



## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **Environment & Climate Advisory Committee**

#### **1. Introduction**

The Environment & Climate Advisory Committee (ECAC) advises the Regional District of Central Okanagan (RDCO) Regional Board on environment and climate related applications, projects, programs, and policy. The ECAC functions as an Advisory Committee of the Regional Board and is established pursuant to Section 7.9 of Board Procedure Bylaw No. 1501.

#### **2. Mandate**

The Committee advises the Regional Board in fulfilling its commitment to protect the environment and mitigate and adapt to climate change in the delivery of regional services for present and future generations.

#### **3. Scope**

Responsibilities of the ECAC include:

- Provide advice to the Regional Board on a range of existing and emerging environmental and climate change related issues and trends for:
  - Strategic planning initiatives (ex. Regional Growth Strategy),
  - Relevant projects (ex. Regional Flood Management plan),
  - Services (ex. Solid Waste), and
  - Policy development (ex. Official Community Plan);
- Identify and review opportunities for environmental protection and enhancement, climate change mitigation and adaptation within the Regional District and advise the Regional Board of the same;
- Provide advice to the Regional Board on natural environment and climate change matters pertaining to:
  - Development proposals and the impact on areas designated as environmentally sensitive or hazardous in nature;
  - Relevant applications and referrals from other governmental agencies and levels of government;
  - Studies, plans, assessments and professional reports required in the review of regional initiatives including, but not limited, geotechnical, environmental impact, habitat or biological, wildfire hazard, storm water management and drainage, groundwater management, flood protection, climate mitigation and adaptation matters in nature; and
  - Mitigation and enhancement projects that could further protect aquatic and terrestrial wildlife, its habitat and other ecological and environmental assets;

- Identify and advise on ways to engage local environmental awareness and promote environmental stewardship and climate change mitigation and adaptation; and
- At the request of the Regional Board, review other matters as it pertains to the mandate of the Committee.

As directed by the Regional Board, the ECAC may also function as a working group to advise on specific delegations as it pertains to the mandate of the Committee.

#### **4. Criteria**

In review of development applications, plans, proposals or items before the Committee, the ECAC will consider the following:

- Relevant policies and regulations at a local level;
- Best Management Practices;
- Impacts on, but not limited to, air quality, cumulative effects, ecosystems (aquatic and terrestrial), hazard management, invasive species, wildlife corridors, species at risk, water quality and quantity, and climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- Regional Growth Strategy;
- Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for the Okanagan Region; and
- The effect of the proposal on the immediate site and adjacent lands.

For each development application reviewed, the ECAC will recommend one of the following options:

- Support the application, as presented;
- Support the application, with conditions; or
- Provide a recommendation of non-support.

#### **5. Membership**

Membership of the Committee will be comprised of five (5) voting members appointed by the Regional Board.

The following are minimum qualifications to serve on the Committee:

- Reside within the Regional District of Central Okanagan;
- Demonstrated interest in environmental and community matters;
- Available to attend most ECAC meetings;
- Commitment to the ECAC's objectives;
- Ability to objectively review complex applications and planning considerations; and
- Access to a computer and an e-mail address in order to receive and respond to communications and information including meetings packages.

The preferred composition of the membership will include residents from each Electoral Area and reflect a diversity of demographic characteristics and professional backgrounds.

Student representatives and others that reside outside of the Regional District of Central

Okanagan may be considered where they have professional expertise or other required qualifications not presented on the Committee. However, at least 2/3 of the members of the ECAC must be residents of the Regional District of Central Okanagan. Elected officials and Regional District staff are not eligible for appointment as voting member of the ECAC.

Although a demonstrated interest in environmental and community matters is a minimum qualification to serve on the ECAC, the following academic or technical backgrounds are favorable:

- Fisheries, wildlife biology, ecology, biogeography;
- Traditional Ecological Knowledge of Syilx tr̓xwúla?xw (land);
- Hydrology, soil science, environmental engineering;
- Water resource management, natural resource management;
- Climate mitigation and adaptation;
- Community and facility energy management;
- Land use planning; and
- Environmental education.

## **6. Appointment Process and Term**

All advisory committee membership vacancies are advertised and follow an application process. All applications are reviewed and appointments to the ECAC are made by the Regional Board.

Member appointments will be for a two (2) year term with the ability for reappointment for a second term. All advisory committees and their member appointments will end at the time of a general local election for a new Regional Board (every 4 years).

## **7. Vacancies**

The Regional Board, may, at any time, terminate the appointment of a member at their discretion.

Committee members who are absent for three (3) consecutive meetings will forfeit their appointment unless such absences are authorized by resolution of the Committee.

A member of the Committee may resign at any time upon sending written notice to the Corporate Officer at the Regional District of Central Okanagan.

## **8. Chair/Vice-Chair**

The Committee will elect a Chair and Vice-Chair annually during the first meeting of a calendar year. In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, the Committee may elect an Acting Chair from those members in attendance.

The Chair, Vice-Chair or Acting Chair are required to be physically present at a meeting and cannot Chair a meeting remotely.

## **9. Quorums and Voting**

Quorum of the Committee is comprised of three (3) members of the Committee for the purpose of conducting business of the Committee.

Majority vote means more than half of the votes of those present on a motion are cast in the affirmative, with abstentions counted as a vote in the affirmative. In the event of a tie vote, the question will be defeated.

## **10. Frequency of Meetings**

The Committee will meet a minimum of four times per year.

The meeting schedule will be established and adopted by the ECAC annually during the first meeting of a calendar year and may be amended as required.

Additional meetings may be required for projects, site visits or urgent matters.

## **11. Agendas and Information Packages**

Staff will prepare agendas for each meeting of the Committee and provide the agenda package to Committee members at least 3 working days prior to the meeting date.

The order of business for each meeting will be governed by the agenda. New agenda items may be added by a majority vote of those present.

## **12. Meeting Procedures**

All ECAC meetings are held in person and are open to the public at the Regional District Office, 1450 K.L.O Road, Kelowna. Electronic participation at a committee meeting is permitted upon confirmation of available technology, and provided that sufficient voting members are in attendance to reach quorum.

Applicants whose matters appear on an agenda are encouraged to attend and be heard at ECAC meetings at which the Committee will consider their application. Attendance by applicants is not mandatory. However, it is recommended so that applicants have an opportunity to answer any questions, which the Committee may have.

The Committee may, from time to time, invite resource people or delegations to participate in a Committee meeting. Individuals or delegations must be authorized by the Director of Community Services and identified in advance as an item on the meeting agenda.

### **13. Minutes**

The minutes will:

- Record the motion and voting on all resolutions;
- Include anecdotal comments that provide context on pertinent discussions;
- Be adopted at a subsequent Committee meeting;
- Be secured at the Regional District office and signed by the Chair or Vice-Chair as the true record of the decisions made; and
- Once adopted, be provided to the Corporate Officer for circulation to the Board and made available for public viewing on the committee page of the Regional District website.

### **14. Administrative/Technical Support**

Community Services staff will provide administrative, technical, and secretarial support for the ECAC.

Corporate Services will provide Legislative support including the recruitment process for the appointment of Committee members by the Regional Board.

### **15. Code of Conduct**

The Regional Board Policy No. 2 – 2016 established guidelines for conduct for advisory bodies of the Regional District of Central Okanagan. Advisory bodies must commit to performing their function of office truthfully, faithfully, and impartially to the best of their knowledge and ability while acting in a manner that is respectful, ethical, accountable, responsible, transparent, and open. The Code of Conduct Policy will be provided to committee member during orientation.

### **16. Conflict of Interest**

If a committee member perceives that they may have a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in a matter before the Committee or may, for any other reason, have a conflict of interest, the member must declare their interest or conflict, and its general nature.

Upon such a declaration being made, it will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting and the member declaring the conflict:

- Will not participate or vote in any discussion regarding the matter in question;
- Will leave the meeting during consideration of and voting on the matter in question; and
- Will not attempt, in any way, whether before, during or after the meeting, to influence the voting on any aspect of the matter in question.

## 17. Public Relations

When speaking in public on an issue, ECAC members must make clear that opinions expressed are individual and not representing the ECAC or the Regional District of Central Okanagan.

In the event the Committee is required to address the media, opinions expressed on behalf of the ECAC are to be communicated by the Director of Community Services or the Chair as appropriate.

On a matter before the Committee, ECAC members will not communicate with elected officials directly.

**\*\*\* END OF TERMS OF REFERENCE \*\*\***

<u>Department</u>	<u>Date Approved</u>
Community Services	February 23, 2023