability, but it may also perpetuate longstanding inefficiencies and limit the potential for significant improvements in delivering targeted, actionable community feedback.

Financial Implications

Since 2021, Advisory Committees have been allocated an annual budget of approximately \$84,100. This budget is intended to support miscellaneous supplies, meeting expenses (including catering and limited expense allowances for members), consultant services for training, and recruitment advertising. Actual expenditures have consistently been lower, largely due to limited uptake of the available expense allowances by members.

In 2023, actual spending totaled \$34,412.68, compared to \$26,149.41 in 2024. The higher 2023 amount reflects a significant recruitment advertising campaign at the start of the current committee term, which was not required the following year.

Structural changes to the Advisory Committee system—such as consolidating the number of committees—would have a direct impact on meeting-related expenses. Over the current term, these costs have averaged approximately \$2,050 per committee annually. As such, reducing the number of committees could yield annual savings of roughly this amount for each committee discontinued.

However, this estimate does not include variable costs such as advertising, supplies, or consultant services, nor does it account for offsetting costs if committees are replaced by alternative bodies, such as task forces. It also does not consider the varying time demands placed on Council, City Clerk’s Office staff, and staff liaisons in supporting each committee, which are more difficult to quantify.

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications.

Conclusion

The analysis of Vancouver’s advisory committee system indicates long-standing challenges related to overlapping scopes, resource constraints, and misalignment with current Council priorities. Despite past reform efforts, the system continues to face difficulties in delivering targeted, actionable community feedback. Three distinct options have been outlined: transition to task forces; consolidation into a reduced number of strategically focused committees; and maintaining the status quo with incremental improvements. Each alternative presents unique benefits and trade-offs. This report is presented for Council’s information to decide on the most effective approach to enhance the quality and impact of community input in municipal decision-making.

* * * * *

APPENDIX A

Advisory Committee Recommendations

Following Council direction to initiate this report, four Advisory Committees passed related recommendation motions. These motions have already been circulated to Council along with relevant meeting minutes, but are consolidated here for convenience.

2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee, March 6, 2025

Motion to Maintain and Strengthen the 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee

WHEREAS

1. The 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee advises Council and staff on enhancing access and inclusion for Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer communities to fully participate in City services and civic life;
2. The Committee specifically exists to elevate the voices of people who have historically been, and continue to be, marginalized, and to ensure that the unique needs, concerns, and perspectives of the 2SLGBTQ+ community are meaningfully and thoughtfully incorporated into municipal decision-making;
3. 2SLGBTQ+ people have historically faced, and continue to face, barriers to meaningful civic participation, and some have experienced outright bias and oppression;
4. While there is merit in the need to ensure that advisory committees provide more focused engagement and feedback, it is vital to ensure the continuation of distinct advisory committees like this one, which can exist alongside other committee structures;
5. There are alternative ways to improve the functioning of advisory committees without removing the benefits they provide, such as clear mandate letters, enhanced meeting processes, and cross-committee collaboration;
6. The potential elimination of this Committee in favour of a different structure would diminish the representation of 2SLGBTQ+ voices and lived experiences in municipal decision-making and decades of progress in increasing civic participation among marginalized communities;
7. Including a handful of 2SLGBTQ+ people within a larger, broader body, such as a Community Advisory Assembly, or only within committees focused exclusively on specific topics or Council priorities, would fail to fully capture the diverse experiences of people under the 2SLGBTQ+ umbrella, while also substantially reducing their opportunity to speak;

8. This Committee provides more in-depth and technical feedback than would be possible as part of a larger body, with staff over the years stating that the Committee's feedback is often more extensive than that of other advisory committees and allows staff to demonstrate meaningful engagement with the 2SLGBTQ+ community;
9. Dedicated, distinct committees like this one are essential for providing focused feedback on issues directly relevant to the 2SLGBTQ+ community, such as the [Trans, Gender Diverse and Two-Spirit Safety and Inclusion Action Plan](#); hate crimes; 2SLGBTQ+ older adults and housing; and issues affecting Davie street and other 2SLGBTQ+ neighbourhoods;
10. The October 9th Council motion on advisory committee structures ([Minutes, page 13](#)) suggests that committees may be placing more emphasis on operations rather than policy, but in practice, these two areas are deeply interconnected, as operational matters directly impact the lived experiences of 2SLGBTQ+ people and often signal areas where policy improvements are necessary;
11. Given historical experiences of stigma and marginalization, many 2SLGBTQ+ individuals feel safer sharing their lived experiences and perspectives as part of a separate group of like individuals, whereas participation in a majoritized group could limit open and frank discussion;
12. This Committee gives members sufficient time and space to bring forward ideas and concerns that may not be apparent to a majoritized group, ensuring that issues affecting the 2SLGBTQ+ community are not overlooked;
13. Over the years, this Committee has established strong relationships with Council members and City staff, which have facilitated meaningful engagement and policy improvements, and such relationships would be disrupted if the Committee were dissolved; and
14. The Committee plays a critical role in bridging the gap between City Council, municipal staff, and marginalized 2SLGBTQ+ communities, ensuring that policies and services are informed by lived experiences and clearly conveyed to the community.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee recommends that Council:

- i. Ensure the Committee remains a distinct, dedicated body that provides focused, expert feedback on issues affecting 2SLGBTQ+ people;
- ii. Ensure that any changes to advisory committee structures do not diminish the representation of equity-denied communities, including 2SLGBTQ+ people, in municipal decision-making; and

- iii. Recognize that specialized advisory committees like this one play a vital role in democratic participation beyond voting and should continue to serve as a means for historically marginalized communities to engage with civic processes.

APPROVED BY CONSENSUS

Women’s Advisory Committee, April 22, 2025

Motion Regarding Advisory Committees Report

WHEREAS

1. City of Vancouver civic agencies are volunteer bodies established and appointed by Council to convey community perspectives to Council while advising on City priorities, projects, and initiatives, or to serve statutory functions as outlined in relevant by-laws or terms of reference;
2. Civic agencies are essential to the City’s public engagement efforts, and are often asked to provide early and ongoing feedback on specific projects;
3. Civic agencies allow residents to develop civic knowledge and give back to their communities, and are a crucial part of the City’s accountability to and engagement with residents;
4. Civic agencies have been shaping City priorities for nearly a century—beginning with the Vancouver City Planning Commission (1926–1952), expanding in the 1970s with advisory bodies like the Bicycle Advisory Committee and special advisory committees on disabilities and seniors, and continuing to evolve toward more inclusive and diverse public engagement;
5. As of part of this larger body of Advisory Committee, the Women’s Advisory Committee (WAC) advises Council and staff on enhancing access and inclusion for women and girls to fully participate in City services and civic life;
6. The Committee specifically exists to elevate the voices of people who have historically been, and continue to be, marginalized, and to ensure that the unique needs, concerns, and perspectives of the community are meaningfully and thoughtfully incorporated into municipal decision-making;
7. Women, girls, and gender-diverse people have historically faced, and continue to face, barriers to meaningful civic participation, and some have experienced outright bias and oppression;
8. While there is merit in the need to ensure that advisory committees provide more focused engagement and feedback, it is vital to ensure the continuation of distinct advisory committees like this one, which can exist alongside other committee structures;
9. There are alternative ways to improve the functioning of advisory committees without removing the benefits they provide, such as clear mandate letters, enhanced meeting processes, and cross-committee collaboration;

10. The potential elimination of this Committee in favour of a different structure would diminish the voices and lived experiences of Women, girls, and gender-diverse people in municipal decision-making, reversing decades of progress in increasing civic participation among marginalized communities;
11. Including a handful of women and gender-diverse people within a larger, broader body, such as a Community Advisory Assembly, or only within committees focused exclusively on specific topics or Council priorities, would fail to fully capture the diverse experiences of women and gender-diverse people, while also substantially reducing their opportunity to speak;
12. This Committee provides more in-depth and technical feedback than would be possible as part of a larger body, with staff over the years stating that the Committee's feedback is extensive and allows staff to demonstrate meaningful engagement with women, girls, and gender-diverse people;
13. Dedicated, distinct committees like this one are essential for providing focused feedback on City policies directly affecting women, girls, and gender-diverse people, including the Women's Equity Strategy (2018–2028), the Equity Framework, and the Childcare Strategy;
14. Dedicated, distinct committees like this one also address gender-based violence, MMIWG2S+, safety across city spaces, and equitable access to housing, childcare, and opportunities for women and gender-diverse people;
15. Because gender-based (GBA+) considerations are vital to all aspects of city planning, gender analysis and engagement are necessary across a broad scope of municipal decision-making;
16. The October 9th Council motion on advisory committee structures (Minutes, page 13) suggests that committees may be placing more emphasis on operations rather than policy, but in practice, these two areas are deeply interconnected, as operational matters directly impact the lived experiences of women, girls, and gender-diverse people, and often signal areas where policy improvements are necessary;
17. Given historical experiences of stigma and marginalization, many women and gender-diverse people feel safer sharing their lived experiences and perspectives as part of a separate group of like individuals, whereas participation in a majoritized group could limit open and frank discussion;
18. This Committee gives members sufficient time and space to bring forward ideas and concerns that may not be apparent to a majoritized group, ensuring that issues affecting women and gender-diverse people are not overlooked;
19. Over the years, these Committees have established strong relationships with Council members and City staff, which have facilitated meaningful engagement and policy improvements, and such relationships would be disrupted if the Committee were dissolved; and
20. These Committees plays a critical role in bridging the gap between City Council, municipal staff, and marginalized communities, ensuring that policies and

services are informed by lived experiences and clearly conveyed to the community.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Women’s Advisory Committee recommends that Council:

- i. Ensure the Committee remains a distinct, dedicated body that provides focused, expert feedback on issues affecting women, girls, and gender-diverse people;
- ii. Ensure that any changes to advisory committee structures do not diminish the representation of equity-denied communities, including women and gender-diverse people, in municipal decision-making;
- iii. Recognize that specialized advisory committees like this one play a vital role in democratic participation beyond voting, and should continue to serve as a means for historically marginalized communities to engage with civic processes; and,
- iv. Reaffirm an ongoing commitment to working with Civic Agencies towards shared goals, including appropriate investment of time and support by Council and staff liaisons.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Arts and Culture Advisory Committee, May 13, 2025

WHEREAS

1. City of Vancouver civic agencies are volunteer bodies appointed by Council to convey community perspectives and advise on City priorities, projects, and initiatives;
2. These agencies are essential to public engagement and democratic accountability;
3. For nearly a century—beginning with the Vancouver City Planning Commission (1926) and evolving to today’s network of advisory bodies—Council has relied on specialized committees for informed guidance;
4. The Arts & Culture Advisory Committee (ACAC) advises Council and staff on cultivating a thriving, inclusive, and sustainable creative sector encompassing arts, culture, heritage, and creative industries;
5. Vancouver’s arts and culture economy generates more than \$6 billion in annual GDP and 100,000+ jobs, according to 2022 Culture Satellite Account data, enriches community identity, and advances the City’s Reconciliation and equity commitments;
6. Artists and cultural workers—especially those who are Indigenous, racialized, disabled, 2SLGBTQ+, women, non-binary, or low-income—face systemic barriers: insecure funding, loss of cultural space, rising costs of living, and under-representation in civic decision-making;

7. Distinct, dedicated committees like ACAC provide nuanced, technical feedback on priority initiatives such as Culture|Shift, Making Space for Arts & Culture, the Vancouver Music Strategy, Public Art Policy updates, Creative City Strategy implementation, and Reconciliation frameworks;
8. Consolidating or significant restructuring of ACAC would dilute specialized knowledge, reduce sector representation, and risk overlooking equity-denied voices;
9. Alternative improvements—clear mandate letters, cross-committee collaboration, streamlined meeting processes—can increase efficiency without sacrificing dedicated arts expertise;
10. Historical experiences of exclusion mean many cultural workers share their lived experience more openly in a committee of peers which provides a critical conduit to City Council;
11. ACAC's long-standing relationships with Council and staff enable timely, actionable advice and build trust between City Hall and the creative community;
12. Sustained investment in ACAC (staff liaison time, honoraria, accessibility supports) is essential for meaningful engagement and accountability to the City's stated cultural strategic priorities.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Arts & Culture Advisory Committee recommends that Council:

- (i) Maintain ACAC as a distinct, dedicated body providing expert, intersectional feedback on City policies and programs impacting the arts, culture, and creative industries;
- (ii) Ensure any restructuring of civic agencies does not diminish representation of equity-denied cultural communities in municipal decision-making;
- (iii) Recognize that specialized committees like ACAC are vital tools of participatory democracy beyond electoral processes, enabling historically marginalized cultural voices to shape civic life; and
- (iv) Reaffirm ongoing commitment to resource ACAC adequately—including dedicated staff support, stipends for committee members, accessibility measures, and opportunities for cross-committee collaboration—to advance shared cultural goals.

APPROVED BY CONSENSUS

Older Persons and Elders Advisory Committee, May 16, 2025

THAT the Older Persons and Elders Advisory Committee recommends to Council that the Committee remain an advisory committee.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

* * * * *