Condominium Authority of Ontario
Advisory Process Terms of Reference

1.0 Purpose

The Condominium Authority of Ontario's Administrative Agreement requires that CAO's Board of Directors establish an Advisory Process that allows condominium communities to provide direct input to CAO. These Terms of Reference outline how CAO will connect with condominium communities to obtain, consider, and prioritize their feedback. Each year, CAO publicly reports on the input received and the priorities set to address what we heard.

2.0 Definitions

a) "Condo Authority" or "CAO" means the Condominium Authority of Ontario
b) "User" refers to any person who interacts with a CAO product, service, system or application
c) "User experience" refers to the overall experience a user has while interacting with a product, system or service
d) "Advisory panel" is a round table with a group of experts assembled to provide strategic guidance, insights and recommendations on specific issues or projects
e) "Focus group" is a small, diverse group of users brought together to discuss a particular digital product or service
f) "Usability Testing" is a research method in which users interact with a digital product, prototype, or system to evaluate its functionality, usability, and overall user experience

3.0 Background

Since 2017, the Condo Authority has focused on strengthening consumer protection and supporting condo living across Ontario. The CAO engages and empowers condominium communities across the province through its digital service delivery model, which provides users with access to information, education and dispute resolution services.

4.0 Objectives

The CAO's Advisory Process provides condominium owners, directors, residents, buyers, managers, industry professionals, and the public multiple ways to provide timely advice and feedback on CAO services or important topics related to condo living. These processes also provide opportunities to learn more about CAO's activities.

5.0 Advisory Tactics

The Condo Authority will engage users through the following tactics:
1. Advisory Panels
2. Focus Groups
3. Usability Testing
4. Surveys
5. Direct feedback to Information Services staff

5.1 Advisory Panels

The CAO will solicit feedback from experts to establish ad-hoc advisory panels typically by synchronous virtual meeting.

Advisory panels will be leveraged to gather feedback on CAO educational or informational products such as:

- CAO Director Training content
- CAO guides and research reports
- Any additional CAO resources, as necessary

5.2 Focus Groups

Focus groups will be used to obtain discovery insights about CAO digital products. These sessions will be conducted through synchronous virtual meetings, generally with individuals who have used the digital services before.

Here are examples of services that focus groups may be used to gather feedback for:

- CAO's online dispute resolution platform
- Returns and notices of change platform
- CAO website (public and gated)

5.3 Usability Testing

Usability testing will be used to solicit feedback on specific features or design elements of CAO products. These sessions will be conducted through synchronous virtual or in-person meetings with individuals who fit the required demographics (e.g., age, location, role, experience).

Examples of usability testing are:

- Usability testing for the navigation of Condo Returns filings
- Testing the user flow of the improved Contact Us Self-Help Centre
- Card sorting to create a clear information architecture for the website

5.4 Surveys

Surveys are a valuable tool for quickly collecting insights on a wide variety of products, services, or experiences provided by CAO. They are particularly useful for gathering large quantities of information with a minimal time commitment from CAO making them more efficient to conduct than focus groups or usability tests. Surveys can be designed to capture both quantitative and qualitative feedback, making them versatile for different research needs.

Examples of survey usages are:

- Information Services customer experience survey
- Condo Calendar Tool card comparison testing
- Webpage-specific feedback

5.5 Direct Feedback Through our Information Services team

The Condo Authority's Information Services team regularly interacts with condominium owners, directors, residents, buyers, managers, industry professionals and the public and serves as a key channel to make suggestions about CAO's services and identify issues of concern.

Information Services staff will report notable qualitative feedback directly to business units responsible for its areas. Staff will also periodically report call volume data by topic to Senior Leadership, who will use this information to set priorities and re-route resources as required to address any feedback.

6.0 Promotion of CAO's Advisory Process

The CAO will promote opportunities to provide feedback through these tactics by leveraging various communications channels such as social media, posting on our website, newsletters or through email campaigns.

7.0 Roles and Responsibilities

The CAO's staff and leadership will have clear reporting and data gathering roles that will ensure consistent delivery of and response to feedback, as per the below table:

Tactic	Lead	Support
Advisory Panel	Business unit responsible for the product in question	Communications & Marketing team
Focus Groups	User Experience team	Business unit responsible for the product in question
User Test	User Experience team	Business unit responsible for the product in question
Surveys	Communications & Marketing team	Business Unit Responsible for the product in question
Direct Feedback to IS	Information Services team	Senior Leadership

8.0 Analytics and Reporting on Feedback

The CAO will develop a quarterly dashboard report for the Board on publicly reported KPIs reflecting consolidated feedback.

Business leads will provide reports to Senior Leadership and supporting business units on results on specific initiatives to inform development of products and services.

As required by Section 7.2(4) of the Administrative Agreement, a report on the activities and advice provided by this process shall be included in CAO's Annual Report.

The CAO's Annual Report will highlight key areas of feedback and opportunities for improvement, as well as the impact to condominium communities.

Advisory panel, focus group and usability testing participants will be acknowledged in the report with their consent.