

Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities – Climate Leadership (VICC-CL) Steering Committee

Terms of Reference

The purpose of these Terms of Reference is to ensure that members are aware of the expectations and commitments of the Steering Committee.

OVERVIEW

The overarching goal of the VICC-CL Steering Committee is to support effective and cohesive climate action across the VICC region by acting as an inter-regional network convener, facilitator, and advocate through the provision of the following services:

- Organize a biennial summit (every two years) of elected officials, staff, NGO's and businesses for information sharing, relationship building, identifying collaboration opportunities, and advocacy prioritization
- Maintain quarterly VICC-CL steering committee meetings as a strategic planning body
- Liaise with CEA's staff peer network to share best practices and support collaborative initiatives
- Develop a digital resource library for sharing best practices, data, and new initiatives
- Facilitate and administer functional working groups based on shared priorities
- Engage in senior government level advocacy based on climate action advocacy priorities identified at the summit, through peer networks and AVICC
- Support continued relationship building with Indigenous communities across VICC Region

MEMBERSHIP

- First Nations are invited to participate and have a standing invitation to the table
- One elected director from each Regional District appointed by motion of the Regional District board. Each board may also appoint an alternate but is not obligated to do so. Meetings will be attended by the representative and by the alternate if the representative is not able to attend.
- Representatives from Vancouver Island colleges and universities by invitation
- Regional District and local government staff are invited to the table as supports and advisers
- The group will be kept to a manageable size to maintain forward momentum

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Role of Co-Chairs:

- Two to three local government elected officials and/or First Nation representatives will act as Co-Chairs for the Steering Committee for a one-year term.
- Co-Chair responsibilities include:
 - Leading the development of an annual workplan
 - Liaising with the Steering Committee's secretariat

- Rotate chairing quarterly Steering Committee meetings.

Role of Members:

Members of the VICC-CLP Steering Committee commit to:

1. Recognizing that local climate solutions are needed to mitigate and adapt to climate change.
2. Attending and actively participating in quarterly meetings organized by the Secretariat.
3. Providing input and feedback to the Secretariat on the administration of the committee
4. Engage in learning, mentoring, and communicating with other elected officials
5. Apply lessons learned to climate action, based on peer-reviewed climate science and best practices.
6. Wholeheartedly championing the Steering Committee within and outside of their work areas and sharing relevant learnings from the Steering Committee with their council and regional district colleagues and local government administration.
7. Fostering a safe environment for exploring challenges and advancing leading edge and collaborative solutions.
8. Notifying the Secretariat and fellow members of the Steering Committee, as soon as practical, if any matter arises which may be deemed to affect the positive progression of the Steering Committee.

Activities members may engage in include:

- Participate at meetings, including making presentations, recommending speakers and topics, and providing an update on climate-related activities;
- Participate in subcommittees and implementation clusters, which may include in-kind or financial support towards special project work; and
- Share best practices and other information and provide links to resources about related activities of interest / relevance to members of the Network.

Associate members:

- Representatives from Vancouver Island universities and colleges, local government staff, or other associate members may be invited to speak at or participate in steering committee meetings, sub-committee working groups, or other events hosted by the Steering Committee

Role of Community Energy Association (CEA):

The Community Energy Association will provide secretariat services to the Steering Committee, including:

- Member management and onboarding of new members
- Coordination of steering committee meetings
- Private webpage hosting & management
- Development and maintenance of digital resource library
- Overarching project management
- Fiscal and contract management, grant applications
- Administration and liaison with regional staff network (in-kind)
- Evaluation and reporting

MEETING PROCESSES

- The Steering Committee will meet virtually for four quarterly meetings annually.
- Meetings will be structured around a workplan that will be generated from feedback of all members and steered by the Co-Chairs.
- Meetings will be structured to encourage free and open discussion of relevant issues, within the constraints of the planned agendas. Each meeting may consist of:
 - (Optional) Closed Discussion – Primary members only
 - Presentations from members or invited guests
 - Roundtable Updates
 - Updates from the VICC regional staff peer network
 - Updates from the Secretariat
- Meetings will typically be scheduled for 2 hours. Occasionally, extended meetings or additional activities may be scheduled that are particularly timely/important.
- Meeting agendas will be provided at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting.
- These terms of reference will be reviewed annually by the members.
- Subcommittees or working groups may form around specific issues and hold additional meetings as needed.

PRINCIPLES FOR ENGAGEMENT

The Steering Committee will adhere to the following principles to promote inclusivity through its work:

- Acknowledge that individuals have unique and particular needs in the learning and work environment
- Promote inclusivity by reasonably adjusting procedures, activities, and physical environments
- Be inclusive in all forms of communication
- Treat all with sensitivity, respect, and fairness

REPORTING

The Steering Committee will report to Regional Districts through the board-appointed representative. A short summary of each meeting will be circulated to Steering Committee members after each meeting, to be used for reporting purposes at the discretion of members.

The Co-Chairs of the Steering Committee, with support from the CEA Secretariat, may send updates to:

- The AVICC Executive
- The UBCM Special Committee on Climate Action
- FCM Executive
- Appropriate Provincial Ministers (Environment, Climate, Energy, Emergency Management, etc)
- Climate Solutions Advisory Council
- Climate Caucus
- First Nations Health Authority
- First Nations (by way of working group members sending to the Nations in their areas)

A working group may apply to present at annual AVICC conferences.

DECISION MAKING

- Non-financial decisions will be made by consensus of all members present
- Financial decisions will be made by majority vote of the committee

EVALUATION

The Network's success will be determined by a process of setting goals and assessing progress against those goals.

REVIEW & CHANGES TO THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

- This Terms of Reference is intended to be a living document and will be reviewed annually at minimum through member feedback.
- Changes may be made at any time by the consensus of the group

Last updated: September 2025

APPENDIX – MISSION, VISION, VALUES

Mission

To connect local elected officials and staff from diverse communities in the VICC region and empower them to accelerate their work on climate change and meet their goals by sharing best practices, collaborating on problem solving and advocating to other orders of government.

Vision

Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities working together to reduce emissions and mitigate climate change at the same time as adapting to a changing climate by creating resilient, regenerative, inclusive and prosperous communities and economies.

Values

We are committed to:

1. Working in a spirit of **reconciliation and decolonization**¹ with the First Nations on whose homelands all of our cities, districts and towns are located.
2. Recognizing that **we need each other to flourish** and that collectively we are more powerful and have greater impact than working alone.
3. Working beyond climate considerations and taking an approach of **inclusive, regenerative community building**.
4. Respecting **local autonomy and decision making** and providing resources and support – especially to smaller local governments.
5. Using our time wisely, **staying focused**, and honouring the energy of those who are doing the work.
6. **Learning from each other** by making time in each meeting to share something we are excited about or struggling with.
7. Shifting the conversation about climate change to **joy, possibility and solutions** in order to create momentum and push through climate despair.
8. Bringing together First Nations, community-based, and academic ways of knowing and **valuing the areas of overlap and the differences**.
9. **Engaging our communities** through our climate action work.
10. Drawing on the **passion and energy of youth** in our communities and creating opportunities for youth involvement and participatory action research.
11. Working with a **sense of urgency while balancing** the need to build support and understanding and bring others along on the journey.
12. **Not duplicating** the efforts of others!

¹ Advancing reconciliation requires renewing and improving relationships with Indigenous peoples. One of the obstacles to this is that how we work together is often shaped by institutions, habits and ideas that reinforce colonial (unequal, unfair, discriminatory) relationships. We must actively commit to reshaping these institutions, habits and ideas so that we can create ways of working together that are fair, equitable and mutually supportive. When we commit to decolonization, then, we are committing to reflecting on and changing our institutions and ways of working, and our own ideas, to ensure that they support reconciliation.