

LONE TREE CITY COUNCIL GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Adopted by the Lone Tree City Council

December 3, 2019

Our Vision

What We Strive For

Lone Tree is a premier Colorado community connected by great neighborhoods, vibrant public spaces, a beautiful natural environment, and thriving businesses.

Our Mission

How We'll Get There

We will achieve Lone Tree's community vision by doing things the best way, not just the expected way.

Our 6 BIG Ideas

We Will Be A National Model For:



Our deep, active commitment to **public safety**.



Creating signature **cultural and recreational** opportunities.



Our visionary **transportation** network.



Attracting and growing top-tier **businesses** and a diverse economy.



Building a **great community** known for exceptional places.



Our innovative, customer focused and efficient city **government**.

(This handbook is intended to give guidance to current and prospective City Council members, as well as our constituents.)

OUR ROLE

As elected officials of a Home Rule Council/Manager form of government, we are the legislative and governing body of the City. As a group, we set policy and adopt laws, ordinances, resolutions and an annual budget as we deem proper. The City Charter enables the City Manager and his or her staff to manage the day-to-day activities of our municipal government, such as preparing the annual budget, hiring staff, enforcing laws and regulations and carrying out Council policy directives.

OUR COMMITMENT TO WORK TOGETHER

As elected officials, we will:

Listen - We will listen to what fellow Council Members, visitors and staff have to say. Listening with an open mind builds trust.

Seek Consensus - We will seek common ground among competing interests and strive for consensus.

Disagree Agreeably - We may disagree with each other but will treat the opinions of others with respect. Our disagreements can lead to constructive solutions to real problems.

Respect the Will of the Majority - While we may not all agree with the Council's final decision, we will support the decision of the majority and not attempt to undermine it. If we want to affect change, we will do so in a constructive manner consistent with Council policies and procedures.

Respect the Rights of the Minority - We will be sensitive to the feelings and concerns of those who do not agree with the majority. We will respect their position and not criticize them for disagreeing with the remainder of the Council.

Treat Everyone with Respect - We will not publicly embarrass or humiliate our fellow Council Members, citizens or staff. While disagreements are expected and acceptable, we will maintain an atmosphere of good will and respect. We will focus on ideas and suggestions rather than question motives, intelligence or integrity.

Treat Staff as Professionals - We respect the role of staff as professionals and depend on the City Manager to manage staff performance.

Share information - We will share relevant information with fellow Council Members, so we all have the same information.

Make Decisions in the Open - We will be transparent and conduct our business consistent with the spirit of Open Meetings law.

Communicate the Decisions of Council - We will accurately communicate the majority decisions of the City Council, even if we disagree with the decision; and by so doing, affirm the respect and integrity of our decision-making process.

Nurture the Value of the Individual and Recognize the Strength of the Team - We believe the Council's legal and political strength can only be realized when we work as a team.

Constituents expect their elected officials will work together for the common good of the City and our constituents.

Trust Your Judgment; Make Tough Decisions - The voters elected us to make informed decisions. We realize some of the most difficult decisions are those that represent the greater good, sometimes against the wishes and desires of individual citizens.

(Adapted from Loveland, Colorado's Council Orientation Guide; Plymouth, Minnesota's Council Handbook; and others.)

ETHICAL STANDARDS

We are bound by the ethical standards contained in Section 2-7 of the Lone Tree Municipal Code. These include but, but are not limited to:

- Adherence to the City's gift ban which prohibits us from accepting gifts, money, or other consideration of any kind as a reward or inducement to perform an act, or refrain from performing an act.
- Maintaining confidentiality of any information obtained in our official capacity that is confidential and not intended for public dissemination.
- Avoiding conduct or actions as elected officials that benefit our personal or financial interests.
- Timely disclosure of conflicts of interest and non-participation in official decisions which give rise to such conflicts of interest.
- Handling ethical complaints through an independent hearing officer.

COUNCIL ACTIONS, MEETINGS AND OPEN RECORDS

Our decisions to adopt rules, regulations, ordinances and resolutions will be made at open public meetings, in compliance with the Colorado Open Meetings Law. All our "meetings," which can include discussions held over email or phone, of three or more Council Members convened for the purpose of discussing "public business," must be open to the public. We assume everything we write regarding City business, including emails, is public and subject to an Open Records Request. We encourage each other to contact the City Attorney with any questions or for clarification.

QUASI-JUDICIAL MATTERS AND EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS

When we apply a specific law to certain facts to determine the rights of a particular person/entity regarding their property or business, we are acting like a judge and must ensure the applicant receives due process. Examples include rezoning or a liquor license. Due process requires public notice, a hearing and a fair and impartial decision-maker.

- We will follow applicable legal criteria and apply those criteria to the evidence we hear at the hearing, to arrive at our decision.
- We will refrain from "ex parte" or "outside the hearing" contacts regarding a pending quasi-judicial matter.

- We will not participate in decision-making in a quasi-judicial matter in which we have a conflict of interest.

Evidence of bias, conflicts of interest, or *ex parte* communications can subject our decisions to a legal challenge. We encourage each other to contact the City Attorney with any questions or for clarification.

HOW WE WORK WITH THE MEDIA

Any media requests received by the Mayor or Council Members are to be forwarded to the City's Communications Manager for review. Upon review with the Communications Manager, the Mayor determines whether to respond with an interview or written statement or delegate a Council Member to respond on his or her behalf. In the event the Mayor is inaccessible, the City Manager determines how to respond.

OUR COMMITMENT TO WORK WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Commissions, Boards and Committees

We are fortunate to have many dedicated volunteer residents to advise and assist the City. Periodically, we will be asked to meet and work with our Commissions, Boards and Committees (CBCs), including the Arts Commission, Audit Committee, Board of Adjustments and Appeals, Citizens' Recreation Advisory Committee, Planning Commission, Youth Commission and the Living and Aging Well in Lone Tree group.

Other Local Boards, Associations and Organizations

Other local partners we work with include over 40 Homeowners Associations, Metropolitan Districts and other local organizations.

Special Events and Occasions

Council Members are also encouraged to attend numerous other community special events and occasions, including City sponsored and partnership events, ribbon-cuttings, business grand openings and others.

OUR COMMITMENT TO WORK WITH OUR PARTNERS IN THE REGION AND BEYOND

We are more successful when we work with our partners in the region and beyond. Individual Council Members are assigned to represent the City of Lone Tree on a selection of the various committees, boards and other entities. Your active participation and preparation for meetings of these assigned entities is expected. Should you be unable to attend, request the help of an alternate or request assistance to make sure the City is appropriately represented.

STAFF SUPPORT

Council Members receive support from staff in many ways, including:

- Staff analysis and reports
- Cell phones and iPads for communication and reviewing the Council's e-packet, along with technical support.
- Routine questions or requests of staff should go through the City Manager, Department Director, or in some cases the author of a Council staff report.

Requests that require significant staff time or resources, e.g. research or preparation of a report, should be referred to the City Manager and Mayor.

ROLE DURING EMERGENCIES OR DISASTERS

The City Council as the duly elected leadership has the statutory responsibility for the management of an emergency or disaster within the jurisdiction. Some of those responsibilities include:

- Officially declare an Emergency or Disaster in the City
- Enact ordinances and resolutions authorizing the City Manager to manage a disaster or emergency
- Provide policy guidance and direction as necessary
- Coordinate with elected officials from other jurisdictions in support of plan implementation

