

# Corporate Policies

SECTION: General	POLICY 14.15.0	
SUBJECT: Accountability and Transparency		
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## POLICY STATEMENT

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.

In the absence of a definition in the *Municipal Act*, Merriam Webster Dictionary defines:

- **“accountable”** as “subject to giving an account: answerable” and “capable of being accounted for: explainable”, and identify the synonym “responsible”.
- **“accountability”** as “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 for their actions, how actions are explained and the level of details that is provided in justification of certain actions Members of Council and staff.

- **“transparent”** as “free from pretense or deceit: frank; easily detected or seen through: obvious; readily understood; characterized by visibility or accessibility of information especially concerning business:
- **“transparency”** as “the quality or state of being transparent”.

In the municipal setting, this relates to the ability of members of the public to observe how decision are made and implemented.

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

**Transparency** – The principle that the municipality actively encourages and fosters public participation and openness in its decision-making processes. Additionally,

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transparency means that the municipality's decision-making process is open and clear to the public.

## PURPOSE

Brampton City Council acknowledges 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; and
- Promoting the efficient use of public resources.

## SCOPE

The principles of accountability and transparency apply to the political process and decision-making and to the administrative management of the municipality.

## PROCEDURES

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. In addition, Brampton will engage the public throughout its decision making process which will be open, visible and transparent to the public, while balancing the need for the decision making process to be efficient and effective.

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

The conduct of Council and Committee meetings is governed by the City's 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

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permitted under s. 239 of the Act to consider a matter in a closed meeting, and provides for notice of public meetings.

Policies dealing with procurement of goods and services, hiring of employees and the sale and other disposition of land, along with the existence of internal and external audit programs, help promote accountability and transparency in the city's financial dealings.

The Employee Code of Conduct, the performance management and evaluation system, an enhanced employee orientation program and the provision of learning and development opportunities for staff are some of the mechanisms used by the City to create a culture of accountability on the part of its officers and employees.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

City Council and Staff shall be responsible to ensure that these principles are addressed in the manner in which they conduct their activities.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

This policy shall be administered jointly by the Legal Services Division of the Corporate Services Department, and the by Council and Administrative Services Division of the Management and Administrative Services Department