



Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee

Terms of Reference

May 2026

1. Goal

- 1.1 To provide advice to the Region of Durham on agricultural matters and rural matters as they relate to agriculture.

2. Mandate

- 2.1 The Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee (DAAC) 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 Community Growth and Economic Development Department or the Regional Community Growth and Economic Development Committee or Regional Council and an allowance for the DAAC to be proactive and advise on matters identified on its own initiative.
- 2.3 Matters may be referred to the DAAC from the Regional Community Growth and Economic Development Department, the Regional Community Growth and Economic Development Committee, or Regional Council. The DAAC may report directly to the Regional Community Growth and Economic Development Committee on substantive matters as determined by the Community Growth and Economic Development Committee. Otherwise, the DAAC shall report through the Regional Community Growth and Economic Development Department.

3. Scope of Activities

- 3.1 The scope of the DAAC may include activities such as:
 - a) Providing advice on issues and concerns of the agricultural community;
 - b) Providing advice on the implementation of Provincial and Federal legislation, policies, and guidelines related to the agricultural industry;
 - c) Provide advice on agricultural and rural economic development initiatives;
 - d) Providing advice on agricultural and rural policy directions pursued by the Region;

- e) Providing advice on agricultural and rural policy directions pursued by the local area municipalities, upon request, by resolution to the Regional Community Growth and Economic Development Committee;
- f) Providing advice on the identification and implementation of programs which encourage public awareness and education of agricultural and related rural issues; and
- g) Providing advice on matters as they arise, at the request of the Region.

4. Composition

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

- Fourteen (14) members will be private individuals who do not represent their respective employers or advocacy groups in their capacity as a DAAC member. Of these fourteen members, eleven will be bona fide farmers who are directly involved in the agricultural industry¹; and three will be residents who are not directly involved in the agricultural industry.
- One (1) member representing the Durham Region Federation of Agriculture who is a bona fide farmer directly involved in the agricultural industry.
- One (1) member of the Community Growth and Economic Development Committee whose role is to act as liaison.
- One (1) member representing the Durham Farm Fresh Marketing Association.

4.2 Membership shall correspond with the term of Regional Council. However, 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.

4.3 At the discretion of the DAAC, non-attendance of three consecutive meetings will be sufficient grounds for replacement.

5. Membership Selection

5.1 Durham Region will place an open call for individuals interested in appointment to the DAAC, in accordance with the Public Appointments Policy. Interested individuals will be required to submit a completed application form to the Regional Clerk outlining their interest and qualifications.

¹ Note: Where an interested bona fide farmer cannot be found to represent an area municipality, as an exception, a non-farm rural resident may be substituted.

- 5.2 The Regional Community Growth and Economic Development Department will review the applications received and will nominate one applicant from each local area municipality who is a bona fide farmer directly involved in the agricultural industry, three additional members at large who are bona fide farmers; and three members at large who are not directly involved in the agricultural industry, to bring the regular member complement to fourteen. If after six (6) months of advertising no qualified applicants are received to represent a local area municipality, the Community Growth and Economic Development Department may nominate an applicant from another municipality for appointment.
- 5.3 In nominating members to the DAAC, regard shall be given to achieving a diversity of members engaged in varied disciplines of the agricultural industry and members living in the rural community with knowledge of agricultural and related rural issues. Regard shall also be given to residency within the Region and availability to attend meetings. All residents of Durham Region are eligible for membership. An elaboration of the selection criteria is provided in Appendix 1 of the Terms of Reference.
- 5.4 The Regional Community Growth and Economic Development Department will formally request the Durham Region Federation of Agriculture (DRFA) to nominate one person to represent the DRFA.
- 5.5 The Regional Community Growth and Economic Development Department will formally request the Durham Farm Fresh Marketing Association (DFF) to nominate one person to represent the DFF.
- 5.6 All members of the DAAC shall be appointed by the Regional Community Growth and Economic Development Committee and Regional Council.
- 5.7 Regional Council shall appoint a representative and an alternate to the DAAC from the members of the Community Growth 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 vice-chair will be elected annually by the membership of the DAAC. The Community Growth and Economic Development Committee representative will chair the inaugural DAAC meeting.

7. Support Services

- 7.1 The Commissioner of Community Growth and Economic Development or designate, shall serve as staff liaison to the DAAC. The staff liaison will provide administrative, procedural and technical support to the DAAC.

- 7.2 The staff liaison will co-ordinate all requests for advice from the DAAC, through meeting agendas. DAAC responses to such requests shall be co-ordinated by the staff liaison to the Community Growth 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 DAAC, and this budget will be administered by the Community Growth and Economic Development Department.

8. Meetings

- 8.1 The DAAC will establish a meeting schedule at its inaugural meeting, taking into account the business needs and the schedule of Regional Council and the Community Growth and Economic Development Committee. Special meetings may be held at the call of the Chair.
- 8.2 Regularly scheduled meetings will be held at Regional Headquarters, unless otherwise stated. Meetings may be held in an electronic or hybrid meeting format with electronic and in-person participation. Individuals may participate electronically using an approved platform.
- 8.3 All meetings will be open to the public, unless otherwise determined in accordance with the Municipal Act. As a formal Advisory Committee to the Region, the DAAC is subject to the Regional Procedural By-law, unless otherwise specified in the Terms of Reference.
- 8.4 A quorum for DAAC meetings shall be a majority of the sitting members.
- 8.5 If a quorum is not present within fifteen (15) minutes after the time appointed for a meeting, the Clerk or their designate shall record the names of the Members present and the meeting shall stand adjourned until the date of the next regular meeting or special meeting called in accordance with the Terms of Reference.
- 8.6 Members shall inform the staff liaison in advance of all planned absences, late arrivals, and early departures from a meeting, with as much notice as possible.

9. Delegations of Committee Meetings

- 9.1 Any person(s) wishing to appear before the DAAC 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 Community Growth 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 DAAC 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 DAAC meeting will be submitted for approval at the next regular meeting. Unapproved minutes will be circulated to members of Regional Council as part of the Council Information Package (CIP) prepared by the Regional Clerk.
- 10.2 The DAAC agendas will be prepared by the staff liaison and the DAAC chair or vice-chair with input from other DAAC members. Agendas will be distributed the week prior to the meeting.

11. Committee Resolutions

- 11.1 The DAAC will seek to achieve consensus on decisions. Recommendations are “carried” if supported by a majority, unless otherwise specified in these Terms of Reference or Regional Council Rules of Procedure. Only resolutions as they appear in the adopted Minutes may be considered as officially representing the position of the DAAC.

12. Annual Reports and Workplan

- 12.1 An annual report summarizing the activities completed in the previous year shall be prepared by the DAAC. The annual report shall be forwarded to the Community Growth 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 DAAC for consideration and approval by the Community Growth and Economic Development Committee and Regional Council.
- 12.3 An annual review of the DAAC by the Community Growth and Economic Development Committee will be completed to examine the effectiveness of the Committee and to ensure continued improvements.

Appendix 1: Membership Eligibility Criteria

To facilitate the nomination and appointment of new members to the DAAC, the following criteria will be considered. The aim is to achieve a diversity of members engaged in varied disciplines of the agricultural industry and community representation with knowledge of agricultural and related rural issues.

1. Residency

- 1.1 Members should reside in Durham Region. Where a person who resides in Durham cannot be found, a farmer who owns land in Durham Region may be substituted.

2. Agricultural Expertise and Knowledge

- 2.1 Applicants engaged in the agricultural industry having the following attributes would be considered as an asset:

- Demonstrated knowledge of agricultural and rural land use issues;
- Relevant farm experience;
- Involvement with activities of the agricultural community;
- Technical training in an agriculture-based field; and
- Knowledge of properties and farm operations within Durham.

3. Rural Experience

- 3.1 For applicants from the non-farm rural community consideration will be given to the duration of residency in the community and the individual's level of knowledge of agricultural related rural issues. The relevance of their interests to the mandate of the DAAC will also be an important consideration.

4. Availability

- 4.1 It is important that an applicant be able to attend as many DAAC 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.