



TERMS OF REFERENCE Agricultural Advisory Committee

1. Introduction

The Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) advises the Regional District of Central Okanagan (RDCO) Regional Board on agricultural issues and the potential impact of planning decisions on agriculture in the electoral areas. The AAC 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 provides local perspective and expertise on the protection and enhancement of agricultural lands within the Regional District of Central Okanagan.

3. Scope

The AAC provides advice and recommendations to the Regional Board on matters relating to agricultural lands, including:

- Applications initiated under the *Agricultural Land Committee Act* and *Soil Conservation Act*;
- Relevant applications and referrals from other governmental agencies and levels of government;
- Assisting with comprehensive review and/or development of:
 - bylaws;
 - official community plans;
 - neighbourhood plans;
 - agricultural plans;
 - farm 'edge' policies;
 - parks and recreation plans; and
 - transportation plans;
- Major development proposals with potential impact on agriculture;
- Irrigation, drainage and other water management issues impacting agriculture; Effectiveness of noxious insect and weed control regulations and programs; and
- At the request of the Regional Board, review other matters as it pertains to the mandate of the Committee.

The AAC may provide recommendations relating to increasing awareness of agricultural issues in the Regional District of Central Okanagan including:

- Enhancing an understanding of agriculture's role in the local and/or regional economy, including the role of farm owners and farm workers;
- Addressing competition for the agricultural land base;
- Examining legislation to identify improvements to support agriculture;
- Improving opportunities for joint funding of drainage and irrigation works;
- Reporting on the impacts of park and recreation proposals on agriculture; and

- Identifying and effecting change regarding the impact of transportation and utility corridors on or near agriculture.

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

4. Criteria

In reviewing applications, plans, proposals, or items before the Committee, the AAC will consider the following:

- The effect of the proposal on agricultural potential;
- The effect of the proposal on adjacent Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) properties and surrounding agricultural production;
- The effect of the proposal on people who rely on farming for their livelihood, including farm owners and farm workers;
- The effect of the proposal on water resources and transportation issues;
- A rating of the priority or impact of the application on the maintenance of the ALR;
- Where appropriate, possible alternatives to the proposal; and
- The identification of issues relating to the protection of the ALR land specific to the application, including the use of appropriate buffering techniques aimed at enhancing land use compatibility.

For each development application reviewed, the AAC will recommend one of the following options to the Regional Board:

- 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 agricultural and community matters;
- Available to attend most AAC meetings;
- Commitment to the AAC'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.

The membership will reflect a diversity of agricultural professions, practices, sectors, and commodity groups and will include a designated representative of the Ministry of Agriculture.

Elected officials and Regional District staff are not eligible for appointment as a voting member of the AAC.

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 AAC 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 is 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.

The Ministry of Agriculture representative is not entitled to vote.

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 AAC 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 AAC 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 AAC 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 or their delegate 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 AAC.

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 members 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 his or her 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, AAC members must make clear that opinions expressed are individual and not representing the AAC or the Regional District of Central Okanagan.

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

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

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

<u>Department</u>	<u>Date Approved</u>
Community Services	January 19, 2023