

**Terms of Reference (November 2010)**  
**Richmond Advisory Committee on the Environment (ACE)**



**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 to assist in:
  - developing a vision for a sustainable environment in Richmond;
  - determining appropriate goals, objectives, policies and guiding principles to achieve a sustainable environment;
  - Note: "The State of Environment Report" and the "Richmond Official Community Plan" are the two main City documents for articulating this vision.
- 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;  
Note: One of ACE's primary tools for doing so will be the "State of the Environment Report".
- 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 Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC); and
- represent the City on the YVR Environmental Advisory Committee (YVR EAC).

**4. City Council Liaison To ACE**

There shall be one Council Liaison to ACE.

**5. Composition**

- ACE shall be comprised of up to 13 citizen members.
- An additional member will sit as an Alternate to the YVR Environmental Advisory Committee (YVR EAC).

Members of ACE shall:

- reflect a broad cross-section of Richmond citizens;
- be, either Richmond residents, or non-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 ACE and not as formal representatives of particular organizations;
- not have a conflict of interest with Council or ACE and should advise the members when a potential conflict may exist on a specific issue and recuse themselves for the duration of the discussions on the issue to which they have declared a conflict of interest;
- 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; and
- the community-at-large.

## 6. Selection

### A.) Recruiting

- The selection of 14 ACE members shall be according to Council policy and procedures. (e.g., The City Clerk's office will place appropriate public advertisements in the press and media to ask for volunteers to:
  - apply for membership on ACE (13 positions), and
  - the YVR EAC (1 position & 1 alternate who will share one ACE membership).
- To achieve a viable ACE committee, ACE members and staff may encourage:
  - individuals to apply to ACE, and
  - 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).

### B.) Appointing

- i.) ACE appointments shall be made by City Council.
- ii.) ACE Members on the YVR Environmental Advisory Committee (YVREAC).
  - (1) General Appointment
    - Council shall determine the City's appointments to the YVREAC(1 person),
    - Once appointed by Council, the City's representatives to the YVREAC shall automatically be full members of ACE with voting privileges.
  - (2) Alternate to City YVRAA Appointment
    - Council may appoint an alternate representative to the YVREAC who will only vote in the regular representative's absence.
- iii.) ACE Representative to the Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC). ACE Committee members may select a representative to sit on the Agricultural Advisory Committee. Council shall make such appointment.

## 7. Term:

### General – 2 Year Terms

Normally, ACE members shall be appointed for 2-year terms.

### Rotating Membership

ACE shall have rotating membership as follows:

#### Group 1:

- Total: 7 ACE members
- Period- (e.g., from January 1, 2011, to December 31, 2012)
- Composition: 6 basic ACE members

#### Group 2:

- Total: 7 ACE members
- Period (e.g., from January 1, 2012, to December 31, 2013)5
- Composition:
  - 6 basic ACE members
  - 1 ACE member who is appointed by Council to the YVREAC.

Subsequent appointments are to be made for two year terms. The ACE appointed representative to the Agricultural Advisory Committee may be drawn from *either Group 1 or Group 2*. The actual number of members in the two groups may be periodically adjusted in order to reasonably maintain the overall number of members.

## **8. Operation and Process**

### **A.) Authority**

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:
  - 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 ACE for timely review and comment prior to a final decision by Council;
- may make recommendations regarding its terms of reference.

### **B.) Accountability**

#### **i.) Basic**

ACE shall:

- be accountable to Council;
- produce annual reports, work programs, budgets and other reports for Council;
- be required to disclose the nature of their interests and involvement in Richmond to identify any potential conflict of interest.

#### **ii.) YVREAC Representatives**

The City's representatives on YVRAAEAC committees shall:

- co-ordinate their activities with ACE prior to and after each YVR EAC meeting;
- report to Council through ACE.

#### **iii.) Agricultural Advisory Committee Representatives (AAC)**

The City's representatives on AAC committees shall:

- co-ordinate their activities with ACE prior to and after each AAC committee meeting;
- report to and through ACE.

### **C.) Communication**

- ACE members shall normally communicate through the staff liaison, to Planning Committee and then to Council.
- Council may ask ACE (and vice versa) to make presentations to Council directly.
- ACE may communicate regularly with the public.
- ACE meetings shall be open to the public.

### **D.) Decision-Making Process**

- Members of ACE shall:
  - follow Council decision making policy and procedures;
  - meet regularly, at least eight times annually;
  - ensure a quorum of at least 8 appointed ACE members exists for any recommendations or decisions made by the Committee;
  - normally make decisions on a consensus basis.
- Where ACE recommendations are brought forward on a basis other than consensus, the submission of minority ACE member opinions shall be permitted.

- Alternate member to the YVREAC committee or the AAC committee shall have voting privileges only when the appointed representative is unable to fulfill his/her obligations.

## 9. Resources

ACE shall prepare and submit:

- For the Year Just Completed:
  - an annual report
  - a financial statement
- For the Upcoming Year
  - a proposed work program
  - a proposed budget.

ACE shall incur expenses only for Council authorized items, and City policy and procedures shall be followed.

ACE may draw upon external consultants and volunteers to assist in fulfilling its mandate, provided that any expenditure can be accommodated within the approved ACE budget.

Richmond City Council shall review ACE's annual budget submission and provide funding based on City budgetary priorities.

## 10. Implementation

### A.) Setting Environmental Goals, Objectives and Policies

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.

ACE shall provide advice to City Council on appropriate goals, objectives and objectives for the achievement of a sustainable environment; for example, ACE may provide advice to Council and staff which assists in:

- developing a vision for a sustainable environment in Richmond; and
- determining appropriate goals, policies, objectives and guiding principles to achieve a Sustainable Environment.
- Note: The State of Environment Report and Richmond Official Community Plan are the two main City documents for articulating this vision.

### B.) Environmental Data Gathering, Information Exchange and Research

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.

Having participated in creating a State of the Environment Report for Richmond, ACE shall:

- continue to assist in regular updates of this report; and
- will recommend to Council appropriate programs for preparing such updates.

C.) Environmental Issue Response Co-ordination

ACE shall co-ordinate public responses to significant environmental issues, for example:

- receive referrals from Council for the consideration of significant environmental issues;
- 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;
- initiate and co-ordinate additional environmental management measures and initiatives.

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;
- suggest processes for facilitation, assisted negotiations (mediation) or other forms of dispute resolution where a significant dispute or conflict is a component of an environmental issue which is brought to its attention.

D.) Environmental Policy Review

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.

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, 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.