

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF ERIN [E.A.C.o.E.]

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Submitted to Erin Council December 17, 2002

Note: The use of italics in this document denotes key terminology
defined in Appendix A - Glossary of Terms.

IN THE BELIEF THAT LOCAL RESIDENTS CAN AND SHOULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE STEWARDSHIP OF OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT, BOTH INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY, THE FOLLOWING ARE THE GOAL, PRINCIPLES AND ACTIVITIES OF A COUNCIL APPOINTED GROUP OF CITIZENS CALLED THE ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF ERIN (E.A.C.o.E.)

1.0 GOAL:

To advise and assist the Council and the citizens of the Town of Erin in the protection, *enhancement, restoration*, management and appreciation of our common natural heritage and in ensuring that our communities are planned for environmental sustainability, health and respect for all life.

2.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

These principles are intended to guide and assess the actions of the Environmental Advisory Committee of Erin. In carrying out its mandate, the EACoE will be governed by these principles and will not undertake any actions that compromise its commitment to these principles.

2.1 Sustainability

The *sustainable integrity of ecological systems* will be a primary consideration in all activities and decision making processes.

2.2 Carrying Capacity

The natural limits of ecosystems must be respected and the *cumulative environmental effects* of development assessed.

2.3 Mutual Support

Ecological integrity and sustainable social, physical, and economic health are interdependent.

2.4 Long Term Perspective

The effects of decisions and trends will be considered in a time perspective of seven generations, to assure precaution, wise use, and equity.

2.5 Innovation

Positive, responsible and creative environmental *stewardship* and change will be fostered. A diversity of organizations and solutions is recognized as a strength.

2.6 Stewardship

The people of Erin are acknowledged as important stewards of the natural environment and as sources of information about the history and current condition of ecosystems.

2.7 EACoE Perspective

The EACoE shall strive to bring a broad, multi-disciplinary and objective perspective to its activities, and shall remain adaptable and responsible to new issues and challenges.

3.0 ACTIVITIES

3.1 Provide Advice on:

- 3.1.1 Protection, enhancement, restoration and management of ecosystems and ecological integrity both within and related to Erin.
- 3.1.2 Sustainable use and management of renewable and non-renewable natural resources, such as: water resources; aggregates; forestry; and, agriculture.
- 3.1.3. Development, implementation, evaluation and monitoring of municipal environmental policies, programs, studies and other initiatives.
- 3.1.4 Data gaps, information needs and new strategies regarding environmental sustainability.
- 3.1.5 Monitoring ecological integrity and recommendations for specific studies and enhancement/restoration measures, relating to ecological integrity.
- 3.1.6 Preparation of guidelines for environmentally related initiatives such as: environmental

impact studies and management plans; ecological restoration; and, monitoring programs.

3.2 Prepare:

3.2.1 A five year strategic plan.

3.2.2 An annual Status Report and Work Plan which shall be submitted to Council in January of each year. The report shall, among other things:

- a) summarize the activities and achievements of the EACoE over the previous year;
- b) describe ongoing activities and issues and identify new priorities/concerns; and,
- c) outline the Committee's primary projects for the upcoming year, including all anticipated budgetary needs.

The Committee may, from time to time, become aware of additional environmental concerns and issues which are not identified in the annual Status Report and Work Plan, but which the Committee believes are relevant to the goal, principles and activities of the EACoE. In such circumstances, the Committee shall seek Council's direction to become involved in these issues as appropriate.

3.3 Research and Action:

3.3.1 Review and compile environmental, social and economic studies and documents pertinent to Erin to provide a storehouse of research and information for public and private use.

3.3.2 Research Ontario Municipal Board and legal decisions, which could affect the interpretation and implementation of environmental policies and legislation.

3.3.3 Conduct/promote research and other special projects to support the goal, principles and activities of the EACoE.

3.4 Review and Comment on:

3.4.1 The environmental policies, programs, legislation, reports and initiatives of government and non-government organizations which pertain to municipal environmental planning.

3.4.2 Issues referred to the Committee by Council, such as: major development applications, or applications with potential for significant environmental impacts; environmental impact studies and management plans; and, environmental assessments. In considering such referrals, EACoE will review the issue and advise Council of a recommended course of action and/or response. Where such referrals are subject to time constraints, either legislative or Council imposed, EACoE is bound by such limits. If EACoE believes it will

be unable to meet applicable deadlines Council must be advised accordingly.

In addition to the foregoing, in reviewing and commenting on development applications, the committee shall consider the following criteria:

- i. The applicability of the Guiding Principles contained in Section 2.0;
- ii. Town-wide and site specific environmental issues raised by the application;
- iii. Applicable policy and legislation;
- iv. The availability and technical expertise of committee members;
- v. Adding value to the existing municipal/agency development review process;
- vi. In the case of ongoing applications, the relevant history and current status of the project.

3.5 Liaison:

- 3.5.1 Exchange information with other environmental advisory committees, municipal environmental planners, government agencies, conservation authorities, non-governmental organizations and other local groups involved in activities such as economic development, waste, resource management, agriculture, health and recreation/tourism which may also have an interest in ecological integrity and the sustainability of communities.

3.6 Public Education:

- 3.6.1 Develop and conduct a public education program, which supports the growth of environmental awareness and appreciation in Erin and promotes the goal, principles and activities of the EACoE.
- 3.6.2 Work with local schools and other groups to promote environmental awareness, education and involvement among the youth of Erin

4.0 MEMBERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 EACoE shall consist of 8-12 members appointed by resolution of Council. This membership shall be composed of members of the public and shall include one Councillor. An additional 2 members over the maximum of 12 may be appointed by Council at the request of the committee based the level of community interest or the need for additional technical expertise. All members are regarded as private citizens and do not represent any agency or firm in their capacity as EACoE members.
- 4.2 Members shall be appointed for three year terms with a maximum continuous tenure of two full three year terms. Upon expiry of a member's term of appointment, the member may be re-appointed for an additional term by council, if eligible. If the member has served the maximum tenure permitted, Council shall appoint a replacement. Members who have served the maximum tenure permitted are subject to a mandatory one-year absence from the

Committee prior to seeking re-appointment for any subsequent term. Members may also be appointed for shorter or more flexible terms in consideration of special circumstances (e.g.: student representatives, non-resident "experts", or to fill out a prematurely vacated term).

(Note to Reader: Initially, the membership shall be equally divided and appointed for one, two and three year terms in order to provide for a consistent and continuous rotation. This clause does not form part of the EACoE Terms of Reference.)

- 4.3** Eligible Members will generally be residents or taxpayers in the Town of Erin. A limited number of non-residents or non-taxpayers may be considered where they hold academic qualifications or professional expertise not represented on the Committee.
- 4.4** Members will be selected on the basis of their demonstrated interest and participation in environmental and community matters. Academic qualifications, availability, work experience, community involvement, knowledge and professional expertise will be taken into consideration.
- 4.5** A Chair, Vice-Chair and recording secretary for the EACoE will be elected by majority vote among the members at the first meeting of every year. The Chair and Vice-Chair positions will be resident members and may be appointed to those positions for a maximum of three consecutive years. The Chair will be expected to be available to make presentations to Council on EACoE reports.
- 4.6** All members will be expected to devote some time between meetings to work on matters before the Committee.
- 4.7** In the absence of both the Chair and Vice-Chair, the quorum will appoint, from its members, a Chair for that particular meeting, who shall be subject to all the normal responsibilities and privileges assigned thereto.
- 4.8** By majority vote, EACoE may recommend to Council, removal and/or replacement of any member who misses three consecutive full meetings of the Committee, subject to circumstances surrounding the absence. Members requesting a temporary leave of absence or intending to resign from the Committee should provide adequate written notification to the Chair prior to such action.
- 4.9** If at any time Committee size drops below 8 members, Council shall appoint an appropriate number of new members.
- 4.10** In considering new appointments to the Committee, Council may select new members from any remaining applications received during prior EACoE appointment periods. Council may also wish to advertise for new public applications from time to time, in accordance with current municipal procedures.

4.11 Members will be expected to be aware of relevant municipal policies, programs and other initiatives in carrying out their activities. To assist in this regard, the committee may, from time to time, request Council to make staff and/or Town consultants available to advise the committee as appropriate.

5.0 REPORTING:

5.1 EACoE is an Advisory Committee established by Municipal Council in accordance with these adopted Terms of Reference. Committee members are bound by these Terms of Reference, and are responsible to Municipal Council.

5.2 EACoE reports directly to council, under the signature of the Chair or designate. EACoE reports and communications will normally be directed to Council through the Town Clerk. The committee Chair, or designate, will be present at Council when EACoE reports are being considered. EACoE may also appear before Council as a delegation.

6.0 FINANCING

6.1 Financial support for the committee will be reviewed annually as part of the Municipality's regular budget preparation process. Additional, special project funding requests may also be submitted by the Committee from time to time for consideration by Council.

6.2 Committee members will receive no remuneration for their involvement in Committee activities. An exception to this clause may be granted by resolution of Council if so requested by EACoE.

7.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

7.1 Members having a conflict of interest in any matter under consideration by the Committee shall declare the conflict of interest at the beginning of the meeting and shall not discuss or vote on the matter.

8.0 STAFF LIAISON AND SUPPORT SERVICES

8.1 Administrative support to be provided by the Town will include: the coordination of EACoE related communications and correspondence; ensuring EACoE reports are included in Council agenda packages; and minor technical support as needed, such as photocopying.

8.2 The EACoE budget will be administered by the Town Treasurer.

9.0 MEETINGS

9.1 The committee shall normally meet once every month, or at the call of the Chair with adequate notice to be given to all members. All committee meetings are public.

- 9.2** The Committee may, from time to time, invite resource persons to attend a meeting.
- 9.3** The Committee may establish sub-committees for various topics, issues or proposals as required. Such sub-committees may include non EACoE members, with the approval of the Chair, provided the sub-committee is chaired by an EACoE member. Sub-committees shall report to the EACoE through the sub-committee Chair.
- 9.4** Quorum for a full Committee meeting will be 50% of the current membership plus 1.
- 9.5** On matters requiring votes, the Committee shall strive for consensus, and shall normally only communicate the consensus or majority position to Council. On matters where there is a significant lack of Committee consensus, minority positions may also be reported to Council, at the discretion of the Chair. The Chair generally does not vote, unless deemed necessary to break a tie.
- 10.0** **AMENDMENTS**
- 10.1** Amendments to the Terms of Reference can only be made by Council.
- 10.2** EACoE may wish to review the Terms of Reference from time to time and make recommendations to Council regarding amendments.

**APPENDIX A - GLOSSARY OF TERMS
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF ERIN
TERMS OF REFERENCE**

1. Carrying Capacity

The capacity of a site to support a use without substantial negative impact on ecological systems such as: groundwater; surface water; vegetation; wildlife; and, soil.

2. Cumulative Environmental Effects

Ecosystem change resulting from human activity in an ecosystem interacting with pre-existing stressors. These changes are characterised by being collectively significant over time and space, by occurring frequently in time or densely in space, and by combining additively or synergistically.

3. Ecological Integrity

Means the condition of ecosystems in which,

- a) the structure, composition and functions of the ecosystems are unimpaired by stresses from human activity,
- b) natural ecological processes are intact and self-sustaining, and
- c) the ecosystems evolve naturally

4. Ecosystem

Systems of plants, animals, and micro-organisms, together with the non-living components of their environment, related ecological processes, and humans.

5. Enhancement

The management of land and water to modify ecological forms, processes, or attributes to produce a desired end state or conditions. In this document, enhancement shall mean improvements to ecological integrity.

6. Restoration

The management of lands and water to produce a state more closely reflecting a natural forms, processes and attributes: re-establishing a former natural state or condition.

7. Stewardship

Definition to be developed in consultation with the Wellington County Stewardship Council.

8. Sustainable

Use of land or a resource without the loss or reduction of ecological integrity.