

CITY OF VICTORIA
HONORARY CITIZENS COMMITTEE
TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Honorary Citizens Committee consists of at least 7 members with consideration being given to ensuring representation from various segments and interest levels of community concerns. The Committee meets, as required, during the months prior to the awards ceremony. The Council liaison is the Chair of the Committee. The awards ceremony is to be held in November of each year with the exception of the municipal election year.

The awards program is named the Honorary Citizens Awards. The Honorary Citizens Committee is primarily responsible for ensuring that there are a suitable number of nominations to choose from, with the Council and the public also having the ability to make nominations for the proposed awards. The Committee evaluates nominations and makes Honorary Citizens Awards recommendations to Council. Meetings are held in camera and recommendations remain confidential until Council has announced the recipients. The number of Honorary Citizens Awards nominations recommended to Council is approximately ten for each year.

Council evaluates and selects awards recipients in camera from the list of nominations evaluated and recommended by the Honorary Citizens Committee. Approximately 12 awards will be presented in the autumn by the Mayor at a formal recognition ceremony followed by a formal reception hosted by Council.

The criteria for Honorary Citizens Awards are as follows:

1. Awards are given in recognition of an individual's service or achievements.
2. Honorary Citizens Awards nominees must be living residents or former residents of the region who have made an exceptional contribution to the City of Victoria.
3. Politicians presently holding office will be excluded from nomination while holding office.

Terms of Reference - Background

A committee chaired by a Council Member and composed of Honorary Citizens was revived in 1997 for the purpose of establishing the process, rationale and timeline for selecting and recommending citizens to receive this special recognition.

Honorary Citizens Awards Certificates were instituted by Mayor Haddock in 1970 as an official recognition of persons who had, over time, served the City meritoriously in any walk of life, often in a volunteer capacity and often without recognition. Over the ensuing years certificates had been awarded on an irregular basis, sometimes nominated by Council Members and at other times at the request of the general public. Very few awards had been made in the few years preceding 1997.

During the course of the 1997/1999 Honorary Citizens Committee meetings, there were a number of discussions regarding selection criteria and the feasibility of setting up a public nomination process.

The Committee discussed the logistics of a public nomination process and reviewed examples of other Awards programs. Not only Committee members and City Council should be asked to recommend the nominees for the Honorary Citizens Awards, but also the public should be invited to gather information about their nominees for submission to the Committee. Guidelines about the qualifications of the nominees and the various categories would be placed in a newspaper advertisement. An application form and guidelines for the nomination process would be available at City Hall and City of Victoria website for those who are interested.

It was agreed that the criteria should be kept as simple as possible to avoid limiting the choice of nominees and that the sole criteria should be that Honorary Citizens Awards nominees be living residents or former residents of the region who have made an exceptional contribution to the City of Victoria. It was also recommended as a policy that politicians currently holding office be excluded from nomination.