

	Community Flag Raisings & Flag Protocol Policy	
	Policy Category: Governance/Protocol	
	Policy No.:	Implementing Procedure No.:
Approving Authority: COUNCIL	Effective Date: February 11, 2020	
Approved or Last Reviewed Date: February 11, 2020	Next Review Year: February 2025	
Area(s) this policy applies to: ALL	Owner Department: LEGISLATIVE SERVICES	
Related Policy(ies): <ul style="list-style-type: none">Proclamation Policy		

Note: Questions about this policy should be directed to the Owner Department.

1. Purpose Statement <i>(Outline why the organization is issuing the policy and its desired effect or outcome of the policy)</i>
<p>The Community Flag Raisings & Flag Protocol Policy establishes a framework to govern requests for flag raisings received from the community, and to establish a consistent protocol for the flying of flags at all municipal buildings, properties, and facilities.</p>
2. Applicability and Scope Statement <i>(Who and what this policy applies to and/or affects)</i>
<p>This Policy applies to Community Flag Raisings held at the Markham Civic Centre, and to the flying of flags at any municipal building, property, or facilities.</p>
3. Background <i>(Indicate any reasons, history, and intent that led to the creation of the policy)</i>
<p>Markham recognizes that flags, as symbols of nations, territories and community organizations, are important to residents of Markham. Markham is committed to building upon, while maintaining, the rich heritage of protocol associated with the flying of flags. As a matter of practice, Markham has used special flag raisings to enhance public awareness of activities such as national/independence days, multicultural events, fundraising drives, and historical commemorations important to residents. Markham has also flown flags at half-mast to mark periods of official mourning or commemorate solemn occasions important to the residents.</p>
4. Definitions <i>(If applicable, define any terminology or interpret meanings of a general term)</i>
<p>A) “Clerk” means the Clerk appointed by the Markham Council, or his/her designate.</p>



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- B) **“Community Flag Pole”** means any flagpole at the Markham Civic Centre designated for Community Flag Raisings.
- C) **“Civic Centre Flag Display”** means the four (4) flagpoles aligned to form a single display adjacent to the main entrance of the Anthony Roman Civic Centre.
- D) **“Flying a Flag at Half-mast”** means the action of flying all flags, forming a single display of flags, at a position that is equal distance from the top and bottom of a flagpole, to mark periods of mourning or to commemorate solemn occasions.
- E) **“Markham Flag”** means the flag adopted by Markham Council as a symbol of the municipality. The Markham Flag may be granted, registered, approved or confirmed by the Canadian Heraldic Authority.
- F) **“National Flag of Canada”** means the flag approved by the Parliament of Canada as a national symbol of Canada.
- G) **“Provincial Flag of Ontario”** means the flag approved by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as a provincial symbol of Ontario.

5. Policy Statements *(Detail the specific regulations, requirements, or modifications to organizational behaviour to be addressed by this policy)*

The following rules will be used by the Markham in respect to the flying of flags at any municipal building, property, or facility:

1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF THE POLICY

The following general principles will apply in respect to all aspects of this Policy, and be used when interpreting the Policy:

- A. The municipality will use flags to celebrate Markham’s diversity, and honour those who have contributed to the life of the City;
- B. The flying of flags at any municipal facility will not be contrary to the principles of any other Markham policy; and,
- C. The municipality will only fly flags that are approved or recognized by federal, provincial or municipal governments of Canada.

2. COMMUNITY FLAG RAISINGS

Markham will designate up to two (2) Community Flagpoles at the Markham Civic Centre to celebrate Markham’s diversity and heritage. The first Community Flagpole will be the center right flagpole of

the Civic Centre Flag Display, and the second Community Flagpole will be designated by the Clerk.

A. Community Flag Raising Criteria

The Criteria for approving or denying a request to use the Community Flag Poles will be:

The Community Flagpoles may be to fly flags:

- in honour national or independence days important to the residents of Markham;
- in support of fund-raising drives important to the residents of Markham; and,
- to celebrate multi-cultural and civic events important to the residents Markham.

The Community Flagpoles will not be used to fly flags

- of Political Parties;
- of Religious Groups;
- in support of fund-raising drives that are political or religious in nature; and
- in support of groups, organizations, or events that promote beliefs contrary to any other City policy.

The Clerk will be responsible for providing advice, as necessary, on the applicability of any of the above criteria to any application received for Community Flag Raisings.

B. Applications for use of the Community Flagpoles

All requests for use of the Community Flagpoles will be made in writing to the Clerk. Applications are to be submitted at least one (3) weeks prior to the day requested for the raising of the flag. The Clerk will review all applications to determine consistency with this Policy, and will:

If the flag raising was previously approved by Council within 5 years of the current request, and is consistent with this Policy, approve the flag raising and note it on a Council Agenda for information purposes;

If the flag raising was not previously approved by Council, or was approved by Council more than 5 years before the current request, will make a recommendation to Council to approve or deny the application on a Council Agenda prior to the date of the proposed flag raising; and,

During the summer recess of Council, will decided to approve or deny any flag raising not previously approved by Council within the last five (5) years, any decisions will be noted on a Council Agenda for information purposes.

C. General Rules for the Community Flagpoles

The general rules for the use of the Community Flagpoles are as follows:

Approvals and use of the Community Flagpole(s) will be granted on a first come-first served basis;

Flags will be flown for up to 1 week at a time;

When the Community Flag Raising is for the flag of another nation the flags of the Civic Centre Flag Display will be ordered from left to right as follows: (1) Provincial Flag of Ontario; (2) National Flag of Canada; (3) community flag; and (4) Markham Flag;

When the Community Flag Raising is for a non-national flag the flags of the Civic Centre Flag Display will be ordered from left to right as follows: (1) Provincial Flag of Ontario; (2) National Flag of Canada; (3) Markham Flag; and (4) the community flag;

When more than one (1) flag-raising occurs on the same day (or during the same period of time), the following rules apply:

When the Clerk has designated a second Community Flagpole, and both flag raising are for flags of other nations, the application received first will be flown on the Community Flagpole which is part of the Civic Centre Flag Display

When the Clerk has designated a second Community Flagpole, and only one flag raising is for the flag of another nation, the flag of the other national will be flown on the Community Flagpole which is part of the Civic Centre Flag Display

When the Clerk has not designated a second Community Flagpole, the community flag raising will: (1) be moved to a different day; or (2) share the time period equally

Individuals, groups or association requesting flag raisings are required to provide the flag to be raised.

FLAG PROTOCOL

Markham's protocol for the flying on flags at all municipal facilities are incorporated into this Policy as appendices. Appendix "A" are the protocols Markham will use in honouring contributions to the life of the municipality through the Flying a Flag at Half-mast. Appendix "B" are the protocols the municipality will use in determining how flags will usually be flown at any municipal facility.



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6. Roles and Responsibilities *(Outline roles and responsibilities of those involved in the implementation of the policy)*

Council

Council is responsible for approving and amending this Policy

The Clerk

The Clerk will be responsible for the interpretation of this Policy, as well as the development of procedures for the effective and efficient implementation of the Policy.

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Appendix “A”

FLYING FLAGS AT HALF-MAST

The City’s protocol for Flying a Flag at Half-mast will be:

Periods of Official Mourning

Flags will be flown at half-mast at all City facilities to mark periods of official mourning upon the death of:

- i. The Sovereign;
- ii. A Member of the Canadian Royal Family;
- iii. The Governor General of Canada, or a former Governor General;
- iv. The Prime Minister of Canada, or a former Prime Minister;
- v. The Leader of Her Majesty’s Loyal Opposition, Parliament of Canada
- vi. The Lieutenant Governor of Ontario;
- vii. The Premier of Ontario;
- viii. The Leader of Her Majesty’s Loyal Opposition, Legislative Assembly of Ontario
- ix. A local Member of Parliament, or a local Member of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario;
- x. The Mayor or a former Mayor;
- xi. A Member of Council or a former Member of Council;
- xii. The Regional Chair or a former Regional Chair;
- xiii. A current employee of the City of Markham;
- xiv. A York Region Police Officer who dies in the line of duty; and
- xv. A resident of Markham, who is a member of the Canadian Armed Forces, killed while deployed on operations.

Flags will be flown at half-mast, in the case of a national or provincial official, for the duration established by the appropriate federal or provincial protocol offices. In the case of other persons, flags will be flown at half mast from the date the notice of death is received until sunset on the date of the funeral for that individual.

The Clerk will be responsible for coordinating the Lowering of Flags at City facilities.

Markham Fire & Emergency Services Facilities

The Markham Fire & Emergency Services may mark a period of official mourning for other fire and emergency personnel who have died in the line of duty, or any other traditional commemorations of solemn occasions important to fire and emergency personnel. This applies to Markham Fire Stations only.

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Commemoration of Solemn Occasions

Flags will be flown at half-mast annually, at all municipal facilities, to commemorate the following solemn occasions:

- i. Day Mourning for Persons Killed or Injured in the Workplace (April 28)
- ii. National Day of Remembrance for Victims of Terrorism (June 23)
- iii. Firefighters National Memorial Day (second Sunday of September)
- iv. Police and Peace Officer's National Memorial Day (last Sunday of September)
- v. National Day of Truth and Reconciliation (September 30)
- vi. Remembrance Day (November 11); and,
- vii. National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women (December 6)

Other Solemn Occasions

The commemoration of other periods of official mourning and solemn occasions, in keeping with the General Principles of this Policy, may be approved by the Mayor. A notice of any approval issued by the Mayor will be placed on a future Council Agenda for informational purposes.

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Appendix “B”

CUSTOMARY FLAG CONFIGURATION

The City’s protocol for the usual configuration of flags at City of Markham facilities will be:

A. Civic Centre Flag Display

The National Flag of Canada will be flown on the two (2) centre flagpoles. To an observer facing the entrance to the Civic Centre, the Provincial Flag of Ontario will fly to the left of the far left of the display, and the Markham Flag will be flown to its right. Other flags will not be flown on any of these flagpoles, except in the circumstances noted under the heading “Dignitary Visits” or “Awards Received by the Municipality”

B. Other City Facilities

When the facility has only one (1) flagpole

The National Flag of Canada will be flown at facilities with only one flagpole. Another flag will not be flown under the National Flag of Canada. Other flags will not be flown at these facilities, except in the circumstances noted in under the heading “Dignitary Visits.”

When the facility has two (2) flagpoles configured to form a single display

The National Flag of Canada and the either the Provincial Flag of Ontario or the Flag of the City of Markham will be flown. The customary position of honour, the left flagpole to an observer facing the display, will be used to fly the National Flag of Canada. Other flags will not be flown on these flagpoles, except in the circumstances noted under the heading “Dignitary Visits.”

When the facility has three (3) flagpoles configured to form a single display

The National Flag of Canada, the Ontario Provincial Flag, and the Flag of the City of Markham will be flown. The National Flag of Canada will be flown on the centre flagpole which is the customary position of honour. To an observer facing the display, the Provincial Flag of Ontario will fly to the left of the National Flag of Canada, and the Flag of City of Markham will be flown to its right. Other flags will not be flown on these flagpoles, except in the circumstances noted under the heading “Dignitary Visits.”

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C. Shared Government Facilities

At Shared Government Facilities (e.g. Markham & York Region Joint Fire & EMS Stations) arrangement of flags at facilities shared by the City and another government will be decided by written agreement between the governments and in accordance with applicable protocol. The Clerk will be responsible for representing the City and confirming such arrangements.

DIGNITARY VISITS

In the event of a visit by a dignitary to a City of Markham facility, the City may fly a flag representing that dignitary. The flying of a flag to mark the dignitary's visit will be made only after consulting with an appropriate protocol officer responsible for coordinating the visit.

AWARDS RECEIVED BY THE MUNICIPALITY

Where the municipality has received a significant award or recognition that includes an approved flag, that flag may be flown for up to one week each year. In this event flags of the Civic Centre Flag Display will be ordered from left to right as follows: (1) Provincial Flag of Ontario; (2) National Flag of Canada; (3) Markham Flag; and (4) the award flag

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Appendix “C”

FOREIGN NATIONAL FLAG RAISINGS AND LIST OF ANNUAL FLAG RAISINGS

The City’s protocol for Limiting Foreign National Flag Raisings to One (1) Annually and Expanding the List of Annual Flag Raisings observed by the City of Markham:

A. Limit Foreign National Flag Raisings to One (1) Annually

The current Policy provides for the raising of national flags from countries other than Canada to acknowledge national or independence days, multicultural events, fundraising efforts, and historical commemorations. However, the Policy does not currently limit the number of times a foreign flag can be raised for the same country, which has occasionally led to confusion for the public and staff. As such, Staff are recommending a minor amendment to Section 2.0¹ of the Policy to limit national flag raisings for countries other than Canada to one annually per country– to be approved on a first come first granted basis. Such a restriction is consistent with flag policies in other Ontario municipalities (see Appendix “B”).

B. Civic Centre Flag Display

The current Community Flag Raisings & Flag Protocol Policy states that all requests for flag raisings are to be made in writing to the City Clerk. Applications are to be submitted at least three (3) weeks prior to the day requested for the raising of the flag. Legislative Services staff review all applications to determine consistency with the Policy. Staff propose amending the Policy to allow for the ongoing approval of annual flag raisings in the City of Markham for the following events:

- Black History Month (February)
- National Indigenous People’s Week (June)
- Pride Month (June)
- Senior’s Month

Sponsors of these events will no longer need to submit an annual application to the Legislative Services Department. Staff all request authorization for the City Clerk to add additional annual flag raising events to this list as needed, in consultation with the Mayor’s Office.