

POLICY MANUAL

Title: Mayor & Council Correspondence Policy	Policy No: 3.08 Supersedes: October 6, 2009
Authority: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Legislative <input type="checkbox"/> Operational Approval: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Council <input type="checkbox"/> CMT <input type="checkbox"/> General Manager	Effective Date: February 25, 2020 with amendments March 31, 2020 Review Date: February 25, 2021
Policy Statement: The City of Maple Ridge is committed to providing the public with timely, accurate and comprehensive responses to enquiries, media requests and appearances at community events. The Mayor & Council Correspondence Policy establishes a formalized process to ensure all Council related interactions are addressed consistently and efficiently in accordance with City Standards. <i>"The City of Maple Ridge will take the initiative in being a reliable source of credible information, consistent to our mission and value statements."</i>	
Purpose: To establish protocols to ensure Mayor & Council correspondence is addressed in a consistent, transparent and timely manner.	
Definitions: Email Correspondence: all digital correspondence addressed to Mayor & Council sent to mayorcouncilandcaol@mapleridge.ca or enquiries@mapleridge.ca , or email addressed to all individual Council members, or email that has been forwarded to the Mayor's office for response. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This does not include email sent to individual Council members, or sent to some but not all Council members, unless that email was also sent, or was forwarded to, the Mayor's office for response. Paper Correspondence: all hardcopy correspondence addressed to Mayor & Council, including correspondence received via Canada Post, fax and hand delivery. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This does not include correspondence addressed only to the Mayor or individual members of Council. Media: accredited staff representatives of print or broadcast media. Writer: any person writing to Maple Ridge City Council, including but not limited to citizens, non-residents, representatives of businesses and other organizations.	

Outcomes:

1. Council can expect to receive staff responses in a transparent and timely manner.
2. Writers can expect an immediate auto-reply and those enquiries requiring further follow up will receive a personal response within two business days. For complex enquiries that require further action, research, or input from other departments, writers can expect a subsequent staff response that may take up to two weeks to be completed.
3. Media enquiries will be addressed within two business days.
4. Requests for attendance or official representation from Mayor & Council will be acknowledged within three business days.

Roles/Responsibilities:**Mayor**

1. The Mayor is the City's chief spokesperson and is responsible for informing the public on Council policies, priorities and decisions.
2. All invitations for official representation from Mayor & Council will come to the Mayor's Office. The Mayor, or a designate, will be assigned for any formal speaking role.
3. The Mayor may provide letters of support, as related to grant applications, award applications and requests that align with City policies and strategic plans on behalf of Council when requested.
4. Media enquiries, received through the Mayor's Office, shall be directed to the Community Engagement & Relations department who will provide background information related to media enquiries to ensure responses are accurate and align with corporate policies and Council decisions.

Council

1. Councillors will confirm their availability to attend events to the Mayor's office, who will provide a collective RSVP to event organizers.
2. Individual members of Council shall not express opinions on behalf of Council.
3. The decisions of Council shall be reflected as collective corporate decisions.
4. Individual members of Council are encouraged to reflect the opinion of Council as a whole, or state that comments reflect their own personal opinion.

General

1. All responses to Email Correspondence and Paper Correspondence will be saved as corporate records.
2. All invitations addressed to Mayor & Council will be entered into the Council calendar by the Mayor's Office.
3. An auto-response has been created for all incoming emails.
4. Follow-up responses to correspondence will be provided during business hours. Correspondence received on weekends and statutory holidays will be addressed on the next business day. If the matter is an emergency, members of the public will be provided with information on how to contact the City directly using the main telephone line 604-463-9581.
5. Staff will not support personal social media channels or personal correspondence for elected officials.
6. The Community Engagement & Relations team will work with the official representative, as designated by the Mayor's office, to provide briefings on protocol events, develop presentation materials as required for events. City assets (photos, video or marketing material) cannot be used by past, current or aspiring elected officials for campaign purposes or by individuals seeking office at the local, provincial or federal level.

Key Areas of Responsibility	Responsibility
<p style="text-align: center;">Action to Take</p> <p>A. Act as the City's chief spokesperson, on behalf of Council.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Mayor</p>
<p>B. Respond to correspondence addressed to an individual Council member or several but not all Council members, sharing the decision of the collective Council, and/or explaining that an alternate opinion provided is that of the individual Council member.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Council</p>
<p>C. Forward correspondence to the Mayor's Office to initiate a corporate response to an email received by one or more individual councillors.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Council</p>
<p>D. Determine routing of correspondence to staff, Council agenda, Council calendar or other.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Staff</p>
<p>E. Respond to inquiries that need further review and response. Ensure the response is cc'd to Mayor, Council and CAO. Response times will vary based on detail of response required.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Staff</p>
<p>F. Respond to and manage invitations addressed to Mayor & Council.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Mayor's Office</p>
<p>G. Act as the City's liaison between the Mayor/CAO/Staff for media enquiries and interview requests.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Manager of Community Engagement & Relations</p>