

MIRANET: Terms of Reference

1. Preamble

In March 2008 representatives from various Mississauga ratepayer / residents' associations came together to discuss the possibility of forming a network of associations. The concept under consideration was improved communication among Mississauga residents and City Council, and regional, provincial, and federal governments, on issues affecting all Mississauga residents. The group agreed that the concept was a viable one, named itself the 'Steering Committee', and appointed a sub-committee to draft Terms of Reference (TOR) and propose a name for the group. The TOR sub-committee reported back to the Steering Committee in June 2008, and produced a revision in July which was circulated to the Steering Committee for final comments. Initial distribution to all Residents' Associations in Mississauga took place on Sept. 6, 2008. This document defines MIRANET's Terms of Reference as follows:

2. Name of Group

Mississauga Residents' Associations Network (MIRANET)

3. Vision

Every citizen has the opportunity to be informed and engaged in civic matters that affect them.

4. Mission

To work together on issues of city and region-wide significance and importance.

5. Strategy

- 5.1 Forge effective working relationships with various levels of government
- 5.2 Share information with residents' associations, citizens, and governments
- 5.3 Foster and encourage the development of forums for community engagement
- 5.4 Share and benchmark best practices

6. Organization

- 6.1 The MIRANET organization shall be a collective without a conventional hierarchical structure. It shall operate through a Steering Committee composed of a representative from each participating residents' association.
- 6.2 The Steering Committee shall operate, to the maximum extent possible, by consensus. Consensus shall be defined as 'The adoption of a position by a majority of the members of the Steering Committee, according to the provisions of section 8.2, and the acceptance of the position by the remaining members of the Steering Committee'.
- 6.3 The organization shall have an elected Secretary / Treasurer and designated spokespersons. The description of the Secretary / Treasurer position is outlined in **Appendix 1** to this document.
- 6.4 MIRANET's Issues Management process shall be as follows:
The Steering Committee shall determine the issues on which MIRANET will take a position, and then appoint a sub-committee to study the issue and report back with recommendations. The Steering Committee will then approve (or amend and approve) these recommendations and adopt a formal MIRANET position, which will be communicated to relevant parties through a designated spokesperson (normally from the sub-committee).
- 6.5 MIRANET's organization shall be subject to review and modification by the Steering Committee twelve months after initial adoption of the Terms of Reference, and annually thereafter.

7. Membership

- 7.1 Membership shall be restricted to residents' associations registered with the City. Each member association shall have one vote and one principal representative on the Steering Committee.
- 7.2 Any residents' association registered with the city shall have the right to join MIRANET upon submission of a formal application clearly stating acceptance of the Terms of Reference. The Application Form is included in **Appendix 2** to this document.
- 7.3 The Steering Committee may, at its discretion, invite non-members to participate and assist in its discussions or those of its sub-committees. Invitees will not have the right to vote on motions before the Steering Committee.

8. Quorum and Voting

- 8.1 A quorum of a meeting of the Steering Committee shall be the presence of representatives of half (50%) of the member associations plus one (1).
- 8.2 To adopt a motion, two-thirds of those present at a Steering Committee meeting, or more than half of the membership, whichever is greater, are required to vote in favour of the motion.

9. Communications

9.1 With Residents

Communications shall be through member associations, a MIRANET website and other internet tools.

9.2 With Government

MIRANET's position on issues shall be developed and determined by means of the process described in section 6.4. Statements of MIRANET's position on issues shall be communicated by designated spokespersons.

MIRANET shall be represented at meetings with government by sub-committees appointed for the purpose from among members of the Steering Committee.

9.3 With Media

Initial contact with the media will be through the Secretary who will direct media to the appropriate MIRANET spokesperson.

Statements of MIRANET's positions on issues shall be communicated by designated spokespersons, as described in section 6.4.

9.4 With Member Associations

Communications shall be through meetings and e-mail.

10. Political Affiliations

MIRANET is a non-partisan organization, and does not endorse any specific candidate seeking public office, nor any political party.

11. Governance

MIRANET will appoint a standing 'Governance' sub-committee to make recommendations to the Steering Committee on matters concerning the governance of MIRANET and the Terms of Reference.

12. Dissolution

Any monies in a MIRANET bank account or other financial instruments at the time of dissolution of the MIRANET organization, and after the discharge of all MIRANET liabilities, will be divided equally among all existing member Residents' Associations.

First issued:	Sept. 4, 2008	
Revision:	Nov. 5, 2008	Addition of section 12. Dissolution
Revision:	Dec. 2, 2009	Revision of section 8.1 Quorum

Appendix 1. Position of the Secretary / Treasurer

1. Responsibilities

- 1.1 Organize meetings of the Steering Committee.
- 1.2 Chair meetings of the Steering Committee.
- 1.3 Produce and circulate minutes of the meetings of the Steering Committee.
- 1.4 Manage the financial resources of MIRANET until the Steering Committee creates a separate Treasurer position.

2. Rights

- 2.1 Able to make motions at meetings.
- 2.2 Able to vote on motions before the Steering Committee as the representative of his / her constituent association.

3. Term

The Secretary / Treasurer shall be elected from among the members of the Steering Committee for a term of one year.

Appendix 2. MIRANET Membership Application Form

DATE:

NAME OF RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION:

PRESIDENT:

WARD #:

BOUNDARIES:

Our designated representative to the MIRANET Steering Committee:

NAME:

POSITION ON BOARD:

E-MAIL:

PHONE:

Our Executive Board has reviewed MIRANET's **Terms of Reference** dated November 5, 2008, and accept and support them.

SIGNED:

By President, or Corresponding Secretary