

Community Relations Committee Terms of Reference

Purpose

Community relations is primarily the responsibility of management with oversight from the Board of Commissioners.

The purpose of the Community Relations Committee (the “Committee”) is to assist the Board of Commissioners in fulfilling its obligations and oversight responsibilities with respect to community relations in a number of areas: communications, research, social housing sector relations and sponsorships.

The term community relations generally refers to BC Housing’s outreach and interactions with the broader community in which it operates. This may include, for example, social housing partners, community leaders, media, stakeholders and the public.

While communications, research and sector relations are primarily staff-driven functions, the Board of Commissioners may have involvement at several levels: oversight, direct support and recommend policies.

Commissioners, because of their personal and professional relationships, can be helpful in leading and supporting community relations activities. The Committee recommends approval of strategic-level plans to the Board of Commissioners, and may help to: develop, implement, and oversee a public relations or research plan; suggest strategies in communications with media, community leaders and the public at large; recommend ways to involve individual Commissioners in community relations efforts; and help the Board monitor BC Housing’s reputation.

In order to discharge its responsibilities, the Committee will have unrestricted access to the Commission’s personnel and documents through the Corporate Secretary, Vice President of Communications and Public Affairs, Vice President of Operations, and Vice President of Strategic Business Operations and Performance, and will be provided with the resources necessary to carry out its responsibilities, including the authority to engage independent counsel and other advisers as part of this resource requirement.

The Committee will consider relevant financial, social and environmental considerations in its planning and decision making.

These Terms of Reference establish the Committee’s governance framework and duties and responsibilities in fulfilling its oversight role.

Accountability

The Committee will report its discussions to the Board of Commissioners by oral report to the Board of Commissioners with respect to every major matter considered since the last meeting. All Board of Commissioners members have access to the minutes from the Committee.

Committee Membership

The Board approves the Terms of Reference for the Committee, including the method for establishing Committee membership, composition, delegated duties and

responsibilities. The Committee Chair is appointed by the Board of Commissioners, by recommendation of the Board Chair. The Committee will be composed of no fewer than three Commissioners or 40% of Commissioners holding office, whichever is lower.

Committee members will have a working familiarity with various aspects of community relations as defined by this Terms of Reference, including research, communications, and sector relations. One or more Committee member will have expertise in the areas of external communications, community leadership and research.

The Corporate Secretary will provide staff support to the Committee.

Orientation

In accordance with the Board's Terms of Reference, an orientation session and relevant orientation materials will be provided by the Corporate Secretary and appropriate senior staff to new members of the Committee.

Meetings

A quorum for any meeting of the Committee will be the majority of the members of the Committee. The Board Chair is a voting member of the Committee but is not counted in determinations of Committee quorum.

Meetings will be held at the call of the Committee Chair in accordance with the Meeting Timetable that appears in these Terms of Reference under section "Committee Timetable", or as deemed necessary to carry out the business of the Committee.

The Chief Executive Officer, Vice President of Communications and Public Affairs, Vice President of Operations, Vice President of Strategic Business Operations and Performance, and the Corporate Secretary may attend all meetings of the Committee, except for in-camera sessions.

There will be a Secretary present for all Committee meetings.

Independent Advice

The Committee may at any time, through the Corporate Secretary and following approval of the Board Chair, engage independent consultants to assist the Committee with its duties.

Duties and Responsibilities

The Committee is charged with engaging on how BC Housing is connected to communities across the province. It shall be responsible for reviewing the Commission's strategic communication plan and broad relationships with the public, including partners, clients, and other stakeholders of BC Housing. It will provide oversight of BC Housing's relationships with housing providers including progress on new programs being delivered with non-profit housing partners. The Committee will also review and provide input on the Commission's research plan and consider the results, and other initiatives that advance BC Housing's reputation and further its mission.

In exercising its function, the Committee has a number of key responsibilities as set out below. Subject to the powers and duties of the Board, the Committee's duties and responsibilities are as follows:

- Providing oversight on BC Housing's relations with Indigenous communities and work to advance Truth and Reconciliation.
- Providing oversight on BC Housing's activities to enhance programs, policies and business practices to be in alignment with GBA+ and equity principles.
- Providing oversight to BC Housing's communications, including providing input into the development and implementation of the Commission's strategic communications plan.
- Facilitating networking and collective action on issues of shared interest among peer organizations.
- Reviewing and recommending policies pertaining to the relations between BC Housing and the broader social housing sector.
- Reviewing and recommending policies pertaining to public relations, branding, advertising, internal and external communications, news and information, and publications.
- Reviewing and providing strategic level input on BC Housing's external relations with the larger community.
- Monitoring and evaluating the quality and effectiveness of the organization's communications vehicles. Reviewing reports prepared by the staff about the impact of communications activities.
- Reviewing the Commission's research program to ensure that priorities are well aligned with broader community issues and receive regular reports on research outcomes.
- Reviewing such other matters that the Committee or the Board of Commissioners deems advisable or timely.

Committee Effectiveness

The Community Relations Committee annually reviews its Terms of Reference to ensure that it continues to meet best practice and the needs of the Board as part of the annual Board evaluation process facilitated by the Governance and Human Resources Committee, Committee members will assess the Committee's performance in carrying out its duties.

Committee Timetable

The timetable on the following page outlines the Committee's schedule of activities during the year.

Community Relations Committee Timetable¹					
	Quarter 1 (Apr 1 – Jun 30)	Quarter 2 (Jul 1 – Sept 30)	Quarter 3 (Oct 1 – Dec 31)	Quarter 4 (Jan 1 – Mar 31)	As Required/ Ongoing
Receive reports on BC Housing's relations with Indigenous communities and work to advance Truth and Reconciliation	X	X	X	X	
Receive reports on BC Housing's equity activities	X	X	X	X	
Review and recommend to the board approval of the communications strategy	X				
Receive reports on outcomes of the communications strategy	X	X	X	X	
Review and recommend policies pertaining to public relations, branding, advertising, internal and external communications, news and information and publications					X
Review and recommend to the Board approval of the research strategy	X				
Receive reports on research activities and strategy implementation including outcomes	X	X	X	X	
Review and recommend policies pertaining to the relations between BC Housing and the broader social housing sector					X
Receive reports on BC Housing's relations and activities with the social housing sector and the larger community	X	X	X	X	

¹ BC Housing's fiscal year begins on April 1 and ends on March 31.

Review and recommend Committee Terms of Reference			X		
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