



# Rural Summit 2024 Governance Workshop

November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024



# What is Governance?

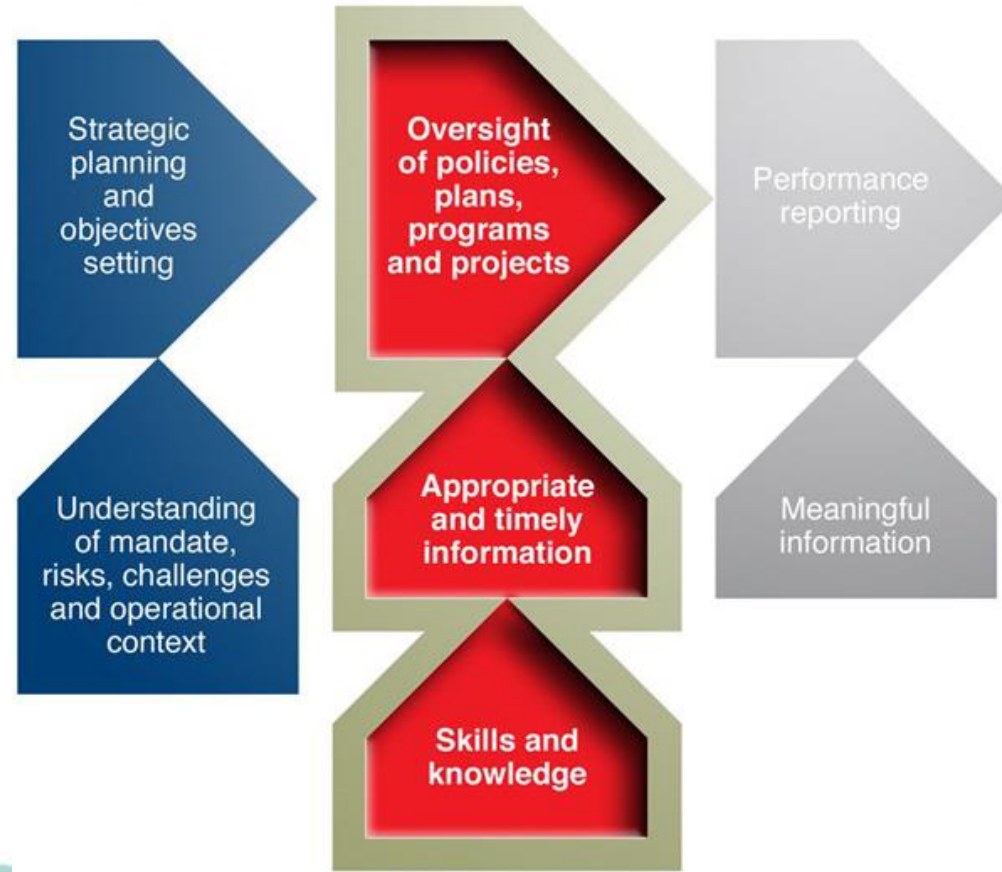
While governance includes oversight, it is a broader concept. Governance refers to the structures, systems, and practices an organization has in place to:

- Assign decision-making authorities, define how decisions are to be made, and establish the organization's strategic direction;
- Oversee the delivery of its services; the implementation of its policies, plans, programs, and projects; and the monitoring and mitigation of its key risks; and
- Report on its performance in achieving intended results and use performance information to drive ongoing improvements and corrective actions.

(Ref: Canadian Audit and Accountability Foundation)



# Simplified Governance Model



# Principles of Good Governance

The basic principles of good governance are:

- Accountability
- Leadership
- Integrity
- Stewardship
- Transparency





# Principles of Good Governance 2

- Accountability is the obligation of an individual, a group, or an organization to answer for a responsibility that has been conferred.
- Leadership is setting the “tone at the top,” which plays a crucial role in encouraging an organization’s personnel to embrace good governance practices.
- Integrity is acting in a way that is impartial, ethical, and in the public interest. Integrity is reflected in part through compliance with legislation, regulations, and policies, as well as through the instilling of high standards of professionalism at all levels of an organization.



# Principles of Good Governance 3

- Stewardship is the act of looking after resources on behalf of the public and is demonstrated by maintaining or improving an organization's capacity to serve the public interest over time.
- Transparency is achieved when decisions and actions are open, meaning that stakeholders, including the public and employees, have access to full, accurate, and clear information on public matters.



# Why Governance Matters to Rural Residents

- Governance is the mechanism by which we get things done for you.
- It sets the terms of the relationship between Council, Committees and the Bureaucracy.
- It grants the authority for strategic direction to the appropriate body (i.e. ARAC).
- It defines the roles of Councillors, ARAC and staff.



# ARAC's Mandate

- The Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee is responsible for ensuring that the unique interests and requirements of the City's rural areas are taken into account in the decisions made by the City of Ottawa, and identify ways to promote an understanding of rural and agricultural communities and their issues. The Committee will make recommendations to Council on issues and programs pertaining to the agricultural and associated industries, the rural economy, rural residential communities, land development and landscaping, transportation, water, wastewater and stormwater services, and environmental protection.





# Why ARAC Matters

- Members are Rural Ottawa's voice at the Council table.
- Members understand the unique and distinct context of rural living, agricultural industry and rural business.
- We understand that one size does not fit all when it comes to policy in a municipality that is 80% rural:
  - What works for downtown or the suburbs does not necessarily work in a rural village or area.
  - Rural infrastructure requires unique considerations not applicable elsewhere.
  - Special consideration is required when dealing with normal farming practices.
  - Warrant systems often include volume thresholds that only work in urban contexts.



# Issues Identified Through Consultation

Rural Ottawa lacks the autonomy and capacity to make decisions that address the unique issues and reflect the unique interests of their communities.

Often, rural issues are poorly addressed by City programs and services that are oriented toward urban areas.

Moreover, with vast geographies, several distinct communities, and rapid growth, Councillors' offices lack the resources to fully deliver the kind of assistance that residents in rural Ottawa deserve and expect.

Essentially, one size does not fit all; rural Ottawa needs a governance model that reflects this reality.



# Issues Identified Through Consultation 2

As it stands, there is a lack of coordination across City departments on rural issues. Issues are viewed first with an urban lens, and rural considerations are left as an afterthought or a few throw-away lines on a report.

Moreover, many departments lack strategic advocacy and issues knowledge necessary to advance rural issues. Residents and Councillors alike are often disappointed that staff have a poor understanding of the unique challenges and interests of rural Ottawa, and this is often reflected in program design that fails to consider rural Ottawa.



# Near-term Deliverables

ARAC Mandate to be respected to help ensure that City departments that provide a program or service in rural Ottawa report directly to the committee.

*Revise governance so that ARAC has final decision-making power on rural matters, ensuring a stronger rural voice in future city planning. The mandate is being reviewed as part of the 2022-2026 Mid-term Governance Review to strengthen and clarify the language regarding rural matters routed through ARAC.*

*Timing: Expected implementation in Q2 2025 following Council approval.*





# Near-term Deliverables 2

Enhance the Rural Affairs Office by adding the expertise. Ensure a focused rural lens can be applied to policy and decision making that impacts rural Ottawa. Rural Affairs Office that can:

- Be customer service focused;
- Act as a one stop shop for rural residents to obtain information about City programs & services; and
- Expand access (physical, virtual) to meet the needs of rural clients

*We are proposing to increase the rural affairs office from a team of 2 to 3.*



# Near-term Deliverables 3

*Rural lead identified in each department, in the Business and Technical Support Services branches and/or other relevant service area.*

*Timing: By end of 2024*



# Longer-term Deliverables

Through a strengthened ARAC, rural councillors will be better-equipped to deal with emerging issues and the feedback received through the rural summit resident working groups and workshops.

Committee will have the support required to study and remedy longstanding challenges.

A strengthened rural office with leads in each department that understand the rural context will be able to identify issues before they reach the committee and council stage, better reflecting the rural context.

Build a culture of respect and understanding of rural issues and voices.

