



Town of Whitby Policy

Policy Title:	Ward Town Hall Meetings
Policy Number:	To be assigned following Council approval
Reference:	Legislation, other Policies, Council Resolution #, etc.
Date Approved:	Click here to enter a date.
Date Revised:	Click here to enter a date.
Approval:	Council
Point of Contact:	Mayor and Councillors' Office

Purpose

To advance Council's priority of community engagement, Members of Council may hold annual town hall style meetings for each ward.

Scope

This policy identifies the supports and responsibilities for organizing and hosting a town hall meeting in each ward.

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1. Responsibilities

- 1.1. The Ward Councillor, and if applicable a paired Regional Councillor, will have overall responsibility for the Ward Town Hall meeting, including:
 - Recommending presentations and identifying Town and community updates to highlight at the meeting; and,
 - Facilitating the meeting and fielding questions from those in attendance, with the option to use the assistance of a moderator.
- 1.2. The Executive Advisor and Public Relations Coordinator will provide the following support to Members of Council to organize the Ward Town Hall meetings:
 - Work with the applicable Councillors to identify content and speaking notes for the meeting;
 - Coordinate with the relevant Town Department(s) through the Senior Leadership Team in accordance with Section 1.5 of this Policy, or with other organizations, agencies, and levels of government to arrange for presentations or to request that Staff attend to assist with answering questions; and,
 - Use and update templated assets created for Mayor and Council, including social media graphics and invitations.
- 1.3. The Administrative Assistant and Customer Service Specialists in the Mayor and Councillors' Office will provide the following support to Members of Council to organize the Ward Town Hall meetings:
 - Secure a venue, oversee room set up, coordinate refreshments, arrange audio/visual supports, track feedback and questions during the meeting, and coordinate with the applicable Councillors to follow-up with any outstanding resident questions; and,
 - Submit invoices for processing and tracking costs in accordance with the Council Expense Policy.
- 1.4. Corporate Communications and Creative Services (CCS) will support Ward Town Halls by using corporate communication channels and tools to advertise the Ward Town Hall meetings, including:
 - Social media channels;
 - Digital displays at Town facilities;
 - Whitby.ca community calendar; and,
 - Fire Hall display signs within the ward.

Additional advertising and promotion to supplement the above, such as flyers and paid online advertising will be arranged directly by the applicable Councillors and charged to their expenses in accordance with the Council Expense Policy.

CCS will provide templated assets to the Mayor and Councillors' Office Staff, which are to be edited and distributed by Executive Advisor, Public Relations Coordinator, and/or Members of Council. Templated assets will be reviewed annually, including a social media graphic and an invitation to attend.

- 1.5. Town Staff, at the discretion of the CAO based on workload and Staff's availability, will:
 - Attend Ward Town Halls to make presentations focused on current and topical Town initiatives and/or to assist with answering questions; and,
 - Provide administrative support as required and applicable to facilitate facility bookings, insurance, and invoicing.

2. General

- 2.1. On an annual basis, one Ward Town Hall meeting per ward will be corporately supported. In the event that additional Ward Town Hall meetings are requested within a calendar year, a Council resolution directing that the meeting be corporately supported shall be required, and in the absence of a Council resolution, all expenses for the meeting shall be reimbursed from the expense budget of the Member(s) organizing the additional Ward Town Hall meeting in accordance with the Council Expense Policy.
 - 2.1.1. Notwithstanding the above, a corporately supported Ward Town Hall meeting shall not occur in an Election Period, defined as:
 - With regard to a regular municipal election, the first day prescribed for the filing of nominations in accordance with the Municipal Elections Act and ending when the new Council takes office; or
 - With regard to a by-election for that ward, from when the by-election is called and ending on voting day.
- 2.2. Refer to the Council Expense Policy for information on how costs associated with the annual corporately supported Ward Town Hall meetings will be covered. Use of meeting space in a Town facility will be part of the Corporate support provided to facilitate one ward town hall meeting per ward per year.

**This Policy is hereby approved by Council Resolution #_____ on this _____ day
of _____, 20__.**