City Council Norms
City of Mountain View City Council

This document was first created by City Council in January 2015. It was updated and revised by Council in February 2017, and reviewed and validated in 2018, 2019, and 2021.

<u>**Interaction Norms**</u>

- **Build Good Relationship**s: Create trust, demonstrate respect, and engage in open and honest dialogue with each other.

- **Seek Understandin**g: Make efforts to understand each other's concerns, issues, interests, and perspectives.

- **Be Candid:** Provide each other with constructive feedback and suggestions in supportive and non-threatening ways (e.g. off line conversations).

- **Manage Differences:** Address disagreements and differences constructively; concentrate on issues, not personalities; engage in problem solving together.

- **Find Common Ground:** Seek areas of agreement; identify shared interests, values, and positions.

- **Commit to Decisions:** Move forward without animosity after decisions are made and votes taken; avoid undermining the decision or denigrating Council colleagues.

- **Ensure Confidentiality:** Ensure that closed session discussions remain confidential; report out only what Council has collectively agreed to share.

<u>**Meeting and City Communications Norms**</u>

- **Use Council Meeting Time Wisely**: Move efficiently toward decisions on non-controversial items when it is apparent that there is broad Council support. Facilitate a sharing of perspectives and dialog among Council Members on complex or controversial items for which there is a range of views to be explored. Avoid long speeches.

- **Encourage Effective Public Participation:** Continue to set speaker time based on the number of speakers to allow all who wish to speak an opportunity to do so at a reasonable hour. Encourage groups to select representatives who can indicate the presence of supporters in the audience. As appropriate, provide points of clarification or refer questions to staff in response to public comments.

- **Promote Clarity Regarding Official City Communications:** Defer to the Mayor as the spokesperson for official City positions and rely upon staff to ensure accurate information and efficient coordination in response to questions about City programs and policies. Be clear when stating an individual perspective and take care when using Council titles to not imply an official City position or sponsorship.