



## CREATION OF AN INFRASTRUCTURE STANDING COMMITTEE

### RECOMMENDATION

That the February 25, 2025, Office of the City Clerk report OCC02814, be received for information.

### Report Purpose

Information only.

### Previous Council/Committee Action

At the December 10, 2024, City Council meeting, the following motion was passed:

That Administration provide a report to City Council on the creation of an Infrastructure Standing Committee that recommends membership, including non-council membership, initiation timeline, and considerations for any changes to the mandate of current standing committees.

### REPORT

This report provides background on Council's standing committees, discusses key considerations in creating a new standing committee, provides recommendations on an implementation path that can be in place quickly, and identifies additional considerations that would require more time to successfully implement.

### 2021-2025 Standing Committees of Council

Edmonton's City Council currently has nine standing committees as designated in section 13 of the Council Committees Bylaw 18156:

1. Agenda Review Committee (ARC)
2. Audit Committee
3. City Manager and City Auditor Performance Evaluation Committee (CMCAPEC)
4. Community and Public Services Committee (CPSC)
5. Council Services Committee
6. Emergency Advisory Committee
7. Executive Committee

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8. Urban Planning Committee (UPC)
9. Utility Committee

Bylaw 18156 outlines the mandates and membership composition of each committee. At the start of each term, Council appoints four Councillors for 16-month terms to each of CPSC, UPC and Executive Committee. The Mayor is a permanent member and chair of Executive Committee, and is a voting member of all standing committees when present.

Attachment 1 outlines the recent history and changes of City Council standing committees, including other instances when external members were part of Council committees.

### **New Infrastructure Committee Considerations**

Administration's starting point when considering the implementation of a new standing committee was that a majority of Council has deemed it a priority, so the committee should be formed before the fall 2025 municipal election. This assumption guides the following considerations and recommendations.

#### Current Standing Committee Procedures and Membership Apply

It is not recommended that significant changes be made to Council and Committee procedures. Therefore, should a new standing committee be created, all the same practices that are in place for other standing committees would apply, including procedures for agenda management and the public requesting to speak to items.

Following the practice at the start of the term, it is recommended that Council appoint four Councillors for the remainder of the term and that the Mayor, when in attendance, counts towards quorum and can vote.

#### Delegated Authorities Remain the Same

A new standing committee would have the same authorities as existing committees to:

- receive reports for information
- send reports to Council with or without a recommendation
- direct the City Manager to provide additional information or perform new work provided that doing so will not affect the approved operating or capital budgets
- approve any agreement that exceeds the City Manager's delegated authority

There would be no changes to the City Manager's authority as set out in the City Administration Bylaw 16620.

#### Changes to Committee Mandates and new Infrastructure Committee Meetings

Attachment 2 provides the mandates of each committee if a new infrastructure committee is added, including changes required to existing standing committees. The proposed mandate for the new committee includes:

- capital project development and delivery;

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- cost, schedule and scope progression for both growth and renewal components of the capital plan and;
- progress on the Capital Plan.

Infrastructure Committee meetings could be scheduled on existing committee days. Based on the predicted number of items on agendas and realigned mandates, meetings of other standing committees would be shortened to accommodate a new committee. Attachment 3 outlines the potential meeting dates (up to the 2025 election) and reports that would be moved to the new Infrastructure Committee once established.

### Inclusion of Public Members - Not Recommended at this Time

In Administration's preliminary scan of other Alberta municipalities, committees related to infrastructure typically do not have public members (including Calgary's Infrastructure and Planning Committee). In the one case found, where there were public members, they did not have an ability to vote; Airdrie's Community Infrastructure and Strategic Growth Committee has three voting members who are elected officials and two, non-voting, public citizen members. Audit-related committees, similar to Edmonton, were the most common type of committee with public members.

Administration's recommendation to establish the new committee without public members, as a preliminary step, allows it to be formed before the 2025 election. Based on initial experiences and learnings from the new committee, Council and Administration could evaluate the intended benefits for the potential of adding public members. This would inform options for the process to recruit Council's desired skills and mitigate procurement risks or conflicts of interest.

If Council directs public members to be included before the committee is formed, additional considerations and a revised timeline for establishing the committee and holding its first meeting are included in Attachment 4.

### **Other Options for Consideration**

The recommended path for the creation of a new standing committee, as directed in Council's motion, is outlined above. The next step would be for Council to pass a motion (see below) directing Administration to prepare a bylaw.

However, if Council does not want to create a new committee at this time, there are other options. If Council would like opportunities to discuss aspects of the capital plan or specific projects in more detail, these discussions could be prioritized within the existing Council and Committee schedule and adding additional times as required. These other options may allow for focused and frequent infrastructure discussions before the end of the 2021-2025 term.

Administration currently provides information about all capital projects (excluding land development, fleet, and IT) utilizing the following approaches

1. "Building Edmonton" website,<sup>1</sup> and
2. Quarterly memorandums to Council detailing capital performance reporting, and

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<sup>1</sup> [building.edmonton.ca/projects](http://building.edmonton.ca/projects)

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3. Semi-annual memorandums to Council on transformational programs including LRT Expansion, Yellowhead Freeway, and Blatchford (and recently added Active Modes).

At the October 22, 2024, City Council meeting, Council also made the following motion:

That Administration provide quarterly updates to City Council on the status of ongoing or imminent major capital construction projects (roads, bridges, and LRT), including traffic management plans and disruptions, project progress, and mitigation strategies.

Administration could bring quarterly verbal reports focusing on project progress, impacts, costs and risks directly to Council to allow for in-depth discussion and public feedback. With this option, standard Council rules could apply, or alternatively, a "Committee of the Whole" model could be used at non-regular or Special Council meetings. This would apply committee rules at Council, allowing for public speakers and a less formal discussion process.

The key differences between a Council meeting and a "Committee of the Whole" model would be:

- A seconder is not required for a motion.
- Informal discussion of a matter is allowed before a motion is made to enable the committee to work together on preparing a motion.
- Each Councillor may have as many opportunities to speak (limited to five minutes at a time) as they wish.
- The Chair may participate freely in debate without leaving the Chair.

### **Next Steps for Council to Create a New Standing Committee**

If desired, Council should direct Administration to prepare a bylaw creating a new infrastructure committee and adjusting the mandates of the other standing committees as outlined in Attachment 2, as well as outlining the Council Calendar changes required to implement the schedule outlined in Attachment 3. This direction should include the number of members of the infrastructure committee as their appointment would happen immediately after the committee is created.

As Utility Committee currently has six members, compared to the four or five member norm of other standing committees, two members from Utility Committee could be reassigned for the remainder of the term.

If the bylaw is passed at the March 18, 2025, City Council meeting, the new infrastructure committee could have its first meeting in the week of March 31, 2025.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. History of Standing Committees
2. Standing Committee Mandates
3. 2025 Infrastructure Committee Schedule and Report List
4. Considerations of Including Public Member(s) and Revised Timeline