



Corporate Policy Manual

Topic: Accountability and Transparency

Policy No. CORP.1-03

Section: Corporate and Financial Services

Covered: Council and members appointed by council to its various advisory, ad hoc and special purpose committee and to task forces and working groups and all employees

Approved by EMT: November 27, 2007
Date

Approved by Council: Dec 17, 2007
Date

Policy Statement & Strategic Plan Linkages

The Council of the Corporation of the Town of Newmarket ("the Town") is committed to providing good government for its constituents 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 its citizens; and
- Promoting the efficient use of public resources.

Accountability and transparency policies/procedures enhance public trust and they support a *well-equipped* and *well managed* organization.

Purpose

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 Town's activities and services in accordance with these objectives.

Definitions:

- i) **Accountability** – The principle that the Town will be responsible to its constituents for decisions made and policies implemented, as well as its actions or inactions.
- ii) **Transparency** – The principle that the Town actively encourages and fosters public participation and openness in its decision making processes. Additionally, transparency means that the Town's decision making process is open and clear to the public.

Procedures

The principles of accountability and transparency shall apply equally to the political process and decision making and to the administrative management of the Town. The manner in which the Town will try to ensure that it is accountable to the public for its actions and the manner in which the Town will try to ensure that its actions are transparent to the public are provided for in Schedule "A" attached hereto. In addition, the Town may implement additional or more comprehensive practices and procedures.

Amendments

Schedule "A" to this policy may be amended from time to time upon the approval of the Executive Management Team in order to add to or enhance matters listed.

Cross References

Municipal Act, 2001 as amended
Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act as amended
Procedure By-law 2007- 106 as amended
Delegation of administrative Powers and Duties By-law 2007-114 as amended
Procurement By-law 2005-94 as amended
Sale of Land By-law 1995-43 as amended
Council Code of Conduct - By-law 2007- 42
Employee Code of Conduct – By-law 2007- 43
Recruitment & Selection Policy HR.12-01
Service Pricing Policy CAO.1-03
Health & Safety Policy
Public Notice Policy CORP.1-02
Public Information Centres Policy (under development)
Telephone Service Standards Policy CI.1-01

(Note: This is a representative list of legislation and policies that support Accountability and Transparency. The reader should refer to all policies of the Town for completeness.)

“Schedule A”

Accountability and Transparency Policy CORP. 1-03

1. Financial Matters

The Town will be open, accountable and transparent to its constituents in its financial dealings as required under the Act. Some examples of how the Town provides accountability and transparency are as follows:

- a) internal/external audits
- b) audit committee consisting of elected officials and members of the public
- c) reporting/statements
- d) long term financial planning
- e) purchasing/procurement procedures (by-law 2005-94 as amended from time to time)
- f) sale of land procedures (by-law 1995-43 as amended from time to time)
- g) annual budget process
- h) community reports/statements

2. Internal Governance

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

- a) code of conduct for staff and council (by-laws 2007-42 and 2007-43 as amended from time to time)
- b) performance development, management and evaluation programs
- c) recruitment policy
- d) orientation/continuing education for councillors and employees
- e) job evaluation process
- f) delegation of administrative powers and duties (by-law 2007-114 as amended from time to time)
- g) health and safety policy
- h) program for excellence, efficiency and creativity
- i) transportation demand management program
- j) work/life balance
- k) compensation and benefits policies
- l) ensuring that administrative practices and procedures recognize Council's commitment to accountability and transparency

3. Public Participation and Information Sharing

The Town ensures that it is open and accountable to its constituents through its procedural by-law which outlines how, when and under what rules meetings will take place. The Town's 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 municipality has adopted policies which ensure that participation by the public can be meaningful and effective, through timely disclosure of information by various means. Some specific examples include:

- a) procedure by-law (by-law 2007-106 as amended from time to time)
- b) code of conduct for councillors (by-law 2007-42 as amended from time to time)
- c) strategic plan
- d) delegation of administrative powers and duties (by-law 2007-114 as amended from time to time)
- e) records retention practices
- f) planning processes including, but not limited to land use, zoning, site plan, community plans and fees & charges,
- g) ensuring that planning and mapping information is accessible to the public upon request, by way of statutory and non-statutory meetings, public information centres, publication in local newspapers, or posting of signs on affected lands, or posting notices on the Town's website or mailing notices to affected residents and those who have specifically requested notice
- h) providing regular reports to council
- i) creation of service standards
- j) creation of computer systems such as Access Newmarket that enable the public to access Town information online
- k) public notice policy
- l) posting agendas and minutes of Council, Committee of the Whole, statutory and advisory committees on the Town's website wherever possible
- m) ensuring that all Town information is accessible according to legislation