

CODE OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

PREAMBLE:

The Council of the City of Burlington is committed to achieving excellence in governance, and doing so in a way that maintains and ensures public trust and confidence in the City's decision making.

The elements of this code that are subject to a formal complaint are intended to act as a Code of Conduct as required under the Municipal Act.

PURPOSE:

The City of Burlington's Council Code of Good Governance serves four main purposes:

- To set out, in manner that is aspirational and proactive, clear expectations of the governance behaviour of members of Council;
- To provide clarity to the public as to the behaviour they can expect from members of Council, and the governance responsibilities that go beyond those in the Municipal Act;
- To provide guidance to members of Council in the conduct of their duties as elected officials; and
- To provide a mechanism for responding to alleged breaches of elements of the Code.

APPLICATION:

This Code applies to all members of the Council of the City of Burlington.

It is the responsibility of all members to be aware of and comply with the Code.

ASPIRATIONAL COMMITMENTS (NOT SUBJECT TO A COMPLAINT)

1. We will put the interests of the City above our own personal interests when conducting City business.
2. We acknowledge that working collaboratively will provide better governance decisions.
3. We will exercise strategic leadership by developing and clearly communicating to the public the Council's purpose and priorities, and its intended outcomes.
4. We will ensure alignment of our key policies, budgets, and other policy instruments with our strategic goals, and hold ourselves, and staff accountable for the efficient and effective delivery of those goals.

5. Because our decisions often have generational impacts, we will strive to take the long view, and in doing so sincerely consider the interests of those who will be immediately impacted, and those who will be impacted in the future.
6. We will, with our Audit Committee, identify risks to the corporation and ensure that Council and staff are effectively managing those risks.
7. We will strive to ensure expansive transparency and robust accountability.
8. We will exemplify the responsibilities and role articulated for members of Council in the *Municipal Act*.

CONDUCT COMMITMENTS (SUBJECT TO A FORMAL COMPLAINT)

9. We will not use city resources to advance our personal interests, we will adhere to the Council Expense Manual, and we will be particularly cautious about using city resources during an election, and will act in compliance with the City's policies respecting elections.
10. We will treat each other, the public, and staff with courtesy and respect. In particular, we will act in a manner that ensures the Council Chamber is a respectful workplace.
11. We will communicate information to the public in ways that are accurate, timely, and in the interest of the corporation. We will respect that the Mayor, as head of council, is the primary spokesperson for Council.
12. We will respect the role of a ward councillor to play a leadership role on issues specific to their ward, and if we engage in issues in other wards we will exercise the courtesy of informing the ward councillor of our engagement.
13. We will take full responsibility for and curate any social media and internet presence that the City and/or individual councillors are responsible for in a way that reflects a high level of courtesy and respect. We will ensure that commenters are respectful, and do not impugn the motives, integrity, or competence of our Council colleagues, other members of the public, or staff. We will take reasonable efforts to address false or misleading information posted to our social media feeds.
14. We will hold in strict confidence all information concerning matters dealt with in Closed Council meetings, matters subject to solicitor client privilege, personal information, or information that is otherwise determined to be confidential.
15. We will avoid any actual or perceived conflict of interests. We, and our family members, will avoid accepting gifts, and where accepting a gift is an integral part of our duties as a member of council, we will report those valued at more than \$25 accepted, to the City Clerk who will annually report them to the public. We will adhere to the Corporate Policy on Gifts and Hospitality.

16. We will avoid directly or indirectly managing or controlling any monies received relating to a charitable, not for profit, or community-based organization's fundraising in our capacity as a member of Council. We will avoid soliciting or accepting benefits or hospitality in any form from an individual, group or corporation who might require a decision or consideration by the City. We will keep a record of all donors to events we organize, and the value of their donation, and file it with the City Clerk.
17. We will respect the relative roles of Council to govern, and staff to manage. We will not direct staff, attempt to influence their professional advice to Council, and will not make public comments that impugn their performance. We will actively create and sustain an environment where staff are comfortable providing their professional advice to Council, even when it may be difficult or controversial. We will take extra efforts to avoid engaging in purchasing decisions, litigation and insurance matters, by-law enforcement, prosecutions, and human resources matters (except those involving the City Manager), unless acting collectively with other members of Council in consideration of business brought forward for direction or decision.
18. We will foster respect for the democratic decision-making process. We will accurately communicate decisions of Council, even if we disagree with Council's decision. When we disagree with a Council decision, we will do so in a way that avoids impugning the motives, integrity or competence of our Council colleagues, staff, or the institution generally.
19. We will hold ourselves individually accountable to these principles, and collectively accountable in a way that is respectful and constructive, and will use the complaint mechanism as a course of last resort.