

Category: Introduction

**Title: Governing Policy**

Policy Number: 1.1.0

Approved by: CW340-2017

Administered by: Service Innovation and Corporate Performance, Office of the CAO

Effective: 2017/10/11

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## 1. BACKGROUND

Policies are the foundation of good governance and ensure a consistent and transparent provision and operation of the City's services, programs and facilities.

A policy is a written statement of position, intent or direction. It communicates City priorities, provides guidance for present and future decisions, sets standards of performance and service delivery, and articulates principles of acceptable behaviour and action.

Policies that have city or corporate-wide application are developed at two distinct levels:

*Council Policies:* those policies that support the work of Council, some of which may be required by legislation and are created by a resolution of Council; and

*Administrative Directives:* those matters that focus on the internal operations of the City and are created by a decision of the CAO and Corporate Leadership Team (CLT).

The creation of Council Policy can frequently bring about the creation of an Administrative Directive or standard operating procedure to more specifically guide staff in the application of Council's intent. Staff should refer to the policy guidelines for instruction on quality standards and how policy is developed, approved, reviewed and made public.

Sections 224, 227, and 229 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, as amended, outline the role of Council, the Chief Administrative Officer, and City Administration in the development and approval of policies.

## 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- a. Define roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability;
- b. Ensure proper controls, compliance and corporate wide consistency;

- c. Provide a framework for the approval of Council Policies and Administrative Directives; and,
- d. Promote open government and transparency through the public posting of Council Policies and Administrative Directives.

### **3. POLICY STATEMENT**

3.1 The level of approval required for a policy is dictated by the subject matter.

3.1.1 Council approval will be sought when matters relate to:

- a. a legislative requirement that a “municipality” shall have a policy;
- b. a significant risk of liability to the City;
- c. a desire to articulate a City position on a public issue;
- d. a specific request from Council for the policy;
- e. matters that affect the public directly and significantly;
- f. major budgetary matters;
- g. public accountability;
- h. strategic direction on City programs and services; and,
- i. self-governance.

3.1.2 Administrative Directives approved by the CAO and CLT will provide guidance on matters related to:

- a. implementation of Council decisions;
- b. matters that do not meet the criteria of Council Policies;
- c. the general control and administrative management of the municipality; and the legislative requirements of an “employer” or “corporation” under other legislation; e.g., Occupational Health & Safety.

3.2 Approval of amendments to Council Policies and Administrative Directives generally falls upon the initial approval authority whether it be Council, or CLT.

3.3 Council Policies and Administrative Directives will be reviewed and updated a minimum of every 3 years or more frequently if required by legislation or business practices to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the City.

3.4 Council Policies and Administrative Directives will be communicated and easily accessible to Council, City Administration and the general public to promote accountability, transparency, and openness..

#### **4. APPLICATION AND SCOPE**

4.1 This governing policy applies to all Council Policies and Administrative Directives.

4.2 Exceptions:

This policy does not apply to:

- a. Standard operating procedures; and,
- b. Departmental policies.

#### **5. ROLES and RESPONSIBILITIES**

5.1 Council is responsible for:

- a. developing and evaluating the policies and programs of the municipality;
- b. ensuring that policies, practices and procedures are in place to implement the decisions of Council; and,
- c. approving Council Policy.

5.2 The Chief Administrative Officer is responsible for:

- a. ensuring that Council has appropriate policies to ensure services are delivered with accountability and due diligence;
- b. ensuring that Council's policies, plans and lawful decisions are implemented;
- c. leading CLT in the consideration and approval of Administrative Directives that focus on the general control and administrative management of the municipality.

5.3 The Corporate Leadership Team is responsible for:

- a. the initiation, consideration and approval of Administrative Directives;
- b. being knowledgeable of Council Policy and Administrative Directive precedents to ensure a complementary organizational policy environment.

5.4 Department Heads are responsible for:

- a. authorizing, and keeping up-to-date Council and Departmental Policies, Administrative Directives, and standard operating procedures associated with their areas of program responsibility;

- b. obtaining legal advice and consulting with other affected divisions/departments as appropriate, in the development of policies/procedures;
- c. ensuring communication of Council and Departmental policies, Administrative Directives, standard operating procedures to those affected;
- d. ensuring their staff comply with this Governing Policy.

5.5 Managers are responsible for:

- a. ensuring that Council Policies and Administrative Directives are developed and maintained in accordance with this Governing Policy;

5.6 All Staff are responsible for:

- a. being knowledgeable of, and act in accordance with, the City's policy and procedural environment.

5.7 Manager, Corporate Policy is responsible for:

- a. administering and co-ordinating the Corporation's Policy Program and keeping the Governing Policy up to date;
- b. establishing and updating templates and guidelines to assist City staff in effective policy writing;
- c. identifying and assisting in the resolution of conflicts between policies;
- d. consulting and advice in the development or amendment of a policy;
- e. co-ordinating CAO approval of policies, and issuance of Administrative Directives;
- f. co-ordinating the annual policy review cycle which may involve a report to Council on those policies which are redundant and should be rescinded.
- g. classifying, indexing, and incorporating policies into a policy registry and coordinating publishing on the internet site.

## **6. MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE**

6.1 Internal Audit will assess appropriate policy controls and compliance as a normal part of audit reviews;

6.2 Council Policies and Administrative Directives will be reviewed and updated a minimum of every 3 years or more frequently if required by legislation or business practices to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the Corporation.

## 7. DEFINITIONS

- 7.1 **Council Policy** - a written statement of position, intent or direction. It communicates City priorities, provides guidance for present and future decisions, sets standards of performance and service delivery, and articulates principles of acceptable behaviour and action.
- 7.2 **Administrative Directive** - written direction approved by the CAO and Corporate Leadership Team that focuses on the internal operations of the City as a corporation.
- 7.3 **Standard Operating Procedure** - a set of step-by-step instructions to help staff carry out routine tasks that operationalize a policy or directive. SOPs aim to achieve efficiency, quality output, uniformity of performance, and safety while reducing miscommunication and failure to comply with rules and regulations.
- 7.4 **Departmental Policy** – written direction with respect to activities or services of a department that do not have citywide application. The responsibility to develop, implement, and monitor these policies resides within the operating department.
- 7.5 **Guideline** - operational guidance and may be related to a policy direction, although they are not subject to the same governance or enforcement as corporate policies or procedures.
- 7.6 **Program** - planned and co-ordinated groups of activities or services often for a specific purpose or are intended to meet a public need and may be developed to implement a policy direction. Departments are responsible for the development and coordination of Council approval of programs. Program documentation typically includes significant operational detail and directions for implementation.

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

- General Delegation Policy (14.16.0)
- Delegation of Authority By-law 191-2011
- Accountability and Transparency Policy (14.15.0)

## Revision History

Date	Description
2015/12/9	Replaced previous version approved in 2002
2017/10/11	Replaced previous version approved by CS172-2015
2020/10/11	Next Scheduled Review