

CITY OF CHARLOTTETOWN POLICY

Policy Title: PROTOCOL POLICY	Policy Number: P-ADMIN-05
Approved By: City Council	Approval Date: Aug 12, 2025
Related Legislation: Municipal Government Act, R.S.P.E.I. 1988, Cap. M-12.1., Sec. 86(2)(b) Related Bylaw: N/A	

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The protocol policy establishes a framework and consistent guidelines for protocol-related events and initiatives.

2.0 SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to protocol events and initiatives, including, but not limited to:
 - a) Freedom of the City
 - b) Key to the City
 - c) Flag Display Protocol
 - d) Requests from external organizations for flag raisings
 - e) Requests from external organizations for City Hall tower lighting
 - f) Requests from external organizations for Proclamations
 - g) Commemorative Observances
 - h) Official visits by dignitaries
 - i) Official gift-giving or receiving

3.0 DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 **City** – Means the City of Charlottetown.
- 3.2 **City Sites** – Facilities, properties, buildings, and parks owned or operated by the City of Charlottetown.
- 3.3 **Commemorative Observances** – Annual or recurring days, weeks, or months that recognize or celebrate various aspects of cultural, historical, and social significance that are important to Charlottetown residents.
- 3.4 **Community Flagpole** – The designated flagpole at Charlottetown City Hall is used to fly the flags of external organizations or initiatives that promote awareness of causes important to Charlottetown residents.
- 3.5 **Council** – means the Mayor and other members of the Council of the municipality.
- 3.6 **Dignitaries** – High-ranking officials or distinguished visitors, such as political leaders or heads of state, for whom special protocol procedures may be followed during a visit to Charlottetown.

- 3.7 **Freedom of the City** – A ceremonial honour granted by the City of Charlottetown to a military unit, allowing it the symbolic privilege of marching through city streets with flags flying, bayonets fixed, and a band playing.
- 3.8 **Key to the City** – The highest ceremonial recognition awarded by the City of Charlottetown to individuals or groups who have made distinguished contributions to the community.
- 3.9 **Official Events** – Activities, ceremonies, or gatherings organized, hosted, or supported by the City of Charlottetown, or those proposed by external organizations in partnership with the municipality for consideration. Events may range from civic celebrations and official ceremonies to community awareness initiatives.
- 3.10 **Official Gift** – An item presented by City officials or Council members to dignitaries or officials as a formal gesture during official events or an item gifted to City officials or Council members in accordance with the City's gift-giving procedures.
- 3.11 **Proclamation** – An official statement or declaration issued by municipalities to recognize specific events, causes, or achievements.
- 3.12 **Prohibited Events** – Types of events or requests that the City of Charlottetown does not support.
- 3.13 **Protocol** – The official system of rules and formal procedures governing the conduct of events, ceremonies, and communications associated with municipal affairs or diplomatic occasions, managed by the City's Economic Growth and Attraction Department.
- 3.14 **Tower Lighting** – An LED lighting system installed on the tower of Charlottetown City Hall, which is made available to organizations for public awareness purposes.

4.0 PROHIBITED EVENTS

- 4.1 The City will not host protocol events for or consider external organization requests from:
 - a) Political parties, organizations, events, or observances;
 - b) Religious figures or organizations;
 - c) Subjects or groups that denigrate ideological, religious, political, or other beliefs;
 - d) Subjects or groups that symbolize social or racial intolerance, violence, discrimination, or hatred of any kind;
 - e) Subjects or groups with the intent to defame the Mayor, Council, or the City of Charlottetown;
 - f) Commercial operations or organizations for advertising or profit;
 - g) Private occasions, such as birthdays or anniversaries;

- h) Topics, groups, organizations, or events that are contrary to municipal policy or pose a risk to the reputation of the City;
- i) Any events not directly related or of interest to the City's vision, values, authority, or role, at the City's sole discretion.

5.0 OFFICIAL EVENTS HOSTED BY THE CITY

- 5.1 The City of Charlottetown hosts several official events such as receptions, awards, ceremonies, and announcements. These include, but are not limited to:
 - a) Receptions for Freedom of the City, Key to the City, recognition or award programs;
 - b) Grand openings of City facilities;
 - c) Receptions associated with events or conferences being hosted directly by the municipality;
 - d) Funding announcements.
- 5.2 All departments that lead official events will ensure that the best practices are followed and the requirements of funding agreements or event partners are met.
- 5.3 Relevant departments may develop and manage customized event protocol processes where appropriate.

6.0 FREEDOM OF THE CITY

- 6.1 The Freedom of the City is an honour conferred by Charlottetown City Council upon a military unit. It grants the unit the privilege to march throughout Charlottetown city streets, thoroughfares, and highways without hindrance or trespass, with flags flying, bayonets fixed, and a band playing.
- 6.2 This honour is granted at the discretion of the Office of the Mayor to a military unit that has enjoyed a long relationship with the City of Charlottetown.
- 6.3 Recognition is conferred during a meeting of Council, typically held on the date of the Freedom of the City parade.
- 6.4 In special circumstances, such as centennials or significant occasions, City Council may reaffirm a military unit's Freedom of the City through a meeting of Council and a parade.

7.0 KEY TO THE CITY

- 7.1 The Key to the City is a ceremonial honour bestowed upon distinguished individuals or groups who have made significant contributions to the community. As the highest honour the City can confer, it is bestowed rarely, selectively and with diligent consideration.
- 7.2 To be eligible, nominees for the Key to the City must be from Charlottetown, or their accomplishments must significantly influence or impact the residents of Charlottetown.

- 7.3 Individuals or groups shall be nominated for the honour by a member of Council. The Councillor providing the nomination is responsible for providing complete and accurate documentation of the nominee's accomplishments and submitting it for Council consideration.
- 7.4 Recipients of the Key to the City must demonstrate exemplary service or significant contributions over several years and achieve the highest honour or level of success or recognition within their field by a national or international professional organization in areas such as:
 - a) Advocacy
 - b) Arts and Culture
 - c) Business and Commerce
 - d) Community Service
 - e) Healthcare
 - f) Humanities
 - g) Politics
 - h) Professional Endeavours
 - i) Science
 - j) Sport
 - k) Uniformed Services (e.g., police, fire, military)
- 7.5 The nomination and supporting documents shall be reviewed by Council and must be approved unanimously via resolution at a Regular Meeting of Council.
- 7.6 The Key to the City is issued in accordance with this policy and the **Key to the City Procedures**.

8.0 FLAG DISPLAY PROTOCOL

- 8.1 Flag placement, position, display, lowering, half-masting, and disposal at City Hall and other City sites follow the Government of Canada National Flag Etiquette, this policy, and the **Flag Display Procedures**.
- 8.2 External organizations may not use the official City of Charlottetown flag for commercial purposes, and the City reserves the right to refuse, deny, or restrict its use.

9.0 REQUESTS FROM EXTERNAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR FLAG RAISING OR TOWER LIGHTING

- 9.1 The City welcomes requests to raise flags or illuminate City Hall to raise awareness for important causes and initiatives to Charlottetown residents.
- 9.2 The official City flagpole at City Hall is designated as the community flagpole for external organizations that request their flag be flown for a certain period.
- 9.3 The LED lighting system on the tower at Charlottetown City Hall is available for external organizations that request the tower be illuminated with their colours for a certain period.
- 9.4 The community flagpole or tower lights may be used to recognize:
 - a) Public awareness and education campaigns;

- b) National or independence days for nations recognized by the Government of Canada;
- c) Charitable fundraising campaigns;
- d) Cultural, social, athletic, historical, and civic celebrations;
- e) Community programs or activities that foster inclusion among and respect for Charlottetown residents;
- f) Special recognitions or honours at the discretion of the CAO or their designate in consultation with the Office of the Mayor.

- 9.5 Requests for prohibited events outlined in section 4.1 will not be considered.
- 9.6 The requesting organization must be based in the Charlottetown area or have a Provincial chapter or representative.
- 9.7 Organizations must submit annual applications for tower lighting or flag-raising, as no recurring requests will be granted.
- 9.8 The City reserves the right to deny or cancel requests at its sole discretion, even if eligibility criteria are met.
- 9.9 The **Flag-Raising and Tower Lighting Procedures** outline details for managing requests from external organizations for flag raisings or tower lighting.

10.0 PROCLAMATIONS

- 10.1 The City of Charlottetown does not issue proclamations. Instead, the Office of the Mayor may issue letters of recognition, congratulations, or greetings at its discretion.

11.0 COMMEMORATIVE OBSERVANCE

- 11.1 The City acknowledges the importance of celebrating and commemorating recurring days, weeks, months, and observances that highlight various aspects of cultural, historical, and social significance that are important to Charlottetown residents.
- 11.2 The methods of acknowledging or observing these commemorations can include, but are not limited to, one or several of the following: a written statement from the Office of the Mayor, communications through the City's social media channels, or, in some instances, recognized statutory holidays.
- 11.3 Requests for prohibited events outlined in section 4.1 will not be considered.
- 11.4 Commemorative observances and the ways in which they are conducted adhere to this policy and the Commemorative Observances Procedures.

12.0 OFFICIAL DIGNITARY VISITS

- 12.1 For official visits from dignitaries to Charlottetown, the City will develop an appropriate protocol response tailored to the dignitary's rank, the required level of ceremony, and necessary security measures.
- 12.2 The department responsible for carrying out this policy must also notify protocol officials from the Province of Prince Edward Island of an official visit by a dignitary.

13.0 OFFICIAL GIFT GIVING AND RECEIVING

- 13.1 Council members or City officials may present dignitaries or other officials with an official gift. The Gifts and Awards Procedures details the process for acquiring and presenting official gifts.
- 13.2 Any gifts of significant value (over \$250) presented to members of Council or City officials through their participation in a City event covered by this policy will belong to the City corporation and be managed by the Office of the Mayor, except for works of art of significant value (over \$500), which will become part of the City of Charlottetown's Public Art Collection and follow this policy and the **Public Art Policy**.

14.0 FUNERALS

- 14.1 The CAO shall appoint a staff member as a contact and communicator for all relevant municipal funeral information. This individual will serve as the primary point of contact notified and will be responsible for official notification of the death of a municipal staff member, council member, or a relative of a municipal staff member or council member.
- 14.2 Funerals for current or past members of Council, staff, or members of municipal emergency services shall follow this policy, the **City Funeral Procedures**, and the **Flag Display Procedures**.