



**VISION**

A place for people to prosper -  
alive with opportunity

**MISSION**

Working together  
Committed to our values  
Serving our community

**VALUES**

INTEGRITY  
RESPECT  
INCLUSIVENESS  
SERVICE



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POLICY TITLE	DECORUM POLICY FOR PUBLIC MEETINGS
CATEGORY	Corporate
POLICY NUMBER	File A09 (TOMRMS)
DEPARTMENT	Corporate Services
DIVISION	City Clerk
AUTHORITY	Corporate
APPROVED BY	City Council
EFFECTIVE DATE	03/28/2017
REVIEW DATE	03/28/2019

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**POLICY STATEMENT**

This policy outlines the Decorum Standards for Public Meetings. The policy aligns specifically with the City’s Strategic Plan as follows:

Goal 1: Promote a caring community where people can make strong connections with others and lead safe, healthy and productive lives.

Objective 1.4: Promote, facilitate and participate in the development of affordable, welcoming and vibrant neighbourhoods.

Goal 2: Provide open, transparent, accountable and innovative leadership in local governance and service delivery.

Objective 2.1: Provide a wide range of ways that people can become involved in city decision making.

This policy has been developed to further the City’s Corporate Values and Behaviours of Respect, Integrity, Service and Inclusiveness.

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of the policy in this report is to establish rules of decorum for members of the public attending city-run meetings and/or events, either on-site or off-site. Because there are a variety of different meetings aside from the standard Council and Advisory

Committee meetings that take place, creating a policy that supplements the guidelines contained in the procedural by-law is practical and makes for good governance.

This policy applies to any City owned or leased property/facility or any other location in which City business or public consultation is conducted. The policy is intended to facilitate the conduct of all meetings, including public meetings in an open and orderly manner and in an environment safe for all persons in attendance and in conformity with the City's core values of Respect, Integrity, Service and Inclusiveness.

## DEFINITIONS

N/A

## AUTHORITY

The municipality is authorized under the *Municipal Act, 2001* including section 238 (procedural by-law for meeting procedures).

## SCOPE

This policy applies to all attendees at all meetings, including public meetings, and includes Members of Council, staff and the public.

## POLICY

The intent of this policy is to create a policy that supports open meetings that welcome debate of public policy issues in an atmosphere of inclusiveness, integrity, civility, fairness, courtesy and respect for differing points of view.

Public meeting decorum consists of:

- Persons in the audience shall refrain from behaviour which, in the opinion of the chair (or organizer), will disrupt the meeting. This will include making loud noises, clapping, shouting, booing, hissing or engaging in any other activity in a manner that disturbs, disrupts or impedes the orderly conduct and decorum of the meeting;
- Persons in attendance shall refrain from creating, provoking or participating in any type of disturbance involving physical contact of any kind;
- No one may speak out from the gallery (audience area) without first being recognized by the Chair of the meeting and when recognized, will not use disrespectful language, gestures or offensive words;
- Turn cell phones to silent/vibrate and leave the meeting in order to take a call or to conduct a conversation;
- Photos and/or recordings are permitted provided that the recording does not infringe upon the rights of others, interfere with the making of presentations and deliberations of Council;
- Removal of hats, with the exception of religious or ceremonial head-gear, during the playing of the national anthem;

- All personal belongings may be subject to search at the request of any City security personnel;
- Objects and symbolic materials, such as signs shall not be allowed within the meeting area unless used for formal presentation purposes;
- Speakers addressing the meeting must discuss topics related to business on the agenda;
- Persons in the audience and speakers may not enter the formal Council and staff area at any time, while in session or not, without prior consent from the Chair of the meeting.

Failure to comply with these guidelines, which in the opinion of the Chair or staff organizer will disturb, disrupt or impede the orderly conduct of the meeting/event may result in removal, a trespass order and other legal action as the City deems appropriate.

By attending civic affairs, the attendee is deemed to agreement with the guidelines outlined in this policy so that everyone is able to be present without harassment, interruption, fear and intimidation.

## **POLICY COMMUNICATION**

A copy of this policy will be posted on the City's website.

Staff will receive training on the policy as part of the new hire orientation. Management will review the policy with current staff and/or consultants who assist with public meetings. Training for Chairs of all committees including advisory committees and task forces will also be provided.