

	COUNCIL POLICY	Policy No: CP-1049-23
		Approved By: Council
		Effective Date: August 21, 2023 Resolution No.: RCM-171-23 Last Reviewed Date: August 21, 2023
		Division: Corporate Services - City Clerk's Office

RESPECTFUL INTERACTIONS WITH CITY COUNCIL POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

The City of Spruce Grove is committed to serving the community and recognizes the importance of public input and welcomes inquiries, comments, requests, and complaints as valuable forms of feedback. While most members of the public interact with City Councillors in a respectful, polite, and reasonable manner, the City also recognizes that inquiries, comments, requests, and complaints which are Frivolous, Vexatious, Harassing, and/or Violent can consume a disproportionate amount of time and resources, can impede Councillors from attending to other members of the public, and can create an unsafe working environment.

It is the intention of the City to deal with public inquiries, comments, requests, and complaints in ways that are consistent, fair, and reasonable while acknowledging that there is a need to set expectations regarding appropriate conduct when the public is interacting with Councillors.

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To establish standards of conduct that the public are expected to adhere to when interacting with Councillors; and
- 1.2 To establish the consequences and processes for handling Interactions of a Frivolous, Vexatious, Harassing, and/or Violent nature.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 "City" means the municipal corporation of the City of Spruce Grove in the Province of Alberta.

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- 2.2 “City Manager” means the administrative head of the City.
- 2.3 “Council” means the Council of the City elected pursuant to the *Local Authorities Election Act*, RSA 2000 cL-21, as amended.
- 2.4 “Councillor” means all members of Council, including the Mayor.
- 2.5 “Frivolous” means an inquiry, comment, request, or complaint that has no serious purpose or value or may have little merit and be trivial, and is part of a pattern of conduct that amounts to an abuse of the right of access, interferes with the operations of the City, or is made in bad faith or for a purpose other than to obtain access.
- 2.6 “Harass” means any single Incident or repeated Incidents including conduct, behaviour, or communication that a reasonable person knows or ought to have known would be objectionable, unwelcomed, threatening, insulting, stalking, bullying, or harassing behavior in person or through other means and includes:
- (a) action that causes offence or humiliation to an employee’s dignity, or adversely affects the Councillor’s health and safety or would cause a reasonable person to fear for one’s safety or the safety of loved ones, or could foreseeably cause emotional distress; and cause harm;
 - (b) conduct, comment, bullying, or action because of race, religious beliefs, colour, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status, gender, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation; and
 - (c) sexual solicitations or advances or stalking.
- 2.7 “Interaction” means any contact with a Councillor including but not limited to in-person contact, or contact via email, phone, hard copy documentation, or social media.


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- 2.8 “Peace Officer” means a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or a Peace Officer appointed under the *Peace Officer Act*, S.A. 2006 c P-3.5, as amended.
- 2.9 “Unreasonable” means given the nature and frequency of an inquiry, comment, request, or complaint, it is likely to cause distress or disruption to the City, Councillors, Employees, or other members of the public.
- 2.10 “Veiled Threat” means a threat that is non-specific and subjective in nature (e.g., “you better watch your back”) and includes a statement and/or body language, psychological injury, or behaviour which shows an intent to harm (e.g., “I know where you live”, “how are you going to make me?”, shaking fist motion, hand signal like a gun).
- 2.11 “Vexatious” means an inquiry, comment, request, or complaint without merit, that is pursued in a manner that is malicious, intended to inconvenience, embarrass, or Harass the recipient, or is a pattern of conduct that amounts to the misuse of processes and procedures.
- 2.12 “Violence” or “Violent” means a Veiled Threat, attempted or actual conduct of person that causes or is likely to cause physical or psychological injury or harm.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Councillors must:


- (a) in accordance with the Council Code of Conduct Bylaw, as amended:
- (i) engage in a respectful discourse when Interacting with members of the public; and
 - (ii) refrain from enabling Frivolous, Vexatious, Harassing, and/or Violent conduct by a member of the public.

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- (b) in the case of an Interaction that is Violent, immediately contact a Peace Officer.

4. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT OF THE PUBLIC

- 4.1 When interacting with Councillors, members of the public are expected to adhere to following standards of conduct:
 - (a) Respectfulness, even when providing criticism;
 - (b) No crude, vulgar, obscene, or offensive language or gestures;
 - (c) No defamatory and libelous remarks or unsubstantiated allegations;
 - (d) No remarks of a racial or discriminatory nature;
 - (e) Refrain from physical confrontations, including those that are intended to intimidate;
 - (f) Refrain from psychological or physical threats; and
 - (g) No engaging in any other conduct of a Frivolous, Vexatious, Harassing, and/or Violent nature.

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RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Council Procedure Bylaw, as amended
- Council Code of Conduct Bylaw, as amended
- Respectful Interactions with City Employees Policy, as amended

Approval	
Mayor <u>Original Signed by Mayor Acker</u>	Date <u>August 21, 2023</u>