

# CITY OF LILBURN PROTOCOL MANUAL

September 3, 2015



Small town. Big difference.

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## I. Introduction and Overview

### I.1. Purpose of Manual

This protocol manual is designed to assist the City Council, staff, and others by memorializing existing policies, procedures and the general ways of doing things. Its purpose is also to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Council, staff, and others. Administration of City business is greatly enhanced by the agreement of the City Council and staff to follow these practices. This manual is not intended to be overly restrictive, thus inhibiting interaction between the Mayor, Council and staff. Rather the manual should be viewed as an instructive source of guidance so that accepted practices are documented and expectations are clarified. Practices and policies will change as circumstances arise. With that in mind, the City Council will review and revise this manual accordingly.

### I.2. Lilburn's way of conducting business

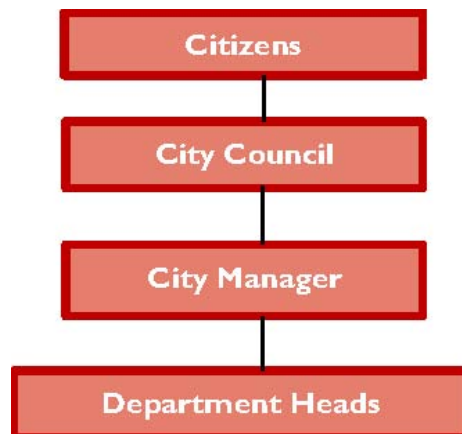
The Lilburn community is comprised of diverse, high-achieving, "creative class" individuals who expect quality, innovation, authenticity and high performance from their local government. The community has responded well to quality in government structure and infrastructure. The City respects the past, but is willing to embrace innovation.

Organizational culture can be defined as the values and norms shared by people in an organization that impact the way they interact with each other and with those outside the organization. Essentially it is the shared attitudes, experiences, beliefs, and values of an organization. As each organization is unique, so is its culture and there is no one right or wrong cultural style.

To assist with identifying Lilburn's way of conducting business, the City Council meets annually and adopts certain cornerstone beliefs.

### I.3. Council-Manager Form of Government

Lilburn has chosen to operate as a Council-Manager form of government. In this form of government, the City Council is recognized as the governing body of the City, elected by the public and serving part-time, while the City Manager is hired by the Council and serves at their pleasure, carrying out policies established by the Council. The City Council provides legislative direction, while the City Manager oversees the day-to-day administrative operations of the City, based on policy set by Council. Core functions of the City Council include setting policy, approving the budget, determining tax rates, etc. Core functions of the City Manager include preparing the budget, directing daily operations, and hiring and firing personnel. More information on how this form of government is specifically executed in Lilburn is included in Chapter 10.



## **2. City Council – General Authority & Responsibilities**

Effective management of a municipality is enhanced when elected officials and appointed staff clearly understand and agree on their respective roles as defined by their form of government, the city charter, and the code of ordinances. As a general rule, the City Council is the legislative body, and its members are the community's decision makers; the City Manager oversees the executive functions of daily oversight and policy implementation. In this sense, Lilburn's government works similarly to a major corporation with a part-time Board of Directors (Council) that sets policy and provides oversight and a CEO (City Manager) that carries out the policy and provides professional management of the day-to-day operations.

As elected officials, the Council implements the community's vision through the policies it enacts. In an effort to memorialize this vision, the Council adopted a Vision Statement during the 2012 annual Council work retreat. This Vision Statement, included in the Appendix, is revisited annually in each retreat to ensure it still accurately captures the community's vision.

### **2.1. Role of City Council**

The following is a brief overview of the various roles that the City Council undertakes. Many of these roles are explained in greater detail in Chapter 1 of the *GMA Handbook for Georgia Mayors and Councilmembers*.

#### **2.1.1. Establish Policy**

One of the most visible roles that the City Council has is its legislative responsibilities, which involves setting policy for the City. Some of these include, but are not limited to, adopting ordinances and resolutions, setting the millage rate for property taxes, approving the annual budget, approving City expenditures, establishing priorities for City services, entering into contracts, establishing policies and procedures, and hearing rezoning and annexation requests. Section 2 of the City Charter provides more details on the Council's legislative authority.

#### **2.1.2. Appoint/Supervise Officials**

The City's appointed boards, commissions, and authorities assist the Council by serving in advisory capacity and by overseeing various functions or projects. The City Charter grants the Council authority to create such bodies and to establish their composition, duties, period of existence, etc. Some examples of the City's appointed bodies include the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Downtown Development Authority and others. Lilburn's appointed boards are outlined in further detail in Chapter 7 of this document.

In addition to appointing boards, commissions, and authorities, the Council also appoints people to serve in individual capacities, such as the City Manager, Judges, Solicitors, City Attorney, etc.

#### **2.1.3. Provide Community Leadership**

Council members will be offered many opportunities, both as a whole and individually, to take a visible role in interacting with and engaging the community and to show public support for the City's various initiatives and programs. Some examples of these include participating in and encouraging community involvement in strategic planning efforts (the Strategic Plan, Comprehensive Plan, etc.), volunteering at City events and projects, sitting on various appointed Boards, etc. The Council members have an important role in interacting with the community - listening to wishes of constituents and communicating the City's vision and goals. Lastly, Council members will help to represent the City's interests at various regional, county, state, and federal levels. The City Manager will make the Council aware of these various opportunities as they arise.

#### **2.1.4. Decision-Making**

Closely related to the Council's legislative authority is the role Councilmembers play in making important decisions that provide guidance to staff for carrying out the day-to-day operations of the City. Such decisions might include direction on project scope, feedback on various City initiatives or programs, etc. While typically less formal than the Council's legislative powers (many times not requiring a formal vote in a Council meeting), such decisions are important and will typically be included as a discussion item for a Council work session.

In an effort to aid in providing such guidance, and to help strengthen and solidify Lilburn's chosen culture, the Council has adopted a *Strategic Plan*. The Strategic Plan filters and provides guidance when making long-term or notable strategic decisions. The plan points should cause the Mayor, Council members, and staff to pause and filter decisions, when appropriate, through these points. Therefore, when Council is considering a decision that doesn't fit these points, something may not be right and the decision may be going against what makes Lilburn successful.

## **2.2. Role of Mayor**

The Mayor serves as the presiding officer and chair of all meetings of the City Council. The Mayor may participate in all deliberations of the Council in the same manner as other members and is a voting member where the council vote is tied, or where one vote is needed to pass any motion, resolution, ordinance or other question before the Council, unless a conflict of interest exists. The Mayor administers oaths and executes all written and approved contracts, ordinances, and other documents executed by the City.

The Mayor serves as the City's ceremonial representative at public events and functions; Councilmembers are welcome to attend as well. The Mayor is the official spokesperson for the Council – articulating actions taken, fielding questions about the City's policies and intentions, etc.

The Mayor appoints individuals to committees, study groups, etc. In certain cases, Councilmembers will be asked to submit nominees for such committees and groups, and the Mayor will then ratify those nominees.

For more details on the Mayor's official capacities, please see Section 2.32 of the City Charter.

### **2.2.1. Emergency Authority of Mayor**

Per the City Code, the Mayor has the authority to declare a state of emergency under appropriate conditions.

## **2.3. Mayor Pro-Tem**

One Council member serves as the Mayor Pro Tempore (Pro-Tem) and performs the duties of Mayor in his/her absence or disability. The Mayor Pro-Tem is elected on an annual basis by the City Council during the January Council meeting. For more details, please see Section 2.33 of the Charter.

## **2.4. Intergovernmental Relations**

Intergovernmental relations refers to the interactions between different governmental entities, such as Gwinnett County, the State, the School Board, the Atlanta Regional Commission, etc. Many of the Council's legislative functions will involve negotiation and coordination with other governments, such as distribution of various tax revenues, negotiation of the Service Delivery Strategy (SDS), etc. Council members will interact with elected and appointed officials from other governmental entities on a regular basis.

### **2.4.1. Service Delivery Strategy (SDS)**

House Bill 489, known as the Service Delivery Strategy (SDS) Act of 1997, requires every county within the State of Georgia to develop and adopt a service delivery strategy that outlines current and future service delivery arrangements. In short, the strategy essentially outlines which government entities within a County are providing certain services, ensuring they are provided Countywide in a manner that eliminates the unnecessary duplication of services. The strategy must be reviewed, re-negotiated (if necessary), and re-adopted every 10 years by each of the affected jurisdictions. The strategy must be submitted to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for verification in order to remain eligible for state administered financial grants or state permits. The act requires that each strategy contain four components:

- 1. Identification of current service delivery arrangements.** The strategy must identify all local government services presently provided or primarily funded by each government and authority within the county and describe the geographic area in which the identified services are provided.
- 2. Identification of future service delivery arrangements.** The strategy must indicate which local government authority will provide each service, the geographic areas of the county in which each service will be provided, and a description of any services provided by any local government to any area outside its geographical boundaries.
- 3. Funding sources of both current and future services.** The strategy must describe the funding source for each service to be provided. This component must indicate the source of revenue each local government will use to fund each service it will provide within the county.
- 4. Identification of the legal mechanisms that will be used by each of the jurisdictions to implement the service delivery strategy.** The strategy must identify the mechanisms, if any, to be used to implement the service delivery strategy, such as intergovernmental agreements, ordinances, resolutions, etc.

#### 2.4.2. SPLOST

Another important issue that involves coordination with Gwinnett County and the municipalities is SPLOST (Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax). The 2014 SPLOST program is currently underway; collections for this program began April 1, 2014 and will extend through March 31, 2017. In order to extend the SPLOST program beyond this timeframe, the voters will need to reauthorize it. This would require Gwinnett County and the municipalities to negotiate in two different areas:

- **Projects:** State law requires the County and municipalities to identify potential project categories for voters to consider as part of the referendum. As the voters are considering categories on a County-wide basis, the County and municipalities must reach consensus on what those will be. For example, project categories in the 2014 SPLOST program include Libraries, Recreational Facilities, Public Safety Facilities and Equipment, Roads, Street, and Bridges, among others.
- **Revenue Distribution:** The County and municipalities negotiate not only the percentage of revenue that will be distributed to the County and then to the municipalities as a whole, but the municipalities must also agree to a formula for how they will distribute their share among themselves. The current distribution is based on population.

#### 2.4.3. Organizations

There are several organizations that help to facilitate intergovernmental relations, both within Gwinnett County and around the region and state. Lilburn's Councilmembers and staff have had a strong tradition of holding leadership roles within each of these organizations. Some of these are as follows:

- **Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC)** – The ARC is the regional planning and intergovernmental coordination agency for the 10-county metro area. Lilburn's elected officials take part in providing input and helping to develop the regional plans and initiatives that ARC oversees. The ARC also provides numerous training opportunities for elected officials and staff. For more information, please see [www.atlantaregional.com](http://www.atlantaregional.com).
- **Georgia Municipal Association (GMA)** – GMA is a statewide organization that provides leadership, tools, and services to assist local municipalities. GMA offers a number of training opportunities, including the annual Mayor's Day Conference (January) and Convention (June). GMA's website [www.gmanet.com](http://www.gmanet.com) includes a wealth of resources, including training materials for elected officials, legislative tracking, news reports from municipalities across the state, an on-line version of the Georgia Cities newspaper, etc. Two of GMA's resources are included in the appendix: *A Survival Guide for Newly Elected Municipal Officials* and *GMA Handbook for Mayors & Council Members*.



### **3. Conflicts of Interest, Ethics & Immunity of Elected Officials**

#### **3.1. Conflicts of Interest**

The state laws regarding ethics and conflicts of interest are some of the most important for Councilmembers to be aware of and follow. Essentially, these laws prohibit any Councilmember from voting on any question that is brought before the Council in which he/she is personally involved. Due to both the complexity of these laws and the significant consequences if violated, it is highly suggested that Councilmembers discuss the law and potential conflicts with the City Attorney.

Section 2.14 of the City Charter details the City's position on conflicts of interest. Chapter I of the *GMA Handbook for Georgia Mayors and Councilmembers*, included in the Appendix, includes a section on "Ethic, Conflict of Interest, and Abuse of Office" that provides more reference on state law. Again, the City Attorney is the best resource for this information.

#### **3.2. Code of Ethics**

The City has an adopted ethics ordinance in place. The ethics ordinance includes guidelines to ensure that the City is operated in a manner that is, and gives the appearance of being, independent, and impartial. The ethics ordinance is included in the Appendix.

#### **3.3. Liability**

The City provides a number of high profile services, such as public safety, roads, parks, etc. that carry some degree of risk and liability. The City must always approach its responsibilities in a manner that reduces the potential of risk and liability for all involved.

The City Attorney will provide guidance to the City and Councilmembers on reducing liability. It is important to understand that violations of certain laws and regulations by individual members of the City may result in personal liability that is not covered by the City's insurance or can be represented by the City Attorney. Examples may include discrimination, harassment, fraud, etc.

### **4. Overview of City Documents**

Councilmembers will want to familiarize themselves with a number of different documents that will help guide decision-making, outline legal requirements for operating the City, etc. Each of the documents is described in more detail below and included in the Appendix.

#### **4.1. City Charter**

Lilburn's charter is a written document that establishes the basic governmental structure, form of government, corporate boundaries, and municipal powers. In this respect, it is similar to a state or national constitution. Each municipality in Georgia has a charter, which is approved by the State General Assembly. As such, in most instances, amendments to the City charter require action by the General Assembly.

#### **4.2. City Code**

The City Code is the compilation of local laws that have been adopted and codified by the City Council. The City Code covers a wide range of areas, including taxes, court, environmental regulations, alcoholic beverages, business regulations, etc. Amendments to the City Code must be adopted by the Council.

#### **4.3. Georgia Laws**

Municipalities are created by the State and, as such, many of the State laws apply to the operation of the City. The City Attorney provides guidance on this area.

#### **4.4. Zoning Ordinance**

The Zoning Ordinance regulates the kinds of activities that are permitted in each district, building heights, required parking, landscape and buffer requirements, sign restrictions, etc. Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance are drafted by staff and then forwarded to the Planning Commission for consideration, with Council having the final vote.

#### **4.5. Development Regulations**

The Development Regulations are technical specifications that outline the standards to which properties and infrastructure shall be constructed. Examples of the standards include water quality, roadway design, materials quality, etc. Like the Zoning Ordinance, amendments are drafted by staff and then forwarded to the Planning Commission for consideration, with Council having the final vote.

#### **4.6. Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual**

The Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual includes the written policies that govern City employees (including Council, as appropriate) and informs them of their responsibilities. Amendments to the Handbook are drafted by staff and forwarded to the Council for adoption.

#### **4.7. Police Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)**

The Police SOP are a compilation of the written directives, procedures, orders, rules, and operations that guide members of the Police staff as they carry out their agency activities. The SOP are written and adopted internally in the Police Department.

#### **4.8. Short Term Work Program (STWP)**

The STWP is a five-year plan of actions that the City intends to complete in order to address identified needs and goals. The STWP is updated annually, removing the prior year's projects and adding a new fifth year, as well as any adjustments that need to be made to projects. Discussion and review of the STWP takes place at the annual Council work retreat, held at the beginning of each calendar year. The Council then formally adopts the updated STWP approximately 1-2 months after the retreat. The STWP is an important tool for decisions needed during budget development.

#### **4.9. Budget**

The budget is the City's financial plan that presents the services to be provided to the community over the coming year and the funds necessary to perform these services. Lilburn operates under a fiscal year that begins on July 1 and ends June 30. In late winter, staff begins the process of estimating anticipated revenues, identifying and evaluating potential expenditures and preparing a recommended budget. Special budget workshops will be scheduled with the Council throughout the spring, as needed, for the City Manager to present the recommended budget. Two public hearings are typically held on the budget in June, with the Council considering the budget at the June Council meeting.

#### **4.10. Capital Improvement Program (CIP)**

The CIP is a five-year plan of certain intended capital projects and purchases. This tool gives the City a comprehensive approach in planning for future assets and projects, as well as maintaining and replacing current ones. The CIP also allows the City to strategically plan how it will fund these projects and the impact they will have on future budgets. The CIP is a component of and developed at the same time as the annual budget. As such, it follows the same timeframe and review process with Council – spring workshops, with public hearings and adoption in June. For more information on general capital planning, please see the chapter in the *GMA Handbook for Georgia Mayor and Councilmembers* on Capital Improvements Planning, which is included in the Appendix.

#### **4.11. Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR)**

At the close of each fiscal year on June 30, an independent auditor reviews the City's financial statements. The auditor's report, along with the financial statements and other important information, make up the CAFR. The CAFR essentially allows the reader to determine how well the City performed from a financial standpoint and where it stands in terms of assets and liabilities. The audit is completed in late summer and early fall, with the report and CAFR being presented to Council at the end of each calendar year.

#### **4.12. Comprehensive Plan**

A community's Comprehensive Plan identifies near-term and long-term critical planning strategies that will help guide the location and design of future development. Georgia municipalities are required to update and adopt a new Comprehensive Plan every 10 years, to comply with guidelines outlined by the Department of Community Affairs. The City's current plan is the 2020 Comprehensive Plan, intended to guide development through 2020. As such, the City is not scheduled to begin a major update to its plan until approximately 2018 or 2019. The City has historically contracted with planning consultants to carry out the public participation and plan development phases of this initiative. Staff oversees minor reviews and updates, which take place on an annual basis.

#### **4.13. Downtown Overlay Plan**

In 2002, the City adopted a Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) plan for the Downtown area, including the historic Old Town and what is now Town Center. This plan not only helps provide vision and guide planning for the Downtown area, but also makes the City eligible for grant funding through ARC's LCI Implementation Program. The City reviewed and updated this plan in December 2014. Similar to the Comprehensive Plan, the City has historically contracted with planning consultants to carry out the public participation and plan development phases of this plan.

#### **4.14. Pedestrian Bicycle Plan (PBP)**

The PBP provides an implementation guide for pedestrian and bicycle facilities to support the community's goals for a walkable and bikeable community. The plan not only identifies needed gaps in the existing system, but also defines additional improvements to benefit the overall sidewalk and trail network. This plan was originally adopted as the Alternative Transportation Plan (ATP), with its name changing to the PBP with the 2011 update. It is estimated this plan will be reviewed and updated as needed or in conjunction with other planning efforts. The City has historically contracted with transportation planning consultants to carry out the public participation and plan development phases.

4.15. Reserved....

4.16. Reserved....

#### **4.17. Annual Report (new initiative underway)**

In conjunction with the State of the City address, staff develops an Annual Report that is a written document highlighting successes, completed projects, awards received, etc. for the past year. This report is printed and mailed with the City newsletter at the beginning of each year.

#### **4.18. Other Planning Efforts**

The need to develop other plans and studies, not identified above, often arises. Typically, these are one-time plans, focused on a single issue or project. The need for such plans is typically identified in the STWP. Depending on the complexity of the plan and process, the Council will decide whether to contract with a consultant team or use staff resources.

### **5. Council Meetings & Workshops**

#### **5.1. Council Code of Conduct**

In the *Handbook for Georgia Mayors and Councilmembers*, GMA notes that successful cities and leaders generally share a common set of characteristics:

- Trust and respect exists between elected officials.
- Teamwork is demonstrated in all actions.
- Communications are open, honest and consistent with expectations and outcomes are clearly understood.
- Planning, including visioning, goal-setting, and short- and long-range planning, is a part of the organizational culture.
- The City operates in a businesslike manner.

#### **5.2. Schedule**

The Council typically meets together once each month. The monthly Council Meeting (and Public Hearing, if needed) is held on the second Monday of each month.

The Council Work Session is held immediately prior to the Council meeting (usually the second Monday of each month). The Workshops typically begin at 6:30 pm.

Other meetings may arise on an as needed basis, such as budget workshops. Additionally, the Mayor or three members of Council may call a special meeting. Notice of such special meetings shall be served no later than 24 hours in advance of the meeting.

All meetings are held at City Hall.

### **5.3. Agenda Development**

#### **5.3.1. Agenda Item Requests**

Staff in the City Manager's office develops the agendas for the Work Sessions and Council Meetings and submits them to the Mayor for comments or additions. Council, on behalf of themselves, members of Boards, community members, etc., may request to have an item placed on the agenda by contacting the City Manager or Assistant to the City Manager. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, an item must first be submitted for and approved by the Mayor or a quorum of Council members in order to be placed on a Council Meeting agenda.

#### **5.3.2. Work Session Agendas**

Work Session agendas are prepared two weeks (staff pre-agenda process) before the Work Session takes place. Requests for agenda items should be submitted to staff by 10:00 am on the Tuesday of that week. Staff will then prepare a draft agenda and forward it to the Council by e-mail for review. The agenda is typically finalized and distributed to Council on Friday of the week preceding the Work Session.

#### **5.3.3. Council Meeting Agendas**

Council Meeting agendas are prepared in the same manner as the Work Session agenda. Again, staff will prepare a draft agenda and forward it to Council for review via e-mail. The agenda is typically finalized and distributed to Council on Wednesday of the week preceding the meeting.

#### **5.3.4. Agenda Packages**

Each agenda package includes the agenda, narrative, recommendations and City Manager's Notes/Approval (brief overview of each item on the agenda), and background materials for each item, as appropriate. The agenda package will be uploaded to a folder on the City's network that Council can access from their iPad, computer, or other device.

Staff prepares a limited number of hard copies of a package with the agenda and background materials for the public – for both work sessions and meetings. These are available in the meeting room at the time of the meeting.

#### **5.3.5. Adding Items to the Agenda After Publication**

At times, emergencies arise and agenda items develop after the agenda has been finalized. In Lilburn, these are informally called "add-on items." In the case of an item to be added to the work session agenda, the Council/staff member should bring this to the attention of the City Manager as soon as possible. In the case of an item to be added to the Council meeting agenda, the Council/staff member should again bring it to the attention of the City Manager, who will inform Council. If appropriate, Council will take a formal vote in the meeting on whether to amend the agenda to add the item.

#### **5.3.6. Agenda Distribution**

Staff distributes the final agendas to the city's legal organ, the Gwinnett Daily Post, as well as other metro area media outlets. Citizens may subscribe to receive a copy of the final agenda by e-mail by visiting [www.cityoflilburn.com](http://www.cityoflilburn.com) and clicking "Notify Me" on the homepage. The final agendas are posted on [www.cityoflilburn.com](http://www.cityoflilburn.com) under "Agendas & Minutes." A hard copy is also posted in the front window of City Hall.

### **5.4. Work Sessions**

#### **5.4.1. Purpose of Work Sessions**

The workshops have several purposes: 1) to discuss pending items for the Council Meeting agenda; 2) to discuss items that staff needs to bring to Council's attention; 3) to receive progress reports on current projects; and 4) to hear regular updates from members of appointed Boards, Committees, etc. Overall, the purpose of the work session is for Council and staff to meet and discuss various items in an informal manner where questions may be asked of each other and in-depth discussion can take place. No official action on City business is taken in work sessions. Work sessions do not generally include public input, unless permitted by the consent of a majority of Council.

#### **5.4.2. Location**

Work sessions are held in the Conference room of City Hall. The room is set up so that the tables are configured in one large square, with Council members and staff sitting at the tables. The Council finds this arrangement allows for informal, effective communication. There are chairs along the walls for the public in attendance.

#### **5.4.3. Time**

The work sessions typically begin at 6:30 pm. Occasionally, the time will be changed if the Council is interested in gathering for other purposes, i.e. to hear a presentation by a consultant before the workshop. At times, it will be necessary to combine the workshop with a called meeting, for the purposes of holding an executive session, a public hearing, or considering an item of business. In this case, the called meeting will typically take place before the work session begins. Work sessions generally last 1-2 hours.

#### **5.4.4. Attendance**

Workshops are attended by all members of the City Council, the City Manager, and the City Attorney. Typically, most, if not all of the department managers attend, as well. Depending on the agenda items, other staff members, consultants, Board members, etc. will be invited. The Mayor presides over the work sessions.

#### **5.4.5. Schedule of Recurring Reports**

One purpose for the workshops is for Council to receive regular updates from staff, appointed Boards/staff, etc. on various issues related to their department/Board. The schedule for these updates is usually as follows. Council can amend this schedule and add or remove updates, as desired.

- January: (reserved)
- February: Planning (Economic Indicators report); Finance Mid-year report
- March: DDA (semi-annual report)
- April: (reserved)
- May: (reserved)
- June: (reserved)
- July: Planning Commission (annual report)
- August: (reserved)
- September: DDA (semi-annual report)
- October: (reserved)
- November: (reserved)

#### **5.4.6. Minutes**

The City Clerk takes informal minutes of the work sessions. These minutes are not formally adopted and are in summary fashion to the public. The work sessions are not recorded by audio or video.

### **5.5. Council Meetings**

#### **5.5.1. Components of a Council Meeting**

There are two “components” to a Council meeting: 1) a public hearing, at 7:30 pm, if necessary; and 2) the Council (business) meeting at 7:30 pm. All are open to the public.

#### **5.5.2. Attendance; quorum required**

Council meetings are attended by all members of the City Council, the City Manager, and the City Attorney. Typically, most, if not all of the department managers attend, as well. Depending on the agenda items, other staff members, consultants, Board members, etc. will be invited. The Mayor presides over the meetings. A quorum, of three or more council members, is required for both the public hearing and meeting. If a quorum cannot be attained with 30 minutes of the published starting time, the meeting will be rescheduled.

#### **5.5.3. Minutes and recordings**

The City Clerk takes formal minutes of the public hearing and meeting. These minutes are adopted by Council the following month and posted to the City’s website. The City Clerk also makes an audio recording of the public hearing and meeting; no video recording is done.

#### **5.5.4. Public Participation**

Citizens have an opportunity to participate in a Council meeting during the “public comment” section of the meeting. As part of the public comment protocol, the Mayor and Council request that citizens first speak with the appropriate staff member for resolution of their particular issue. If only the Mayor and Council can address the issue, or the issue could not be resolved by staff, then public comment will be granted. Citizens may also comment on any specific item requiring a public hearing for adoption. The Mayor has the authority to impose time limits for public comments in both the public hearing and the meeting.

### **5.5.5. Signing of Documents**

At the conclusion of the meeting, the City Clerk will circulate all documents that were approved and require signature of the Mayor and/or Council.

### **5.6. Consent Agenda**

The City Code permits the Council to use a consent agenda for Council Meetings. The consent agenda is a group of items that are expected to receive unanimous approval and where no debate is anticipated. Council will typically decide during the work sessions whether to place an item on the consent regular agenda. Council members can also request during the draft agenda review or vote at the beginning of a Council Meeting to remove an item from the consent agenda, if desired.

### **5.7. Public Hearings**

Public hearings provide Council the opportunity to solicit public comment on various subjects. They are always scheduled for rezoning cases, special use permits, alcohol beverage applications, budget adoption, and the setting of the millage rate. They are commonly used when the City is undergoing planning initiatives, such as the Comprehensive Plan. As needed, public hearings are held in conjunction with the Council meetings and begin at 7:30 pm.

### **5.8. Open Meetings**

Georgia's laws regarding government meetings and records are commonly referred to as the "sunshine laws." They are designed to provide transparency to the public on how government operates, how decisions are made, how money is spent, etc. As such, they require that the public have notice and access to City meetings and establish procedures for public access to City records.

#### **5.8.1. What is a Meeting?**

In general, whenever a quorum of the Council (or other City Board) gathers at a designated time to conduct or discuss public or official business, this is considered a meeting that must be open and advertised to the public and comply with other aspects of the sunshine laws. This applies whenever any public matter, official business, or policy is discussed, including workshops, even if no final action is taken. Social gatherings that include a quorum are not considered meetings as long as no City business or other public matter is discussed.

#### **5.8.2. Executive Sessions**

##### **5.8.2.1. Purpose**

Council and Boards have the ability to discuss issues related to three areas in a closed discussion not open to the public: 1) legal – to discuss pending or potential litigation with the City Attorney; 2) personnel – to discuss hiring, compensation, evaluation, or disciplinary action for a specific public employee, or to conduct interviews for Board seats and other appointments; and 3) real estate acquisitions. The City Attorney will provide guidance, if necessary, on whether an item meets the criteria to be discussed in an executive session. All items discussed in an executive session are strictly confidential.

While not open to the public, Council cannot enter into an executive session unless it is held in conjunction with a meeting, even if it is simply for the purposes of calling a meeting to order, immediately taking a vote to enter into executive session, and then adjourning the meeting after the executive session ends. A majority of Council must vote to enter into the executive session.

Official business does take place in an executive session. If an item requires a vote by Council, the vote must take place in an open meeting.

##### **5.8.2.2. Attendance**

Depending on the topic(s) to be discussed, executive sessions are typically attended by the City Manager, City Attorney, and City Clerk. Other staff members may be present, if needed.

##### **5.8.2.3. Schedule**

Due to the limited nature of discussion topics, executive sessions do not occur at a regularly scheduled time. Each Council meeting agenda includes an agenda item that allows Council to vote on entering into an executive session, if needed. If need for an executive session arises that cannot wait for the monthly Council meeting, a specially called meeting will be scheduled in conjunction with a work session or at a convenient time for the members of the Council. On rare occasions, an emergency will make it necessary to hold an executive session before the next regularly scheduled work session or Council meeting. In this case, the City Manager will contact Council to confirm availability, and a specially called meeting will be scheduled.

## **5.9. External Meetings**

Council members will be invited to meetings and training opportunities for external organizations, such as the Gwinnett Municipal Association, Atlanta Regional Commission, Georgia Municipal Association, etc. Council may contact the City Clerk for assistance in signing up and confirming attendance to these events.

## **6. Education & Training**

There are a number of training opportunities, both optional and mandatory, that are offered by various organizations for Council members. The following includes more details on these events.

### **6.1. Newly Elected Municipal Officials Institute**

State law requires each Council member to attend the Newly Elected Municipal Officials Institute. This 18-hour program is coordinated by GMA and the Carl Vinson Institute and is offered at locations throughout the state. The course provides an orientation to City government for Council members new to office. This course must be taken within the first 12 months of taking office. Typically, the course is offered in late winter/early spring of each year. For more details, please see [www.cviog.uga.edu/elected-officials](http://www.cviog.uga.edu/elected-officials).

### **6.2. Harold F. Holtz Municipal Training Institute**

In addition to the Newly Elected Institute, state law also requires elected officials to attend and complete 42 units of various training courses pertaining to the basic performance of their duties. In partnership with the Carl Vinson Institute of Government, GMA provides the Municipal Training Institute, which offers these required courses, as well as other elective courses. The Institute also offers a voluntary certification program for elected officials. For more details, please see [www.gmanet.com/Training](http://www.gmanet.com/Training).

### **6.3. GMA Convention**

The Georgia Municipal Association hosts an annual convention each year. In addition to providing required and elective training classes, the convention also includes sessions on various topics and networking opportunities with other cities. The convention is typically held the last weekend in June at the Savannah Convention Center. Lilburn's Council members, City Manager, and City Attorney normally attend. Some senior staff members may attend as well. For more details on the convention, please see [www.gmanet.com/convention](http://www.gmanet.com/convention).

### **6.4. Mayor's Day**

Mayor's Day, also a GMA event, is a smaller version of the annual convention. Held in Atlanta in mid-January each year, the conference offers required and elective training classes and sessions on various topics. Council members normally attend this conference. For more details, please see [www.gmanet.com/MayorsDay](http://www.gmanet.com/MayorsDay).

### **6.5. Other**

Other non-required professional development opportunities will arise. The Council will decide among themselves on the suitability of attendance for these activities and whether the City will fund them.

### **6.6. Registration for Classes, Conferences & Other Events**

The City Clerk can assist Council members with registration for classes, conferences, etc., as well as the associated travel arrangements, such as hotel. Council should submit their completed registration forms to him/her. Any special requests should be noted on the registration forms.

### **6.7. Retreats**

The Council holds one work retreat each year. It is typically held over one and one-half days (Friday evening to Saturday evening) in January. During this retreat, Council reviews accomplishments from the previous year, discusses funding priorities for the upcoming budget, and engages in conversation on Council-determined strategic and tactical issues. This retreat may also include a learning field trip, informational meeting(s), and networking opportunities with elected officials and staff from the host city. This retreat is attended by the Council, City Manager, and Department Heads. An outside facilitator may assist with this retreat.

The retreat is held outside Lilburn, typically within a driving distance of approximately two hours or less. The locations are typically selected for the learning value they might provide or relevance to a particular project or initiative, etc. Staff will solicit ideas on location from Council when beginning the retreat planning process.

## 6.8. Travel

### 6.8.1. General Overview of Travel Policy

The City has adopted a policy that outlines covered expenses for Council and staff as it relates to travel, entertainment, lodging, and incidental expenses incurred when conducting City business. The policy covers air travel, lodging, car rental, meals and entertainment, and other expenses, as well as outlining expenses that will not be reimbursed. Please note, the City does not cover expenses for spouses or other companions traveling with City and/or staff. Additionally, the City does not pay for the purchase of any alcohol. For more details on the travel policy, please see Administrative Policy #001-04, General and Administrative Policies and procedures.

### 6.8.2. Procedures for Obtaining Reimbursement of Expenses

Original, itemized receipts are required for all expenses over \$5.00; estimated expenses are not acceptable.

The City Clerk is available to assist Council in preparing an expense report for travel and other expenditures. Receipts must be submitted to him/her within 10 days of purchase/return of trip. A check will be issued within approximately 30 days of submittal for all approved reimbursable expenses.

Customary expenses by Council may be approved administratively by the City Manager or his/her designee. In the case of special circumstances or expenses subject to interpretation, the Mayor shall review and approve Councilmembers' expenses and the Mayor Pro-Tem will review and approve the Mayor's expenses.

### 6.8.3. City Vehicles

Council members typically use their personal vehicles for City-related travel. The City will reimburse the Council member for the mileage incurred at the City mileage rate; this should be submitted as outlined above. Carpooling with other Council members or staff, if feasible, is encouraged to minimize expenses.

## 7. Appointed Boards & Positions

The City's appointed boards, commissions, and authorities assist the Council by serving in advisory capacities and by overseeing various functions or projects. The City Charter grants the Council authority to create such bodies and to establish their composition, duties, period of existence, etc. Section 3.11 of the City Charter provides more information on the Council's authority as it relates to boards, commissions, and authorities.

In addition to appointing boards, commissions, and authorities, the Council also appoints people to serve in individual capacities, such as the City Manager, Judges, Solicitors, City Attorney, etc.

### 7.1. City Manager

Lilburn is a Council-Manager form of government, with a City Manager overseeing and directing the daily operations of the City. The City Manager directs the City's administrative activities; serves as a focal point for strategic planning, programming and budgeting; supervises City employees; serves as a liaison between Council and staff; and assists the public. For more details on the City Manager's functions, please see Section 2.30 of the City Charter.

### 7.2. City Attorney

Council appoints a City Attorney, who is responsible for representing and defending the City in all litigation in which the City is a party, attending meetings of Council as directed, and advising the Council and staff concerning legal aspects of the City's operations. The City Attorney serves on a part-time basis and works from his/her office, rather than from City Hall. For more details on the City Attorney, please see Section 3.12 of the City Charter.

### 7.3. Planning Commission

The Planning and Zoning Commission is a five-member board comprised of volunteers appointed by the Lilburn City Council. Its duties and responsibilities include reviewing requests and making recommendations to the City Council on the following matters:

- **Rezoning requests** – Requests to alter the zoning district for a piece of property. Zoning districts regulate the allowed and special uses and the basic development standards for properties throughout the City.
- **Special use permit** – Each Zoning district includes a list of potential uses (called special uses) that may be appropriate for the district in certain locations. These uses require a permit to be issued by Council.
- **Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance** – Periodically the Zoning Ordinance requires changes in order to help the city meet the goals of the comprehensive plan.



The Board may also undertake special studies and reviews as directed by the Council.

The Planning Commission meets on the fourth Thursday of each month at 7:00 pm in City Hall. Members serve one-year terms, appointed annually by the Council, and must be residents of the city of Lilburn.

#### **7.4. Zoning Board of Appeals**

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) is a five-member board comprised of volunteers appointed by the Lilburn City Council. Its duties and responsibilities include reviewing and issue rulings related to variance requests and appeals of administrative decisions.

- **Variations** - requests to deviate from the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.
- **Appeals of administrative decisions** - requests to hear alternative interpretations from the Zoning Ordinance as interpreted by the Planning Director.

The ZBA meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm in City Hall. Members serve one-year terms, appointed annually by the Council, and must be residents of the City of Lilburn.

#### **7.5. Downtown Development Authority**

The Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is a seven-member board of directors appointed by the City Council to serve as advocates and advisors to the City on issues related to designated areas of Lilburn.

The DDA's mission is to strengthen the economic viability of downtown Lilburn through economic development, aesthetic improvements, historic preservation, and promotion and image-building efforts. Its goal is to create and sustain a vibrant downtown in the heart of Lilburn as well as other areas designated by the Council. Its focus and planning are long-term in nature. The DDA is a hybrid agency — neither wholly a public agency nor wholly a private corporation — enacted by municipal government and authorized by State law.

The DDA meets the third Wednesday of each month at 6:30 PM at the Planning Office or at City Hall. Members serve four year staggered terms, and must be either residents of the city of Lilburn and/or own a business within Downtown Lilburn. A Council member has historically served on the DDA as one of the seven members.

#### **7.6. Municipal Court**

The Council appoints staff to the City's Municipal Court for the purposes of hearing and adjudicating traffic offenses and violation of City ordinances that occur within the City limits.

Appointed staff includes the Chief Judge, Associate Judge(s), Chief Solicitor, and Associate Solicitor(s). Each position is appointed for a one-year term. The City also contracts its professional probation services. This contract is typically reviewed every three years.

Councilmembers should be aware that circumstances may arise where individuals who have received a ticket or other violation might request a Councilmember(s) to assist in achieving a reduced fine or dismissal. From both an ethical and legal standpoint, it is important that the Municipal Court be operated independently and without influence from the Council, as the Charter and Code establishes.

Municipal Court hearings are held at various times throughout the month in the Calvin Fitchett Municipal Court building. For more details on the role of Municipal Court, please see Article 4 of the City Charter.

#### **7.7. Election Superintendent**

State law requires the Council to appoint an election superintendent. This person is responsible for carrying out the administrative duties associated with conducting an election. The City Clerk has historically served in this capacity.

## **8. Financial Matters**

It is important to recognize the key distinctions between the financial operations of a municipality compared to the commercial world. Cities have very different objectives from those of commercial enterprises. A city's primary goal is to provide services to its constituents within budgetary constraints; business enterprises exist to maximize economic profit. A city's capital assets are used to provide services whereas in business they are used to generate revenue. Cities operate in an entirely different economic, legal, political and social environment, which requires different objectives, financial reporting requirements, etc. For more information on the City's financial operations, please see Article 6 of the City Charter and Chapter 5 of the *GMA Handbook for Georgia Mayors and Councilmembers*.

### **8.1. Budget**

Each year, the City adopts an annual budget that determines where the funds to operate the City will come from and how they will be spent. The adopted budget serves as an important internal tool and control to both guide the services to be provided and ensure spending limits are not exceeded. The budget has an important role externally and, with public participation in the budget development, is one of the most significant ways the City can provide open and transparent leadership. Cities are required to adopt a balanced budget, meaning expenditures and revenues are equal.

#### **8.1.1. Preparation**

One of the first steps in the annual budget development process is the Council's annual work retreat, held in January. During this retreat, Council establishes priorities, which will include new projects and initiatives to be evaluated in the budget. After returning from the retreat, staff continues the process by analyzing trends, researching updated information, preparing revenue forecasts, identifying department goals and objectives, reviewing department requests, etc. to put together a draft budget for Council to review. The first draft is typically forwarded to Council in April. A series of budget review workshops will be held during late April/May for Council to review and discuss the proposed budget in detail with staff. After receiving Council input, staff revises the draft budget accordingly and the final draft is typically available for public review by late May. Public hearings are typically scheduled during June, with the Council considering the final draft at the June Council meeting.

#### **8.1.2. Millage Rate**

Setting the millage rate each year is closely related to budget development. The millage is the rate of taxes charged and collected by the City for all real and personal property within the City limits. Gwinnett County provides tax assessment services for the City and forwards a consolidated, estimated digest to the City in the spring. This draft digest is considered in the budget development and the adopted budget assumes an estimated millage rate, based on the consolidated digest, proposed revenues to balance the budget, collectability rate, etc. In mid-summer, the City receives a detailed digest from the County, which allows staff to confirm assumptions that were made in the adopted budget and recommend a final millage rate. The Council will then schedule a public hearing(s) for the citizens to comment on the proposed millage rate. The public hearing(s) and vote by Council typically takes place in June.

#### **8.1.3. Monthly Financial Statements**

At the close of each month, the Finance Department prepares a financial statement that compares budgeted revenues and expenditures with actual revenues and expenditures. These reports allow Council and staff to monitor budget compliance throughout the fiscal year. Monthly financial statements are provided for informational purposes only; Council does not officially approve them.

#### **8.1.4. Audit**

At the close of each fiscal year on June 30, an independent audit is conducted in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and governmental auditing standards (GAGAS). This is a requirement of state law. The purpose of the audit is to verify that the City's financial statements present the City's financial position in a fair and accurate manner. It can provide citizens with a degree of trust that public funds have been expended as legally required. The audit allows holders of debt securities to better understand the City's financial position. The audit also includes a review of the City's internal accounting controls, and if necessary will include suggestions to help avoid circumstances that might permit inefficiencies or fraud. A copy of the final audit is provided to Council once completed.

### **8.2. Council Compensation**

Council establishes the rate of compensation for the Mayor, Mayor Pro-Tem, and Councilmembers in accordance with O.C.G.A. 36-35-4. This rate is currently set at (\$5,000/year) for the Mayor, and (\$3,500/year) for the Councilmembers. Council is compensated with an annual check in November of each year.

### **8.3. Council Campaign Disclosures**

State law requires Council to submit public disclosure forms for campaign contributions and expenditures. More details on this filing, including the forms, can be obtained from the Georgia Government Transparency and Campaign Finance Committee at <http://ethics.georgia.gov/>.

### **8.4. Adopted Policies**

The following is a select few of the applicable policies the City has adopted to govern its financial operations. All policies can be found in the General and Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual.

#### **8.4.1. Purchasing Policy**

The City's purchasing policy outlines requirements to ensure competitive pricing of goods and services. It also includes specific tiers, based on cost, and the level of competition and approval that is required for each. Competitive pricing is always given high consideration. For some goods and services when there may be distinctions in the good or service depending on the provider, factors other than pricing will determine the successful provider; this is particularly true in the case of professional services. Change orders are subject to standard purchasing policy limits; the City Manager is authorized to approve change orders up to \$10,000, provided the overall approved budget is not exceeded. For more details, please see the City's Purchasing Policy, as well as GMA's *Public Works Construction Projects* report, both included in the Appendix.

#### **8.4.2. Internal Controls/Segregation of Duties Policy**

The City's internal controls/segregation of duties policy delineates specific financial functions to reduce the likelihood of errors and eliminate fraud. The basic idea underlying segregation of duties is that no employee or group should be in a position to conceal or commit error or fraud in the normal course of their duties.

#### **8.4.3. Cash Management and Investment Policy**

The cash management and investment policy sets forth written procedures for the operation of the investment program. Liquidity of assets and a sound financial position is at the forefront of the policy.

#### **8.4.4. Fixed Assets Policy**

The fixed assets policy and procedures are designed to provide financial and management information regarding fixed assets that facilitate valuation and financial reporting. This information allows management to make effective and accurate fixed asset acquisition, deployment, replacement, and maintenance decisions. The policy also assures that these valuable items are safeguarded and protected.

#### **8.4.5. Fund Balance Policy**

This policy established guidelines on managing the City's fund balance, which is the surplus of funds accrued from unexpended operating budgets and unanticipated revenues. The policy ensures that an adequate fund balance is maintained in order to sustain financial sustainability and to provide prudent management of the City's financial reserves.

## **9. Communications**

One of the Council's fundamental roles is communication. The Council communicates with the public to share the City's vision and goals and to determine community opinions, needs, and desires. Council must also communicate with staff, in order to provide direction on policy.

### **9.1. Communications from Council**

The Council acts as a body. On occasion, Councilmembers may wish to communicate on an issue on which the Council has taken a position or about an issue for which the Council has no position. In these cases, the Councilmember should make it clear that he/she is expressing a personal view, rather than that of the Council.

The City Charter specifies that the Mayor serves as "the official spokesperson for the City." With that in mind, Councilmembers should defer to the Mayor the role of communicating the City's position on policy matters to the public and other external bodies.

Members of Council will often be requested to correspond with citizens, business, and public agencies. Such correspondence might be a response to an inquiry, a reference for an individual or business, etc. In the case of communicating the City's position on a policy matter, the Mayor will generally handle such correspondence. It is appropriate for the Council to use City letterhead, e-mail address, and Council titles when sending correspondence that communicates official City business. Staff support is also available for preparing and sending such correspondence; please forward requests to the City Manager. City letterhead, e-mail, staff support, and postage may not be used for personal or political purposes.

## **9.2. Communications to Council**

Mail, including letters, memos, etc. that is received by the City and addressed to an individual Councilmember(s), will be opened, copied (or scanned) and forwarded to all Councilmembers.

## **9.3. Local Ballot Measures**

At times, initiatives may be placed on ballots that affect City policy. Individual Councilmembers may express their personal options on such initiatives. The City may provide education on the initiatives, but may not use personnel, equipment, materials, buildings, or other resources for the purposes of trying to influence the outcome of such elections. The City Attorney and City Manager will provide specific direction, as appropriate.

## **9.4. Proclamations**

The Mayor issues proclamations as a way to give special recognition by the City to an individual, event, issue, etc. Proclamations are not statements of policy and do not require the official approval or action of Council.

## **9.5. State Open Records Law**

Generally, any item, such as letters, e-mails, maps, photographs, audio recordings, etc. that is prepared and/or maintained or which is received in the course of operation of a public office is defined as a public record by state law. Such records must then be maintained and produced, if requested. E-mail messages generated and received through the City e-mail system are City property and may be retrieved from storage even if they have been deleted by the sender and receiver.

The regulations concerning open records are covered extensively in various training courses for elected officials, as well as in Chapter 2 of the *GMA Handbook for Georgia Mayors & Councilmembers*, and the *GMA Government in the Sunshine* guide. Questions may also be directed to either the City Attorney or the City Manager.

## **9.6. Communications from the City**

### **9.6.1. Press Releases**

City press releases are written and distributed by the City's Public Information Officer (or designee) several times each week or as needed. Press releases are also posted on the City's website.

### **9.6.2. City Website**

Content for the City's website, [www.cityoflilburn.com](http://www.cityoflilburn.com), is managed by staff. The home page of the site is updated frequently with current information. The website is a tool that is used for communicating news from the City as a whole and is not used for communicating from individuals or specific departments, including Council.

### **9.6.3. Social Media**

In an effort to build relationships, reach audiences that don't have access to or typically utilize the City's more traditional means of communication (e.g., newsletter), share information on a real-time basis, and retain its reputation as a progressive community, Lilburn uses social media outlets for City communications. The City uses one central account with each network, e.g. Facebook, Twitter, etc. Staff manages the City's social media accounts.

Elected officials should not post as "City of Lilburn." Campaigning, on behalf of political candidates or in support or opposition to issues, is discouraged on the City's pages. Political candidates are encouraged to establish their own fan pages and accounts. City staff members are discouraged from becoming "fans" of candidates' election pages/accounts; elected officials should avoid asking staff to do so.

### **9.6.4. City Newsletter/ E-Newsletter**

The City publishes the *Lilburn News* bimonthly (six times each year). The newsletter is used to communicate with the community on upcoming events, interesting news, etc. One copy of the newsletter is mailed to each City residence and business location.

Staff manages the production process, including selecting items for publication, writing articles, and editing the newsletter. Much like the City website, the City newsletter is a tool that is used for communicating news from the City as a whole and is not used for communicating from individuals or specific departments, including Council. City staff may contact Councilmembers for information and quotes to be included in articles.

The City also produces a monthly e-newsletter that is electronically submitted to subscribers.

## **10. Interaction with City Staff**

### **10.1. Council Manager Form of Government**

As a Council-Manager form of government, the policy of Lilburn's City Council is carried out by a dedicated and professional staff, under the oversight of a City Manager. The Council-Manager form of government allows Council to direct their time and energies to legislation and policy development, while the City Manager focuses on the organizational, legal, personnel, financial, and other administrative matters that occur on a daily basis. As there is a clear distinction between the roles of both, it is critical that the relationship between Council and staff be well understood by all parties. The Council and City Manager are most effective when there is mutual respect between both parties and Council supports the organizational teamwork necessary to successfully implement Council's policies.

### **10.2. City Council Non-Interference**

The City Council is to work through the City Manager when dealing with administrative duties of the City.

The Council or its individual members shall not, either directly or indirectly, be involved in or attempt to influence administrative matters that are under the direction of the City Manager, such as staff decision-making, the development of staff recommendations, scheduling of work, executing department priorities, personnel issues, purchasing, etc. This is necessary to protect staff from undue influence and pressure from individual Councilmembers and to allow staff to execute work in the priority set by management. If a Councilmembers wishes to influence an administrative action, decision, recommendation, workload, work schedule, etc., he/she must bring it to the attention of Council so that Council can decide whether to address it as a matter of policy.

Requests for staff assistance shall be directed to the City Manager. The City Manager will assign such requests to the appropriate staff person(s) and they will be completed in a timely and professional manner, as appropriate. The City Manager will forward requests to Council that are of the magnitude, either in terms of workload or policy, that are more appropriately assigned to staff as a matter of Council policy.

The Council shall not give any orders to staff under the direction of the City Manager. All communications from Council to staff shall be directed to the City Manager, with the exception of a general inquiry, which may be directed to the appropriate department director. All non-emergency communications to staff, with the exception of the City Manager, shall be during business hours.

It will not be unusual for Council to receive requests from citizens, vendors, personal contacts, etc. requesting a Councilmember's assistance with certain administrative functions of the City. This is particularly true for the more visible functions, such as event management, marketing and promotion, etc. For example, event management is a staff-driven administrative function – setting the event calendar, selecting entertainment and vendors, etc. Staff's approach to event management combines professional judgment with past experiences in order to create well-rounded quality events for the community. Staff takes a similar approach to the City's marketing plan, using professionally developed materials and a strategic plan for how and where the City will market itself. Council should be respectful of the need for a managed, professional approach and refrain from committing the City and/or staff in such administrative functions.

### **10.3. Council/Manager Relationship**

An effective professional relationship between the Council and City Manager honors the City Manager's role as chief executive of the City. All dealings with the City Manager, whether publicly or privately, shall respect the City Manager's role. Public disagreements should be centered on issues of policy, rather than in terms that question satisfaction with or support of the City Manager.

The City Manager respects and is sensitive to the responsibilities of Council in setting policy and acknowledges that the Council holds the final responsibility for establishing the policy direction of the City.

## **10.4. Council & Staff Communications**

### **10.4.1. Council Requests for Information**

The City Manager serves as the liaison for communication between Council and City staff. The sharing of timely, accurate information is one of the City Manager's highest priorities. Council requests for information shall be forwarded to the City Manager who will ensure a prompt and professional response. Such information requests, and the subsequent response, will be copied to the full Council so that each member may be equally informed.

### **10.4.2. Staff Communications to Council**

The City Manager and staff use a variety of methods to share information with Council. The City Manager's open-door policy allows for impromptu meetings. Monthly pre-agenda meetings allow for detailed presentations and discussions of City business. In an effort to consolidate the communication of non-emergency information, the City Manager will provide regular updates. Annual retreats with Council and senior staff allow for in-depth, focused discussion on both strategic and tactical topics.

### **10.4.3. Restricted Information**

There are certain circumstances under which the City Manager is restricted from providing information to Council, such as confidential personnel information, certain aspects of Police affairs, etc.

### **10.4.4. Citizen Requests for Service**

Council will receive frequent contacts from citizens regarding requests for service by the City, such as repair of potholes, code enforcement issues, replacement of street lights, etc. In addition to calling or e-mailing staff, citizens can make these requests directly to staff through the online Citizen Request Tracker system, which can be accessed through the home page of [www.cityofilburn.com](http://www.cityofilburn.com). This allows requests to be made during non-business hours and the requestor will receive details on the status of the request.

## **10.5. Staff Relationship to Appointed Boards**

Staff provides support and assistance to the City's appointed boards. Such support includes assistance with agenda development, preparation of reports and background materials on issues before the boards, etc. This assistance allows the boards to have sufficient information to discuss the issues before them.

Appointed boards do not have supervisory authority over City staff. While staff members may work closely with the boards, staff remains responsible to their immediate supervisor, and ultimately, the City Manager. Appointed boards shall not give any orders to staff.

## **10.6. Political Involvement by Staff**

Lilburn is a nonpartisan local government. Professional staff prepares recommendations and carries out policy in compliance with Council policy for the good of the entire community and is not influenced by political factors.

Employees are prohibited from using their position with the City to advance or promote political office. Such involvement may impair the employee's independence of his or her judgment or action in the performance of official duties. Additionally, no employees are allowed to continue in service upon qualifying as a candidate for nomination or election to any public office.

By working for the City, staff does not surrender their rights to be involved in political activities as private citizens. Employees may privately express their personal opinions, register to vote, sign petitions, and vote in any election.

## **11. Support Provided to City Council**

### **11.1. Staff Support**

Staff in the City Manager's office, usually the City Clerk, provides administrative support to Councilmembers, such as appointment scheduling, receipt of phone messages, word processing, etc. As staff may have work assignments with high priority, sensitivity to workload is appreciated. Should requested tasks require significant time, the Councilmember shall direct the request to the City Manager.

#### **11.1.1. IT Support**

The City uses an independent contractor to perform Information Technology (IT) work. Councilmembers who need IT assistance shall forward a request to the City Clerk, who will coordinate with the IT staff. IT assistance is limited to the maintenance of applications/hardware related to City business only.

## **11.2. Technology**

### **11.2.1. Computers**

A computer is available to the Mayor for official use only. The City does not provide computer hardware to individual Councilmembers.

### **11.2.2. E-mail account**

Each Councilmember is assigned an individual City e-mail address with the cityofilburn.com domain. Councilmembers may elect to use a personal e-mail address as an alternative. The City's e-mail system shall be used for the communication and exchange of information related to City business. City e-mail may not be used for personal or political purposes.

Councilmembers can access their e-mail from their computer, phone, etc. through a web-based client; IT staff will assist with the set-up.

There should be no expectation of privacy when using City e-mail.

## **11.3. Office & Meeting Rooms**

### **11.3.1. Office & Equipment in City Hall**

As the Mayor and Council are part-time positions, and not responsible for day-to-day operations, the City has chosen not to provide offices for Councilmembers. Elected officials are free to visit City Hall and other facilities, but should limit the frequency and length of their visits. An office is afforded the Mayor and is available for Councilmembers as well.

Councilmembers may use available office equipment within City Hall, such as the copier, scanner, etc. for official City business.

### **11.3.2 Meeting Rooms**

There are three meeting rooms available in City Hall – the Council Chambers, Council conference room and Mayor's conference room. Councilmembers may reserve the rooms for meeting with the public. Rooms may be reserved for City business only and may not be used for personal or political business. The City Clerk can assist Councilmembers with reserving the meeting rooms.

The City does reserve/rent out its meeting rooms to community and non-profit groups. The City Clerk's staff coordinates these rentals. Generally, alcohol is not allowed during rentals, unless specifically approved by the City Manager.

## **11.4 City Vehicles**

Councilmembers shall use their personal vehicles for daily use within the City limits. Council members typically use their personal vehicles for City-related travel, as well, receiving a reimbursement for mileage.

The City does not provide drivers for either the Mayor or Councilmembers, regardless of the vehicle that is used.

## **11.5 Mail**

Members of the City Council receive a large volume of mail and other materials that are usually delivered to City Hall. Individual mailboxes are maintained for the use of Council. Mail received at City Hall will be placed in the Councilmember's box, to be picked up at his/her convenience. Councilmembers are provided a key to access City Hall after hours, if needed, for this purpose.