

Category: Governance

Flag Policy

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1. Background

The City of Brampton recognizes that Flags are important symbols of honour and pride and must be treated in a respectful and consistent manner.

The City supports Half-masting as an expression of collective mourning and sense of loss that is shared by all residents of Brampton.

To celebrate together the strength of Brampton's diversity and inclusivity, the City offers the opportunity for communities to raise Nation Flags and community flags on the designated Community Flag Pole located in Ken Whillans Square at City Hall enhancing awareness of special occasions and activities.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that all Flags at City facilities are flown and displayed in a consistent and appropriate manner.

3. Application and Scope

This Policy applies to the display, maintenance and disposal of Flags flown at City facilities.

A community flag raising is limited and specific to the Community Flag Pole located in Ken Whillans Square at City Hall.

3.1 Exceptions

This Policy is not meant to impede the standards of practice of the Brampton Fire and Emergency Services Department with regards to honouring their members or other fire and emergency personnel who have died in the line of duty.

4. Outcomes

4.1 Ensure all Flags at City facilities are flown, displayed and disposed of in a consistent and appropriate manner and are positioned in Order of Precedence in accordance with the National Flag of Canada etiquette.

4.2 Ensure community flag raisings honouring Brampton's diversity and important community events, occur in a fair, inclusive and equitable manner.

5. Principles

5.1 **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion** - Ensure flag raising celebrates the diversity of the City and the City's commitment to diversity and inclusion through fair and inclusive practices.

- 5.2 **Consistency** – Ensure flag raising procedures for Flags flown at City facilities are clear and consistent at the City.
- 5.3 **Respect and Dignity** – Ensure Flags flown at City facilities are treated with respect and dignity in accordance with the National Flag of Canada etiquette.
- 5.4 **Transparency** – Ensure public awareness of the City’s Flag raising protocols and rationales.

6. Policy Statements

- 6.1 The City follows the [Order of Precedence](#) established by Canadian Heritage when flying Flags.

- 6.1.1 Flags must be in excellent condition and conform to City guidelines.

- 6.2 The City of Brampton Flag takes precedence over all charitable and non-profit organization and community flags unless otherwise established by Canadian Heritage.

- 6.2.1 The City of Brampton Flag will be flown at all City buildings or facilities where there are sufficient flagpoles to do so.

- 6.2.2 The City of Brampton Flag may be displayed indoors, in the Council Chambers, the Mayor’s Office, and at special events or ceremonies where Flags have a specific purpose and are required.

- 6.2.3 The City of Brampton Flag shall not be used for commercial purposes by any external organization.

- 6.2.4 The City of Brampton reserves the right to refuse, deny or restrict the use of the City Flag.

- 6.3 Flags shall be flown in accordance with the [National Flag of Canada etiquette](#) and the City guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures for Half-masting.

- 6.4 Flags Flown Permanently at City Hall

- The National Flag of Canada, the Province of Ontario and the City of Brampton Flags shall be displayed in the Council Chamber, along with any other Flags approved by Council.

- 6.5 City Facilities

- 6.5.1 Departments shall consult with the Protocol Office when planning to add or remove Flags or flagpoles outside the premise(s) of existing or new City facilities

- 6.5.2 Where external tenants are located at City properties and facilities and wish to fly Flags outside the buildings, they shall consult with the Protocol Office, prior to displaying their Flags, and are subject to approval by the City.
- 6.6 Maintenance and disposal of Flags must be done in accordance with the National Flag of Canada etiquette.
- 6.7 Half-masting
- 6.7.1 Flags are flown at the Half-mast position as a symbolic expression of collective mourning.
- 6.7.2 Half-masting may occur at all municipal facilities or specific locations, subject to the provisions of this Policy.
- 6.7.3 For military days of significance and observances, Flags will be at Half-mast at the Cenotaph at City Hall and the Chinguacousy Park Memorial and may include City Hall.
- 6.7.4 The duration of Half-masting may be:
- a) From time of notification of death until sunset on the day of the funeral or memorial service, or
 - b) From notification of death until sunset the next day and from sunrise to sunset on the day of the funeral or memorial service, or
 - c) From sunrise to sunset on the day of the funeral or memorial service, or
 - d) As prescribed by the Government of Canada's Rules for half-masting the National Flag of Canada.
- 6.7.5 Unless otherwise prescribed in this Council Policy, the Protocol Office will determine and direct the extent of Flags to be flown at Half-mast including the locations and duration, and will send formal notice to all relevant business units with specific instructions.
- 6.8 Rationale for Half-masting
- 6.8.1 Half-masting at all City of Brampton facilities will occur in the event of the death of:
- a) The Sovereign or a member of the Canadian Royal Family
 - b) The Governor General of Canada, or a former Governor General
 - c) The Prime Minister of Canada, or a former Prime Minister
 - d) The Lieutenant Governor of Ontario
 - e) The Premier of Ontario

- f) A local Member of Parliament or local Member of Provincial Parliament
- g) A member of the Region of Peel Council
- h) A member of Brampton City Council, or a former member of Brampton City Council
- i) A current City of Brampton employee
- j) A resident of Brampton, who is a member of the Canadian Armed Forces, killed while deployed on operations.

6.8.2 Half-masting at City of Brampton facilities in respect of a person or persons not specifically identified in this section may occur at the discretion of the Mayor in consultation with the Chief Administration Officer (CAO) and the Protocol Office as a symbolic gesture of collective community mourning.

6.8.3 Brampton Fire and Emergencies Services at the discretion of the Fire Chief will lower Flags at the Fire Memorial to honour internal and external fallen Fire Fighters as well as honouring those lives lost in Police and Paramedic Services (within the City of Brampton and outside City Boundaries).

6.8.4 Brampton Fire and Emergencies Services will notify the Protocol Office of all Half-masts conducted, the Protocol Office in discussion with the Director of Strategic Communications, CAO, and Mayor will determine whether the Flags will be lowered at City of Brampton Facilities.

6.9 Special Day

Flags will be Half-masted at the City of Brampton facilities in accordance with the Important and Commemorative Dates Report approved by Council listed in Appendix A.

6.10 Nation and Community Flag Raising

6.10.1 General

The City may fly Flags on its premises on a temporary basis mark special and ceremonial occasions. Discretion rests with the Mayor in consultation with the CAO and Protocol Office for such requests.

6.11 Dignitaries

6.11.1 Royal Family or His Majesty's representatives:

When a member of the Royal Family or his Majesty's representatives visits a City facility or is hosted by the City, the Protocol Office may determine if and where the appropriate Royal Standard Flag is to be

flown. The Royal Standard Flags take precedence over the National Flag of Canada.

6.11.2 Other dignitaries:

As a gesture of respect and friendship, the Protocol Office may direct if and where the appropriate Flag be flown on the occasion of a visiting foreign dignitary to the Mayor.

6.12 Community Flag Raisings

6.12.1 All community flag raisings take place on the Community Flag Pole in Ken Whillans Square at City Hall.

6.12.2 Requests will be confirmed on a first come first served basis.

6.12.3 Organizations with approved flag raising requests are required to provide a Flag and other information pertaining to their flag raising program in advance of the flag raising in accordance with Standard Operating Procedures.

6.12.4 The Protocol Office will assess and approve community flag raising requests from charitable and non-profit organizations based on the following criteria:

The City will fly flags on the Community Flag Pole:

- a) Of nations recognized by the Government of Canada to celebrate a country's national day or on the anniversary of a special occasion
- b) Of organizations that have a presence in the Brampton community, except those outlined in Section 6.12.5 below.

6.12.5 The City will not approve requests for flag raisings on the Community Flag Pole requested by:

- a) Organizations or groups that are political or partisan in nature, including political parties or political organizations;
- b) Organizations that promote hatred, violence, racism, or discrimination of any kind;
- c) Religious organizations;
- d) Organizations that have already flown a Flag on the Community Flag Pole within the same calendar year; or
- e) Commercial entities.

6.12.6 The City will not approve requests for use of the Community Flag Pole for Flags that:

- a) Belong to nations not recognized by the Government of Canada;
- b) Represent political causes;
- c) Celebrate religious events;
- d) Celebrate corporate events;
- e) Support of groups, organizations, or events that promote beliefs contrary to any other City policies or pose a reputational risk to the City; and
- f) Belong to nations that have already flown on the Community Flag Pole within the same calendar year.

6.12.7 The Mayor, in consultation with the Protocol Office, may use discretion to approve or deny a request for a flag raising based on reputational risk to the City.

6.12.8 When requests do not meet the criteria outlined in this Policy, the Protocol Office staff will bring forward a report to Council before the decision is communicated to the requestor that the flag raising will not be approved. The report will also identify decisions by the Mayor to approve or deny flag raisings.

6.12.9 The Mayor has discretion to deny a request that meets the criteria based on a reputational risk to the City.

6.12.10 The Mayor has discretion to deny a request that meets the criteria based on a reputational risk to the City.

6.12.11 The Mayor has discretion to deny a request that meets the criteria based on a reputational risk to the City.

6.12.12 The City reserves the right to cancel a Flag raising in the case of an unforeseen circumstance.

6.12.13 Flags may be flown for a maximum of two weeks or at the discretion of the Protocol Office.

6.12.14 When more than one flag raising request occurs for the same day, the application received first will be flown on the Community Flag Pole. For multiple requests for the same period the flags will be flown for an equal amount of time as determined by the Protocol Office.

6.12.15 When the same flag raising is requested by more than one community organization, the City will try to coordinate the requests and reserves the right to determine the lead organization.

6.12.16 Flag raisings of similar topic/awareness campaign will be approved on a first come, first served basis.

6.12.17 City Council will be notified by the Protocol Office of approved and denied requests to raise a Flag on the Community Flag Pole.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 City Council

Approve annual tactics for Important and Commemorative Dates.

7.2 Mayor

7.2.1 Discretion for Half-masting and for flying Flags for special or ceremonial occasions not identified in this Policy.

7.2.2 Discretion to approve a community flag raising request that does not meet the criteria, and to deny a community flag raising request that has reputational risk to the City.

7.3 Chief Administrative Officer

7.3.1 Provide advice to the Mayor on Half-masting protocols not identified in this Policy.

7.3.2 Provide advice to the Mayor and/or Protocol Office for dignitary and other requests not identified in this Policy.

7.4 The Protocol Office

7.4.1 Interpret and administer this Policy and associated Standard Operating Procedures.

7.4.2 Provide advice to the Mayor and/or CAO on Half-masting protocols, Flag protocol for dignitary visits, or other requests not identified in this Policy.

8. Monitoring and Compliance

8.1 The Protocol Office shall ensure this Policy is reviewed as per the Governing Policy for Corporate Policy Program and remains relevant to the needs of the City, in accordance with legislative requirements and good business practices.

8.2 Consequences of non-compliance

Failure to follow this Council Policy may result in reputational risk to the City.

9. Definitions

9.1 **City facilities** means facilities, properties, buildings, and parks managed or owned by the City of Brampton.

- 9.2 **Community Flag Pole** means the Community Flag Pole in Ken Whillans Square at Brampton City Hall.
- 9.3 **Flag** means a piece of cloth (usually rectangular) of distinctive colour, design, emblem, or symbol to represent nations, provinces, states, or municipalities. “Flag” is also used to describe a banner, which looks like a flag bearing a symbol, logo, slogan, or another message to represent charitable or non-profit organizations but does not have a flag status.
- 9.4 **Half-masting** means the position of a flag, approximately halfway up the post or pole. Flying flags at half-mast is a symbol of respect or mourning or to commemorate significant dates.
- 9.5 **Order of Precedence** means the positioning of Flags in priority of importance, order, or rank.

10. References and Resources

This Council Policy should be read and applied in conjunction with the following references and resources as updated from time to time. Please note that some of the following documents may not be publicly available.

10.1 External references

- National Flag of Canada etiquette
- Position of Honour, Canadian Heritage
- Rules for half-masting the National Flag of Canada.

10.2 References to related bylaws, Council policies, and administrative directives

- Community Flag Raisings

11. Revision History

Date	Description
2019/04/10	New – Approved by Council Resolution C119-2019.
2019/04/23	Minor administrative edits to correct grammar and formatting.
2022/06/22	Policy updated to comply with new Policy template principle and outcome sections added. Current City employees of the City added to rationale for Half-masting.
2025/06/22	Next Scheduled Review