

Model Municipal Ordinance

Governance and Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence Systems

Section 1. Purpose

The purpose of this ordinance is to establish governance, transparency, and accountability standards for the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems by the municipality. The intent is to ensure that AI technologies used by municipal departments support public service delivery while protecting residents' rights, maintaining human oversight, and promoting transparency in government decision-making.

This ordinance provides guardrails for how AI systems may be evaluated, approved, and used by the municipality and ensures that residents have visibility into the role such systems play in public operations.

Section 2. Definitions

For the purposes of this ordinance, the following definitions apply:

Artificial Intelligence System (AI System)

Any computational system, software, or algorithm that uses machine learning, statistical modeling, automated decision-making, generative AI, or similar techniques to produce outputs such as predictions, recommendations, classifications, or generated content that influence municipal operations or decisions.

Automated Decision-Making System

An AI system that produces decisions or recommendations that may materially influence decisions affecting residents, municipal services, enforcement actions, or administrative determinations.

Human Review

A process in which a qualified municipal employee evaluates and verifies AI-generated outputs before those outputs are used to inform or make a final decision.

Municipal Department

Any department, office, agency, board, or commission operating under the authority of the municipality.

Section 3. Applicability

This ordinance applies to any AI system that is:

1. Procured by the municipality

2. Developed internally by municipal staff or contractors
3. Used by municipal departments to support decision-making, operations, or public services

This ordinance does not prohibit the use of AI systems but establishes governance requirements and oversight standards for their responsible use.

Section 4. Prohibited and Restricted Uses

The municipality shall not deploy AI systems in ways that remove meaningful human oversight from decisions that materially affect residents.

The following uses are prohibited unless expressly authorized by the governing body through a public approval process:

Fully Automated Decision-Making Affecting Residents

AI systems shall not independently make final determinations regarding enforcement actions, benefits, permits, or other decisions affecting residents without meaningful human review.

Real-Time Facial Recognition for Surveillance

The use of real-time facial recognition technology for continuous surveillance of public spaces is prohibited unless specifically authorized by law and approved by the governing body.

AI Systems That Discriminate or Produce Unlawful Bias

AI systems known to produce discriminatory outcomes based on protected characteristics may not be deployed.

Undisclosed AI Use in Resident Interactions

Municipal systems interacting directly with residents must disclose when automated or AI-assisted technologies are being used.

Section 5. Transparency and Public Disclosure

The municipality shall maintain transparency regarding the use of AI systems in municipal operations.

At a minimum, the municipality shall maintain a publicly accessible record that includes:

1. The name and description of each AI system used by the municipality
2. The purpose of the system and the department responsible for its operation

3. A general description of the type of decisions or tasks the system supports

The municipality shall review and update this disclosure at least annually.

Section 6. Human Oversight

AI systems shall be used as decision-support tools and shall not replace responsible human judgment in municipal governance.

Municipal employees responsible for decisions influenced by AI systems must:

1. Review AI-generated outputs before acting on them
2. Exercise independent judgment when evaluating those outputs
3. Retain the authority to override automated recommendations

No AI-generated output shall be treated as a final decision without human evaluation.

Section 7. Resident Rights and Appeals

Residents who believe that an AI-assisted system has materially influenced a decision affecting them may request review through the municipality's administrative process.

Such requests may be submitted to the appropriate municipal office, such as the Town Manager, City Administrator, or other designated authority.

The municipality shall establish procedures to:

1. Receive complaints or concerns regarding AI-assisted decisions
 2. Conduct a meaningful human review of those decisions
 3. Escalate complex matters to legal counsel or appropriate authorities when necessary
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Section 8. Annual Review

The municipality shall review its AI governance policy at least once per year to ensure that it remains aligned with technological developments, legal requirements, and community expectations.

Updates to the policy or AI system disclosures shall be made publicly available following each review.

Section 9. Effective Date

This ordinance shall take effect upon adoption by the governing body.

Municipal departments currently using AI systems shall review those systems for compliance with this ordinance within six months of adoption.