

NEWS RELEASE

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City launches online form for submitting agenda-related questions to Council

Summary

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in many changes across the City. On March 26, 2020, the Province announced Ministerial Order No. M083, which allows for changes to Council meeting processes during the pandemic. As a result of these Orders, members of the public have been asked to observe Council meetings virtually and not attend in person, and question period was temporarily suspended.

In an effort to reinstate the opportunity for the public to ask questions at Council meetings, while physical distancing restrictions are in place, the City has created a new online form and invites the public to submit their agenda-related questions to Council via this tool.

The usual guidelines for question period at Council meetings will be in place, which means that in order for submitted questions to be read out during a Council meeting they must be related to an agenda item. The Regular Council meeting taking place on Monday, May 4 will be the first opportunity for online questions to be received by Council.

Questions for Regular Council meetings must be submitted by 3:00 p.m. the day of the meeting. Questions for Special Council meetings will need to be submitted by 10:00 a.m. the day of the meeting. To view the agendas for upcoming Council meetings visit www.nanaimo.ca/meetings. For questions not related to an agenda item, the public is encouraged to email Mayor and Council at mayor&council@nanaimo.ca.

Strategic Link: Supporting the strategic pillar of Governance Excellence while ensuring public safety through physical distancing measures.

Key Points

- Question Period at Regular and Special Council meetings will be reinstated on Monday, May 4 with the public invited to submit questions via an online form found here: <https://www.nanaimo.ca/your-government/city-council/council-meetings/question-period-online-submissions>
- The Province's Ministerial Order No. M083 continues to be in place, which outlines changes to Council meeting processes during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Question period at Committee meetings will continue to be suspended while the Order is in effect

Quotes

"Ensuring that public participation can still take place at Council meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic is important to Council. Having an online option for receiving questions is a great way to adapt question period during these extraordinary times when public safety is paramount."

Leonard Krog
Mayor
City of Nanaimo

"Staff are committed to ensuring that public participation at Council meetings can still take place, even though many of the meetings are being held virtually and public attendance is restricted due to the pandemic. Being able to submit questions for Council online that are related to the agenda will help keep those lines of communication open between the public and their elected officials."

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