



# Corporate Policy

## Council Request for Information Policy

Policy Number: CAO.1-01

Topic: Municipal Governance

Applies to: All Members of the Council of the Town of Newmarket and all members of Staff of the Town of Newmarket.

### 1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 The establishment of a policy develops and reinforces highly effective relationships based on mutual respect and supports the Town's vision and mission to provide excellence in customer service.
- 1.2 All Members of Council ("Members") and staff must comply with the provisions of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, Human Rights Code, and Occupational Health and Safety Act.

### 2. Purpose

- 2.1 This policy is intended to:
  - (a) provide a process for Members' requests for information;
  - (b) set out staff responsibilities to comply with Members' requests for information;
  - (c) support organizational vision, mission and goals of customer service excellence;
  - (d) support Members' requests in a consistent, fair and equitable manner; and,
  - (e) provide consistent information and support equitable access to information for all Members.

### 3. Communication Protocols

- 3.1 Requests for information of a non-routine nature that may involve a written report, data collection, analysis or research are to be directed to the Chief Administrative Officer ("CAO") or applicable Commissioner(s). The CAO or applicable Commissioner(s), may advise the Member that the request must be presented at a Council meeting with a resolution directing the staff resources be allocated to respond to the request.

- 3.2 Responses to requests for non-routine information [as deemed non-routine by the CAO and/or applicable Commissioner(s)] from a Member shall be provided to all Members.
- 3.3 Ongoing administrative priorities will take precedence over any special requests from an individual Member, except by direction of Council.
- 3.4 Any requests relating to political use will not be approved or acted on, and will be referred by the CAO to the Mayor for action and/or a report to Council.

#### **4. Members of Council Responsibilities**

4.1 Members are responsible to:

- (a) Remain cognizant of the “formal relationship” that exists between staff and Members.
- (b) Direct requests of a sensitive nature, i.e., personnel-related enquiries relating to staff, or non-routine nature to the CAO, Commissioner or Director, in writing. The CAO will have the discretion of deciding to advise the Member that their request must be directed through Council.
- (c) Consider the impact and timelines for preparation of the information when the request is submitted.
- (d) Direct questions about a staff report to the CAO, Commissioner, or Director, as appropriate.
- (e) Address issues through a member of the Strategic Leadership Team [CAO Officer or applicable Commissioner(s)].
- (f) Direct resident matters to the Town’s Customer Relationship Management system to ensure efficient and accountable service delivery.

4.2 The Mayor, as Chief Executive Officer and Head of Council, has a specific statutory role and responsibilities which provide the mayor with a greater degree of autonomy in their requests of staff (i.e. pursuant to the Emergency Measures Act, the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and the Municipal Act, 2001).

#### **5. Chief Administrative Officer’s Responsibilities**

- 5.1 The CAO is responsible to refer requests of a non-routine or sensitive nature regarding senior management issues to the Mayor.
- 5.2 Advises members of Council when requests must be directed through Council.

## **6. Commissioners and Directors Responsibilities**

6.1 Commissioners, and Directors are responsible to:

- (a) Refer requests of a non-routine or sensitive nature regarding senior management issues to the Chief Administrative Officer.
- (b) Determine whether a Member should re-direct their request for information of a routine nature through Council, and to so recommend same, especially in circumstances where the staff is aware that more than one request for the same or similar information is being made by more than one Member and/or to more than one department.
- (c) Assign requests for information to the appropriate staff member and ensure that the information requested is clearly identified with appropriate timelines for completion.
- (d) Support and/or provide guidance to staff members.
- (e) Provide resources as applicable to complete the request.
- (f) Ensure timely, effective customer service in accordance with the Town's vision and mission goals.
- (g) Work with Members to address their issues/concerns.
- (h) Advise Members regarding the impact of certain requests for information, especially with regard to staff and time resources.

## **7. Staff Responsibilities**

7.1 Staff are responsible to:

- (a) Remain cognizant of the "formal relationship" that exists between staff and Members.
- (b) Advise the Member of the need to direct their request to the CAO, Commissioner or Director in situations where the work requested has not been assigned or has not been directed through a Council report.
- (c) Refer requests for information to the CAO, Commissioner or Director.
- (d) Discuss all requests for information with their direct supervisor.

## **8. Administration and Contact**

8.1 This Policy shall be administered by the CAO, and in consultation with the Integrity Commissioner, as necessary.

8.2 Members and Staff shall contact the CAO or applicable Commissioner with regards to questions about this Policy.

## **Cross-References**

### **Legislation**

[Municipal Act, 2001](#)

[Municipal Conflict of Interest Act](#)

[Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)

[Occupational Health and Safety Act](#)

### **Corporate Policies**

[Accountability and Transparency Policy](#)

Council and Staff Relations Policy

[Customer Complaint Policy](#)

[Use of Corporate Resources and Election Campaign Activities Policy](#)

### **Details**

Approved by: Council

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Last Revision Date: July 19, 2004

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