

**City of Richmond  
Advisory Committee on the Environment  
Terms of Reference**

**Approved: November 2021**

## **The Advisory Committee on the Environment (ACE) Revised Terms of Reference**

### **1. Purpose**

These terms of reference shall apply to the Advisory Committee on the Environment (ACE).

### **2. Name**

The community-based advisory committee shall be called the Advisory Committee on the Environment (ACE).

### **3. Mandate**

ACE shall:

- Provide advice (e.g., information, options and recommendations) to City Council on environmental issues of concern to the community.
- Provide advice to Council on achieving a sustainable community in support of and consistent with the City's sustainability goals and objectives.
- Review and comment on reporting for environmental, energy efficiency and climate action strategies, plans and associated implementation measures.
- Generate independent and credible information on key environmental issues.
- Anticipate and advise Council and staff of potential problems and opportunities for environmental sustainability.
- Review and monitor the existing situation and trends to identify environmental concerns.
- Work with City staff to encourage and co-ordinate public participation in the identification and development of solutions to environmental issues.
- Help enhance public awareness of environmental issues.
- Provide environmental information to the Food Security and Agricultural Advisory Committee (FSAAC).
- Represent the City on the Vancouver International Airport Environmental Advisory Committee (YVR EAC).

### **4. City Councillor Liaison to ACE**

There shall be 1 Councillor Liaison to the ACE.

### **5. Composition**

The ACE shall be comprised of up to 10 citizen members. Members of the ACE shall:

- Reflect a broad cross-section of Richmond citizens.
- Be Richmond residents, who demonstrate an interest in and commitment to environmental issues in Richmond.
- Be appointed on the basis of their availability, experience and the expertise which they can bring to the work of the ACE and not as formal representatives of particular organizations.
- Represent knowledge, experience and perspectives of various sectors including:
  - agriculture;
  - fishing;
  - aquatic ecology;
  - terrestrial ecology;

- health and the human environment;
- environmental mitigation;
- business;
- communications;
- community planning;
- students; or
- the community-at-large.

## 6. Selection

- Recruiting
  - The selection of 10 ACE members shall be according to Council policy and procedures.
  - The ACE members and staff may encourage:
    - Individuals to apply to the ACE.
    - Applicants from particular groups, organizations, or sectors (e.g., Kwantlen College, UBC).
  - Staff may place additional advertisements in other media (e.g., university & college media).
- Appointing
  - The ACE appointments shall be made by City Council.
  - The ACE Representative to the FSAAC:
    - The ACE members may select a representative to sit on the FSAAC. An ACE representative selected to sit on the FSAAC shall be appointed by Council.
  - The ACE representative to the YVR EAC:
    - The ACE members may select a representative to sit on the YVR EAC. An ACE representative selected to sit on the YVR EAC shall be appointed by Council.
    - Selection of a representative from the ACE to the YVR EAC shall commence at the beginning of 2023 to allow for the existing appointed citizen representative on the YVR EAC (also appointed to the ACE) to complete their membership term to the end of December 31, 2022.

## 7. Operation and Process

- Authority – The ACE:
  - Shall address environmental issues referred by City Council.
  - May prepare information, options and recommendations for City Council.
  - May recommend, steps for addressing environmental issues which:
    - The ACE deems a priority, or
    - Have been identified as a significant public concern.
  - Shall have access to all publicly accessible information available to Council that relates to the environment.
  - May request staff to undertake work regarding particular environmental concerns, subject to City staff workload and priorities.

- May request that any specific environmental policy initiative to be considered by Council be referred to the ACE for timely review and comment prior to a final decision by Council
- May make recommendations regarding its terms of reference.
- **Accountability**
  - Basic – The ACE:
    - Shall be accountable to Council.
    - Produce an annual report and work program for Council consideration.
    - Be required to adhere to the Code of Conduct section provided for within these Terms of Reference.
  - ACE representative to the YVR EAC:
    - The ACE representative on the YVR EAC shall communicate activities with ACE after each YVR EAC meeting.
  - ACE Representative on the FSAAC
    - The ACE representative on the FSAAC shall communicate activities with ACE after each FSAAC meeting.
- **Communication**
  - The ACE members shall normally communicate through the staff liaison, to Planning Committee and then to Council.
  - Council may ask the ACE (and vice versa) to make presentations to Council directly.
  - The ACE may communicate regularly with the public.
  - The ACE meetings shall be open to the public.
- **Decision-Making Process**
  - Members of the ACE shall:
    - Follow Council decision making policy and procedures
    - Meet regularly, at least eight times annually.
    - Ensure a quorum of at least 6 appointed ACE members exists for any recommendations or decisions made by the Committee.
    - Normally make decisions on a consensus basis.
  - Where the ACE recommendations are brought forward on a basis other than consensus, the submission of minority ACE member opinions shall be permitted.

## **8. Reporting**

The ACE shall prepare and submit:

- An annual report to Council which outlines activities and initiatives of the previous year; and
- A proposed work program for the coming year.

## 9. Implementation

The ACE shall implement a Council approved work program and fulfil its mandate incrementally as tasks are matched by available resources, and as skills, knowledge and experience develop.

- Setting Environmental Goals, Objectives and Policies:
  - The ACE shall provide advice to Council in accordance with the mandate of the Committee provided for in these Terms of Reference.
- Environmental Data Gathering, Information Exchange and Research:
  - The ACE shall gather information on environmental issues and provide Council and the public with credible, independent information, options and recommendations on key issues of concern, for example ACE may:
    - Invite information, opinions, options and recommendations from independent sources, such as consultants, academics, industry, business, community groups and environmental organizations.
    - Convene public forums on environmental issues.
    - Make recommendations to Council regarding the necessity for reports and studies on particular environmental issues.
  - The ACE shall review and comment on sustainability and environmental related reporting.
- Environmental Issue Response Co-ordination:
  - The ACE shall co-ordinate public responses to significant environmental issues, for example:
    - Invite submissions from individuals, groups and organizations.
    - Respond through recommendations and proposals to Council.
    - Establish task forces or sub-committees to address key issues of concern in detail as required.
    - Advise on additional environmental management measures and initiatives of interest to the public.
  - In the longer term, the ACE may make recommendations to City Council on a wider range of environmental issues and co-ordinate additional measures or initiatives as required, for example:
    - Recommend priorities for managing environmental issues.
    - Recommend long term strategies for environmental protection, sustainability, conservation and mitigation.
- Environmental Policy Review:
  - The ACE shall identify environmental issues and evaluate if they are adequately or appropriately addressed by the policies, programs and practices of the City of Richmond.
  - The ACE may, for example:
    - collect and submit evidence of environmental problems or foregone environmental opportunities which would be addressed by a change in City or agency policies, programs and practices.
    - Present evidence and reasoned arguments on potential future environmental problems or opportunities that could be addressed by changes in City or agency policies, programs and practices.

- In the longer term, the ACE may recommend to Council a periodic review of policies, programs and practices that affect the environment and propose terms of reference for such reviews.

## **10. Code of Conduct**

- Conflict of Interest:
  - A conflict of interest exists if a Committee member is a director, member or employee of an organization seeking to benefit from the City or if the Committee member has a direct or indirect pecuniary (financial) interest in the outcome of Committee deliberations.
  - Committee members who have a conflict of interest with a topic being discussed shall declare the conflict, describe the nature of the conflict, leave the room prior to any discussions and shall refrain from voting.
  - Committee members are not permitted to directly or indirectly benefit from their participation on the Committee during their tenure and for a period of twelve (12) months following their term(s).
- Professionalism:
  - Committee members are expected to act in accordance with the City's Respectful Workplace Policy (Policy 6800), including being respectful towards other members.
  - Committee members must devote the necessary time and effort to prepare for meetings, arrive at meetings on time and provide feedback consistent with the Committee's mandate. Any Committee member who is absent for three (3) meetings of the Committee without reason satisfactory to the Committee may be removed from the Committee.
- Reporting and Social Media:
  - The Committee members may not represent themselves as having any authority beyond that delegated in the Terms of Reference approved by Council.
  - Items will be presented to the Committee if referred by Council or staff and the standard process of communication is through staff to Council. Committee members may communicate directly to Council or the media, if the Committee members identify themselves as an individual, and not as representatives of the Committee.
  - Any use of social media must, as with all other forms of communication, meet principles of integrity, professionalism and privacy.

Should a Committee member violate the Code of Conduct or act outside the Terms of Reference, the Committee member may be removed from the Committee.