

Municipality of South Dundas



Youth Advisory Committee

Terms of Reference

History

In 2019, Municipal Staff completed a Youth Engagement Report to gain a better understanding of how to better address the needs of the youth within the Municipality. The report was completed in response to the successful grant application hosted by the Rural Ontario Institute. The grant was designed to help rural Municipalities develop a Youth Engagement Report that could include commentary on engagement, retention, and attraction of youth in rural Ontario communities.

The primary focus of the completed project was to collect data from local youth to improve community engagement and determine what the Municipality requires to attract and retain youth. The survey was conducted during numerous visits to Seaway District High School as well as through an online platform. The final amount of participation for this project was 109 youth between the ages of 15 to 29.

A summary of the report showed that most of the participants were between the ages of 15-18 with 50% of the total participants showing they do not feel as though their voices are heard in South Dundas. In addition, 56% of participants showed they would like to learn more about the Municipality, and how it works. Lastly, the report shows a large majority of the youth in South Dundas were interested in the development and participation of a Youth Advisory Committee within the Municipality.

Youth play an important role within the Municipality and have expressed their interest in becoming more engaged within the community. Research and communication from other rural communities in Ontario suggest that youth consider returning to their local community to live while looking at the following:

- a job in their field
- a place to live
- and the recreational amenities that they desire.

Considering the information from the completed Youth Engagement Report as well as the projected future growth of the community, Staff received approval from the seventh council of the Municipality of South Dundas to develop and implement a Youth Advisory Committee in 2021.

MANDATE

The Municipality of South Dundas Youth Advisory Committee will provide a voice for the youth of South Dundas while advising Municipal Staff and Council of important recreational and social issues concerning the community's youth.

PURPOSE

1. To keep council informed of important matters affecting youth.
2. To act as positive advocates for youth.
3. To seek input from youth on important matters which affect youth via surveys, forums, and workshops and to address these issues through presentations to council, events, and initiatives.
4. To support events created by council and staff that relate to the mandate.
5. To provide leadership experience for youth.
6. To help enhance the image of youth within the Municipality.

VISION

"It is the vision of the committee to provide a communication link between the youth of South Dundas and Municipal Council and to encourage facilities, programs and projects that will enhance the quality of life, as well as the mental and physical wellness of the youth in our community."

MEMBERSHIP

The Youth Advisory Committee shall be made up of a core group of students under the age of 18. As the committee meetings will be open to all interested students, the committee shall not exceed the maximum of 10 sitting members. Student membership will be selected at the beginning of each school year by the appointed liaisons and facilitators.

In addition to Students, professional representatives from Seaway District High School as well as the Municipality of South Dundas will serve as facilitators and liaise with the committee to be nonvoting members. The facilitators will consist of Seaway District Highschool Principal, A Current Municipality of South Dundas Council Member, and a current Municipal Staff Member.

The representatives are as follows;

Seaway District High School- Mr. Carter Edwards, Principal

Municipal Council Member- Deputy Mayor Gardner

Municipal Staff Member- Austin Marcellus, Manager of Parks and Recreation

TERM

The minimum term is one school year (September to June). Once appointed, committee members will be considered for reappointment each year during the duration of their academic career through Grade 7-12. At the completion of each year the appointed liaison(s) will make a recommendation to principal(s) in regards to the reappointment of active and contributing committee members. The committee's success hinges on the experience and guidance of returning member.