

May 17, 2019

Ms. Kimberley Kitteringham
City Clerk
City of Markham
101 Town Centre Boulevard
Markham, ON L3R 9W3

Dear Ms. Kitteringham:

**Re: 2018 Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy Update and
Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee Terms of Reference**

On May 16, 2019 Regional Council adopted the following recommendations:

1. Council receive the 2018 Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy update for information.
2. Council approve the Terms of Reference for the Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee (Attachment 1).
3. This report be circulated by the Regional Clerk to the Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and local municipalities.

The original staff report is enclosed for your information.

Please contact Doug Lindeblom, Director of Economic Strategy at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 71503 if you have any questions with respect to this matter.

Sincerely,



Christopher Raynor
Regional Clerk

Attachments

The Regional Municipality of York

Committee of the Whole
Planning and Economic Development
May 9, 2019

Report of the Commissioner of Corporate Services and Chief Planner

2018 Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy Update and Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

1. Recommendations

1. Council receive the 2018 Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy update for information.
2. Council approve the Terms of Reference for the Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee (Attachment 1).
3. This report be circulated by the Regional Clerk to the Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and local municipalities.

2. Summary

This report provides Council with an update on the first year of implementation of York Region's [Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy](#) (endorsed by Council in October 2017) with an outlook of planned initiatives for 2019. This report also seeks Council approval of the Terms of Reference for the York Region Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee (Attachment 1), formerly called the Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group.

Key Points:

- The first year of Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy implementation is on track with significant stakeholder outreach and engagement in 2018
- Successful collaboration is underway to support the Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy action plan with a focus on education and awareness
- In 2018, 31 of the 45 Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy actions were either initiated or planned and four short-term activities completed
- 2019 agriculture and agri-food initiatives will strengthen stakeholder communication, collaboration and build capacity in the agriculture and agri-food industry
- The proposed Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee Terms of Reference aligns the focus of the Advisory Committee with the Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy

and makes the structure and operations of the Terms of Reference consistent with other Regional advisory committees

3. Background

The Agriculture and Agri-Food sector contributes \$2.7B to York Region's Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

York Region is home to a vibrant agri-food industry with more than 700 farm-based businesses and 270 food and beverage manufacturers and distributors that contribute to the Region's economic vitality. The agri-food sector in York Region includes everything from farms to processors, food retailers and restaurants, and provides approximately 57,000 jobs and generates \$2.7 billion in GDP for York Region. Based on the 2016 Census of Agriculture, gross farm sales (a measure of farm business income) for primary food production in the Region, grew to approximately \$301 million.

In 2017, Council approved the Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy to guide long-term growth of the sector

Supporting the farming community remains a priority for Council. In [October 2017](#), Council approved the Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy (the Strategy) developed in collaboration with the Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee) and local municipalities. The Strategy sets direction for long-term growth of the agriculture and agri-food sector and guides development of policy and program initiatives.

The Strategy articulates a comprehensive set of objectives defined within five strategic goal areas and 45 action items to be implemented over five years. The five strategic goals are to:

1. Strengthen communication and collaboration with York Region, local municipalities and the agri-food sector
2. Support the agri-food sector through integrated land use planning and economic development
3. Support increased capacity for value added agri-food processing and support services
4. Leverage location within GTA and proximity to customers through direct farm marketing and meet demand for local food production
5. Provide support for business retention and expansion of primary agricultural production within York Region

Progress on the Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy initiatives is reported to Council as part of the annual update.

The Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee provides advice on the protection and promotion of agriculture and farming in the Region

The Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee is a volunteer advisory committee that was created by Regional Council in 2001 as a means to support the agricultural industry and promote healthy rural communities. The Advisory Committee has been involved in activities to promote and protect agriculture and local food in York Region. The group is similar to agricultural advisory committees in the Regions of Halton, Peel and Durham.

York Region Planning and Economic Development staff provide administrative and procedural support to the Advisory Committee and work collaboratively to implement the Strategy action plan.

The Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee is governed by a Terms of Reference that must be reviewed every four years and approved by Council

The Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee's Terms of Reference determine its composition and operational guidelines. The group is required to meet quarterly, at a minimum, and individuals, interest groups or organizations may be invited to appear at any meeting as a delegation, or to submit/present information that will assist the Advisory Committee in fulfilling its mandate. Additional meetings may be called by the Chair. Meetings are typically held at the Regional Administrative Centre.

The original Terms of Reference were drafted in 2001 and last updated in 2015. The Terms of Reference for all Regional advisory committees are reviewed at the beginning of each new term of Council.

In December 2018, Council appointed the following Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee council representatives:

- Councillor Avia Eek on behalf of Mayor Pellegrini, King Township
- Councillor Hugo Kroon on behalf of Mayor Lovatt, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville

4. Analysis

The analysis below addresses the Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy update and Terms of Reference review separately.

STRATEGY UPDATE

Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy implementation is on track

The Agriculture and Agri-food Strategy identified 45 action items for implementation over five years (2018-2022) to support and grow the agriculture and agri-food sector.

In 2018, York Region staff worked closely with local municipal partners, the Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee, and agri-food stakeholders to evaluate the action items and develop a workplan to execute the Strategy.

As of December 2018, 31 of the 45 action items (68 per cent) were either initiated or planned. These include showcasing agricultural innovators/champions in the Region, launching a local food awareness campaign, supporting Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance on a project basis, facilitating relationships between producers, processors and retailers. A summarized list of action items grouped by status (initiated, planned, new and completed) is outlined in Attachment 2.

Four of five short-term action items were completed since adoption of the Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy

In 2018, the following short term action items were completed:

- Hiring of Agriculture and Agri-Business Specialist in Economic Strategy dedicated to supporting the agriculture and agri-food sector in the Region
- Development of a strategic communications plan to strengthen collaboration and communication with local municipalities and the agri-food sector
- Participation in consultation and review of Greater Golden Horseshoe's Agricultural System policies (led by Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs)
- Development of the annual York Farm Fresh Guide Maps (2018) to raise awareness of locally produced agricultural products

Significant outreach occurred in 2018 with over 300 agri-food stakeholders to raise awareness of the Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy

A key focus for 2018 was to engage with agri-food stakeholders to build partnerships and leverage resources to execute the Strategy. Staff hosted and/or attended over twenty five agri-food related events or meetings engaging over 300 stakeholders to raise awareness of the Strategy. The organizations engaged include the York Federation of Agriculture, York Region Food Network, York Farm Fresh Association, York Beef Producers, the Holland Marsh Growers' Association, and the Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance among others.

The Region established funding partnerships to deliver projects that align with the Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy

York Region staff collaborated with two community partners, York Farm Fresh and Holland Marsh Growers Association to establish funding partnerships for 2018-2019 to deliver projects that support the Strategy.

- **Local Food Promotion:** York Farm Fresh connects York Region communities to locally grown products at farms and farmers markets. The Region funded York Farm Fresh as a service delivery agent for projects that directly align with the Strategy. Deliverables include raising awareness of locally produced agricultural products and the development of the local Farm Fresh Guide Map for 2019.
- **Economic Impact Study for the Holland Marsh:** The Holland Marsh is one of the two specialty crop areas within the Province. More than half of the Holland Marsh is located within York Region; a significant driver for local economy. The Region provided funding to the Holland Marsh Growers Association, leveraging provincial Rural Economic Development funding for an economic impact study of the Holland Marsh. Other project partners include King Township and Simcoe County. The study will be completed by December 2019.

Four agri-food education and awareness workshops were held in 2018

In 2018, York Region staff delivered four agri-food education and awareness workshops and networking events in collaboration with internal departments and industry stakeholders. Event details include:

- Succession planning and tax management workshops for local farm businesses on January 18, 2018 and April 5, 2018. The workshops were attended by more than 50 farm businesses and provided options for protecting and transitioning family and farm assets, and provided tax management strategies. This was delivered in collaboration with the Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee.
- Business Waste Reduction Forum on September 28, 2018. The forum was attended by 55 agri-food businesses including food and beverage processors, retailers/grocery stores and food service providers. The forum provided an opportunity to educate and inspire local businesses to implement practical waste reduction solutions to reduce costs and achieve bottom line benefits. Ninety-six percent of the participants indicated that the event either exceeded or met their expectations.
- Asset Mapping Workshop in Newmarket on October 12, 2018. The workshop was attended by ten Regional/municipal staff from Ontario communities, and provided a practical guide to using ConnectON – an agricultural and food asset mapping database. The workshop was delivered by Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance.

The Advisory Committee members provided input on the Proposed Provincial Agricultural System Mapping Assessment

The Region is currently conducting a Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) to update the Regional Official Plan. As part of this process, agricultural lands are being reviewed and the Province has identified additional lands as potential Prime Agriculture.

The Agricultural and Agri-Food Advisory Committee has been engaged in the review of the proposed Provincial Agricultural Mapping System. A report on the review is anticipated for the June Committee of the Whole cycle.

2019 Agriculture and Agri-Food initiatives will focus on stakeholder communication, continued collaboration and capacity building

In 2019, the Region, its local municipalities and Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee will continue to prioritize and deliver the action items as part of agriculture and agri-food initiatives.

2019 deliverables include:

- Continued collaboration with agri-food stakeholders on education and outreach activities to build capacity for the agri-food industry in York Region.
 - The Region supported an agri-food sustainability conference hosted by Provision Coalition on “Using the Power of Data for Making Food Sustainably” held on February 26-27, 2019 in the City of Vaughan. This event provided learning and networking opportunities for local agri-food businesses. Staff engaged with over 140 participants from the agri-food value chain, bringing awareness of agriculture and agri-food initiatives in York Region.
 - Staff hosted a two-day workshop on March 25, 2019 and April 1, 2019 – Growing Your Farm Profits – in partnership with Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA) and the Township of King. The workshop, attended by 16 farm businesses was designed to help farmers develop and reach improved business goals and raise awareness of funding incentives from the Canadian Agricultural Partnership.
- Implementing the strategic communications plan to strengthen communication with stakeholders and raise the profile for the agriculture and agri-food sector across the Region. The plan includes:
 - A series of presentations to promote the Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy initiatives to local municipal Councils, internal staff, and agri-food stakeholders. This provides an opportunity for staff to connect with stakeholders to leverage ongoing agriculture and agri-food resources and coordinate initiatives.
 - Staff delivered presentations to local Council in King Township and Georgina on April 15, 2019 and April 17, 2019 respectively.
 - Staff participated in the Earth Week Fair at the Region and hosted a lunch and learn to promote local food on April 26, 2019.
 - Launch of a local food awareness campaign in collaboration with York Farm Fresh in Q4 of 2019.

- Collaboration with York University Community Innovation Hub (YSpace) on a pilot in the Fall of 2019 to design components of a Food Accelerator Program. The program will assist food start-up companies (consumer packaged goods) in bringing their business access to markets and scaling up. The program will focus on four streams including product packaging, pricing, operational logistics, and sales strategies.

Staff continue to work with the Advisory Committee to deliver action items in the Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy

Staff will continue to work with the Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee to evaluate and develop a work plan to deliver the remaining actions prioritized as medium to long term in the Strategy. These include development and implementation of an Agricultural Community Investment Plan, and an Agriculture and Agri-Food Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) study.

TERMS OF REFERENCE REVIEW

The Terms of Reference for the Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee has been updated

Region staff initiated a review of the 2015 Terms of Reference with the Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee in August, 2018. Changes to the Terms of Reference were necessary to:

- Reflect the connection of the role of the Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee with the Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy
- Make the Terms of Reference consistent with other advisory committees at the Region

The proposed Terms of Reference aligns closely with the Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy

The majority of revisions in the proposed Terms of Reference have been made to align with the Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy. In addition, several operational changes have been made to make the Terms of Reference consistent with other Regional Advisory Committees (e.g., Planning Advisory Committee). The proposed Terms of Reference include three (3) strategic and five (5) operational revisions as outlined below:

Strategic revisions include:

- Adding agri-food presence to the group to balance representation from producers, input suppliers, food processing, distribution, food retailers and food service. This inclusion will make the Advisory Committee representative of the agri-food sector in the Region and reflect the intent of the Strategy.

- The Mandate section has been updated to include the purpose and reflect the connection to the Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy. The Goals section has been eliminated to make the Terms of Reference consistent with the Region's other Advisory Committees.
- The name of the group and wording throughout the Terms of Reference has been revised to reflect and align with the Agriculture and Agri-food Strategy, as there is no mention of the Strategy in the current Terms of Reference. The name "Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee" will reflect the connection of the role of the group with the Strategy and other advisory committees.

Operational revisions include:

- Non-named members (from agricultural and agri-food groups) will remain eligible for re-appointment up to a maximum of two (2) terms, with a need to re-apply for consideration after each municipal election.
- Adding a public call for membership advertised through print and electronic media. Applications will be directed to the Office of the Regional Clerk, for consideration by Regional Council.
- Adding support from the Regional Clerk's Office to coordinate and support Committee meetings.
- Increasing the number of meetings to six per year, with additional meetings that may be held at the request of the Chair.
- If membership is comprised of an even number, then quorum is one-half of the membership.

Consultation on the proposed Terms of Reference (Attachment 1) has occurred with the Regional Council representatives appointed by Council and a separate meeting was held with previous Liaison Group members to review the proposed changes.

Upon approval of the proposed Terms of Reference, the process for selecting Advisory Committee members will be initiated by staff

Upon approval of the proposed Terms of Reference, staff will work with the Council representatives appointed to the Advisory Committee and the Regional Clerk's office to recruit membership. Citizens and nominated representatives of organizations from agricultural and agri-food groups will be invited to apply. A public call for membership will be advertised through print and electronic media, including posting on York.ca. In addition, staff will reach out to past members and industry associations to spread the word for recruitment. A matrix with criteria will be established to evaluate the applicants. Qualified applicants will be interviewed by a panel of Regional Staff and a list of potential candidates will be recommended for council approval.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy is supported by approved Regional plans

The goals and objectives of the Agriculture and Agri-food Strategy are supported and integrated within the following Regional Council approved plans:

- **Vision 2051:** Includes “A Resilient Natural Environment and Agricultural System” goal area where the agricultural areas are thriving and provide healthy food and resources to a growing population.
- **York Region Official Plan – 2010:** Chapter 6 is dedicated to Agricultural and Rural Areas which form an important part of the fabric of York Region, supporting a vibrant agricultural community.
- **2019 to 2022 Strategic Plan:** The strategic priority areas focus on “Building sustainable communities and protecting the environment with a resilient natural environment and agricultural system” and “Increasing economic prosperity by fostering an environment that attracts business, grows employment opportunities and attracts people”.
- **SM4RT Living Plan:** Food Waste Reduction Strategy and the Good Food Program, promote buying local farm fresh food to help residents gain a better connection and appreciation for their food while reducing food waste.

5. Financial

The Strategy identified a number of strategic objectives and actions for consideration as part of implementation. Some of these are no cost or low cost, or are already pursued by the Region, while others have potential resource and budget implications. Funds for 2019 Agriculture and Agri-Food implementation activities are included in the approved budget.

6. Local Impact

The Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy supports and complements the goals and interests of the Region’s local municipal partners. Staff from local municipalities participated in the development and review of the Strategy and will continue to attend Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee meetings. Regional staff partner with local municipalities to deliver programs and execute the Strategy. The Strategy is shared with local municipalities to be leveraged as they develop their respective agriculture and agri-food plans and initiatives.

7. Conclusion

Through implementation of the Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy, York Region continues to demonstrate a strong commitment to the agriculture and agri-food sector.

Implementation of the Strategy is on track with significant stakeholder outreach and engagement in 2018. A key focus for 2018 was to engage with agri-food stakeholders to build partnerships and leverage resources to execute the Strategy. In 2019, the Region, its local municipalities and Agriculture Advisory Liaison Group will continue to prioritize and deliver action items from the Strategy.

The Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee plays a key role in providing advice on agriculture, agri-food and rural matters in York Region. The proposed Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee Terms of Reference align the focus of the group with the Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy and make it consistent with other Regional committees. The progress on the Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy initiatives and the work of the Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee will be reported as a part of the annual update to Council.

For more information on this report, please contact Doug Lindeblom, Director of Economic Strategy at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 71503. Accessible formats or communication supports are available upon request.

Recommended by: **Paul Freeman, MCIP, RPP**
Chief Planner

Dino Basso
Commissioner of Corporate Services

Approved for Submission: **Bruce Macgregor**
Chief Administrative Officer

April 26, 2019
Attachments (2)
#9277994

York Region Agriculture & Agri-Food Advisory Committee

Terms of Reference

Description

The York Region Agriculture & Agri-Food Advisory Committee (AAAC) is established by Regional Council in accordance with these Terms of Reference. AAAC members are bound by these Terms of Reference and are ultimately responsible to Regional Council. The AAAC will report to Regional Council through the Planning and Economic Development section of Committee of the Whole.

Purpose

The purpose of the AAAC is to provide advice to Regional Council and staff on agriculture, agri-food and rural matters in York Region. AAAC will work with Regional staff on implementing approved work plan activities to advance the execution of York Region's Agriculture and Agri-food Strategy.

Mandate

The mandate will be fulfilled by considering and providing input on matters such as:

- a) Issues and concerns of York Region's agriculture, agri-food industry and community groups.
- b) Implementation of York Region's Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy including its strategic goals and recommended actions outlined in the strategy.
- c) Education and public awareness regarding agriculture and rural issues, including urban agricultural practices.
- d) Review of studies, plans and proposals referred by Regional Council or staff and providing comments on agricultural and rural impacts. This includes future updates to York Region's Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy.
- e) Recommendations for tools to ensure agricultural land is available for growing and producing local food and other agricultural products that are accessible to York Region residents and neighbouring communities.
- f) Proposed new or revised legislation, programs and funding from Provincial ministries, Federal departments and other agencies that affect agriculture, agri-food and rural issues in York Region.

- g) Strengthening collaboration between the Region, local municipalities and key agri-food stakeholders.

Membership

1. Composition

The AAAC will consist of a minimum of seven (7) to a maximum of eleven (11) members who are appointed for a term of four (4) years to coincide with the term of Regional Council.

The members shall be appointed as follows:

- Regional Council: one (1) to two (2) appointees, plus the Regional Chairman and CEO as an ex-officio member
- York Federation of Agriculture: one (1) appointee, plus one (1) alternate
- York Region Food Network: one (1) appointee, plus one (1) alternate
- Other agricultural groups in York Region: three (3) appointees , plus three (3) alternates
- Agri-food value chain groups (e.g. input supplier, food processing, distribution, food service and retail) in York Region: three (3) appointees, plus three (3) alternates
- Citizens-at-large: one (1) appointee

2. Qualifications

The representatives of these organizations or agencies should have qualifications, interests and abilities that will support delivery of the AAAC's mandate and must also be willing to devote the necessary time to the AAAC. The members-at-large should possess expertise, experience and willingness to liaise with the range of agencies, organizations and interest groups represented on the AAAC and represent the interests of the broader community rather than a specific interest group. Additional individuals and agencies are encouraged to attend the meetings and participate in discussions; however, only the membership will carry voting privileges.

3. Terms of Office

Members appointed to the AAAC will serve for a term of up to four years to coincide with the term of Regional Council. Non-named members remain eligible for reappointment up to a maximum of two (2) terms and must reapply for consideration after each municipal election. Citizens-at-large will be limited to residents of York Region; however, organization representatives are not required to be residents of York Region. AAAC will not be dissolved until after the recruitment of new members is completed.

4. Recruitment

All citizens and any nominated representatives of organizations involved in agricultural, agri-food and rural issues are invited to apply. A call for representation will be publicly advertised through print and electronic media, including posting on York.ca. Applicants will submit their application to the Office of the Regional Clerk. Qualified applicants will be interviewed by a panel of Regional Staff and a list of potential candidates will be recommended for consideration by Regional Council.

5. Appointment of Chair

The AAAC Chair shall be appointed by the membership at the first AAAC meeting. A member may hold the Chair position for a maximum of four (4) years. If necessary, the committee may select an Acting Chair for a portion of, or an entire meeting.

6. Membership Review

The membership will be reviewed and evaluated annually based on the ability of members to carry out advisory duties, attendance and participation. Council has the ability to remove members from the committee should they fail to fulfill the responsibilities of the AAAC Membership Responsibility Agreement.

7. Resignation of Members

Any resignation of a member during the term of the AAAC must be given in writing to the Regional Clerk's Office. Regional Council may choose not to fill a vacancy, except where a resignation will leave the AAAC without a minimum of seven (7) members.

In order to maintain a high level of commitment, members may be required to resign if they or their alternate have been absent for more than three (3) consecutive meetings without good cause. Request to appoint new or additional members of the AAAC will be submitted by AAAC Chair to the Regional Chair during the term of Regional Council.

Meetings

A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum. If the membership is comprised of an equal number, then quorum is one-half of the membership.

The AAAC shall meet six times a year. Additional meetings may be held at the request of AAAC Chair. AAAC meeting agendas will be made available online in the week preceding the meeting. Meetings will generally be held at the York Region Administrative Centre, located at 17250 Yonge Street in Newmarket.

Meetings shall be open to the public and will be conducted in accordance with York Region's Procedure Bylaw 2018-59, unless otherwise stated in these Terms of Reference.

The AAAC, by resolution or through its Chair, may invite any individual, interest group, agency or consultant to appear at a meeting as a delegation or to submit or present information, which will assist the AAAC in carrying out its mandate.

Staff Support

Planning and Economic Development Branch Staff will be designated to provide subject-specific expertise support for the AAAC. The Regional Clerk's Office will coordinate and support the committee's meetings. Regional staff will co-ordinate involvement of other Regional Departments and agencies as necessary, and prepare reports as required on the work of the AAAC.

Expenses for the normal ongoing work of the AAAC shall be provided as part of the Regional Municipality of York operating budget.

Local municipal and senior government staff may be invited to participate in an advisory non-voting capacity.

Conduct and Procedures

1. General

Where not otherwise specified in these Terms of Reference, conduct and procedures of the AAAC will be governed by the relevant sections of York Region [Procedure Bylaw](#).

2. Conflict of Interest

AAAC member Conflict of Interest matters will be addressed through the Agriculture & Agri-Food Advisory Liaison Group Membership Responsibility Agreement. The agreement must be signed by all AAAC members.

3. Delegations

Requests by any person wishing to appear before the AAAC as a delegation must be forwarded to the Regional Clerk's Office advising staff of the topic or item to which they wish to speak. It is preferable that this should be completed at least five (5) days prior to the meeting in order that the delegation may be included in the Agenda.

Any persons wishing to address the AAAC as a delegation, and who are not listed as a delegation in the Agenda, may be granted permission to do so by majority vote of the AAAC Membership.

4. Reporting Structure

AAAC minutes will be reported to Regional Council through the Planning and Economic Development section of Committee of Whole.

5. Amendments to the Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed and amended in the fourth year of every Council Term.

Regional Council will have the authority to make changes to these Terms of Reference as required.

Membership Responsibility Agreement

I, _____ understand I have the following responsibilities as a member of the York Region Agriculture & Agri-Food Advisory Committee.

My role is to provide Regional Council and staff with advice regarding key agriculture, agri-food and rural issues matters in York Region.

As a member of the York Region Agriculture & Agri-Food Advisory Committee, I understand and agree to carry out the responsibilities set out in this Membership Responsibility Agreement and further detailed in the Terms of Reference.

I understand that if I fail to fulfill those responsibilities, I may be removed as a member of the York Region Agriculture & Agri-Food Advisory Committee.

Responsibilities

- 1) It is considered a conflict of interest if I give advice, in the course of carrying out my duties, that directly benefits my personal, financial or business interests, or the personal, financial or business interest of my immediate family, being my parent, my spouse or my child.
- 2) I am ultimately responsible and accountable for using good judgment in the course of carrying out my duties.
- 3) If I am asked to speak publicly to an organization or professional association as a member of the York Region Agriculture & Agri-Food Advisory Committee I must notify the Region.
- 4) If I choose to speak as an industry representative or private citizen at a conference, meeting or other public forum and I am not speaking as a representative of the Region, I understand that I do not appear to represent the opinion or policy of the Region and may not present any information I have received or reviewed as a result of my membership on the York Region Agriculture & Agri-Food Advisory Committee.
- 5) If I am approached by the media I will refer all inquiries to the Region's Planning and Economic Development branch.
- 6) I understand that the information discussed at York Region Agriculture & Agri-Food Advisory Committee meetings becomes public record.
- 7) I will not use confidential information shared with the York Region Agriculture & Agri-Food Advisory Committee for personal, financial or business use without written consent from the Region.

Terms of Reference
York Region Agriculture & Agri-Food Advisory Committee

- 8) I will not use the York Region Agriculture & Agri-Food Advisory Committee mail, phone or email communication list for personal or business purposes and understand that this information must only be used to conduct the business of the York Region Agriculture & Agri-Food Advisory Committee.
- 9) I will not use my personal email, listserv, social media accounts, or other modes of communication to represent the opinions or policies of the Region.

I understand and agree that I will be a member of the York Region Agriculture & Agri-Food Advisory Committee starting on [DATE] and ending on [DATE] unless my membership ends early for any of the reasons outlined in this Membership Responsibility Agreement or the Terms of Reference.

Acceptance of Appointment to York Region Agriculture & Agri-Food Advisory Committee:

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy Action items: arranged by status (initiated/underway, planned, new or completed)

GOAL	DESCRIPTION
<p>Strengthen communication and collaboration with York Region, lower tier municipalities and the agri-food sector</p>	<p><u>INITIATED/UNDERWAY</u></p> <p>1.2 Build internal staff capacity to provide direction to lower tiers on agri-food issues; coordinate programming and initiatives between planning and economic development and tourism at the Regional level. ONGOING - York Region</p> <p>1.6 Continue to support and collaborate with GHFFA through projects. ONGOING - York Region</p> <p>1.7 Continue support for the York Region Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group (YRAALG) by allocating annual budget for special projects and events. MEDIUM – York Region</p> <p>1.8 Explore and identify ways to celebrate and showcase agricultural innovators/champions in the Region using existing communication efforts. ONGOING – York Region + local municipalities</p> <p>1.9 Seek opportunities to collaborate with partners in York Region and beyond the Region. ONGOING- Led by partners and supported by York Region</p> <p>1.10 Develop York Region agri-food educational materials for general public to share at regional and community events. ONGOING – York Region + local municipalities</p> <p>1.11 Investigate and explore opportunities for teaching youth about agriculture and food production in the Region. MEDIUM - YRAALG + YRFA and community groups</p> <p>1.12 Demonstrate a commitment to the agri-food sector by supporting agricultural events and conventions through sponsorship or in-kind support. ONGOING - York Region</p> <p>1.13 Collaborate with organizations such as Rouge National Park, Oak Ridges Moraine Trust, Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA), and Ontario Farmland Trust to conduct study to understand current land stewardship practices used by York producers. MEDUIM – York Region + local municipalities</p>

	<p><u>PLANNED</u></p> <p>1.4 Create a directory/resource that includes names and contact information of producers in the Region; to be used by the Region for collecting employment data. MEDIUM – York Region</p> <p>1.5 Create annual opportunity to collect feedback from the agri-food sector to strengthen York Region staff and Council’s understanding of farm and food businesses and their needs by engaging with local famers and agri-food experts. MEDIUM – York Region</p> <p><u>COMPLETED</u></p> <p>1.1 Create a York Region agri-food specialist role dedicated to supporting growth of existing businesses, attracting new investments and promoting the Agri-food sector in York Region. SHORT TERM- York Region</p> <p>1.3 Develop a communication roadmap/strategy to ensure open and transparent communication pathways. SHORT TERM- York Region</p>
<p>Support agri-food sector through integrated land use planning and economic development</p>	<p><u>INITIATED/UNDERWAY</u></p> <p>2.1. At next review, update York Region’s Official Plan to conform and align with recent changes to the Greenbelt Plan, Growth Plan and Oak Ridges Moraine Plan (2017 updates) - MEDIUM - York Region+ local municipalities</p> <p>2.2. Prior to next Official Plan review, conduct a Land Evaluation and Area Review (LEAR) study to collect updated data on quality of soils, fragmentation, conflicting uses and production in York Region. MEDIUM - York Region+ local municipalities</p> <p>2.3 Through the Municipal Comprehensive Review, review York Region’s Official Plan (and lower tier plans) related to overall agricultural strategies, land use policies, acceptable uses, as well as application processes and development fees to ensure they encourage. ONGOING - York Region+ local municipalities</p> <p>2.7 Recognize and acknowledge the agri-food sector’s role as an economic driver in the Region through updates to plans and policies. MEDIUM - York Region</p> <p>2.8 Conduct a study and review of edge planning practices and identify planning tools the Region can use to resolve conflicts between adjacent urban and agricultural land uses MEDIUM – Partner</p>

	<p>2.9 Monitor the province's development of Agricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) guidelines and provide feedback through consultation with planning staff and other relevant stakeholders - ONGOING - York Region+ local municipalities</p> <p><u>PLANNED</u></p> <p>2.5 Conduct a review of policies and regulations related to environmental performance of food processing operations within the Region. SHORT- York Region</p> <p><u>NEW</u></p> <p>2.4 NEW: Conduct a study that investigates innovative financial mechanisms that incentivize producers and land owners to keep land in agricultural production. MEDIUM - York Region+ local municipalities</p> <p>2.10 Encourage the lower tier municipalities to develop and implement an Agricultural Community Improvement Plan (CIP) to incentivize on-farm diversification and value-added operations. - ONGOING - local municipalities</p> <p>2.11 Create factsheets and accessible materials to help agri-food stakeholders interpret land use policies- ONGOING - York Region+ Municipalities</p> <p><u>COMPLETED</u></p> <p>2.6 Participate in the upcoming consultation and review for the Greater Golden Horseshoe's Agricultural System policies (led by OMAFRA) - MEDIUM - York Region+ local municipalities</p>
Support increased capacity for value added processing and support services	<p><u>INITIATED/UNDERWAY</u></p> <p>3.2 Establish an agri-entrepreneur mentor program in conjunction with the York Small Business Enterprise Centre to support existing and potential entrepreneurs with mentoring and business guidance. MEDIUM ONGOING York Region + local municipalities</p> <p><u>NEW</u></p> <p>3.1 Develop and implement a Food Processing Action Plan that demonstrates York Region is 'open for business' to attract and retain food processing businesses. MEDIUM York Region + local municipalities</p>

	<p>3.3 Investigate and identify opportunities to develop a regional food incubator/hub to support fruit and vegetable value-adding opportunities to increase farm revenue. LONG- York Region + local municipalities</p>
<p>Leverage within the GTA and proximity to customers through direct farm marketing to meet demand for local food production</p>	<p><u>INITIATED/UNDERWAY</u></p> <p>4.1 Facilitate the revitalization of the York Farm Fresh Organization to support the growth of York's agri-food sector and demand for farm-direct production. ONGOING - York Region + Municipalities</p> <p>4.3 Continue to support and encourage the provision of community gardens and/or urban agriculture projects that promote agricultural awareness in settlement/urban areas. ONGOING - York Region+ local municipalities</p> <p>4.4 Support the development of agri-tourism programming such as "Farm Tour Hikes". ONGOING - York Region</p> <p>4.6 Revisit York Region's Food Charter and broaden support across the agri-food sector. ONGOING - York Region + local Municipalities</p> <p>4.8 Facilitate relationship building between producer, processors and retail companies that support local food production (e.g. Longos, Metro) MEDIUM - York Region</p> <p>4.9 Communicate and promote opportunities to connect producers with the local market. MEDIUM – York Region</p> <p>4.10 Partner with Rouge National Urban Park and Toronto Region Conservation to increase collaboration and learning amongst agri-businesses and potential new entrants into agri-tourism through hikes, education programs and/or peer-to-peer learning groups. MEDIUM - York Region</p> <p><u>NEW</u></p> <p>4.5 Raise awareness around the diversity of production and processing found in the Region through promotional materials (e.g. Ontario's 'soup and salad bowl' in the Holland Marsh; world crop production). ONGOING - York Region</p> <p>4.7 Develop local food-sourcing policies for Regional facilities and encourage other public sector agencies within the Region to adopt similar policies. MEDIUM- York Region + local Municipalities</p>

	<p><u>COMPLETE</u></p> <p>4.2 Continue annual production of the York Region Farm Fresh Guide Map and Pumpkin Pie Trail Map to promote and raise awareness of locally produced agricultural products. SHORT-York Region</p>
Provide support for business retention and expansion of primary agriculture production within York Region	<p><u>INITIATED/UNDERWAY</u></p> <p>5.2. Conduct a study and develop a long-term sustainability strategy for the Holland Marsh through collaboration with stakeholders and partners (e.g. Simcoe County, Lake Simcoe Regional Conservation Authority, Holland Marsh Growers' Association, OMAFRA, etc.) MEDIUM - Partner</p> <p>5.6 Continue support to improve broadband connectivity across the Region through the Region's Broadband Strategy; particularly in rural and agricultural areas to help businesses develop and grow. ONGOING - York Region + local Municipalities</p> <p>5.7 Develop template and prepare annual report card to record and evaluate achievements. ONGOING - York Region + Municipalities</p> <p><u>PLANNED</u></p> <p>5.3. Work with industry and government agencies to support the employment of seasonal and foreign agricultural workers, with respect to working conditions, accommodations, cultural services and accessibility to workers. ONGOING</p> <p>5.5 Explore opportunities to increase the production of world crops within York Region. MEDIUM: York Region + Municipalities:</p> <p><u>NEW</u></p> <p>5.1 Conduct Business Retention and Expansion studies (led by OMAFRA) to assess and evaluate the needs and opportunities in each lower-tier municipality with a focus on agri-food related services and businesses - MEDIUM - York Region + Municipalities: NEW</p> <p>5.4. Undertake an equine industry study and consultation to identify barriers and opportunities for growing the Region's equine industry including research on successes in other regions (e.g. Greater Toronto Area, Caledon, Halton Hills, etc.). MEDIUM - local municipalities</p> <p>5.8 Conduct a five-year review of York Region's Agriculture and Agri-Food Sector Strategy. LONG - York Region, Municipalities</p>