

Category: Governance

Accountability and Transparency

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1. Background	2
2. Purpose	2
3. Application and Scope	2
4. Outcomes	2
5. Principles	3
6. Policy Statements	3
7. Roles and Responsibilities	4
8. Monitoring and Compliance	4
9. Definitions	5
10. References and Resources	5
11. Revision History	6

1. Background

Accountability, transparency and openness are standards of good government that enhance public trust. They are achieved through the municipality adopting policies and establishing processes that are open and accountable, which will guide the municipality throughout the course of carrying out its duties and responsibilities.

The Municipal Act, 2001 (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 for the delivery of the municipality's activities and services in accordance with the principles as outlined herein. This policy has been developed in accordance with the Act to comply with section 270.

The conduct of Council and Committee meetings is governed by the City of Brampton's ('the City') Procedure By-law, which complies with the relevant provisions of the Act. The Procedure By-law ensures that meetings are open to the public, except where it is appropriate and permitted under s. 239 of the Act to consider a matter in a closed meeting and provides for notice of public meetings.

The principles of accountability and transparency are already reflected in many City policies and practices.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Council Policy is for Council to acknowledge that it is responsible to provide good government in an accountable and transparent manner by:

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

3. Application and Scope

This Council Policy applies to political process as well as decision-making and to the administrative management of 'The City'.

4. Outcomes

- 4.1 Public engagement in open, visible and transparent City decision-making process; and
- 4.2 Efficient and effective City decision making process

5. Principles

- 5.1 **Good Government** – Achieve service excellence through an accessible and transparent municipal government
- 5.2 **Community Engagement** – Ensure members of the public have full, reasonable access to participate in the City decision-making process.

6. Policy Statements

- 6.1 The City of Brampton has in place the following mandates, processes, and procedures to ensure accountability and transparency in carrying out the business of the Corporation:
 - 6.1.1 Annual budget
 - 6.1.2 Financial Information Return
 - 6.1.3 Financial Statements
 - 6.1.4 Open council meetings
 - 6.1.5 Procedure bylaw outlining how meetings are to be conducted
 - 6.1.6 Accountability and Transparency policy
 - 6.1.7 Hiring of employees policy
 - 6.1.8 Multilingual Services Policy
 - 6.1.9 Sale and Disposition of Land policy
 - 6.1.10 Procurement policy, bids and tenders
 - 6.1.11 Notice policy
 - 6.1.12 Delegation of powers and duties policy
 - 6.1.13 Freedom of Information request process
 - 6.1.14 Record Retention processes, policy
 - 6.1.15 Conflict of Interest Registry available to the public
 - 6.1.16 Personal Information Bank Index (PIB) available to the public
 - 6.1.17 Assessment Roll containing property ownership available to the public
 - 6.1.18 Annual statement on development charge reserve funds

6.1.19 Complaint mechanism

6.1.20 Annual statement of pay and expenses of council members

6.1.21 Code of Conduct – Bill 68 requires all municipalities to develop codes of conduct.

6.1.22 Integrity Commissioner

6.2 The City makes use of various tools to further enhance accountability and transparency including livestreaming all Council and Standing Committee meetings and carrying out audits through the Internal Audit Division. More details can be found in the applicable policies and procedures referenced in this policy.

6.3 The City will maintain a web page for gift and lobbyist registries for individuals or groups doing business with the City.

6.4 The City shall be committed to continuous improvement in developing approaches to promote accountability and transparency.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 City Council

7.1.1 Acting as an Approval Authority by approving and amending this policy,

7.2 Managers/Supervisors

7.2.1 Maintain awareness of this policy and circulate with team members.

7.3 City employees

7.3.1 Ensure adherence to the provisions of this policy in which they conduct their business activities at the City.

7.4 City Clerk's Office

7.4.1 Administer this policy throughout the City and review as well as maintain the policy every three years or sooner depending on business needs or legislative requirements.

7.4.2 Facilitate implementation of policies, processes and procedures that support accountability and transparency at the City.

8. Monitoring and Compliance

8.1 This Council Policy should be reviewed every three years by the City Clerk's Office in compliance with the Corporate Policy Program.

8.2 Consequences of non-compliance

8.2.1 Failure to follow this Council Policy may result in an inefficient and ineffective City decision-making process and a lack of public engagement.

9. Definitions

- 9.1 **Accountable** – subject to giving an account: “answerable” and “capable” of being accounted for: “explainable”, and identify the synonym “responsible”
- 9.2 **Accountability** – the quality or state of being accountable; especially an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one’s actions. In the municipal setting, this is meant to include how Members of Council and staff are held to account to the public for their actions and inactions, decisions made, and policies implemented, how actions are explained, and the level of details that is provided in justification of certain actions of Members of Council and staff.
- 9.3 **Transparent** – free from pretense or deceit: frank; easily detected or seen through obvious; readily understood; characterized by visibility or accessibility of information especially concerning business.
- 9.4 **Transparency** – the quality or state of being transparent. In the municipal setting, this relates to the ability of members of the public to observe how decisions are made and implemented. Additionally, it actively encourages and fosters public participation and openness in its decision-making processes. This process is open and clear to the public.

10. References and Resources

This Council Policy should be read and applied in conjunction with the following references and resources as updated from time to time. Please note that some of the following documents may not be publicly available.

10.1 External references

- [Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25](#)
- [Municipal Ombudsman](#)

10.2 References to related bylaws, Council policies, and administrative directives

- [Procedure By-Law 160-2004](#)
- [Donations and Gifts Received Administrative Directive FIN-130](#)
- [Purchasing By-law 19-2018](#)
- [Fair Wage Policy PUR-130](#)
- [Community Benefits Policy PUR-140](#)
- [Vendor Suspension PUR-110](#)

- [Employee Code of Conduct HRM-100](#)
- [Purchasing Card PUR-120](#)
- [Information Management Administrative Directive GOV-210](#)
- [Privacy Administrative Directive GOV-130](#)
- [Employee Business Expenses FIN-160](#)
- [Information and Data Governance Policy GOV-220](#)
- [Information and Data Privacy and Protection GOV-230](#)
- [Recruiting and Retaining Top Talent HRM-160](#)
- [Budget Policy FIN-140](#)
- [Financial Spending Approval Authority FIN-100](#)
- [Mayor and Councillors' Expense Policy FIN-110](#)
- [Administrative Authority By-law 216-2017](#)
- [Administrative Authority Policy 14.16.0](#)
- [Delegation of Department Head Purchasing Authority PUR-100](#)
- [Property Tax Billing and Collection Policy FIN-170](#)
- [Strategic Asset Management Policy ASM-100](#)
- [Lobbyist Registry By-law 149-2015](#)
- [Records Retention By-law 272-2014](#)
- [Code of Conduct for Members of Council](#)

10.3 References to related corporate-wide procedures, forms, and resources

- [Complaint Intake and Investigation Process](#)
- Closed Meeting Investigator process
- Public Complaint Procedure Regarding Staff
- Complaint Protocol
- [Gift Registry](#)
- [Lobbyist Registry](#)
- Freedom of Information Request Process
- PUBLIC COMPLAINTS RESOLUTION GUIDELINE

11. Revision History

Date	Description
2007/11/28	Approved by CW493-2007 on November 28, 2007.