

Options for the Public Appointments Process for the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee

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What this report is about

- Discussions on public appointments for the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee (AAAC) have been a part of many meetings over the past two years.
- Following a motion from the AAAC, City Council has directed staff to report back on options for a revised public appointments process for the 2022-2026 Council Term.

New members were recently appointed

- New members were appointed in the fall of 2021 using a process similar to other Council Advisory Bodies.
- Candidates applied through the Public Appointments website and a panel for five Indigenous City staff reviewed all applications, conducted interviews and recommended candidates to City Council.

What could be done differently?

- A revised public appointments process should consider ways to respect Indigenous sovereignty, self-determination and how the process and the committee can advance the City's Reconciliation Action Plan.
- If a new process is adopted, it should try to reflect the mandate of the AAAC and the ways in which First Nations, Inuit, and Metis communities in Toronto would like to participate.

What could be done differently?

1. Outreach and Recruitment
2. Application Process
3. Selection and Interviews
4. Nominations and Appointments

1) Outreach and Recruitment

- Information sessions to talk about the committee, what members do, and how to apply. Sessions could be co-hosted with local Indigenous organizations.
- Posters distributed to local Indigenous community centres, service providers, and gathering places.
- Language and imagery used in outreach could be developed in consultation with the Indigenous communities in Toronto to ensure it better connects with and reflects First Nations, Inuit and Métis in Toronto.

2) Application Process

The online application could be enhanced so that instead of just written answers to questions, applicants could have the option of submitting:

- A written attachment which allows for a more creative and personal voice.
- An audio or video file that allows candidates to express, orally, why they want to join the committee, what they hope to contribute, and anything else they would like to share.

3) Selection and Interviews

Several options could be considered and combined. Candidates could be shortlisted and interviewed by:

- A panel of Indigenous City staff whose work compliments the committee, as was done in the fall of 2021.
- A panel of Indigenous residents who select, interview, and nominate committee members. Panel members should not be part of organizations who want to join the committee.
- A panel with both staff and Indigenous residents.

3) Selection and Interviews - continued

A revised interview format could include:

- Group sessions with multiple candidates that are more collaborative and based around discussion rather than the standard interview format.
- Elders could be present to ensure these sessions happen in a good way and that support is available for participants.
- Group sessions could be followed-up with smaller or one-on-one discussions between the panel and individual candidates in order to reach the stage of final nominations.

4) Nominations and Appointments

- Unless there are changes to its governance, appointments to the AAAC would continue to be guided by the City's Public Appointments Policy. Nominations will be considered by the Civic Appointments Committee with final decisions made by City Council.
- This aligns with other Council Advisory Bodies as well as other City boards and committees.
- If the committee exists in a different form in the future, other options for nominations and appointments may be possible.

Other Opportunities

- In addition to these options, other things that could be considered for the next term of Council include:
 - Changes to the committee's Terms of Reference
 - Meeting procedures
 - How the committee is structured and governed
- These changes could be considered by staff from the City Manager's Office, the Indigenous Affairs Office, and the City Clerk's Office in consultation with committee members and the Indigenous communities in Toronto.

Thank You

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