



## What the Guelph are round tables?

### **What are these round tables of which you speak?**

They are a safe place where, depending on the topic, a cross-section of City employees will work with elected officials and the community to find new, on-the-ground solutions to help us continually improve how we deliver services. They are more than an actual round table (the table may in fact end up being square or octagonal or non-existent).

They are one of the ways we're going to co-create, collaborate and innovate. And while those words may be industry jargon, they are part of the language of change and have the added benefit of rhyming.

They are flexible spaces where we will improve our processes, working environment, communities and city by working together while breaking down silos and barriers. And they are more about taking advantage of future opportunities than solving past problems.

### **What's the point?**

The round tables are one of the ways we're working differently to improve our city while building trust and confidence inside and outside the organization. The point is we're better together. These tables are designed to bring us together.

### **What's so different about that?**

The big differences are:

1. While the composition and duration of these tables will change depending on the issues and opportunities we're facing, they will be cemented as part of our organizational structure.
2. This is a new way of doing business – certainly in Guelph and rare across the public sector. And we are going to use these tables, this collaboration tool, to comprehensively and continuously improve our organization at all levels.
3. Most importantly, we're building these tables and prioritizing the problems they will tackle largely based on what you tell us.

### **Why do we need these tables?**

We have real issues to solve and plenty of opportunities on the horizon. And we know from experience that we'll have a better chance of success if we work together.

As is all too common for municipal, provincial and federal governments, our employee engagement and community trust and confidence are not at acceptable levels. That won't change if we keep working in the same ways while somehow expecting different results.

Our starting point is to say this: We trust you – our community and our people.

We trust your experience, your creativity, your passion for Guelph and for public service. We need your help to build from our successes and accomplishments, to build a new culture where we work better together with an unwavering focus on improving the lives of our citizens.

### **What are the table topics?**

In brief, and alphabetically, these are the draft table topics.

- Administrative recommendations
- Asset management
- Budget
- Citizen-first / Customer service
- Communication
- Intergovernmental advocacy
- Open government
- Our people – employee engagement
- Policy coordination
- Program and project management
- Technology

### **How are we going to pick the first tables to start?**

We have developed a list of guiding criteria that our corporate management team will use to select the first tables. The criteria aren't numbers based on a perfect science, but they are a list of important considerations that will be used to select the first tables. These are listed alphabetically and not by level of importance.

- Conditions for success: In what topic areas do we expect to encounter the least amount of risk, the best opportunities for early success and will be easiest to evaluate progress?
- Impact on the community: What topic areas have the best chance to improve the lives of our citizens or make it easier to conduct business in our community?
- Interest: How much interest is there from staff for each of the topic areas? We'll learn from the events and the volume of activity on the website how interested our people are in any particular topic area.
- Priority: Where do the topic areas fit in terms of corporate priority? Will working on one area create a better environment for others to follow? Do we have work that's already underway that needs support?
- Well-framed issues: Based on our work with City employees at all levels, what topic areas have clearly defined issues and opportunities that we can address right away?

### **What happens to the round tables that aren't picked first?**

All round table topic areas are important. This is a new process, and we need to make sure we have the capacity to support the round tables and implement their recommendations and solutions. As we learn throughout the process – every success and setback – we will continue to roll out more tables based on the guiding criteria and available resources.

### **How will the public and elected officials get involved?**

The public and elected officials will definitely be getting involved. Our Councillors, citizens, business leaders and stakeholders are critical to the success of these tables. Their involvement will change depending on the round table topic. Some areas will be more internally focused and others will require significant involvement from the community.

### **How are you picking who will get on the various round tables?**

We are currently developing the process for deciding who will sit on each table. It's not a one size fits all selection process. Each table will need different types of expertise and participants to be successful. The topic areas will also likely have more interest than can be accommodated around any one round table so we'll be looking at more than one way to involve our employees and the community. Depending on the table, we are also considering offering employees and the community the opportunity to apply to join a table.