



Policy Manual

Section:	Corporate Services
Subject:	Petition Policy
Policy Number:	034
Approval Date:	May 16, 2016
Approved By:	R16-05-208
Prepared By:	Director of Corporate Services

Objective

The Town of Essex is committed to citizen engagement and recognizes the important role that petitions play in providing citizens with input into Council's decision-making process. A petition can be effective when the information contained in it is accurate and verifiable, and when the petition is recognized and accepted by decision makers.

Scope

This policy applies to all petitions submitted to the Town of Essex, with the exception of those governed under another Act, such as drainage and local improvement petitions.

Definitions

In this policy:

"Clerk" means the Clerk of the Town of Essex or his or her designate;

“Council Member” refers to those individuals who have been elected to Council for the Town of Essex and are currently sitting as a member of Council in the capacity of Mayor, Deputy-Mayor or Councillor;

“Mayor” means the Head of Council of The Corporation of the Town of Essex;

“Petition” means a formal written request, typically signed or agreed to by people appealing to Council with respect to a particular cause.

Responsibilities

The Clerk is responsible for evaluating all petitions to ensure that they meet the Petition Requirements noted below. Petitions not in compliance with the Petition Requirements will not be formally presented to Council at a meeting.

Petition Requirements

A valid petition is one that meets all of the requirements below:

- a) is addressed to the Town of Essex, the Mayor or another Council Member of the Town of Essex;
- b) requests a particular action within the authority of Council;
- c) is legible, typewritten or printed in ink (pencil is not permitted);
- d) the text of the petition is listed at the top of each page;
- e) pages are numbered with the total number of pages noted for multiple-page petitions;
- f) is appropriate and respectful in tone and does not contain any improper or offensive language or information;
- g) in the case of paper petitions, the name and address of each petitioner is printed and the petition contains original signatures of all petitioners;

- h) in the case of electronic petitions, the petitioner's name, address and a valid email address; and
- i) discloses on each page that the petition will be considered a public document at the Town of Essex and that information contained in it may be subject to the scrutiny of the Town and other members of the public.

Submission of Petitions

Petitions must be sent to the attention of the Clerk by mail or delivered in person.

Alternatively, petitions may be submitted to the Mayor or another Council Member.

Electronic petitions may be submitted electronically to the attention of the Clerk at clerks@essex.ca.

Petitions that meet all Petition Requirements noted above will be presented to Council at its next regular meeting, or a meeting where the subject of the petition is to be discussed.

Council, in its sole discretion, may accept or reject a petition with any decision made in this regard being final.

Retention and Disclosure of Petitions

All petitions submitted to the Town that meet the requirements of this policy and are received by Council will be kept on file in the Clerk's office and will be available for public viewing upon request.