

Orientation Guide for Public Members of Toronto City Council Advisory Bodies

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1 WELCOME MESSAGE

Thank you for contributing your time, knowledge, skills, and advice as a member of a City of Toronto Council Advisory Body. This document provides an overview of the City of Toronto's governing processes, procedures, legislation, bodies, and administration relevant to your advisory body. Links to additional resources and contact information for the staff supporting your advisory body and for the City Clerk's Office is also provided should you have any questions.

Additional introductory information about the mandate and meetings specific to your Advisory Body will be provided by the Chair(s) and City staff. City staff will be your first point of contact if you have any questions about Advisory Body matters or other issues related to the City of Toronto.

2 COUNCIL ADVISORY BODIES

Each Council term, Toronto City Council establishes Council Advisory Bodies (CABs) to receive the advice of community members and experts on specific areas. In February 2023, City Council adopted a report [Re-establishing Council Advisory Bodies for 2022-2026 City Council Term](#) that established 6 advisory bodies for this term, along with related Terms of Reference (See Appendix 2). These advisory bodies are:

- Confronting Anti-Black Racism Advisory Committee
- Film, Television and Digital Media Board
- Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Toronto Music Advisory Committee
- Toronto Francophone Affairs Advisory Committee
- Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (2SLGBTQ+) Advisory Committee

The City is also in the process of reviewing the structure, meeting procedures, and governance of the Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee in response to concerns from past members. This review is an important first step in an ongoing process to ensure the City engages with Indigenous communities in a manner that reflects Indigenous governance approaches.

In March 2023, City Council adopted a report [Terms of Reference for the Housing Rights Advisory Committee for 2022-2026 City Council Term](#) that established a housing-focused advisory body, along with related Terms of Reference (See Appendix 3). Additional CABs may be established by Council over the course of its term.

2.1 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Terms of Reference for CABs are adopted by City Council to guide the operations of the bodies and generally include: purpose, composition, term, honorarium, reporting relationships to City Council's Standing Committees, meeting procedures and frequency, and identification of the City Division(s) that will provide support to the CAB.

2.2 ROLE OF COUNCIL ADVISORY BODIES

CABs provide valuable advice to City Council and its Committees.

Recommendations from CABs to City Council related to policies or services are first considered by an appropriate Council Committee and then by City Council before action can be taken by City staff.

Proposed recommendations to City Council are voted on by CAB members and require a majority vote to proceed to Council committees for consideration.

2.3 POLICY AND PROGRAM SUPPORT

City staff with expertise in the subject matter related to the mandate of the CAB provide policy and program support to the CAB over the course of the Council term.

Policy and program staff work closely with the CAB's Chair, Vice-Chair and Members to help the Advisory Body develop a work plan. The policy and program staff also liaise on the CAB's behalf with other City service areas. Policy and program staff identify information relevant to the CAB's mandate and coordinate with the CAB Chair, Vice-Chair, and relevant City divisional staff to bring it forward for consideration.

CAB members may seek the assistance of City policy and program staff on specific requests for information or other matters but may not direct City staff to develop or implement policies or services as this is the role of City Council.

2.4 MEETINGS

The frequency of meetings for each CAB is set out in the terms of reference for the CAB. The City Clerk's office provides meeting management support, and all meetings are conducted in public (which may include online livestreaming.) Meeting agendas are posted in advance of meetings, and minutes are posted following meetings – all of which are available on the City Council website, www.toronto.ca/council.

2.5 MEETING PROCEDURES

Meetings of Council Advisory Bodies follow the [Simplified Rules of Procedure for Advisory Bodies](#) that set out how meetings are conducted and supported by City officials.

The Simplified Rules of Procedure include:

- the principles of the rules of procedure under which CAB meetings occur;
- how to interpret the Simplified Rules of Procedure in conducting a meeting;
- how the CAB can give its advice to City Officials, appropriate City Committees and City Council;
- CAB Chair, Vice-Chair, Members and staff's duties, roles, and responsibilities during a meeting;
- information on the requirements and process for calling a CAB meeting, and how to set and distribute meeting agendas;
- details on how CAB members, City officials and the public participate at meetings, including the process for consideration of agenda items, moving motions, and voting by members; and
- information on the development and distribution of CAB meeting minutes.

Public members of Advisory Bodies of City Council are subject to both [City](#) and [Provincial policies and legislation](#) regarding information and data privacy in the conduct of Advisory Body meetings.

All meetings of Advisory Bodies to City Council are held in public. This means:

- notice of all meetings is given in advance;
- agendas, reports and correspondence are posted online before meetings and decisions be posted as minutes afterwards as soon as possible;
- the public can observe all meetings, in-person or online, and can participate by presenting their views on a matter on the agenda

The [Simplified Rules of Procedure for Advisory Bodies](#) establishes a limited number of specific reasons where an Advisory Body may meet in closed session for confidential discussion on an agenda item. To date, no Council Advisory Body has closed a meeting to the public.

2.6 CONDUCT OF CAB MEMBERS

The [Simplified Rules of Procedure for Advisory Bodies](#), Section 4.6 "Members' responsibilities during a meeting", describes the roles and conduct expected of CAB Members during a CAB meeting. This includes:

- listening attentively, participating in meetings, and not interrupting the proceedings;
- always speaking respectfully, including when referring to any other CAB members, any City Officials or other City employees, the Council as a whole, or members of the public;
- speaking only on the matter under debate or related motions during debate;
- respecting the Rules of Procedure;
- respecting and following the Chair's rulings and Council decisions; and

- attending scheduled meetings.

3 INTRODUCTION TO TORONTO'S GOVERNMENT

3.1 TORONTO'S GOVERNANCE

[Introduction to Toronto's Government](#) is a webpage with a wide range of information including: the role of Toronto City Council, City administration, the City's Accountability Officers, the City's Agencies and Corporations and other information about key parts of Toronto's government. Advisory bodies play an important role in providing advice and recommendations to help inform [Council's decision making](#) related to the mandate of the advisory body.

3.2 EQUITY AND RECONCILIATION AT THE CITY OF TORONTO

Toronto is Canada's largest city with one of the most diverse populations in the world and the largest Indigenous population in Ontario. The City is committed to advancing [equity, diversity and inclusion](#), and truth, justice and reconciliation. Read about the City's [Reconciliation Action Plan](#) (RAP) and more on the [Indigenous Affairs Office](#).

3.3 CITY FINANCE AND BUDGET

The City's [Finances and Budget](#) webpages provide information on municipal finances, the City's revenues and expenditures and the annual budget process. Information about how the budget is approved, the difference between operating, capital and rate-supported budgets, details on each division's budgets, background briefing notes and how to get involved in the annual budget process are provided at [Toronto.ca/city-budget](#). The City's [Environment, Social and Governance Performance](#) (ESG) reports provide additional information on how the City is performing on its commitments in each of the three key areas.

3.4 COUNCIL BRIEFING AT THE START OF THE COUNCIL TERM

At the beginning of each Council Term, the City Manager provides [briefing materials](#) to Members of City Council on the key issues and matters anticipated to come before City Council in the new Council term. These materials, posted to [www.toronto.ca/FYIToronto](#), provide point-in-time information on a wide range of policy, governance, program, service, intergovernmental, financial, and strategic issues.

3.5 ADDITIONAL PUBLIC INFORMATION

The City of Toronto's [Open Data portal](#) supports its commitments to accountability and information and data transparency. The City regularly posts and updates information and data sets on its [Open Data Portal](#), [Council Datasets](#), and [Mayoral Decisions](#) web pages about the work of City Council, the Mayor and City staff.

4 APPENDIX 1: LIST OF 2022-2026 COUNCIL ADVISORY BODIES

Council Advisory Body (CAB)	Web Page	Contact Information
Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee (AAAC)	https://secure.toronto.ca/council/#/committees/2749	t. 416-338-5089 aaac@toronto.ca
Confronting Anti-Black Racism Advisory Committee (CABRAC)	https://secure.toronto.ca/council/#/committees/2744	t. 416-338-5089 aaac@toronto.ca
Film, Television & Digital Media Advisory Board ('Film Board')	https://secure.toronto.ca/council/#/committees/2745	t. 416-338-5089 ftdmb@toronto.ca
Housing Rights Advisory Committee (HRAC)	https://secure.toronto.ca/council/#/committees/2750	
Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC)	https://secure.toronto.ca/council/#/committees/2586	t. 416-338-5089 e. taac@toronto.ca
Toronto Francophone Affairs Advisory Committee (TFAAC)	https://secure.toronto.ca/council/#/committees/2748	t. 416-392-8485 frenchac@toronto.ca
Toronto Music Advisory Committee (TMAC)	https://secure.toronto.ca/council/#/committees/2746	t. 416-392-1879 tmac@toronto.ca
Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Advisory Committee (2SLGBTQAC)	https://secure.toronto.ca/council/#/committees/2747	t. 416-338-5089 2slgbtq@toronto.ca

Note: CAB web page and contact information to be added as City Council confirms CABs' Terms of References and Membership appointments in the coming months. This list will be updated should City Council establish any additional Council Advisory Bodies in the 2022-2026 term.