



# East Kootenay Accessibility Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

July 2023

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## 1. Mandate

To advise the Regional District of East Kootenay (RDEK) and partner organizations on the need to establish, develop and maintain equitable policies, services, and facilities for persons with disabilities.

To identify barriers to RDEK and partner organizations' services and facilities encountered by people with disabilities and advise on how to remove or prevent them.

To promote initiatives that foster active living, and the full participation of people with disabilities in their communities.

Partner organizations are any municipalities or public sector organizations in the RDEK that have chosen to participate on the East Kootenay Accessibility Advisory Committee (Committee) and have appointed a staff liaison to participate as a non-voting member.

## 2. Membership

The Committee will be comprised of at least seven (7), and up to twelve (12) voting members, representing the public, business, and community interests within the RDEK. The Committee will strive to maintain the following membership criteria:

- (a) One RDEK Director will be appointed by the RDEK Chair.
- (b) Fifty percent (50%) of members are persons with a disability, or are individuals who support persons with disabilities either at a personal or organizational level;
- (c) At least one (1) member who is an Indigenous person;
- (d) Reflect the diversity of persons with disabilities in the region; and
- (e) Geographical representation from around the region.

## 3. Funding

The Committee does not have a specific budget. Financial requests must be submitted to the RDEK Board for approval.

The RDEK will act as the financial administrator for the Committee. All administrative costs of the Committee will be shared equally among the partner organizations.

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

#### **4. Non-Voting Members**

Partner organizations shall appoint a minimum of one non-voting staff member to support the work of the Committee within their organization.

To facilitate the Committee, the RDEK will provide a Staff Liaison, as directed by the Chief Administrative Officer, to act as administrative support for the Committee.

#### **5. Appointments**

Vacancies for voting members of the Committee will be advertised by the RDEK and the partner organizations where the vacancy exists; interested individuals shall submit applications to the RDEK.

The RDEK Board shall approve the appointment of the voting members of the Committee. Recommendations for membership will be provided to the Board by staff through consultation with partner organization representatives.

The appointment of the non-voting staff member(s) on the Committee will be exempt from the formal appointment process, which apply to the appointment of voting members.

The Chair and Alternate Chair of the Committee shall be elected annually by the Committee membership.

The RDEK Staff Liaison on the Committee will be appointed by the Chief Administrative Officer.

#### **6. Voting**

Each voting member has one vote each.

Recommendations of the Committee shall be made by a majority of voting members in attendance at a meeting.

#### **7. Quorum**

A quorum consists of five (5) voting members, and the Committee Chair or Alternate Chair must be present.

## 8. Meeting Frequency and Facilitation

In the first year, the Committee shall meet as necessary to complete the Accessibility Plan and thereafter shall meet quarterly, or at the determination of the Committee Chair.

Meetings will take place at the scheduled time, either virtually or at the RDEK Office in Cranbrook. Both in-person and virtual attendance will be supported at all meetings.

Meeting agendas will be distributed at least seven (7) days before each meeting.

All meetings will be open to the public to attend, unless otherwise permitted by Section 90 of the *Community Charter*.

## 9. Procedures

The Committee 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 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 voting 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 assist with the implementation of the *Accessible BC Act* legislation.

## 10. Roles and Responsibilities

Each member of the East Kootenay Accessibility Advisory Committee is an independent representative of the Committee and should aim to represent the concerns of multiple disabilities and groups. Members should:

- (a) Be familiar with the *Accessible BC Act* Legislation and these Terms of Reference.
- (b) Work together for the purpose of developing a common approach that is reasonable and practical.
- (c) Contribute their expertise actively during meetings.
- (d) Provide an objective view in the public interest and fairly represent this view in public processes.
- (e) Participate in related events and activities, including those designed to receive public feedback regarding the regional accessibility plan.
- (f) Declare any situation that is, or has the potential to be a conflict of interest.

## **11. Reporting Relationship with Municipal Councils and the RDEK Board of Directors**

The RDEK Staff Liaison will be responsible for reporting the Committee minutes to all partner organizations.

Minutes shall be provided to all partner organizations and the RDEK Board of Directors to make individual decisions about action items to bring forward for consideration.

Partner organizations will also apprise the Committee of any municipal initiatives involving or having impact on people with disabilities via their Staff Liaisons. This information will be provided to the Committee via meeting agendas.

## **12. Term of Office**

Term of office is two years. Members may re-apply for appointment on the Committee upon expiry of their term.

In a case where a member must end their term prior to the two years. Another member, ideally representing the same area, can apply for appointment to complete the remainder of the term.

## **13. Representative Authority**

The Committee does not have the authority to make commitments on behalf the RDEK or any partner organization.

The Committee members do not have the authority to speak publicly (e.g., to the media) on behalf of the Committee unless so directed by the Committee Chair.