

# THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VAUGHAN

## CORPORATE POLICY

**POLICY TITLE:** PUBLIC CODE OF MEETING CONDUCT

**POLICY NO.:** 06.C.05

<b>Section:</b>	Council & Committees		
<b>Effective Date:</b>	November 19, 2024	<b>Date of Last Review:</b>	Click or tap to enter a date.
<b>Approval Authority:</b>	<b>Policy Owner:</b>		
Council	DCM, Strategic Initiatives		

### POLICY STATEMENT

The City of Vaughan recognizes the importance of promoting a respectful and inclusive environment at its Council, Committee Meetings and Town Halls, both physical and digital. A clear code of conduct is essential to ensure that the deliberations of public matters are undertaken in a safe and welcoming environment.

### PURPOSE

This policy provides a set of shared expectations for the conduct, decorum and behaviour by all individuals participating in Council, Committee Meetings and Town Halls. By setting clear expectations for behaviour, the City aims to prevent harassment, disrespect, and other forms of misconduct that can create a hostile or unwelcoming environment while facilitating meaningful engagement and upholding the integrity of the democratic process.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to the conduct of Participants attending a Council, Committee Meetings and Town Hall at any City-owned property or facility, either in person or by electronic participation.

This policy does not apply to or include community events, offsite tours, or private events.

### LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

- 1) *Criminal Code*, RSC 1985, c C-46.
- 2) *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, s 7, Part 1 of The Constitution Act, 1982, Schedule B to the Canada Act 1982 (UK), 1982, c11.

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- 3) *Human Rights Code*, RSO 1990, c H19.
- 4) *Municipal Act, 2001*, SO 2001, c. 25.
- 5) *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, RSO 1990, c O1.
- 6) *Trespass to Property Act*, RSO 1990, c T.21.

#### **DEFINITIONS**

- 1) **City:** The Corporation of the City of Vaughan.
- 2) **City Clerk:** A statutory officer of the Corporation as prescribed by s. 228(1) of the *Municipal Act*, or their designate.
- 3) **Committee:** Per the City's Procedure By-law, a Committee includes Committee of the Whole, Committee of the Whole (Closed Session), Committee of the Whole (Public Hearing), a Statutory Committee, an Ad Hoc Committee, or a Sub-Committee.
- 4) **Corporate Security:** The Corporate Security section of the Facility Management Department. For the purpose of this Policy, reference to Corporate Security shall include Staff and/or contractors retained by Corporate Security to execute the functions of Corporate Security as contained in this Policy.
- 5) **Meeting:** Any regular, special or other meeting of Council or Committee, of a local board, or its Committee, held in person or by electronic participation, where Members of Council are present.
- 6) **Meeting Chair:** The person presiding at a Council or a Committee Meeting.
- 7) **Member of Council/Council:** A person currently elected or appointed to hold office on City Council.
- 8) **Participants:** Any member of the public who either physically or electronically participates in or attends a Meeting or Town Hall.
- 9) **Procedure By-law:** The City's Procedure By-law 7-2011, as amended or superseded.
- 10) **Prohibited Items:** Anything used, designed to be used or intended for use in causing injury or death or the purpose of threatening or intimidating behaviour.

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**11) Safety:** The state in which hazards and conditions leading to physical, psychological or material harm are controlled in order to preserve the health and well-being of Participants and the community.

**12) Security Incident:** Any unforeseen situation affecting the conduct, decorum or Safety of a Meeting that potentially threatens, or does threaten, Participants by causing physical, mental or emotional harm.

**13) Staff:** An employee of the City and for the purposes of this policy, "Staff" includes volunteers retained by the City.

**14) Town Hall:** Meetings to allow for an open dialogue and a free exchange of ideas and information between residents and Members of Council in an informal atmosphere.

## **POLICY**

### **1) COMMITMENT**

The City of Vaughan's policy for Public Code of Meeting Conduct is guided by principles that protect the rights and responsibilities of all Members of Council, Staff and Participants with the ultimate objective of supporting the democratic process through access and participation while providing a safe, inclusive and welcoming environment. As such, the City of Vaughan is committed to:

a) Mutual Respect and Dignity

Participants have the right to, and responsibility for, contributing to a democratic environment of mutual respect where the dignity of all Participants of the City of Vaughan is valued.

b) Freedom of Dialogue and Assembly

The City of Vaughan values freedom of speech and supports peaceful assemblies, demonstrations and lawful protest, in accordance with the law.

c) Collaboration and Fair Process

The City of Vaughan will work collaboratively to resolve Meeting disruptions where possible. Disruptions will be handled in a fair and equitable manner adherent to principles of procedural fairness and the promotion of civic participation.

## **2) ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

a) Participants are expected to:

i) Observance of Meeting Rules and Procedures

- (1) Observe the Meeting procedures and rules as set out in the Procedure By-law as well as the Council and Committee Meeting Safety Policy (06.C.04).
- (2) Respect the authority of the Chair and abide by their rulings on Meeting conduct.
- (3) Raise questions or concerns through appropriate channels and in a respectful manner.
- (4) Adhere to the allotted speaking time limits established for public comments or presentations in accordance with the Procedure By-law, unless permission is otherwise granted by the Chair.

ii) Respect for Others

- (1) Treat all individuals with respect and dignity, regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
- (2) Refrain from engaging in behaviour that is disruptive, disrespectful, or intimidating to others.
- (3) Refrain from using offensive language, gestures, or actions that could be deemed discriminatory or harmful.

iii) Inclusivity and Diversity

- (1) Support an environment in which civility, respect, inclusiveness and opportunity are valued.
- (2) Be mindful of different cultural norms and practices.

iv) Safety and Security

- (1) Report any prohibited or unreasonable behaviour to appropriate Staff or authorities.
- (2) Refrain from engaging in unreasonable behaviour that compromises the Safety and security of others.

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(3) Comply with all applicable laws and policies in their conduct at the Meeting.

v) Civil and Constructive Engagement

(1) Engage in discussions and debates in a constructive and respectful manner.

(2) Present viewpoints and opinions with clarity and civility.

(3) Listen attentively to others' viewpoints and refrain from interrupting.

vi) Environmental Stewardship

(1) Help maintain cleanliness and orderliness in Meeting spaces.

(2) Dispose of waste properly and respect the natural environment.

(3) Contribute to the preservation and sustainability of public resources.

**3) Compliance and Safety Response**

a) Safety and Security responses for Council and Committee meetings will be carried out in accordance with the Council and Committee Meeting Safety policy (06.C.04).

b) Town Hall Safety will be coordinated with Corporate Security at the request of the Member of Council. Safety and Security Incident responses will be carried out in accordance with the Council and Committee Meeting Safety policy (06.C.04) to the extent as applicable to a Town Hall.

**ADMINISTRATION**

*Administered by the Office of the City Clerk.*

<b>Review Schedule:</b>	3 Years If other, specify here	<b>Next Review Date:</b>	November 19, 2027
<b>Related Policy(ies):</b>	13.C.01 – Respectful Workplace, 13.C.03 – Workplace Violence, 06.C.04 – Council/Committee Meeting Safety, 13.A.02 – Employee Code of Conduct, CL-011 – Code of Ethical Conduct for Members if Council		
<b>Related By-Law(s):</b>	7-2011 – Procedure By-law (as amended)		

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<b>Procedural Document:</b>	
<b>Revision History</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Description:</b>
19-Nov-24	Approved at Council. Report No. 39 Item No. 17
Click or tap to enter a date.	