

Proposed amendments are noted below in ~~strikethroughs~~ and **additions**.

## Accountability and Transparency Policy

Approved By: City Council

Section: City Clerk

Approval Date: November 28, 2007

Effective Date: November 28, 2007

Revision Dates: December 3, 2014; **December xx, 2022**

### Policy Statement

The City of Ottawa ~~will promote~~**s** accountable and transparent municipal governance guided by the following principles:

1. Decision-making **is** ~~will be~~ open and transparent.
2. Municipal operations **are** ~~will be~~ conducted in an ethical and accountable manner.
3. Financial resources and physical infrastructure **are** ~~will be~~ managed in an efficient and effective manner.
4. Municipal information **is** ~~will be~~ accessible so that it is consistent with legislative requirements.
5. Inquiries, concerns and complaints **are** ~~will be~~ responded to in a timely manner.
6. Financial oversight, service standards and performance reporting and all other accountability documents **are** ~~will be~~ made available and accessible, in language that the public can understand, to increase the opportunity for public scrutiny and involvement in municipal operations.
7. Every new delegation of power or authority will have a corresponding accountability mechanism.

### Definitions

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 **review**

examination by the public, its stakeholders. fostering trust in government and improving service delivery.

## Purpose

This policy provides guidance on how the City of Ottawa ensures municipal matters and operations are approached in an accountable and transparent manner, with emphasis on openness, ethics, service excellence, performance outcomes and fiscal responsibility.

Subsection 270(1)(5) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* provides that a municipality shall adopt and maintain policies 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”.

## Application

This policy applies to all City of Ottawa operations and its employees, including Members of Council.

## Policy Requirements

The City of Ottawa’s commitment to accountability and transparency ensures sound governance and sustainability by way of various policies, procedures and practices that have been divided into the following six categories:

### 1. Legislated requirements

The City of Ottawa is accountable and transparent to the public taxpayers by fulfilling various legislated responsibilities and disclosure of information. The following are some of the provincial statutes that govern how the City conducts its business in a public, accountable and transparent manner:

1. *City of Ottawa Act, 1999*
2. *Municipal Act, 2001*
3. *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*
4. *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*
5. *Provincial Offences Act*
6. *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*

7. *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004*
8. **Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act**
9. *Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act, 1996*
10. *Occupational Health and Safety Act*
11. **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005**

**In addition to the above, there are various provincial and federal statutes that govern the operations of the City and its services.**

## **2. Financial accountability, oversight and reporting**

The City of Ottawa is accountable and transparent to **the public** by identifying the source of City funds and how those funds are used to deliver services. The following policies, procedures and practices demonstrate the City of Ottawa's best-practice financial accountability, and oversight and reporting mechanisms, including **but not limited to:**

1. External Auditor, ~~and~~ **annual financial statements and disclosure of the City's credit ratings** ~~report~~
2. Auditor General's Office, **its Annual Plan, audit plans and reporting, and the Fraud and Waste Policy** ~~and Annual Report~~
3. Annual **Year End Disposition Reports** ~~and Quarterly Financial Statements~~
4. Long Range Financial Plans, **including Housing**
5. Operating and Capital Budget Status Reports
6. Delegation of Authority By-law and ~~reports~~ **reporting**
7. **Procurement** ~~Purchasing By-law and reports~~ **reporting**
8. **Budget Development, Monitoring and Reporting Policy and financial-related policies and procedures**
9. **Comprehensive Asset Management Policy, Asset Management Plans and reporting**
10. **Real Property policies and procedures**
11. **Corporate Sponsorship and Advertising Policy**
12. ~~FTE Analysis Report~~

## **3. Performance measurement and reporting**

The City of Ottawa is accountable to **the public** ~~taxpayers~~ by using various results-orientated tools to measure progress on performance and the achievement of corporate service standards and goals. The City of Ottawa is committed to producing performance

information that measures how the City is doing in all areas over which it has responsibility, from financial reporting to human resource management to service delivery, including **but not limited to**:

1. City Strategic Plan **and Term of Council Priorities** and related performance reports
2. **Service-specific reporting at the departmental or service-area level**
3. ~~Semi-Annual Performance Reports to Council~~
4. ~~Participating in the Ontario Municipal Benchmarking Initiative~~
5. ~~Participating in the Quality of Life Reporting System (Federation of Canadian Municipalities)~~

#### 4. Open government

The City of Ottawa is accountable and transparent to **the public** taxpayers by providing governance in an open manner through communication, consultation, and collaboration. The following are **some of the** policies, procedures and practices that ensure the City is transparent in its operations and residents are aware of how decisions are made and carried out:

1. Council Procedure By-law **and Advisory Committee Procedure By-law**
2. Public **access** ~~Distribution~~ **to** of Council and Committee agenda meeting documentation, **and attendance at open meetings**
3. Appointment Policy (Recruitment and Selection of members of Advisory Committees, Boards and Task Forces, and External Boards, Commissions and Authorities)
4. Public Notice By-law
5. Delegation of Powers Policy **and** Delegation of Authority By-law
6. Bilingualism Policy
7. Public Engagement Strategy, **including Engage Ottawa and online engagement tools**
8. **Accessibility Policy and** Accessible Formats and Communication Supports Procedure
9. ~~Enhancements to~~ Open meeting procedures including a process of rising and reporting following closed sessions, ~~indicating either the date a confidential report can be made public or a legal opinion indicating why the report cannot be made public and proactively making confidential reports public upon the reporting out date~~
10. Routine Disclosure and Active Dissemination Policy **and departmental Plans**

11. **Personal Information Banks**
12. Adherence to the principles of Open Government **and the Open Data Policy**, including making data available through Open Data Ottawa
13. Proactive disclosure of executed contracts with a value of \$100,000 or more that were not a result of public procurement, as well as contracts resulting from a public procurement exercise that are of significant public interest
14. **Public disclosure of Access to Information Requests under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act***
15. Annual proactive disclosure of events hosted by the Office of Protocol **and Intergovernmental Affairs**, as well as gifts presented on behalf of the City through the Office of Protocol

## 5. Internal accountability and ethical standards

The City of Ottawa has established **by-laws**, policies, procedures and practices that govern internal accountability and ethical standards for the City of Ottawa, including **but not limited to:**

1. **Employee** Code of Conduct for City employees
2. **Alcohol and Drugs in the Workplace Policy**
3. **Discipline Policy**
4. Code of Conduct for Advisory Committee Members
5. Code of Conduct for Members of the Built Heritage Sub-Committee
4. Hiring and Employment of Family Members Policy
5. Responsible Computing Policy
6. **Leave of Absence, Accumulated Sick Leave, Overtime and work-related policies**
7. Election-Related Resources Policy **and Election-Related Blackout Period Procedures**
8. **Corporate Complaints Handling Policy**
9. **Occupational Health and Safety Policy** Harassment in the Workplace Policy
10. **Workplace** Violence **and Harassment Policy** in the Workplace Policy
11. Equity and Diversity Policy
12. Records Management Policy **and Records Retention and Disposition By-law**
13. **Information Security Policy**
14. **Ethical Purchasing Policy and Contract Administration Policy**
15. **Legal Indemnification Policy**

16. **Personal Use of City Vehicles Policy**
17. **Statutory Officer Recruitment, Appointment and Contract Administration Policy and Procedures**

## **6. City Council's Accountability Framework**

Ottawa City Council has **demonstrated** ~~furth~~er~~ed~~ its commitment to accountability and transparency through the implementation of various integrity officers and additional policies and practices, **including but not limited to:**

1. ~~The~~ **P**roactive disclosure of the office expenses of Members of Council
2. ~~The~~ **A**ppointment of an Integrity Commissioner to whom Council has also designated the role of Lobbyist Registrar and Meetings Investigator
3. ~~The~~ Adoption of a Code of Conduct for Members of Council, **Code of Conduct for Advisory Committee Members, and Code of Conduct for Members of the Built Heritage Sub-Committee, and associated complaint processes**
4. ~~Code of Conduct for Advisory Committee Members~~
5. ~~Code of Conduct for Members of the Built Heritage Sub-Committee~~
4. ~~The~~ **Q**uarterly disclosure by Members of Council **through** ~~in~~ an online Gifts Registry of all gifts, benefits and hospitality received which individually exceed \$100 from one source in a calendar year (save for some exceptions)
5. ~~The~~ **Q**uarterly disclosure by Members of Council **through** ~~in~~ an online Gifts Registry of all tickets received which individually exceed \$30 from one source in a calendar year (save for some exceptions)
6. **Online public registry of declarations of interests, under the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*, for declarations filed by Members of Council and members of local boards, including investigation protocols for perceived violations**
7. ~~The~~ **A**doption of ~~the~~ a Community, Fundraising and Special Events Policy, ~~and~~ a Council Expense Policy, **Advisory Committee Participation Expense Policy, and Council-Staff Relations Policy**
8. ~~The~~ **E**nactment of a Lobbyist Registry By-law including a Lobbyist Code of Conduct, and the establishment of a Lobbyist Registry; ~~and~~
9. Integrity Commissioner's Annual Report **and public release of investigation reports as required.**

**The City's commitment to conducting its business in an open and transparent manner is an important and progressive initiative. The City will continue to**

**demonstrate its commitment through the implementation of new policies, procedures and practices that may not be referenced in this policy.**

## **Responsibilities**

City Council and City staff are responsible for adhering to the parameters of this policy and for ensuring accountability for their actions and transparency of municipal **matters and** operations.

## **Monitoring/Contraventions**

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

1. In the case of staff, the Department Head, General Manager or Director responsible for the area, and the Director, Human Resources
2. In the case of a closed meeting, the Meetings Investigator
3. In the case of Council **or a Member of Council**, the Head of Council **or as set out in the applicable Code, by-law or policy**

## **Legislative and Administrative Authorities**

Section 270 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, as amended, ~~by Bill 130~~ requires that the City adopt and maintain a policy with respect to ensuring accountability and transparency. The Accountability and Transparency Policy identifies the legislation, policies, procedures and practices that the City complies with in order to promote accountability and transparency.

## **Enquiries**

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