



Council Streamlines Decision Making and Focuses on Greater Public Participation

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For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC — City Council has endorsed a new decision-making model to align advisory committees with Council priorities and create more meaningful opportunities for public participation. This model was endorsed based on a recent review of Council decision-making processes, conducted by the management consulting firm of George Cuff and Associates.

“As elected officials we must ensure we have systems that support effective decision-making and provide meaningful opportunities for our community to participate,” said Mayor Dean Fortin. “Every advisory committee member should know exactly how their input feeds into Council decision-making. This new model clearly demonstrates how advisory input is sought and how it supports Council decisions.”

The City of Victoria Governance Review recommended a number of strategies to improve Council decision-making and make the advisory committee structure more valuable to those contributing and to informing Council decisions.

The new model includes four Council standing committees and six public advisory committees to support those committees. Committee of the Whole will now be known as the Governance and Priorities Committee and will focus on issues that affect the community or organization as a whole.

“Very few issues facing our community can be discussed in isolation. We have merged a number of subject areas to break down historical silos and garner a broader discussion that can focus on larger policy issues,” notes Fortin.

Mayor Fortin added, “Our entire community must be involved in the decisions that affect the community,” said Mayor Dean Fortin. “We must provide many options for this to occur so we’re building on the valued contributions of advisory committees and identifying additional ways to engage citizens in City of Victoria decision-making.”

Terms of Reference for the new advisory committees will be finalized in the coming weeks and an information session will be offered on April 2009 before the new model will be implemented June 30, 2009.

The new model and the full report were presented to the Chairs of Victoria Community Associations and Advisory Committees this morning and will be posted on the City of Victoria website.

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