



Durham Environmental Advisory Committee

Terms of Reference

March 2022

1. Goal

- 1.1 To provide advice to the Region of Durham on environmental impacts of planning matters, as expressed in the Durham Regional Official Plan.

2. Mandate

- 2.1 The Durham Environmental Advisory Committee (DEAC) is a volunteer Advisory Committee established by Regional Council in accordance with these Terms of Reference. Committee members are guided by these Terms of Reference.
- 2.2 The Terms of Reference provide for a balance between activities referred from the Planning and Economic Development Department or the Planning and Economic Development Committee and a provision for DEAC to be proactive and advise on matters identified on its own initiative.
- 2.3 Environmental matters may be referred to the DEAC from the Regional Planning and Economic Development Department or the Planning and Economic Development Committee. DEAC shall report directly to the Regional Planning and Economic Development Committee and/or Regional Planning and Economic Development Department, as appropriate.

3. Scope of Activities

- 3.1 The scope of the DEAC may include activities such as:
 - a) providing advice on environmental policy directions pursued by the Region. This may include providing advice on official plan amendments related to environmental policies or providing advice on Regional environmental policies through an Official Plan review process;
 - b) providing advice in the identification and implementation of new or existing programs, approaches or policies relating to the protection, sustainability and enhancement of natural resources and systems within the Region in co-operation with other organizations where appropriate. This may include investigating conservation easements, land trusts, tree planting, environmental stewardship, new provincial directions and funding grants;

- c) providing advice in identifying and implementing community outreach activities which support the growth of environmental awareness and appreciation in Durham Region in co-operation with other organizations where appropriate. This may include recommending and assisting with educational workshops or homeowner guides which can be used by the public in areas such as tree cutting, fertilizer use, erosion control and general enhancement of the environment;
- d) providing advice on Regional environmental data in co-operation with other organizations where appropriate;
- e) providing advice on the state of environmental resources such as water resources and natural heritage features such as wetlands, forests, and wildlife within Durham Region in co-operation with other organizations where appropriate;
- f) appointing a member of DEAC to participate on steering committees for environmental impact studies related to Regional Official Plan Amendment applications. In accordance with the Region's approved EIS Guideline, a DEAC representative would participate in Regionally co-ordinated EIS's and peer reviews; and
- g) at the request of the Planning and Economic Development Committee or the Regional Planning and Economic Development Department, provide advice on miscellaneous matters as they arise.

4. Composition

4.1 The DEAC will be comprised of seventeen members in total, as follows:

- Thirteen (13) citizen members.
- One (1) Post-Secondary Student member.
- Two (2) youth members.
- One (1) member of the Planning and Economic Development Committee.

4.2 All members are regarded as private citizens and do not represent their respective employers or advocacy group in their capacity as a DEAC member.

- 4.3 Membership for citizen members shall correspond with the term of Regional Council. However, citizen members shall continue to serve until their replacements are appointed by Regional Council. If a member chooses to resign, the Region will seek a replacement in accordance with Section 5.
- 4.4 Membership for Post-Secondary Student members shall be up to a 4-year term, generally corresponding with the length of their college or university program.
- 4.5 Membership for youth members shall be up to a 3-year term, generally corresponding with the school year.
- 4.6 At the discretion of the DEAC, non-attendance of three consecutive meetings will be sufficient grounds for replacement.
- 4.7 DEAC will strive to maintain a high level of relevant technical expertise and competence in environmental issues within its membership.

5. Membership Selection

- 5.1 Durham Region will place an advertisement seeking individuals interested in volunteering for appointment to the DEAC. For post-secondary student and youth members, the Region shall also contact colleges, universities, and secondary schools in Durham Region to request that students be notified about the opportunity to volunteer with DEAC. Interested individuals will be required to submit an application form to the Regional Clerk outlining their interest and qualifications.
- 5.2 The Regional Planning and Economic Development Department will review the applications received. Applications from qualified applicants will be forwarded to the respective area municipality with a request that the local Council nominate one representative. The Regional Planning and Economic Development Department, from the remaining applications received, will nominate a sufficient number of citizen members at large in order to bring the citizen membership to thirteen. The Regional Planning and Economic Development Department will also nominate one Post- Secondary Student member and two youth members from the applications received.
- 5.3 In nominating citizen members to the DEAC, regard shall be given to the aim of achieving a combination of technical experts and community representatives with knowledge of environmental and land use planning matters. Regard shall also be given to residency within the Region and availability to attend meetings. An elaboration of the selection criteria is provided in Appendix 1 of the Terms of Reference. The nomination of members at large will help to achieve the desire of a diverse and balanced DEAC. All residents of Durham Region are eligible for membership.

- 5.4 In nominating a Post-Secondary Student member, consideration shall be given to the individual's interests, level of participation and knowledge of environmental issues in Durham Region and the planning process. The member must be enrolled full-time in a college or university program and express an interest in environmental matters. The relevance of their interests to the mandate of DEAC will be an important consideration. Regard shall also be given to residency within Durham Region for the school year and availability to attend meetings. An elaboration of the selection criteria is provided in Appendix 1 of the Terms of Reference.
- 5.5 In nominating youth members, consideration shall be given to ensure representation from both the urban and rural communities. An elaboration of the selection criteria is provided in Appendix 1 of the Terms of Reference.
- 5.6 All members of the DEAC shall be appointed by the Regional Planning and Economic Development Committee and Regional Council.
- 5.7 Regional Council shall appoint a representative and an alternate to the DEAC from the members of the Planning and Economic Development Committee.
- 5.8 In the case of a vacancy, the approach described in Section 5 will generally be followed.
- 6. Officers**
- 6.1 A chair and two vice-chairs (first and second) will be elected annually by the membership of the DEAC. The Planning and Economic Development Committee representative will chair the inaugural DEAC meeting.
- 6.2 Post-Secondary Student members and youth members are not eligible to sit as chair or vice-chair.
- 7. Support Services**
- 7.1 The Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development or designate shall serve as staff liaison to the DEAC. The staff liaison will provide administrative, procedural and technical support to the DEAC.
- 7.2 The staff liaison will co-ordinate all requests for advice from the DEAC, through meeting agendas. DEAC responses to such requests shall be co-ordinated by the staff liaison to the Planning and Economic Development Department.
- 7.3 The Region will provide secretarial and other support services. Regional Council will provide a budget to cover the operational expenses of the DEAC, and this budget will be administered by the Planning and Economic Development Department.

8. Meetings

- 8.1 Regularly scheduled meetings of DEAC will be held at the Durham Regional Headquarters. The DEAC, will establish a meeting schedule taking into account the business needs and the schedule of Regional Council and the Planning and Economic Development Committee. Special meetings may be held at the call of the Chair.
- 8.2 Unless otherwise determined, all meetings will be open to the public. As a formal Advisory Committee to the Region, the DEAC is subject to the Regional Procedural By-law, unless otherwise specified in the Terms of Reference.
- 8.3 A quorum for DEAC meetings shall be a majority of the sitting DEAC members.

9. Delegations of Committee Meetings

- 9.1 Any person(s) wishing to appear before the DEAC as a delegate must submit a request to delegations@durham.ca, advising of the topic or item to which they wish to speak, which will then be forwarded to the staff liaison in the Regional Planning and Economic Development Department. All requests for delegations must be received at least one week prior to the meeting to ensure that the delegation is included on the agenda. Any person wishing to address the DEAC as a delegate, who has not previously arranged to do so, may be granted permission to do so only by Committee resolution.

10. Minutes and Agenda

- 10.1 The minutes of each DEAC meeting will be approved at the following meeting. The unapproved minutes will be circulated to members of Council as part of the Council Information Package (CIP) by the Regional Clerk.
- 10.2 The DEAC agendas will be prepared by the staff liaison and the DEAC chair or vice-chair with input from other DEAC members. At the beginning of every meeting, the Committee shall approve its agenda.

11. Committee Resolutions

- 11.1 The DEAC will seek to achieve consensus on decisions. Recommendations are “carried” if supported by a majority. Only resolutions as they appear in the adopted Minutes may be considered as officially representing the position of the DEAC.

12. Annual Reports and Workplan

- 12.1 An annual report summarizing the activities completed in the previous year shall be prepared by the DEAC. The annual report shall be forwarded to the Planning and Economic Development Committee.

- 12.2 An annual workplan with an estimate of the resources necessary and any suggested revisions to the Terms of Reference for the coming year shall also be prepared by the DEAC for consideration and approval by the Planning and Economic Development Committee and Regional Council. To avoid duplication, the DEAC shall ensure that the workplan is co-ordinated with other environmental initiatives in the Region.
- 12.3 An annual review of the DEAC by the Planning and Economic Development Committee will be completed to examine the effectiveness of the Committee and to ensure continued improvements.

Appendix 1: Membership Eligibility Criteria

1. Citizen Membership Eligibility Criteria

1.1 To facilitate the nomination and appointment of new citizen members to the DEAC, the following criteria will be considered:

A) Residency

Members should reside in Durham Region.

B) Technical Expertise

A high level of technical expertise is required within the Committee. Applicants with academic qualifications and/or work experience in environmentally-related disciplines will be an important consideration.

C) Community Representatives

Consideration shall be given to the individual's level of participation and knowledge of environmental issues and the planning process. The relevance of their interests to the mandate of DEAC will be an important consideration.

D) Availability

It is important that an applicant be able to attend as many DEAC meetings as possible and undertake work outside of the regular monthly meetings. An applicant should be able to be contacted or reached during the day in order for meetings to be arranged.

1.2 The aim is to achieve a diverse committee with a combination of technical experts and community representatives.

2. Post-Secondary Student Membership Eligibility Criteria

2.1 To facilitate the nomination and appointment of new Post-Secondary Student members to the DEAC, the following criteria will be considered:

A) Residency

Members should reside in Durham Region for the school year.

B) Education

Members must be accepted into, or enrolled in a full-time College or University program and express an interest in environmental matters.

Consideration shall be given to the individual's interests, level of participation and knowledge of environmental issues in Durham Region and the planning process.

The relevance of their interests to the mandate of DEAC will be an important consideration.

C) Availability

It is important that an applicant be able to attend as many DEAC meetings as possible and undertake work outside of the regular monthly meetings. An applicant should be able to be contacted or reached during the day in order for meetings to be arranged.

3. Youth Membership Eligibility Criteria

3.1 To facilitate the nomination and appointment of new youth members to the DEAC, the following criteria will be considered:

A) Residency

Youth members should reside in Durham Region.

B) Education

Youth members must be enrolled in Grade 10, 11, or 12 and express an interest in environmental matters.

C) Availability

It is important that an applicant be able to attend as many DEAC meetings as possible. An applicant should be able to be contacted or reached during the day in order for meetings to be arranged.

D) Letter of Reference/Support

Applicants for youth membership must include a letter of reference from their school and a letter of parental/guardian support with their expression of interest.