

Recommended amendments to the Petition Policy

Proposed amendments are noted below using ~~strikethrough~~ for deletions and **bold, underlined** for additions.

Petition Policy

Approved By: City Council

Section: City Clerk

Approval Date: December 8, 2010

Effective Date: December 8, 2010

Revision Approved by: City Council

Revision Date: February 13, 2013; January XX, 2025

Policy statement

The City of Ottawa is committed to ~~citizen~~**public** engagement and supports **the use of** petitions as ~~one tool~~**a way** for **the public** ~~citizens~~ **to bring a matter within City Council's authority to the attention of its Members.** ~~have input into Council's decision-making process.~~

A petition can be most effective when the information contained in it is accurate and verifiable, and when the petition is recognized and accepted by decision makers.

Purpose

This policy outlines the City of Ottawa's procedure for receipt and recognition of public petitions.

Application

This policy applies to all petitions submitted to ~~the City of Ottawa~~ **City Council, in paper or electronic format,** with the exception of those governed by another Act (such as for example, drainage and local improvement petitions).

This policy does not apply to petitions that are subject to a petition process regulated by another level of government (for example, petitions related to drainage and local improvements) or another City policy or by-law (for example, petitions related to local traffic and parking modifications or the Dogs-in-Parks Designation Policy).

Policy requirements

Petition requirements

- The petition must be addressed to the City of Ottawa or Ottawa City Council ~~(or the Transit Commission)~~ and request a particular action within the authority of **City Council. Petitions that fall outside the authority of City Council, including but not limited to those seeking actions that fall within the jurisdiction of other levels of government, will not be presented on a City Council agenda.**
- ~~Petitions must be legible, typewritten or printed in ink (no pencil).~~
- The text of the petition, **being the petitioners' cause or position,** must be **included on the petition. The text should be included on each page of the petition, where possible.** ~~listed at the top of each page for multiple page petitions. Pages should be numbered and total number of pages indicated.~~
- The petition must be appropriate and respectful in tone, and must not contain any improper or offensive language or information.
- Each petitioner must print and sign ~~his or her~~ **their** own name. ~~A paper petition must contain original signatures only, written directly on the petition.~~
- ~~Each petitioner must provide his or her full address.~~
- **For paper petitions, the petition:**
 - **Must be legible, typewritten or printed in ink (no pencil);**
 - **Must contain the name and original signature, written directly on the petition, of all petitioners; and**
 - **Should contain the address and/or postal code of all petitioners.**
- ~~For electronic petitions, petitioners must provide name, address and a valid e-mail address.~~ **the petition:**
 - **Must contain the name of all petitioners;**
 - **Should contain the address and/or postal code of all petitioners;**
 - **Should include a valid email address in place of an original signature of all petitioners; and**
 - **Should be submitted in PDF format where possible, as staff may not be able to access all file formats or links.**
- **Each petition must include a statement informing petitioners** ~~The petition must clearly disclose on each page that it will~~ **form part of the public record** ~~be considered a public document at the City of Ottawa and that information contained in it may be subject to the scrutiny of the City and other members of~~

the general public. **This statement must be visible to all petitioners and should be included on each page of the petition, where possible.**

- **Petitions created using an external petition website or platform that meet the above requirements will be received only once the petition organizer has formally submitted the list of signatories to the Office of the City Clerk.**
- **The petition must be submitted with the contact information of the petition organizer, such as the telephone number or email address, for confirmation.**

Submission of petitions

- **Petitions should be submitted to the Office of the City Clerk and may also be submitted to the Mayor or any member of City Council.**
- Petitions containing original signatures should be sent to the attention of the City Clerk by mail or delivered in person to Ottawa City Hall or City of Ottawa Client Service Centre.
- ~~Petitions may also be submitted to the Mayor or any member of City Council.~~
- Electronic Petitions may be submitted to the attention of the City Clerk at petitions@ottawa.ca. **Electronic petitions should be submitted in PDF format where possible, as described above.**
- All petitions that meet the above standards **requirements** will be presented to **City Council** (or the Transit Commission) **and listed as a communication on the agenda** at its next regular meeting, or the meeting at which the subject of the petition is to be discussed.
- Standing Committees cannot formally accept **receive** petitions. Petitions received at Standing Committees will be forwarded to the **City Clerk** and presented to full **listed on the Council agenda of** at its next regular meeting, or the meeting at which the subject of the petition is to be discussed. **Where such petitions are submitted in relation to a Committee agenda item, they may also be noted in the Committee's minutes.**
- ~~Council has the discretion to accept the petition, and Council's decision is final.~~
- **Petitions received by the City Clerk that are subject to another petition process established by legislation or under a City policy or by-law will not be listed on a City Council agenda. Petition organizers will be directed to the appropriate City staff in these instances (for example, petitions related to local traffic and parking modifications, the Dogs in Parks Designation Policy, or submitted in relation to the commemorative naming approval process).**

Responsibilities

The City Clerk is responsible for receiving all petitions within the authority of City Council and submitting them to the attention of Council ~~or the Transit Commission~~.

City Council members are responsible for forwarding all petitions received by their offices to the attention of the City Clerk.

Monitoring/contraventions

The City Clerk will evaluate all petitions to ensure that the requirements of the policy are met.

Petitions deemed to be in non-compliance and those outside the authority of City Council will not be formally accepted and received by City Council ~~or the Transit Commission~~; ~~However,~~ they will may be listed as “other correspondence received” on the appropriate ~~Standing Committee or~~ City Council agenda, if applicable.

Retention and disclosure

All petitions submitted to the City will be retained by the Office of the City Clerk's office. Petitions meeting the requirements of this policy and therefore presented to and received by City Council ~~or the Transit Commission~~ will be kept on file at the Office of the City Clerk and will be available for public viewing upon request.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, a petition is a formal written request made to the City of Ottawa, or City Council ~~or one of its Standing Committees~~.

Enquiries

City Clerk

Office of the City Clerk

~~Legislative Services Branch~~ Council and Committee Services

~~Deputy City Clerk~~

110 Laurier Avenue West,

Ottawa ON K1P 1J1

Petition form

The A petition form and more information on how to submit a petition can be found on the Submitting a petition to Council page.