



CAPITAL PLANNING GUIDELINES

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University
of Victoria

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ABOUT THE CAPITAL PLANNING PROCESS

BACKGROUND:

As a publicly funded institution committed to excellence in education, research, and community engagement, the University of Victoria (“UVic”, the “university”) and its administrative officials have a responsibility to manage the physical and digital infrastructure of its campuses. This infrastructure, supported through government funding, internal allocations, and donations, is essential for fulfilling the university’s mission of delivering high-quality teaching environments and advancing research.

UVic undertakes significant long-term financial commitments through major capital projects. This includes planning to allocate resources necessary for the maintenance and operation of facilities throughout their entire lifecycle. The Capital Planning process ensures that the university’s investments are aligned with its highest priorities, incorporate campus engagement throughout the review process, and emphasizes equity and accessibility in the prioritization and execution of capital projects, partnerships, and license arrangements.

PURPOSE:

The need for capital improvements at UVic often surpasses the available funding. Many of the university’s academic buildings, research facilities, and utility infrastructures are at risk of failing due to age, usage, and insufficient funds for timely renewal. The university is prioritizing building renewal and space optimization projects to address existing deficiencies and adapt infrastructure to support evolving ways of working and service delivery.

To optimize the use of limited resources, the university has established the Capital Planning Guidelines (the “Guidelines”) to support the prioritization of greatest needs, highest institutional priorities, and most cost-effective solutions to advance our educational, research, and service missions. The Guidelines establish a consistent and transparent process for submitting Unit capital project needs, ensuring they are reviewed and considered alongside other institutional needs and funding requirements. As outlined below, the Guidelines describe a continuous process with annual administrative and government deadlines, providing ample time for Vice President of Finance and Operations (VPFO) staff to assist and coordinate resources for the full development of capital project requests.

5-YEAR CAPITAL PLAN:

The university's 5-Year Capital Plan is a roadmap that guides the institution's strategic development and growth for Major Capital Projects (MCP) valued at **\$5M or greater**.

The 5-Year Capital Plan serves as a vital document that outlines infrastructure needs, which are necessary for achieving the university's academic, research and service objectives. The Capital Plan identifies two types of projects:

Project in Planning – a project that has been identified as an emerging priority by Unit Leaders and is supported by Executive Council and the Board of Governors. A Project in Planning requires a high-level project description, including a problem statement, and clearly demonstrates how it aligns with Provincial and institutional priorities. Projects in Planning may be elevated to a Prioritized Project in a **future** Capital Plan when project scope and costs are further defined.

Prioritized Project – a project that has been deemed a priority by Executive Council and the Board of Governors. An Prioritized Project has undergone a feasibility study to determine a defined scope and program, site location, concept design, and cost estimates (minimum Class D) and potential funding sources.

The Ministry provides the following categories for Major Capital Projects:

- **New Priority Investment** – New space to address programming capacity or to accommodate enrollment growth. Examples: new academic building, student housing.
- **Whole Asset Replacement or Renewal** – Major renovations to existing infrastructure that seek to improve the condition, safety and/or functional efficiency of the building. Examples: mechanical or electrical upgrades, building envelope upgrades.
- **Linear Infrastructure** – Projects focused on vehicular and active transportation routes and underground utilities. Examples: repair or replacement of power lines, pipelines, roads, sidewalks and bike paths.
- **Carbon Neutral Capital** – Projects focused on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, energy consumption and operating costs. Examples: lighting upgrades, boiler to heat pump conversion, electric fleet vehicles.
- **Information Management / Information Technology** – Projects that leverage sector wide or shared services focused on security and privacy and areas of increased demand to deliver services. Examples: internet connection speeds, increasing cybersecurity or firewall protections.

The Capital Plan is updated and approved annually by the Board of Governors and submitted to the Ministry for consideration for future government funding allocations. Once submitted, the university will receive direction from the Ministry regarding next steps, i.e., approval to proceed to a Business Case and/or Concept Plan.

WHO SHOULD FOLLOW THESE GUIDELINES:

These guidelines apply to all academic, research, administrative, and ancillary units seeking approval for Major Capital Projects, on the Gordon Head and Queenswood campuses, and including off-campus locations, regardless of funding mechanism or source.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

The following Guiding Principles are identified to foster transparency and understanding of the key criteria used by decision-makers when approving a new capital project.

1. The project will align with the university's Strategic Plans, ensuring alignment with the institution's long-term goals and objectives.
2. Proposed projects should consider first meeting program needs through reuse and redevelopment without the addition of net new space or infrastructure. Projects should address a significant level of deferred maintenance whenever feasible.
3. Projects or proposed programs must prioritize synergies and coordination in the use of resources, including funding, space and land.
4. The project delivers a strong return on investment by generating financial payback or significant cost savings through synergies.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Administration of the Major Capital Planning process is the responsibility of the Office of Campus Planning and Sustainability. Consultation and approvals involve other representatives. The roles and responsibilities of all parties are described below.

Executive Council and Board of Governors.

The role of Executive Council, led by the President, is to review and approve the 5-Year Capital Plan prior to submission to the Board. The 5-Year Capital Plan is reviewed and approved by the Board of Governors prior to submission to the Ministry.

Capital Planning Advisory Team

The CPAT serves an advisory role to Executive Council and is comprised of the following members:

- Associate Vice President Academic Resource Planning
- Associate Vice President Research
- Associate Vice President Financial Planning and Operations
- Associate Vice President Alumni and Development
- Executive Director Facilities Management
- Director Campus Planning and Sustainability

The Terms of Reference for the CPAT is included as an Appendix to these Guidelines.

Office of Campus Planning Sustainability

The Office of Campus Planning and Sustainability (OCPS) is responsible for developing the 5-Year Capital Plan and maintaining capital planning processes and policies. OCPS ensures the key activities and objectives are achieved by the identified timeline and that key collaborators and decision makers are engaged throughout the plan development process.

Facilities Management

Facilities Management staff act as a key collaborator in the Major Capital planning process given their expertise in project management and development, including capital project identification, cash flow and costing.

Unit Leaders

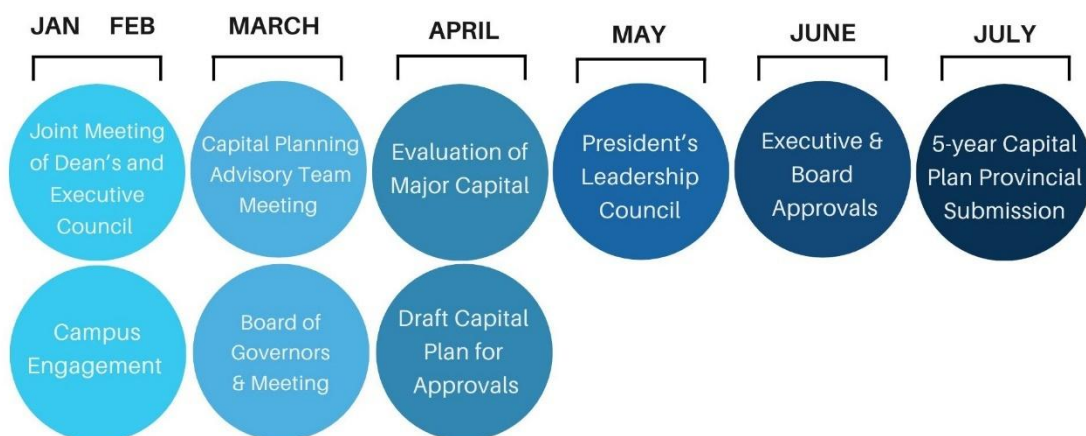
A “Unit” refers to academic, research or administrative areas at the university, including but not limited to: executive portfolios, faculties, departments, divisions, schools, offices and centres.

OCPS will consult with Unit Leaders annually to understand their department/Faculty’s existing and emerging priorities. Unit leaders may include Dean’s, Executive Directors or department leads. To support project evaluations, Unit Leaders are responsible for developing a proposed project’s rationale, problem statement and alignment with university and Ministry priorities. Additional details on this process are provided in the engagement section of these Guidelines.

All public post-secondary institutions are required to report to the Ministry of Post Secondary Education and Future Skills (the “Ministry”) on the implementation of short, mid and long-term capital planning.

5-YEAR CAPITAL PLANNING PROCESS

The 5-Year Capital Planning process takes place from January to July each year to identify Major Capital priorities.



JANUARY & FEBRUARY

- **Joint Meeting of Dean's and Executive Council** – The annual 5-Year Capital Planning process will kick-off with an introductory session at Dean's and Executive Council to share the forthcoming process and for members to identify high-level needs and directions. Members who have identified emerging priorities will be invited to participate in the Campus Engagement phase of the process.
- **Campus Engagement** – The Office of Campus Planning and Sustainability (OCPS) will conduct interviews with all interested Unit Leaders (Dean's and Administrative Leaders) to understand their emerging major capital priorities. OCPS will also share which Major Capital Projects from the previous year have been approved.

Following the interview, Unit Leaders interested in being considered in the 5-Year Capital Plan, will be required to submit a project application to OCPS by early March. Major Capital Project requests must be submitted and approved by the Dean or equivalent Administrative Leader for non-Faculty departments.

MARCH

- **Capital Planning Advisory Team (CPAT) Meeting** – Following completion of 5-Year Capital Plan engagement with Unit Leaders, OCPS will share with CPAT an engagement summary of what was heard during engagement to help inform their evaluation. A copy of the engagement summary will also be shared with Dean's Council.

- **Board of Governors Meeting** – OCPS will present the results of the campus engagement process and seek input from the Board.

APRIL

- **Evaluation of MCP** – Each CPAT member will complete an individual evaluation of all Major Capital Project applications. CPAT will meet to evaluate results and prepare recommendations for Projects in Planning and Prioritized Projects.
- **Draft 5-Year Capital Plan** – Following results of the evaluation process, OCPS will prepare the draft 5-Year Capital Plan for review and approvals.

MAY

- **President's Leadership Council** – OCPS will share the draft 5-Year Capital Plan with the Presidents Leadership Council (PLC) prior to Executive and Board decision-making.

JUNE

- **Executive and Board Approvals** – OCPS will share the draft 5-Year Capital Plan for review and approval by Executive and the Board of Governors.

JULY

- **Major Capital Plan Provincial Submission** – The university will submit the approved 5-Year Capital Plan to the Ministry.

PROJECT TIMELINE EXAMPLE:

The process to have a Major Capital project scoped, costed, funded and constructed could take eight or more years. A major capital project timeline is provided as an example below:

- **Phase 1 – Project Planning (1-3 Years):** Project is first identified as a Capital Project in Planning and undergoes a Feasibility Study to develop a Class D cost estimate.
- **Phase 2 – Business Case and Government Approval (1-2 Years):** Costed project is identified as a Prioritized Capital Project. Once the Province invites the institution to develop a Business Case, the project will undergo government review and approval.
- **Phase 3 – Detailed Design (1-2 years):** Once the project has received government approval, the project will go through detailed design and municipal approvals process. design and pre-construction process can take 1-2 years.
- **Phase 4 – Construction (2-3 Years):** Depending on the scope and complexity of the project, construction can take 2-3 years before occupancy.

HOW TO SUBMIT A CAPITAL PROJECT PROPOSAL

The capital planning process is informed through engagement with Unit Leaders from all Faculties and relevant departments including the University Libraries, University Systems, Residence Services, Campus Services and Facilities Management.

Integrating a structured engagement process into capital planning is essential for strengthening relationships with Unit leaders and enhancing their understanding of the process.

OCPS will lead the engagement process to understand capital needs. Improvements may be related to:

Growth: Addition of new facilities or optimization of existing facilities to serve student demand and enrollment growth.

Excellence: Improvements to existing facilities for student, program or research needs.

Targeted Investment: Strategic investments to support university priorities and/or the development of strategic partnerships that promote learning based academic and research collaborations.

Discussion questions to guide this engagement may include:

- Are there new research or academic priorities that should be considered in the updated 5-Year Capital Plan?
- Has your faculty and/or department completed a space optimization study in the last five years? If so, provide a summary of implementation progress.
- How does your emerging capital priority align with key campus policies and strategic plans?
- How does your emerging capital priority align with Provincial priorities for investment?
- What potential funding and/or financing sources does your department have access to that could support a major capital project?

Following consultation, if the Unit Leader is interested in pursuing a Major Capital Project, they will be required to submit a request to OCPS through the Dean or equivalent Administrative Leader for non-Faculty departments.

PROJECT REVIEW AND DECISION MAKING ON CAPITAL PRIORITIES

The capital planning evaluation framework has been established to build understanding in how Major Capital Projects are prioritized for funding applications and implementation.

Evaluation Criteria:

Projects are evaluated using four themes that are supported by supporting criteria. The criteria encompass the university's priorities relating to campus growth, Strategic Plan alignment, academic and research needs and building condition and safety improvements.

Theme	Criteria
Problem Statement and Program Need There is a strong case that supports the need for a capital solution.	Existing Capital Priority Project - The project has been identified in previous Major Capital Plans and remains a priority.
	Space Optimization - The project maximizes the use of space for this unit/department/faculty and/or opens up space for other university uses.
	Return on Investment - The project generates financial payback through net new revenue or cost savings.
	Community Benefit - The project addresses barriers that limit access and inclusion to UVic education (housing, childcare, food, accessibility).
	Government Priority Alignment - The project aligns with government-funded expansions in a key area of growth, interest and demand.
Strategic Plan Alignment The project will affect core or foundation programs, services or strategic initiatives and has been identified as a priority by Executive Council and/or in a strategic policy document (Strategic Plan, Indigenous Plan, Campus Plan, Real Estate Strategy, Academic Action Plan, Aspiration 2030)	Indigenous perspectives - The project implements local, national and international responsibilities and calls to action that support the rights and sovereignties of Indigenous Peoples.
	People, Places and the Planet- The project supports the on-going development of sustainable, healthy and connected campuses and communities, consistent with the Campus Plan, Climate and Sustainability Action Plan.
	Culture of change and transformation - The project fosters adaptable uses of space to grow transformative ideas, partnerships, education and communities of practice.
	Cultivates partnerships - The project creates opportunities for collaboration and partnerships with internal and external partners from academic institutions, industry, community organizations and/or government to contribute to community, society and the planet.

Academic Excellence & Impactful Research Contribution to creating and mobilizing knowledge and research for meaningful impact to the campus community.	Education and Research Growth - The project innovates and grows university programming in response to student demand and Provincial priorities.
	Interdisciplinary collaboration - The project supports faculties in the effective use of spaces and structures, including interdisciplinary collaboration on campus.
	Recruitment and Retention - The project supports the recruitment and retention of students and employees.
	Strategic Investment - The project supports research and academic excellence through strategic investment that encourages interdisciplinary collaboration and raises the profile of impact areas.
	Student Success - The project fosters a healthy environment to support programs and services for student success and retention.
Health, Safety and Resilience Contribution to deferred maintenance or replacement of aging systems to improve facility condition, health and safety and system performance and reliability.	Community Engagement and Reputation - The project deepens the relevance, impact and public appreciation of UVic research and education.
	Condition & Performance - The project significantly improves condition and performance of facility or system.
	Functionality - The project prevents major disruption including loss of function, power or data.
	Universal Design - The project removes barriers and improves accessibility.
	Sustainability and Resilience - The project improves sustainability and/or resiliency performance.
Overall Suitability An overall suitability rating is provided and assists when two or more projects rank closely. This rating also ensures the project can be evaluated for its alignment with overall university objectives.	Life Safety - The project improves the overall safety for occupants of the building and meets modern Building Code standards.

Evaluation Approach – Major Capital Projects

Major Capital Projects are evaluated individually by each member of the Capital Planning Advisory Team. Each criterion is assigned a weight, equaling 100%, as identified below:

- Problem Statement, Program Need and Provincial Alignment – 30%
- Strategic Plan Alignment – 20%
- Academic Excellence & Impactful Research – 20%
- Health, Safety and Resilience – 25%
- Overall Suitability – 5%

MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECT FUNDING

Once a Major Capital Project is approved and included in the 5-Year Capital Plan, the Plan is submitted to the Ministry for review. The Ministry will inform the university if a project is supported to proceed to a Business Case. Not all projects that are included in the Capital Plan will proceed to a Business Case.

A Business Case strives to establish the capital need and an accurate degree of scope, cost, and schedule certainty for the Ministry. This ensures that funding, if approved, is sufficient to successfully implement the project. A Business Case demonstrates the need, viability, desirability, and affordability for the project and requires three levels of approval – the university’s Board of Governors, the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training, and the Ministry of Finance.

Creating a Funding Plan

As part of the Business Case for a Major Capital project, Units will work with the Associate Vice President Financial Planning and Operations and Treasurer to create a funding plan that covers the entire cost of the capital project. VPFO will also consult with Alumni and Development to ensure consideration of gifts is included in the funding plan. A list of funding sources is provided further in this section. Given how unpredictable the economic climate is and will likely continue to be, central funding may or may not be available to support major capital projects.

As a Unit considers its funding plan, it is important to keep the following key funding principles and assumptions in mind:

- Every proposed capital project must have a funding plan to support the design, construction, furnishings, equipment, and operating costs, as well as the costs associated with any interim moves of the renovated, new or expanded asset.
- Any commitments from non-unit funds (Provost’s Office, Dean, etc.) must be approved in writing.

- Any central university commitments used for the completion of any project will be reimbursed first if the funding sources for the project exceed the final costs of the project.
- All gift agreements must be signed and executed (to be included in the funding plan at the time of Board of Governors approval).
- All grant agreements and contracts must be signed and executed.

Funding Plan Review

To ensure that a Unit's funding plan is feasible, the CPAT seeks input from several administrative units.

Treasury Office Review

The Treasury Office, within Financial Planning and Operations, provides consulting on financing principles and options in constructing a viable funding plan. This office can also assist in determining prevailing rates, terms and principles consistent with the university's approach for debt financing. The Treasurer considers the following information when reviewing a Unit's capital project funding plan:

- Does the project leverage external funds, such as a gift or grant?
- Is the funding plan feasible?
- Are the assumptions conservative or aggressive?
- Are the assumptions based on one good year or is there a historical pattern that supports the assumptions?
- Is there a strategy for incremental costs like staffing, maintenance, utilities, moving, storage, temporary space, and interest?
- How strapped will the Unit be to support unexpected program initiatives or operating expenses that arise after the capital project is approved?
- Does the unit have unrestricted fund balances that can be applied to the capital project?
- For projects that require University debt financing, does the proposing unit have the financial capacity to pay the debt service, as well as any new net operating costs from the renovation, construction, or asset acquisition (for major technology or equipment)?
- Is the funding plan sufficient to cover the life cycle repair and improvement costs of the new or expanded facility?

University Development Office Review

University Development Office provides advice on fundraising objectives and reviews the final fundraising plan to ensure its viability. The Development Office considers the following information when reviewing a Unit's capital project funding plan:

- Has a fundraising feasibility analysis been conducted? What do its results suggest?
- How does the donor funding potential meet philanthropic goals?
- How does this project intersect with other fundraising priorities at the unit and university levels?
- Has the appropriate donor coordination taken place?
- Is there alignment between project scope and donor expectations?

Budget Office Review

The Budget Office provides review of any projects requiring central commitment or Provincial funding for capital or operating budget needs. The Budget Office considers the following information when reviewing a Unit's capital project funding plan:

- Unit carryover balances
- Provincial funding feasibility

FUNDING SOURCES & FINANCING OPTIONS

The following sources or combination of sources are typically used to fund capital projects, depending on availability:

Unit Reserves, Gifts and Grants	Typically, there are more high priority capital needs than there are currently available central funding resources, so Units are expected to contribute to Capital Projects, whenever possible. This includes using Unit reserves (if available) and securing external funding (gifts or grants) to support their capital need.
Central Resources	Given the unpredictable economic climate, central resources are often limited and may or may not be available for a Capital Project. If central resources are available, the Treasurer and Executive Council will work with the Unit to ensure that the funding is committed.
Routine Capital	Facilities Management manages Routine Capital renewal funds that were established specifically to renovate and reprogram existing buildings to address major infrastructure needs and to renew and extend the useful life. Routine Capital funding may be leveraged toward projects that meet the building system renewal criteria.
Debt Financing	The University has very limited debt capacity and approval of financing requires a rigorous funding plan (operating forecast and capital plan) that demonstrates the university Unit's capacity to pay the debt service. Approval of the use of debt capacity is made by Board of Governors and the Ministry.
Provincial Funding	Every year, the Ministry requires the university submit a 5-Year Capital Plan. Each Plan must include prioritized capital project requests, special maintenance needs, and other information about

	<p>their facilities and space. Plans are submitted by the Office of Campus Planning and Sustainability each July. Provincial funding is not always available to support the university's capital needs. Funding amounts, availability, and timing vary from year to year, and are directly related to the Provincial budget and priorities. When the Province of BC provides capital funding to the university, it requires the university to contribute funding to the capital project(s).</p>
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Donor Funding Guidelines

The Fundraising and Gift Acceptance Policy (ER4105) provides policy direction on fundraising and gift acceptance activities at the university. In some cases, a Major Capital Project may have interest from a donor(s) to financially support the construction of the project. Donor funding may be in addition to Provincial funding, or be supported individually.

For each major donation, a formal gift agreement must be executed during the Business Case development phase. The Gift Agreement should include:

- The total amount of the donation;
- Detailed payment terms, including the amount and timing of payments;
- A clear statement on any restrictions regarding the use of funds, such as designated naming rights, specific purposes;
- Any conditions under which the gift may be altered or rescinded, ensuring alignment with donor intent and project scope.

The Capital Project must meet specific funding benchmarks before proceeding to different phases to protect the university from financial risk:

- **Pre-Design Milestone:** At least 50% of the total donor funding must be committed and documented in signed gift agreement(s) before schematic design begins. Each agreement must include the total donation amount, payment terms, and any usage restrictions, as outlined during the Business Case development phase.
- **Pre-Construction Milestone:** 100% of donor funding must be secured and documented in signed gift agreements before construction commences. This ensures that the university is fully funded for the project and avoids the risk of shortfalls that could disrupt or delay the project.

NEXT STEPS

Once a project has all funding in place and has been approved to proceed, the Unit will continue to work with Facilities Management to explore the Capital Project further and begin program studies and design.

It is important to note that all capital projects must be coordinated through and managed by Facilities Management. Units will have input in the selection but are not permitted to procure architectural firms or general contractors.

CAPITAL PLANNING ADVISORY TEAM (CPAT)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.0 Role of the Committee

The Capital Planning Advisory Team (CPAT) reviews and coordinates the annual priorities of all university portfolios in the context of the Five Year Capital Plan. The CPAT is responsible for:

- Adhering to the process and Guiding Principles outlined in the Capital Planning Guidelines;
- Conducting individual evaluations of Major Capital Project requests to inform the draft Five-Year Capital Plan prior to Executive and Board approval.
- Developing recommendations for prioritized projects that align with the institution's long-term goals and objectives, address deferred maintenance backlog and generate cost savings and synergies for the university;
- Providing advice and subject matter expertise to the Executive Council to support the prioritization of major capital projects.
- Providing direction on prioritizing space optimization studies and approving these studies;
- Reviewing major changes in space allocations resulting from significant academic or research program changes.

2.0 Membership

The **Capital Planning Advisory Team** shall comprise of:

Member	Name
Chair	Associate Vice President Financial Planning and Operations
VPAC Representative	Associate Vice President Academic Resource Planning
VPRI Representative	Associate Vice President Research
A&D Representative	Associate Vice President Alumni and Development
Facilities Management	Executive Director
Campus Planning and Sustainability	Director
Resource	Name
Campus Planning and Sustainability (non-voting)	Campus Planner
Capital Development and Delivery (non-voting)	Director

1. The Campus Planner will act as resource to the committee and is responsible for campus engagement for, and development of, the 5-Year Capital Plan.

2. The Chair shall:
 - Call meetings of the Advisory Team.
 - Chair meetings of the Advisory Team.
 - Ensuring meetings are duly convened and that quorum is present when required.
 - Working with the Campus Planner on the development of agendas and related materials for the meetings.
 - Ensuring meetings are conducted in an efficient, effective and focused manner.
 - Ensuring members have sufficient information to provide input and subject matter expertise.
 - Monitoring compliance by the Advisory Team of its duties and responsibilities as contained in the Terms of Reference.
 - Report to Executive Council on the advice of the Capital Planning Advisory Team.
3. Alternative members may be nominated by individual members from their Portfolio for purposes of attendance at meetings where the nominated member is unavailable. Alternate members shall have the same status at that meeting as elected members.
4. Other members may be co-opted from time to time for a specified period and purpose, as endorsed by the Chair. Co-opted members will have full voting privileges.

3.0 Procedures

1. The Chair of Advisory Team will be the Associate Vice President Financial Planning and Operations
2. The Advisory Team will meet a minimum of two times throughout the year, aligning with the Major Capital planning processes set out in the Capital Planning Guidelines.
3. The meetings will be pre-scheduled at the start of each fiscal year by VPFO in order to ensure availability and predictability of all members.
4. Special meetings may be called by the Chair.

4.0 Decision Making

Members provide individual advice and subject matter expertise in the evaluation and selection of major capital projects for prioritization. CPAT recommendations will strive to be based on a consensus among members, ensuring that advice reflect collective agreement when presented to President Leadership Council.

The Chair of CPAT provides updates on capital planning to the President's Leadership Council to support final decision making by Executive Council and the Board of Governors.

5.0 Secretariat

An administrative staff from VPFO will support the Advisory Team by taking minutes at the meetings and the minutes shall be approved at subsequent meetings. Minutes will be kept and stored in accordance with the organization's practice.

Meeting materials will be circulated five business days in advance of the meeting.

6.0 Accountability

The Capital Planning Advisory Team will be accountable to Executive Council.

Approved by Executive Council: **2025-03-04**