

Caledon set to implement Youth Advisory Committee

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Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Caledon youth will soon have a new way to make their voice heard.

At Caledon Council's January 7 General Committee meeting, Councillors approved terms of reference for a new Youth Advisory Committee (YAC).

As the terms of reference were approved, a YAC establishment bylaw will come to Council's January 28 meeting for final approval.

If approved, Caledon will begin looking for youth to serve on the committee in February.

Caledon Council, through a motion from Mayor Annette Groves, first directed Town staff to look into creating a YAC at its May 21, 2024 meeting.

After initial consultation with Groves, Town staff began doing research on other YACs in Southern Ontario and their terms of reference. Staff also consulted with Ward 3 Councillor Doug Maskell and Ward 5 Councillor Tony Rosa, both of whom have extensive experience working with youth in the education system.

Caledon's YAC mandate is proposed as follows: ?provide a voice for the youth of Caledon, while advising Council of important professional, recreational, and social issues concerning the Town's younger population.?

?The purpose of applying this broadened perspective is to maintain long-term flexibility in topics that currently affect and may in-future affect the youth population in the Town of Caledon,? said Town of Caledon staff in a report. ?The Youth Advisory Committee could advise which types of initiatives or events could effectively address the issues they advise on without the need for the Terms of Reference to mandate a specific youth-based event or activity be held.?

The YAC will consist of between four and eight community representatives (youth), two members of Caledon Council, and three community liaisons.

Community representatives will be between the ages of 14 and 24, and representatives in high school can earn volunteer hours for serving on the committee.

The YAC will work to enhance quality of life for Caledon youth by representing their perspective on municipal projects, issues and trends; identify opportunities to improve the quality of life for local youth, inform budgets, and promote programs, resources, initiatives, and policies that impact youth in Caledon; create and implement an annual work plan that supports the identified priorities of the 2023-2035 Town of Caledon Strategic Plan and goals of the Community and Human Services Commission; and plan and implement youth events, programs and initiatives in partnership with recreation and culture staff.