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Coming up at 2 pm, it's this month's Committee of the Whole meeting. This is what's on the agenda:

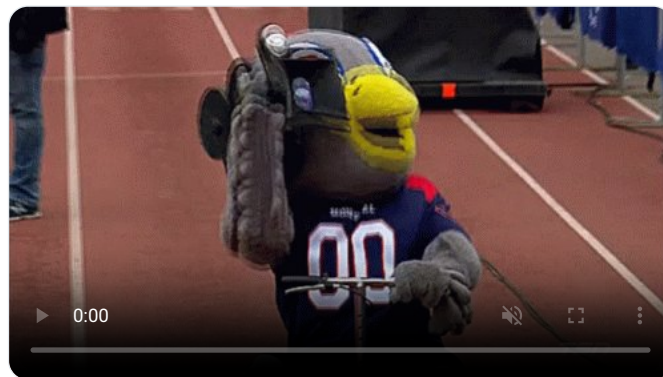


**Committee of the Whole Preview – What's on the Agenda for the March...**

March comes in like a lamb at city council. There's nothing terrible controversial in this month's Committee of the Whole agenda, assuming, of course, that no one wants to start a fight...

<https://guelphpolitico.ca/2024/02/23/committee-of-the-whole-preview-whats-on-the-age...>

It seems that being in-camera is just too much fun. We're standing by for the open session.



Council is emerging. Stand by.



On Corporate Cyber Security Assessment, the one closed agenda item, Guthrie reports that there was a "good discussion" and direction was given to staff.

No Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof.

First, 2024 Property Tax Policy under the Corporate Services agenda. Chair Caron notes that this is approval of the tax ratios, and the continuation of low income tax relief program.

Cllr Billings has quick question: What's the average assessment, the media is in the report? Staff reports that they've historical used median, which is what MPAC provides. At least for last few years.

O'Rourke asks if it's possible to get the number based on average, even if it's not today? Staff say they can get that calculation, but they're not sure that provides the correct view of distribution. Median provides better data point.

O'Rourke/Guthrie move the recommendation and it's approved.

**Recommendation:**

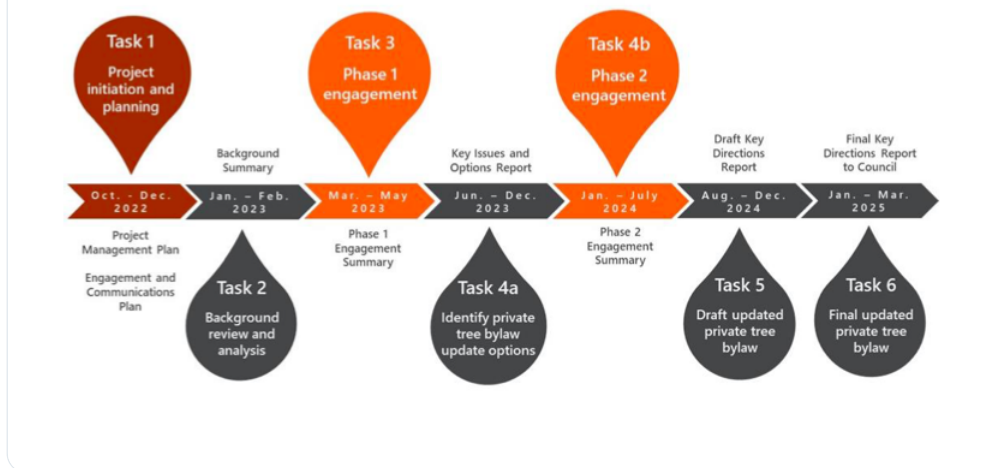
1. That the 2024 City of Guelph property tax ratios and corresponding tax rates, as set out in Attachment-1 to the report 2024-63 titled 2024 Property Tax Policy dated March 5, 2024, be approved.

Now Public Services with Chair Downer. One item on this agenda: Private Tree Protection By-law Update – Key Issues and Options.

Timea Filer, Urban Forestry Field Technician, will present. Staff are looking for support to proceed with the four recommendations, and the second phase of community engagement.

Point in time? We're halfway done.

# Timeline and progress



## Key Findings:

- Tree canopy provides great value
  - There are best practices for private tree bylaws, but the present bylaw is not full resourced
  - Most of Guelph's trees are relatively small /young (78 per cent smaller than 20 centimetres in diameter)
- (cont'd)

- More than two thirds of Guelph's tree canopy cover is on private land
- Half of the tree canopy cover in Guelph is regulated by the current private tree bylaw
- There's a lack of knowledge in the community about the PTB

## Screening criteria for update:

1. Proportion of trees regulated
2. Proportion of tree canopy cover regulated
3. Level of protection compared to the current private tree bylaw
4. Alignment with community perspectives
5. Level of complexity
6. Impact on City resources

## Recommended options

Option 1: Current private tree bylaw scope - Regulation of trees at least 10 cm diameter on private lots greater than 0.2 ha.

Option 2: Current private tree bylaw tree size on smaller private lots - Regulation of trees at least 10 cm diameter on lots greater than 0.1 ha rather than 0.2 ha.

Option 3: Trees at least 20 cm diameter on all private lots - Regulation of trees slightly larger than what is currently regulated (20 cm rather than 10 cm diameter and greater) but with the scope expanded to all private lots across the city.

Option 4: Current private tree bylaw scope plus trees at least 50 cm diameter on all private lots - Regulation of (a) trees at least 10 cm diameter on lots greater than 0.2 ha, plus (b) trees at least 50 cm diameter on all private lots.

Option #3 captures all private lots and 69% of the canopy, so it's the best option.

Option	Description (scope)	Number of lots captured	Area of land captured (hectares)	Approximate canopy cover captured (per cent)
1	Current scope - Trees at least 10 cm diameter on private lots greater than 0.2 (ha)	1,929	4,036	50
2	Trees at least 10 cm diameter on private lots greater than 0.1 ha	3,882	4,287	55
3	Trees at least 20 cm diameter on all private lots	37,187	5,914	69
4	Current scope (trees at least 10 cm diameter on private lots greater than 0.2 (ha)), plus trees at least 50 cm diameter on all private lots	37,187	5,914	50 to 69

#### Additional recommendations

1. Regs of replacement trees through the PTB
2. Options for updating the approach to tree compensation (in accordance w/2019 Tree Technical Manual)
3. Options for offsetting potential tree comp. costs for residents.

It's worth noting that there's no financial impact right now, but these are the costs for the various options:

Option	Description (scope)	Operating Cost (estimate)	Funding gap (estimate)
1	Current scope - Trees at least 10 cm diameter on private lots greater than 0.2 (ha)	\$29,000	\$0
2	Trees at least 10 cm diameter on private lots greater than 0.1 ha	\$58,000	\$0
3	Trees at least 20 cm diameter on all private lots	\$340,000	\$235,000
4	Current scope (trees at least 10 cm diameter on private lots greater than 0.2 (ha)), plus trees at least 50 cm diameter on all private lots	\$218,000	\$113,000

#### Next steps

Phase 2 community engagement (May 2024)

Phase 2 engagement summary

Confirm scope for updated PTB

Draft private tree bylaw (summer 2024)

Internal review and finalization (fall 2024)

Presentation of updated private tree bylaw to Council (targeting March 2025)

One delegate for this item: Morgan Dandie.

Dandie says she was excited about the items, and then she's worried that they wouldn't make the mayor's proposed cuts for the budget. Lot of small lots in Guelph that means trees not protected under option #2.

Dandie also notes developers and home owners that have clear cut without much penalties, so there needs to be ways to enforce the PTB in a public and transparent way.

Questions from council? Gibson asks "what is a tree" in this instance? Filer says there is a basic definition in the bylaw, and there will be exemptions for invasive species, for example, in the finished bylaw.

Guthrie says his main focus, other than protect the trees, is making development more onerous. There will be infill, so what's the impact? Filer says they'll be looking at equity issues, and how there are different users. They want to make sure it looks at scale.

Also, there are differences between the planning process (the Planning Bylaw) and this bylaw, but they do both use the technical manual.

Guthrie asks if they're looking at a fee based program, so that there's no impact on tax base? Staff says that's the kind of detail they'll get into when they present the finished bylaw and when they choose an option.

Guthrie asks for clarity: Is there a fee for someone to come out and take a look, or is it just when a permit required? Filer says permit and Guthrie notes that it would be nice if staff could look at some kind of fee for service model.

Guthrie asks about appeal process. Staff says the one time mentioned in the staff report was brought to council for resolution. Is staff looking a revisions? Staff says that wasn't on their list of changes to make, but they can look at it if council wishes.

Caron asks if there are any value added elements (like stormwater impact) when it comes to this bylaw? Filer says that can be considered, they have the evaluations through the urban forest study.

O'Rourke asks for confirmation, staff are not recommending an option today, right? Filer says that's right, the 6 criteria presented were the ones that scored he highest and the four options are the most feasible.

O'Rourke asks if the options will be refined further. Filer says she's actually hoping for that, but there are opportunities to reformulate depending on the community feedback.

O'Rourke notes that this is separate from streetscaping and other efforts. Filer says yes, this is meant to communicate and educate the community in addition to developing the bylaw, but there's more than one way to grow the canopy.

O'Rourke asks about severed properties. Filer says if the lot severed is smaller than the area set in the bylaw, it would not be covered by the bylaw. There is a definition of lot in the bylaw, and if there's consecutive lots w/ same owner they are taken as block.

Staff add that tree management is also a matter covered under the purview of the Committee of Adjustment too.

Goller asks about soil volume and root protection. Filer says that's technical stuff that's in the tree manual, but what the bylaw says is if you're taking 3 or more trees, you have to have a planting plan along with your permit.

Chew asks about removal of invasive species of trees. Staff says that they have forestry workers and experts, and some level of education is always happening in the community. There are many factors at work impacting a tree.

Chew asks if invasive trees are assessed the same. Filer says there are currently exemptions in the bylaw for some invasive species, and they're going to be looking at the list again. You don't now need a permit to remove a buckthorn tree on your property.

Billings asks if the home owner subject to fees if trees are damaged through natural causes like ice storm? Filer says there are exceptions for trees that are hazards, trees that have to come down.

Billings asks if staff have to come out and inspect that. Filer says under the bylaw right now, they do. They're planning on looking at that process in phase #2, exemptions might need to be more clear.

Downer asks about injury to trees. Filer says it's presently in the bylaw for lots bigger than 1/2 acre, but it's not usual that someone reaches out to get a permit for accidentally damaging a tree. That might need to be a case for more education.

No more questions, no comments.

#### Recommendation:

That the Private Tree Protection By-law Update – Key Issues and Options report, dated March 5, 2024, be received, and that staff be directed to proceed with the recommendations set out within the report.

Approved.

Next up, Audit Committee. Chair Allt will take committee through the Internal Audit Work Plan 2024-2026.

Robert Jelacic, General Manager of Internal Audit will present. He begins by highlighting the process: Feedback from council and management, external factors, and risk management. This was done without "undo influence" from management.

Last year, 4 out of 5 audits completed; work on the fifth one will continue this year, and has been incorporated. The 2024 plan will also focus on two money-for-value audits as directed by council at the 2024-2027 budget vote.

O'Rourke/Caton put the motions on the floor:

That the report titled 'Internal Audit Work Plan 2024–2026' dated March 5, 2024, be approved.

That the Internal Audit Charter Update dated March 5, 2024, be received.

That the Value-for-Money Audit Review Framework be approved.

O'Rourke asks if staff would look at outsourcing in the VFM audits if they can't get it done? Jelacic says that they do have money set aside for outside assistance if they need it.

First two VFM audits? Jelacic says that they're still fine-tuning that, but they have had preliminary discussions but nothing's been finalised yet.

O'Rourke asks how Jelacic will maintain independence and get value with VFM? He says this is a little more confrontational than usual audits, but it will be up to the auditors to drive home the objectives.

Guthrie says one of the recommendations from KMPG was back-ending the outside boards, could save \$500k to \$1 mn per year. Does getting some of that work going fall under audit, or corporate services?

Jelacic throws it to DCAO Clack-Bush, and she says exec can take that away and see where it best fits, but that's probably not an internal audit thing. It's corporate, and maybe an in-camera discussion, but will have something by the end of the month.

Goller asks if building inspections and approvals are part of internal audit? Jelacic says it's in scope of their work, but it just hasn't made the list of priorities in the last few years, but they can also add that if there's an uptick.

DCAO Holmes says there's a lot going on as they're updating planning process due to legislative changes. So there's a review underway right now. Goller asks if there will be follow-up report. Holmes says they will be reporting "some" results.

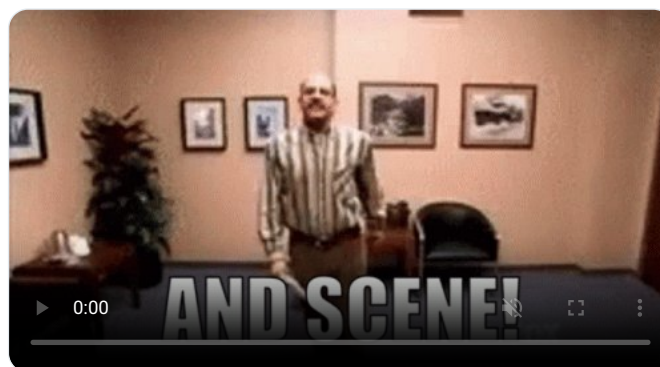
Caton thanks Jelacic for AODA audits and notes the great work in getting new initiatives going.

O'Rourke also appreciates enterprise wide risk management work and how quick it was completed.

Allt points to the internal audit charter as important reading and reminds committee that the City has only but the two auditors.

Recommendation approved.

And that's a wrap for this meeting!



@threadreaderapp unroll please!

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