

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

MANDATE

The Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee is responsible for ensuring that the unique interests and requirements of the City's rural areas are taken into account in the decisions made by the City of Ottawa, and identify ways to promote an understanding of the rural and agricultural communities and their issues. The Committee will make recommendations to Council on issues and programs pertaining to the agricultural and associated industries, the rural economy, rural residential communities, land development and landscaping, transportation, water, wastewater and stormwater services, and environmental protection.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee shall consist of Members of Council, as appointed by Council. Due to the unique nature of this committee, the majority of the membership shall be comprised of those Councillors representing wards with a rural component. The Mayor and Chair of Planning and Housing Committee are *ex-officio* members of the Committee.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee shall:

1. Be responsible directly to Council for those items outside of the urban boundary emanating from:
 - a) The Development Review Rural Branch of the Planning, Real Estate and Economic Development Department;
 - b) All departments, services and/ or branches responsible for issues arising from the rural areas, or with a distinct rural component or impact on rural residents;
 - c) Any Advisory Committees or Sub-committees that are within the area of responsibility of the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee;
 - d) The rural panel of the Committee of Adjustment;
 - e) Such entities as the agriculture and associated industries, rural businesses and rural communities and their residents, for matters that are

brought forward and within the area of responsibility of the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee; and

- f) Local boards, agencies and corporations that are created by, and report to, this Committee.
2. Ensure co-ordination and consultation with other Standing Committees and departments where responsibilities overlap on issues related to the rural areas and on issues relevant to the mandate of more than one Committee.
3. Ensure that the meeting Agendas are provided to members and the public ten calendar days in advance of the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee meeting (except where an observed holiday necessitates release earlier than ten calendar days).
4. Have the authority to hear briefings on litigious matters related to rural issues and to give direction to the City Solicitor on such matters where it is consistent with current Council direction or policy.
5. Receive reports from staff regarding the exercise of delegated authority (By-law 2023-2) on items within the Committee's mandate.
6. Review and make recommendations to Council on all front-ending agreements pertaining to items within the mandate of this Committee.
7. Consider, for recommendation to Council, operating and capital budget amendments pertaining to items within the Committee mandate, subject to the budgetary powers and duties assigned to the head of Council under the Municipal Act, 2001 and associated regulations and any Council-approved budget process.
8. Review and recommend to Council the recommendations submitted by the Commemorative Naming Committee with respect to commemorative naming of City parks and facilities in the rural areas.
9. Ensure active public participation by receiving delegations from the public, and holding public hearings as required by statute and Council.
10. Address all matters related to, and arising from, Advisory Committees or Sub-Committees under the Standing Committee's responsibility and that are in line with the established Committee and Council Strategic Plans.
11. Review and recommend to Council revisions to the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee Terms of Reference, as required.

12. Have the delegated authority to decide matters that are consistent with the application of federal and/or provincial statutes and/or regulations.
13. Recommend to Council, the City of Ottawa's participation in federal or provincial funding programs or grant proposals for matters within the mandate of the Committee, subject to the Delegation of Authority By-law.
14. Monitor federal and provincial legislation with a distinct impact on agriculture and its associated industries.
15. Recommend to Council proposed by-laws that are under the Committee's jurisdiction.
16. Recommend for approval by Council, the membership and participation of its Members as municipal representatives in relevant public associations and other government organizations, such as the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) that are not undertaken through the Nominating Committee Process.
17. Pursuant to the *Delegation of Authority By-law*, approve Councillors' travel and attendance at conferences that are related to the Committee's mandate.

SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

The Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee shall:

Agriculture

1. Support and encourage the appropriate and sustainable use of land for agriculture, forestry and recreation, and actively encourage the establishment and prosperity of farms and related businesses.
2. Identify and promote specialty-type agricultural operations and businesses such as woodlots, hydroponic greenhouses, orchards and nurseries.
- ~~3. Identify ways to promote an understanding of the rural and agricultural communities and their issues.~~
4. Encourage the use of best practices in nutrient management in association with the rural areas and agricultural industry.
5. Encourage the establishment of agricultural operations that are compatible with the quality of life in the rural areas and existing agricultural operations.
6. Encourage strong linkages between the City and federal, provincial and local research facilities in order to benefit from new applications in the agriculture sector.

7. Make recommendations to Council:

- a) On issues pertaining to agriculture, agri-food, livestock, horticulture, associated industries and related policy matters;
- b) On matters relating to agri-business including farm labour, large scale agricultural operations, transportation, marketing and promotion of agri-businesses;
- c) On issues that have significant implications for the rural population including: snowmobile and ATV use; hunting and firearms; use of private agriculture land for public recreational purposes; and wildlife management;
- d) On matters under the *Drainage Act* and serve as the Court of Revision for the purposes of the legislation by reviewing assessment appeals;
- e) On by-laws, policies and programs which predominantly or uniquely affect agriculture and associated industries, particularly those by-laws that deal with matters under the *Farming and Food Production Protection Act, 1998*, and the *Weed Control Act*;
- f) In relation to the municipal role with respect to the administration of the *Livestock, Poultry and Honey Bee Protection Act*.
- g) On the implementation of federal and provincial legislation related to farm practices;
- h) On matters associated with the *Line Fences Act* such as *Appointment of Fence Viewers By-law*;
- i) On appointments to fill vacancies on rural entities including Rural Business Improvement Associations (“BIAs”), the Mohr-Quyón Landing Port Authority, the rural panel of the Committee of Adjustment, and conservation authorities in the rural areas.

Conservation, Wildlife and Forest Management

8. Make recommendations to Council:

- a) On matters respecting the activities of federal and provincial governments as well as conservation authorities, in the management of water, land and associated resources within their jurisdiction and located in the City's rural areas;

- b) On forest management in the rural areas including identifying the potential of managed forests for enhanced use, and supporting appropriate new forms of development and recreation that contribute to the rural economy;
- c) On matters associated with rural issues as defined within the *Clean Water Act, 2006* and the *Conservation Authorities Act*;
- d) On rural tree by-laws enacted under the *Municipal Act, 2001*, and encourage a high standard of private forest management;
- e) On issues of rural servicing including water, wastewater and stormwater services
- f) On issues pertaining to the recreational use of City-owned properties in rural areas and regulations concerning the discharge of firearms within City limits; and
- g) On matters with respect to the development of a comprehensive wildlife management strategy for the conservation, management and, where necessary, control of wildlife, in conjunction with the appropriate agencies.

Rural Economic Development

- 9. Promote agricultural fairs and rural exhibitions, and promote the formation and sustainability of markets and direct farm sales.
- 10. Make recommendations to Council on economic development policies, strategies, and other initiatives that have an impact on the City's rural areas and interests, including tourism.
- 11. Make recommendations to Council on matters relating to the rural BIA(s) as a means to support and promote economic development in the rural areas.

Planning / Servicing / Transportation

- 12. Encourage the orderly development and management of growth that **protects**, maintains and strengthens the character of the City's rural areas, including its hamlets and villages, and promotes the concentration of growth within established and planned settlements.
- 13. Promote a cost-effective, environmentally sound, comprehensive servicing policy for the City's hamlets and villages **and designated rural economic development areas**.

14. Make recommendations to Council on land use planning, environment and infrastructure, including development of private services where policies apply to the City's rural areas.
15. Monitor and make recommendations to Council on agricultural and village developments and related policies for the City's rural areas, including its hamlets and villages.
16. Make recommendations to Council on policies related to the location, use and reclamation of future and existing landfill sites, pits and quarries in the rural areas.
17. Make recommendations to Council on all transportation matters as they relate to the rural areas, including parking, one-way designations, road accesses, intersection improvements, sidewalks and pedestrian paths, streetscapes, speed zoning, and traffic calming measures.
18. When applicable, and where delegation of authority has been lifted, review and consider reports on the following matters that are consistent with an adopted Council policy and fall within the mandate of the Committee:
 - a) Subdivision and condominium applications;
 - b) Extensions of draft plan approvals;
~~Site Plan Control applications;~~
 - c) Approval of Zoning By-laws;
 - d) Land severance applications and minor variances granted by the rural panel of the Committee of Adjustment;
 - e) Official Plan amendments related to the rural areas;
 - f) Street openings and closings;
 - g) Street name changes;
 - h) Rural signage and municipal addressing where the street is wholly located in the rural area;
 - i) Administration and enforcement of the *Ontario Building Code*;
 - j) Lifting of 30 cm reserves;
 - k) Lifting of Holding Provisions;

- l) Signs By-laws, Amendments and Minor Variances;
 - m) Cash-in-lieu of Parking agreements;
 - n) Grant program for offsetting building permit fees for the construction of buildings/structures requires as a result of the *Nutrient Management Act, 2002* and other environmental protection legislation; and
 - o) Other grant programs, as established by Council, with a focus on the rural areas.
19. The Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee shall also be responsible for recommending to Council, any proposed action applicable to the rural areas, which is at variance with action taken by staff pursuant to delegated authority.

Development Charges

- 20. Review and make recommendations to Council on all front-ending agreements pertaining to items within the mandate of this Committee.
- 21. Review and make recommendations to Planning Committee and/or Council on rural issues pertaining to the *Development Charges Act*.
- 22. Review and make recommendations to Planning Committee and/or Council on the general enactment of the *Development Charges By-law* in rural areas.
- 23. Review and make recommendations to Council on development charges complaints respecting properties in the rural area.

Heritage

- 24. Make recommendations to Council on heritage protection in the rural areas through applications and proposals brought forward by the Built Heritage Committee for designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, where there is an associated planning application.
- 25. Make recommendations to the Built Heritage Committee, where applicable, on general heritage matters including the development and implementation of heritage policies, by-laws, strategies and programs applicable to the rural areas.

Local Improvements

- 26. Consideration of reports arising from petition for Local Improvements within the rural area.