

***Statement of Values and Conduct Commitments
for Working with Colleagues and Together as a Council.***

A. OPENNESS VALUES:

1. We will respect the importance of our process in performing our work and we will ensure that process is transparent, straightforward, and understandable; and used to facilitate participation by all interested parties, and not to exclude or discourage participation.
2. We will actively and regularly reach out to one another so that we can hear what one another are interested in or concerned about, and so that others can hear what is of interest or concern to us, being mindful of considerations such as: creating timely collaboration opportunities with allies; helping others avoid parallel or duplicate efforts, particularly with issues of interest in adjacent districts; limiting “surprises;” and allowing timely use of the committee process while also avoiding premature or undue raising of expectations
3. We will operate with integrity and make our commitments meaningful and reliable; we will not commit to a position until we have explored and can understand the various perspectives that other members may have; and if we move away from a commitment, we will do so only following an explanation and discussion as to why.
4. We will strive to operate on a “no surprises” basis by communicating our concerns to one another in advance and giving sufficient time to others to understand and digest our concerns.
5. We will give one another, and the body as a whole, the time and space to deliberate on and work through decisions together.

B. VALUES FOR WORKING TOGETHER:

1. Individual councilmembers will share their areas of expertise as a resource for decision-making by the body, while being mindful to avoid usurping other members’ decision-making prerogatives by the undue elevation of that expertise as the key or only decision-making criterion, or by excluding other perspectives.

2. We will participate in and encourage working groups of the Council to leverage our limited time, develop subject matter expertise, and build collaboration, as well as utilize our staff members for detailed or intensive research as appropriate; and give and share credit and access where allyship exists.
3. Individual councilmembers will understand when an “I” role is called for, as well as when a “we” (the body as a whole) role is called for. When a position or action is one that is to be taken by the body, we will strive towards a “we” decision on the position or action rather than pursuing our own “I” position or action.
4. We will keep each other informed of our individual initiatives and we will strive to find common ground and opportunities for collaboration and cooperation on those initiatives.
5. We will maintain our own true “north” with respect to the perspectives, experience, and priorities that we bring to decision-making as individual members, and we will respect the same of our colleagues.
6. We will strive to relate to, understand, and treat one another as professional workplace colleagues.
7. Although we come to our positions with varying motivations and backgrounds, we will understand that our role and relationship to “the government” changed once we took our oath of office and we became part of “the government,” and we will comport ourselves accordingly with respect to one another, the people we serve, and those working in the City.
8. We will reach out to one another when we need help, and we will help one another when a colleague reaches out.
9. We will not make assumptions about how others on the body may feel about or view an issue, but we will ask and listen to find out one another’s views.
10. When our individual views appear to place us at the center of the prevailing views on a position, we will seek to encourage the questions and perspectives that will draw those on the edges closer to the center, so that those questions and perspectives can be heard and be acted upon.

11. We will honor the majority will of the body and not seek to undermine it, and we will respect minority views on the body.

C. VALUES FOR RESPECT:

1. As individual members, we will accord respect to one another by virtue of the office that each of us holds.
2. We will seek opportunities to deepen that respect for one another on an individual level by the following means: we will accord each other the presumption that each is acting in good faith in the best interests of the City and the people we serve, and avoid demonizing others because of disagreements we may have; we will recognize that respect for one another applies in public and non-public settings; we will engage with and interact with one another, and seek to do so honestly, forthrightly, and kindly; we will understand that communication is required for trust, and trust is required for respect; and we will recognize and be willing to act when an apology and amends are due.
3. Although we have unique personalities and leadership styles, we will avoid personal attacks, “cheap shots,” attempts to guilt or shame one another, and non-forthright comments or criticisms.
4. We will listen to one another with an open mind.
5. We will look for opportunities to get to know one another in settings where we don’t necessarily have to discuss policy issues.
6. We will communicate to one another our concerns, and we will acknowledge and share our skepticisms and our initial mindsets, so that we can be understood by others.
7. We will welcome conflict and disagreement as healthy and necessary for decision-making, but we will avoid making disagreements personal. We will not use our conduct expectations as a tool to stifle or to exclude people from the discussion.