

Town of Collingwood Administrative - Policy and Procedure Manual			
SECTION: Administration – Council (Mandatory s. 270 MA)		POLICY #: A09-A1301	
POLICY: Accountability and Transparency			
DATE: April 8, 2013	REV. DATE: None	COVERAGE: All	PAGE #: Page 1 of 4

1.0 PURPOSE/ APPLICATION

This policy applies to all operations within the Corporation of the Town of Collingwood and is prepared in accordance with Section 270 (1) 5 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, S.O. 2001, c. 25, as amended. The Act requires that all municipalities adopt and maintain a policy with respect to *“the manner in which the municipality will try to ensure that it is accountable to the public for its actions, and the manner in which the municipality will try to ensure that its actions are transparent to the public”*.

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on how the Corporation of the Town of Collingwood ensures municipal matters are approached in an accountable and transparent manner.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

In this policy, the terms “accountability” and “transparency” have the following meaning:

Accountability: The principle that the municipality is obligated to demonstrate and take responsibility for its actions, decisions and policies and that it is answerable to the public at large.

Transparency: The principle that the municipality will conduct its business in an accessible, clear and visible manner and that its activities are open to examination by its stakeholders.

3.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Council of the Town of Collingwood acknowledges that it is responsible to provide good government for its stakeholders in an accountable and transparent manner, guided by the following principles:

1. Encouraging public access and participation to ensure that decision making is responsive to the needs of its constituents and receptive to their opinions;
2. Delivering high quality services to our citizens; and
3. Promoting the efficient use of public resources.

Accountability, transparency and openness are standards of good government that enhance public trust. They are achieved through the Town of Collingwood adopting measures ensuring, to the best of its ability, that all activities and services are undertaken utilizing a process that is open and accessible to its stakeholders. In addition, wherever possible, the Town of Collingwood will engage its stakeholders throughout its decision making process which will be open, visible and transparent to the public.

4.0 CORPORATE VALUES

The Town of Collingwood Strategic Plan identifies values including integrity, excellence, results, teamwork and respect by believing in and adhering to open, transparent, accountable processes, and the mission, vision and values of the Town shall continue to promote accountability and transparency.

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5.0 POLICY REQUIREMENTS

The principles of accountability and transparency shall apply equally to the political process and decision making and to the administrative management of the municipality.

Legislated Requirements

The Town is accountable and transparent to its stakeholders by fulfilling various legislative responsibilities and disclosure of information, and shall conduct its business within its jurisdiction in accordance with the Provincial Statues, Ontario Regulations and any other applicable laws including but not limited to the *Municipal Act, 2001*, *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*; *Provincial Offences Act*; *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*; *Public Health Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, and *Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act*.

Financial Accountability, Oversight and Reporting

The Town of Collingwood will be open, accountable and transparent to stakeholders in its financial dealings as required under the Act and has taken a leadership approach to accountability and transparency in areas of financial accountability, oversight and reporting. Some examples of how the municipality provides such accountability and transparency are as follows:

- External audits and reports
- Annual and quarterly financial statements
- Annual budget reports, including multi-year budgeting
- Asset management
- Purchasing/procurement practices
- Sale of land practices and procedures
- Budget process open to the public

Financial policies and reserve funds include:

- Tangible Capital Assets Policy
- Debt Management Policy
- Operating Surplus/Deficit Allocation Policy
- Donations Policy
- Lifecycle Replacement Reserve Fund
- Land Acquisition Reserve Fund
- 10% Non DC Growth Reserve Fund
- Tax Rate Stabilization Reserve Fund

Performance Measures and Reporting

The Town is accountable to taxpayers by using various results-orientated tools to measure progress on performance and the achievement of corporate service standards and goals. The performance measurement and reporting framework is informed by a number of different initiatives, which need to be adhered to and maintained even through changes in administrative and political leadership.

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The Town has been participating in the Municipal Performance Measurement Program (MPMP) since 2001. Various departments have been generating different types of performance reporting to meet other statutory reporting requirements and for their own internal management purposes.

The primary components of performance measurement includes:

- Town of Collingwood Annual Budget and Business Plan Report, including priority setting directions.
- Quarterly Financial Reports to Council
- Town of Collingwood Strategic Plan

Open Government

The Town of Collingwood shall provide governance in an open manner through communication, consultation and collaboration. All policies, procedures and practices shall ensure that its operations are transparent and that mechanisms are in place to make residents aware of how decisions are made and carried out and are able to participate in the decision making process.

All meetings of Council and its local boards, agencies and committees shall be open to the public when and as required under the Act, and members of the public will have an opportunity to make delegations or comments in writing on specific items at these meetings as outlined in the Town’s Procedural By-law. Meetings are publicly advertised in advance, with the rationale for discussing matters *in camera* being disclosed.

Town information shall be readily available to the public subject to the requirements of the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

The following are policies, procedures and practices that ensure the Town is transparent in its operations and that residents are not only aware of how decisions are made and carried out, but that they are able to participate as well:

- Council Procedure By-law
- Public Posting and Distribution of Council Agenda Meeting Documentation
- Public Notice By-law
- Procurement By-law
- Land Sale/Disposal By-law
- Closed Meeting Investigator Policy
- Facility Naming Policy
- Committee/Board Recruitment Policy
- Land Acquisition Guidelines
- Accessibility Barrier Complaint Policy
- Records Retention By-law
- Social Media Policy

Internal Accountability and Ethical Standards

The municipality’s administrative practices ensure specific accountability on the part of its employees through the following initiatives:

- Human Resources Policies and Procedures

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- i. Discrimination and Harassment-Free workplace
- ii. Violence-Free Workplace
- iii. Code of Ethical Behaviour
- iv. Behaviour and Conduct in the Workplace
- v. Performance Management Programme
- vi. Recruitment and Selection (including the hiring of immediate relatives)
- Code of Conduct for Council
- Municipal Election Procedures
- Accessibility Training Policy

6.0 MONITORING/CONTRAVENTION

This policy shall be reviewed within the first year of a new Council term or at such other time as may be deemed appropriate to ensure its effectiveness.

The Town Clerk shall be responsible for receiving complaints and/or concerns related to this policy. Upon receipt of a complaint and/or concern, the Town Clerk shall notify:

- a) In the case of staff, the Department Head responsible for the areas;
- b) In the case of a closed meeting, the Closed Meeting Investigator; and
- c) In the case of Council, the Head of Council.