

Corporate Policy and Procedure



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TAB: MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT
SECTION: GOVERNANCE
SUBJECT: ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

POLICY STATEMENT Council acknowledges that it is responsible to provide good government for its stakeholders 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; and
- promoting the efficient use of public resources.

PURPOSE Accountability and transparency are standards of good government that enhance public trust. They are achieved through the City 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 City will engage its stakeholders throughout its decision making processes which will be open, visible and 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.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

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. This policy has been developed in accordance with Section 270 of

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the Act.

The *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (MFIPPA) governs access to information and protection of privacy for municipalities. This policy complies with MFIPPA.

SCOPE

The principles of accountability and transparency shall apply equally to both the City's political and administrative management and decision making.

DEFINITIONS

"Accountability" – The principle that the City will be responsible to its stakeholders for decisions made and policies implemented, as well as its actions or inactions.

"Transparency" – The principle that the City encourages and fosters stakeholder participation and openness in its decision making processes. Additionally, transparency means that the City's decision making process is open and clear to the public.

CORPORATE VALUES

The City of Mississauga's core values are fundamental to the City's relationship with our stakeholders and serve as a guiding principle to the City's corporate decision making process. They reflect the City's determination to provide good governance in an accountable and transparent manner. The City's core corporate values are:

- Trust – meaning the public trust that the City upholds, the open and responsive manner in which the City is governed.
- Quality – meaning the quality of life that the City provides to our taxpayers, delivering the right services that add value to our citizens' lives.
- Excellence – meaning the delivery of excellence in public administration and delivery of services in a superior way, at a

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reasonable cost.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY IN FINANCIAL MATTERS

The City will be accountable and transparent to its stakeholders in its financial dealings as required under the Act. Some examples in which the municipality provides such accountability and transparency are as follows:

- internal and external audit
- reporting statements
- long term financial planning
- asset management
- Purchasing By-law
- sale of land
- budget processes

ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY IN INTERNAL GOVERNANCE

The City's administrative practices ensure specific accountability on the part of its employees through initiatives including, but not limited to:

- policies on employment standards and employee conduct, including respectful workplace policy
- performance management and evaluation processes
- recruitment policies, including hiring practices
- orientation/continuing education programs
- health and safety policies
- compensation policies and benefits programs
- creating administrative policies, practices and procedures that recognize Council's commitment to accountability and transparency

ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY IN PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND INFORMATION SHARING

The City ensures that it is open and accountable to its stakeholders through implementing processes outlining how,

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when and under what rules meetings will take place. Meetings will 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. In addition, the City has adopted policies which ensure that participation by the public can be meaningful and effective, through timely disclosure of information by various means including print media, websites, etc.

The City has a long-standing practice of routine disclosure in response to requests for information. The City also endeavours to respond to formal information requests within the parameters established by MFIPPA.

Some specific examples include:

- Procedure By-law
- Strategic Plan
- delegation by-laws and policies
- records retention policies
- planning processes
- Public Notice By-law
- Matters Considered In Camera policy
- information routinely released without formal request under MFIPPA

REFERENCE: GC-0775-2007 – 2007 12 12

LAST REVIEW DATE: May, 2011

CONTACT: For more information, contact the Office of the City Clerk.