



Town of Whitby Policy

Policy Title:	Council Participation at Community Events Protocol and Attendance Guidelines Policy
Policy Number:	G 120
Reference:	Resolution #16-24
Date Approved:	January 29, 2024
Date Revised:	
Approval:	Council
Point of Contact:	Town Clerk

Policy Statement and Purpose

The Mayor and Members of Council as community leaders are frequently invited to attend openings, special events, unveilings, announcements, ground breakings, dignitary visits, and other community engagements.

This Policy is intended to provide guidance to Members of Council and Town Staff regarding the etiquette, decorum, and practice for Members of Council to attend, speak, and otherwise be engaged with community events.

1. Responsibilities

- 1.1. Mayor – it is the role of the Mayor to represent the municipality at official functions and act as the representative of the municipality both within and outside the municipality. As the head of Council and a community leader, the Mayor receives invitations and is expected to attend civic events.
- 1.2. Councillors – are elected to represent the public and to consider the well-being and interests of the municipality. As community leaders, Councillors are invited and expected to attend civic events.
- 1.3. Mayor and Councillors' Office Staff – Staff in the Mayor and Councillors' Office are responsible for providing administrative support to the Mayor and Members of Council which includes receiving and processing invites for civic events and undertaking the necessary scheduling arrangements.

2. Town and Third Party Special Events

- 2.1. For the purpose of this section, the Special Events Policy MS 200 may be referenced to assist in determining the types of events that are considered to be Town and Third Party special events.
- 2.2. All requests made by event organizers for the Mayor and/or Members of Council's official involvement (e.g. attending the opening ceremony, provide a welcome message, or undertaking other ceremonial functions) at a special event shall be directed to Staff in the Mayor and Councillors' Office. If a Town event, the Staff organizing the event may directly communicate with the Mayor and Members of Council to make the necessary arrangements.
- 2.3. The Mayor, and in their absence the Mayor's designate, shall be responsible for providing the official involvement requested, which may include official remarks and introducing other Members of Council in attendance.
- 2.4. Requests for unofficial involvement from Members of Council at special events, such as requests to volunteer or participate in an informal manner, shall be coordinated directly between the event organizer and Members of Council.

3. Processions and Parades

- 3.1. Where Members of Council are to march or walk in a procession or parade, the Council may either walk or participate as a group or individually depending on the formality of the event. If a formal event with an identified order of proceedings, then Council shall adhere to the following order with the Mayor being last:
 - Ward 1 Councillor
 - Ward 2 Councillor
 - Ward 3 Councillor
 - Ward 4 Councillor
 - Regional Councillors in order of votes received during the last Regular Election, with the Member receiving the fewest votes going first and the Member receiving the most votes going last
 - Mayor

4. Official Functions and Intergovernmental Events

- 4.1. Should a representative of the Town be requested to attend an official function by another level of government, government agency or crown corporation, the Mayor shall be the designated representative. If the Mayor is not available to attend, then the Mayor's designate shall attend.

- 4.2. Where an event by another level of government is being hosted in the Town of Whitby (e.g. funding announcement), in addition to the Mayor attending, all Members of Council shall be notified of the event by the Mayor and Councillors' Office, except where the level of government has requested the announcement remain strictly confidential until such time as it is publicly made.
- 4.3. Official protocols and proceedings identified by the Provincial or Federal governments for an event or function shall take precedence over any Town of Whitby protocols.

5. Grand Openings, Groundbreakings, and Unveilings

- 5.1. The processing of invitations, protocol, and scheduling for the Mayor and Members of Council to attend business or other facility grand openings, groundbreakings, or unveilings shall be managed as follows:

5.1.1. For invitations to the Mayor

- The Mayor will provide direction through the Mayor and Councillor's Office Staff for how the invite will be handled.
- If the Mayor is unable to attend, then the Mayor may direct that a Member of Council attend and provide official remarks on their behalf.

5.1.2. For invitations received by the Mayor and Councillors' Office Staff that are addressed to the Mayor and Council

- Staff will forward the invite to all Members of Council and arrange scheduling and RSVPs on behalf of Council.
- The Mayor and the Ward Councillor, and if applicable the paired Regional Councillor, for the ward the event is being held in shall present the welcome gift if one is offered and make official remarks.
- All Members of Council may participate in photographs and the ribbon cutting.

5.1.3. For invitations received by the Mayor and Councillors' Office Staff that are addressed to select Councillors

- Staff will confirm with the organizer the opportunity for all Members of Council to attend.
- For the instances where the organizer cannot accommodate all Members of Council due to space constraints or otherwise, the

organizer will be advised that Town protocol provides that it shall be the Mayor and the Ward Councillor, and if applicable the paired Regional Councillor, for the ward the event is being held in who attend.

5.1.4. For invitations received directly by Councillors

- The Councillor may forward the invite to Mayor and Councillors' Office Staff to coordinate in accordance with Sections 5.1.2 and 5.1.3 above.
- Should the Councillor respond and coordinate their attendance directly with the organizer, then the Member shall attend the event in an informal capacity and shall not provide official remarks on behalf of the Town. Staff support for their attendance will not be provided.

5.2. Members shall arrive for the event's proposed start time or at a time communicated by the organizer and adhere to the event schedule.

6. Events outside of the Town of Whitby

- 6.1. Events held outside the Town of Whitby deemed "official functions" as per Section 225 of the Municipal Act fall under the authority of the role of the Mayor as the head of Council and shall be coordinated through the Mayor's Office based on the Mayor's direction. If the Mayor is unable to attend, then the Mayor may direct that a Member of Council attend and provide official remarks on their behalf.
- 6.2. Organizers for events outside of the Town of Whitby that are seeking official representation from the Town of Whitby shall direct their requests to the Mayor and Councillors' Office Staff.
- 6.3. Councillors who receive an invite directly from an event organizer for an event being held outside of the Town of Whitby may attend the event in an informal capacity out of respect for the official role of the local representatives for that jurisdiction. Staff support for Councillor attendance at events outside of Whitby shall not be provided.

This Policy is hereby approved by Council Resolution #16-24 on this 29th day of January, 2024.