



DRYDEN

Media Release

Judicial Review Decision Regarding Councillor Noel vs. The Corporation of the City of Dryden

DRYDEN, ON – October 7, 2026

In late December 2024 / early January 2025, The Corporation of the City of Dryden received a number of complaints involving Councillor Ritch Noel.

The City engaged an external independent investigator. She concluded that Councillor Noel had bullied and harassed City staff.

Given that conclusion, the City directed Councillor Noel not to attend Council meetings or City planned functions in person until he completed a workplace civility training program.

In response, Councillor Noel commenced a Court Application arguing the City had (i) acted outside of its authority, (ii) unreasonably relied on the investigator's findings, (iii) denied him procedural fairness, and (iv) violated his constitutional rights.

The Ontario Divisional Court heard the matter on June 16, 2026, and it released its decision on October 5, 2026.

In its decision, the Court dismissed each of Councillor Noel's allegations. The Court confirmed both that the City had acted reasonably in relying upon the investigator's report, and that the City's decision reflected a proportionate balancing of Councillor Noel's constitutional right to freedom of expression and the City's statutory responsibilities respecting workplace harassment and workplace safety. The Court ordered Councillor Noel to pay costs of \$17,000 to the City.

