



Statement

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 9, 2026

Upholding Safety and Respect in Civic Proceedings

Last night's Council meeting included a deeply concerning incident following a rezoning decision in which threatening and unwelcome gestures from the public gallery were directed toward members of Council. The behaviour was unacceptable, and we unfortunately had to pause our proceedings to address it.

Council members come to this role with one focus - to make South Dundas a better place to live, work and play. Council and Staff understand that governing means making hard decisions, and that not all outcomes will be welcomed by everyone. We genuinely encourage respectful dialogue, as it is incumbent on us to stand behind our decisions and be accountable to the community we serve. What we will not accept is intimidation, threatening gestures, or behaviour that puts the safety and dignity of staff, elected officials and the public at risk. There is simply no place for it.

Fortunately, the vast majority of residents who engage with their municipal government do so respectfully and with professionalism. Unfortunately, it only takes one individual to make an already difficult and often thankless job harder than it needs to be. It was not lost on us that later that same evening, Council was considering a draft Social Media policy designed, in part, to address exactly these kinds of concerns staff and Council encounter online.

With a municipal election on the horizon, we encourage residents to think carefully about what civic participation looks like at its best. Disagreement is healthy, and democracy depends on it. There is a right way and a wrong way to disagree; last night reminded us of that, and of why it matters.

For more information about this statement contact:

Benjamin de Haan

Chief Administrative Officer

Phone: 613-543-2673 ext. 4756

Email: bdehaan@southdundas.com