

Regional District of Mount Waddington Accessibility Advisory Committee

Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

The purpose of the **Regional District of Mount Waddington Accessibility Advisory Committee** (Committee) is to:

1. Assist in the development of a regional accessibility plan that is in compliance with the *Accessible BC Act* legislation.
2. Assist in the review and updating of the regional accessibility plan every 3 years, in accordance with the *Accessible BC Act*.
3. Work collaboratively to identify barriers experienced by people with disabilities when accessing services, programs and facilities at partnering public sector organizations, and provide advice on how to assess, remove, and prevent those barriers in the development and updating of the regional accessibility plan.
4. When requested, provide advice and offer recommendations and information pertaining to the accessibility matters, to assist member municipalities regarding the development of organization policies, procedures and programs to ensure the inclusion of all residents, including those with disabilities, are considered in relation to:
 - Employment
 - Transportation
 - The built environment
 - Delivery of services
 - Information and communication
 - Procurement

2. Background

The District of Port Hardy has partnered with the Mt. Waddington Regional District, Town of Port McNeill, Village of Alert Bay, and Village of Port Alice to develop a regional accessibility plan that complies with the requirements of the *Accessible British Columbia Act*.

By way of participation in the Committee, the Regional District of Mount Waddington member municipalities and public sector organizations will be in compliance with the legislation. A regional approach was pursued to support the pooling of resources, encourage collaboration between organizations, and create a plan that is conscious of accessibility at a regional level.

3. Definitions

“Barrier” means anything that hinders or challenges the full and effective participation in society of a person with an impairment, as defined in the *Accessible BC Act*. These may be caused by

environments, attitudes, practices, policies, information, communications or technologies, and can be affected by intersecting forms of discrimination.

4. Committee Composition

The Committee shall consist of at least seven (7), and up to twelve (12) voting members, representing partnering organizations, the general public, businesses, and community interests within the Regional District of Mount Waddington. As per the *Accessible British Columbia Act*, members of the Committee should reflect the diversity of persons with disabilities in BC and will geographically represent the Regional District of Mount Waddington.

The Committee will strive to maintain the following membership criteria:

1. At least half of the members (50%) will be persons with disabilities or individuals who support or represent organizations that support persons with disabilities.
2. At least one (1) member will represent the Indigenous community.
3. One (1) member will be a Mt. Waddington Regional District Director, appointed by the board.

Committee members will be appointed for a 2-year term. Members may re-apply upon completion of their term for a maximum of 3 terms.

5. Member Eligibility

The public Committee members shall be appointed by the Regional District of Mount Waddington Board resolution.

Members of the Committee shall:

1. Reflect a broad cross-section of the region.
2. Be appointed based on their availability and commitment to increasing accessibility and inclusiveness within the region.
3. Have no conflict of interest with the Regional District of Mount Waddington, member municipalities, partnering organizations, or the Committee and should advise the members when a potential conflict may exist on a specific issue and recuse themselves (i.e. leave the meeting when the matter is under discussion, not participate in any discussion of the matter or vote on a question in respect of the matter) as necessary.
4. Follow the Committee Code of Conduct (section 14) as described in these Terms of Reference

Committee members must have access to a computer and an email address in order to receive and respond to communications and information, including meeting packages.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Each member of the Regional District of Mount Waddington Accessibility Advisory Committee is an independent representative of the Committee and should aim to represent the concerns of multiple disabilities and groups. Members should:

1. Be familiar with the *Accessible BC Act* Legislation and these Terms of Reference.
2. Work together for the purpose of developing a common approach that is reasonable and practical.
3. Consider the principles of inclusion, adaptability, diversity, collaboration, self-determination, and universal design in making recommendations.
4. Contribute their expertise actively and respectfully during meetings.
5. Declare any situation that is, or has the potential to be, a conflict of interest.
6. Strictly adhere to the Committee Code of Conduct.

7. Meeting Frequency

In the first year, the Committee may meet as necessary to develop an Accessibility Plan. This is anticipated to consist of approximately two (2) meetings.

During updates to the Accessibility Plan, scheduled to occur every three years, approximately two (2) meetings of the Committee will be required.

The Committee will recognize that each meeting requires a significant commitment of staff resources and meetings should therefore be held when there are clear items of business to address. The Committee shall meet at the frequency described above, or as required when the Regional District Board refers a new piece of business to the Committee requiring immediate action.

8. Procedures

The Committee will be supported by staff from the partnering organizations and consulting resources as required. The Regional District of Mount Waddington's commitment is to provide a Staff Liaison, as directed by the Chief Administrative Officer, to act as support for the Committee. The Staff Liaison will also aid in the agenda preparation, minute taking and other administrative duties. Additional staff from partnering organizations may attend Committee meetings as a resource and to support the work of the Committee within their organizations.

The Chair will make a call for agenda items two weeks in advance of scheduled meetings.

The Committee shall only consider those matters included in the meeting agenda circulated to the members in advance of the meeting. New business items may be introduced at a meeting but will be forwarded for consideration by the committee at a subsequent meeting. By unanimous consent of its members the Committee may consider new business/emergent items at a duly constituted meeting.

The Committee will be responsible for ensuring all matters brought before its members for discussion and consideration directly relate to regional efforts to be more accessible and inclusive and assist with the implementation of the Accessible BC Act legislation.

The quorum shall be constituted of 50% + 1 of all the current members of the Committee (e.g. if the Committee currently has eight (8) members, five members constitute a quorum).

Meetings of the Committee shall be governed by Roberts Rules of Order.

Each representative that is appointed has one vote.

The Committee's preferred method of decision-making is to reach resolution by consensus. However, when consensus cannot be reached, a vote will be conducted, and a simple majority will rule. Both in-person and virtual meeting attendance will be supported.

All meetings will be open to the public to attend as observers.

Committee members do not have the authority to speak publicly on behalf of the Committee unless directed to do so by the Chair. The Chair will act as the Committee spokesperson when responding to the media.

9. Removal of a Member from Committee

The Board may remove a member from a Committee for good and sufficient reason, which may include any of the following, without limitation:

- (a) the absence of a member from three (3) consecutive regularly scheduled committee meetings, unless the absence is because of illness or is with leave of the Committee;
- (b) a finding by The Board that the member has engaged in misconduct, such as bullying or harassment of another Committee member or a partnering organization employee, or failure to adhere to the Committee Code of Conduct; or
- (c) participation by a member in circumstances where the Committee member has a conflict of interest.

In any case where The Board proposes to remove a member from a Committee, the member will be provided with notice and an opportunity to be heard by The Board prior to The Board voting on the matter.

10. Resignation

The resignation of a member during the term must be given in writing to the Committee Chair and Mt. Waddington Regional District Staff Liaison. The Mt. Waddington Regional District Board may choose to appoint another member to serve the remainder of the term. To maintain a high level of commitment, members may be required to resign if they have been absent for three consecutive meetings without good cause.

11. Funding

The Committee does not have an approved budget for 2024. Financial requests to support the development and implementation of an Accessibility Plan, will be submitted to the Regional District of Mt. Waddington Board and partner organizations for approval. As a regional committee, requests may be made to each participating public sector organization for funding to sustain the Committee's activities where areas of common interest exist. Grant funding will be pursued where appropriate.

The Committee does not have the authority to pledge the credit of any partner organization, or to authorize any expenditure to be charged against partner organizations.

Participating organizations will be financially responsible for the recommendations they choose to implement within their organization.

The Committee also welcomes and appreciates in-kind services, input, and expertise from municipal councils, agencies, businesses, and volunteers on an as needed basis.

12. Remuneration

Committee members participate as volunteers.

Reimbursement for pre-approved reasonable expenses related to travel, meals, accommodation, and out-of-pocket costs while performing Committee responsibilities will be made in accordance with Mt. Waddington Regional District Travel Expense Policy, and will be supported in accordance with the funding mechanism noted on the section 11.

13. Reporting to Partnering Organizations

The Regional District of Mt. Waddington Staff Liaison will be responsible for reporting the Committee minutes to all partner organizations.

Minutes shall be included for receipt on partnering council/board agendas.

Committee agendas and minutes will be available on the Regional District of Mt. Waddington website. Each partner organization will determine how they will implement the Committee and Accessibility recommendations.

14. Code of Conduct

Committee members shall strictly adhere, in action and in spirit, with the following foundational principles and standards of responsible conduct:

1. Integrity

Conduct that upholds the community interest and that is based on honesty and the active demonstration of ethical principles.

2. Respect

Conduct that creates an environment of trust by demonstrating due regard for the perspectives, wishes, and rights of others.

3. Accountability

Conduct that demonstrates a member's willingness to accept responsibility for their actions.

4. Leadership and Collaboration

Conduct that demonstrates an ability to lead, to listen to, and to positively influence others while encouraging individuals to come together to meet a common goal through collective efforts.