



Council Highlights are intended to provide a summary of Council proceedings only. The information contained within the Highlights is based on approved material from within the associated agenda packages, linked at the bottom. These reports were part of the agenda from the **Council Meeting on February 8, 2022**. For more information on any item covered in the Highlights, each article is hyperlinked to the appropriate report, which can be accessed by clicking on the title. Images are also linked to relevant resources.

- Service Simcoe

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

SPEAKER SERIES



Click on the image above to learn more about the Simcoe County Museum's Black History Month Speaker Series. Each lecture will explore a different aspect of the long history of Black people in Simcoe County and the Black Canadian experience in general.

Black History Month

The celebration of Black History Month originates from the U.S. Professor Carter G. Woodson's 1926 declaration of Negro History Week, a week in February that marked the birthdates of civil rights activists Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln. In 1976, Toronto City Council declared February as Black History Month. National recognition occurred on December 14, 1995, when the House of Commons unanimously agreed to a motion presented by the Honourable Jean Augustine to recognize February as Black History Month.

On February 8, 2022, Warden Cornell proclaimed the month of February 2022, as "Black History Month" in our community to encourage all citizens to honour the significant role that Black people, both past and present, have played in shaping Simcoe County and its values.

Tourism Simcoe County and Indigenous Tourism

The public's interest in accessing authentic Indigenous experiences and products is at an all-time high, making Indigenous Tourism one of the fastest growing sectors of the tourism industry. Indigenous Tourism not only provides opportunities to promote greater cultural understanding – which supports the growth of strong communities – but it also provides significant economic benefit to Indigenous people, their communities, and the wider region. As a leader in the local tourism industry, Tourism Simcoe County (TSC) recognizes that it has a role to play in supporting and sustaining Indigenous Tourism in the region.

On February 8, 2022, Council approved the Warden and County Clerk entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Indigenous Tourism Ontario (ITO). Under the MOU, ITO will assist TSC in providing visitors with the opportunity to learn about Indigenous culture while simultaneously supporting the sustainable growth and development of Indigenous entrepreneurs and the products and experiences that they offer.

Governance Update Regarding Structure of Warden and County Council Composition

In March 2021, Council voted that, subject to a change in legislative framework, the office of Warden be held by a qualified, non-directly elected resident of Simcoe County, appointed by County Council. It is the County's opinion that the Municipal Act does not permit the appointment of a non-elected person as head of council; however, this option is currently available in several regional municipalities that are governed by an existing legislative framework.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) was engaged in 2019 on the issue of appointing an unelected head of council similar to the regional municipalities in the GTA and seeking assurances that the Province would not interfere should Council consider this option. Information received from the Ministry referenced sections of the Municipal Act, suggesting that the existing legislative framework would permit the appointment of a (unelected) head of council. However, independent legal counsel suggested that an appointed (unelected) head of council may not be permitted under the Municipal Act.

Given the contradicting opinions leading to uncertainty, on February 8, 2022, Council voted not to proceed with the full-time (unelected) Warden, and that the matter be closed, and deemed concluded for the 2018-2022 Term of Council.



Click on the image above to watch the first archived YouTube recording of the Council and Committee of the Whole meeting from February 8, 2022.

Video Broadcasting and Archiving

While there is no legislative requirement to audio record or video broadcast meetings of Council, in 2017, the Governance Committee requested staff to report on available options to broadcast Council and Committee of the Whole meetings. Over the past few years the number of viewers has increased from around 9-13 concurrent connections in 2017-19 to between 30-70 in 2020-2021.

Early in the design phase (2017), the Governance Committee acknowledged that tools/software were not readily available, reliable or affordable to make the broadcast fully accessible; however, in 2020, with the extensive use of Zoom and the quality of the broadcast, closed captions have improved. While auto-closed captioning has improved, broadcasts have not been archived for after-hours/post-meeting review, as they are not in compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Success Criterion 1.2.2, as prescribed by the Accessibility of Ontarians with Disability Act (AODA), which requires that captions/described video not only include dialogue to text, but also identifies who is speaking and includes non-speech information, such as including a description of meaningful sound effects.

On February 8, 2022, Council approved the archiving of videos, and that archived videos for Council and Committee of the Whole be retained for 365 days from the date of the meeting. WCAG Success Criterion 1.2.2 will be applied upon request, effective February 9, 2022. The deployment of audio recording and or video broadcasting of meetings will improve access to Council and Committee of the Whole to all persons that may be unable to attend council meetings for a variety of reasons, including due to a disability.

Simcoe Water and Wastewater Service Delivery Review

Council previously voted to engage local municipalities to conduct an update of the Water and Wastewater Visioning Strategy, seeking local input on the current service challenges, capacity, potential opportunities on coordination, and any opinions on the potential roles of the County of Simcoe in this regard.

Research undertaken by Consultant R.V. Anderson Associates Limited on behalf of the County recognized that municipalities face several diverse regional and local challenges. The most prominent challenges include responding to growth pressures, limited investment and planning across boundaries, financing for infrastructure investments, water quality constraints, and limited servicing for both employment and residential development.

On February 8, 2022, Council approved that the County engage the lower tier municipalities to gain a greater understanding of the issues and challenges they face regarding storm water management, and what, if anything, the County of Simcoe could do to assist in this regard. The County will continue to work closely with our member municipalities, as well as the cities of Orillia and Barrie to evaluate options and collect additional data as needed.

[Council Meeting Agenda - February 8, 2022](#)

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