



<b>POLICY TITLE</b>	Accountability and Transparency		
<b>CATEGORY</b>	Governance		
<b>POLICY NUMBER</b>	A09 GOV 008 LS		
<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	Legislative Services		
<b>POLICY AUTHOR</b>	Director of Legislative, Enterprise and Information Services		
<b>POLICY TYPE</b>	Corporate Policy		
<b>APPROVED BY</b>	Council		
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b>	DEC 17, 2007	<b>NEXT REVIEW DATE</b>	JUN 01 2027

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### **POLICY STATEMENT**

The Town of Lincoln promotes an accountable and transparent municipal governance guided by the following principles:

- a) Decision-making be conducted with integrity, in an open and fair manner, and with a goal of maximizing efficiency and effectiveness.
- b) Open and responsive meeting practices are established to ensure the public has access to, and an awareness of, Council and Committee business being discussed.
- c) Municipal information is accessible and is provided in a manner consistent with legislative requirements and Town policies.
- d) Members of Council and municipal employees conduct themselves in accordance with corporate values.
- e) Inquiries, concerns and complaints are responded to in a timely manner and in accordance with the Town's Customer Service Strategy.
- f) Delegated responsibilities are documented and include appropriate oversight in accordance with the Town's Delegated Authority By-law.

### **POLICY PURPOSE**

This Policy provides guidance for the delivery of municipal activities and services in an accountable and transparent manner in accordance with the [Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25.](#)

## **LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

Section 270 of the [\*Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25\*](#), requires all municipalities adopt and maintain a policy with respect to the manner in which the municipality will ensure it is Accountable to the public for its actions, and the manner in which its actions are Transparent to the public.

Additionally, the Town of Lincoln is Accountable and Transparent to the public by fulfilling various legislative responsibilities and disclosures of information.

The following are some of the provincial statutes that govern how the Town conducts its business in an Accountable and Transparent manner:

- [\*Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.M.50\*](#)
- [\*Municipal Elections Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M. 53\*](#)
- [\*Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P. 13\*](#)
- [\*Provincial Offences Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P. 33\*](#)
- [\*Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. 56\*](#)
- [\*Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act, 1996, S.O. 1996, c.1\*](#)
- [\*Occupational Health and Safety Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.O.1\*](#)

In addition to the above, there are various provincial and federal statutes that govern the operations of the Town and its' services.

## **POLICY SCOPE & EXEMPTIONS**

This Policy shall govern the actions of the Council, municipal employees and citizens of the Town of Lincoln.

## **POLICY ADMINISTRATION**

### **General Accountability and Transparency Provisions**

The Council of the Town of Lincoln acknowledges that it is responsible under the [\*Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25\*](#) for providing good government with respect to matters within its jurisdiction in an Accountable and Transparent manner.

The Town of Lincoln will fulfill this responsibility by:

- a) Communicating and facilitating public access to information about the Town's programs and activities in a manner consistent with legislative requirements.

- b) Ensuring an open and responsive meeting process that provides public access and public awareness of Council and Committee business.
- c) Delivering high quality services to its residents, businesses and other stakeholders by encouraging their understanding of those services and providing opportunities for suggestions for improving such services.
- d) Striving for consistent, effective, and efficient financial management of the municipality.
- e) Continuously seeking methods to improve the effective and efficient use of the Town's financial, human, and physical resources.
- f) Responding to inquiries, concerns, and complaints in a timely manner and in accordance with the Town's Customer Service Strategy.

The Town of Lincoln acknowledges that Accountability and Transparency are important elements of good government. The Town of Lincoln will endeavor to ensure that all of the Town's activities are undertaken utilizing processes that are open and clearly understood by the public.

Wherever practicable, the Town will engage affected members of the public throughout its decision-making processes which will be open, visible, and transparent to the fullest extent possible and appropriate.

### **Policies and Practices**

In order to strengthen the Accountability and increase the Transparency of the Town's activities, Council will from time to time enact specific policies and/or procedures to clearly establish a framework within which the municipality will consistently operate.

The Town Clerk (or designate) shall maintain a register listing and description of all such policies of the municipality. Policies will be published to the Town's website, if appropriate.

Unless otherwise prescribed, the Town of Lincoln Council will endeavor, directly or through one of its' standing committees, and in accordance with Council's procedures, to review its policies at least once during the four-year period corresponding to the term of office of its members after a regular election.

Council will endeavor to ensure that it is Transparent in the conduct of its deliberations by adhering to the relevant provisions of the [Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25](#), and Council's Procedural By-law, as amended, concerning meetings of Council and its Committees.

The Procedural By-law, as amended, embodies the principles of Accountability and Transparency and provides that, except where appropriate and permitted by law, meetings will be open to the public. The Procedural By-law, as amended, also provides,



among other things, notice regarding meetings and opportunities for members of the public to appear as delegations before Committee or Council on subject matters that are within the Town's jurisdiction.

Council will encourage public awareness of, and participation in, its activities and decision-making processes wherever possible and practicable by ensuring that appropriate notice is provided to the public of all meetings and significant proposed actions, making relevant information available prior to the meeting or significant action in accordance with the Town's Public Notice Policy.

### **Compliance Process**

The Town Clerk (or designate) of the Town shall be responsible for collecting concerns or complaints related to this Accountability and Transparency Policy and routing such concerns or complaints or appropriate investigation and follow-up.

Upon written notification of a concern or complaint, the Town Clerk (or designate) shall notify:

- a) In the case of municipal employees – the Chief Administrative Officer and the Director responsible for the operational area.
- b) In the event of Closed Meetings – Council, the Chief Administrative Officer, and/or the Closed Meeting Investigator appointed by Council.
- c) In the case of Council – the Mayor and the Chief Administrative Officer.
- d) In the case of individual members of Council – the Integrity Commissioner.

### **POLICY COMMUNICATION**

This Policy will be made available on the Town's website.

### **DEFINITIONS**

"Accountability" is the concept or principle that the municipality is answerable for the content and merits of decisions it has made, and policies it has adopted, as well as for its actions, or in specific circumstances, failures to act. The concept of Accountability also includes an obligation to explain the reason or rationale for making specific decisions or adopting policies dealing with subject matter within the municipality's jurisdiction.

"Transparent" or "Transparency" is the concept or principle that the municipality endeavors to practice openness in all of its activities and decision-making processes, subject to limited and specific exceptions that can be demonstrated as being in the best interests of the municipality and consistent with law. The concept of Transparency includes the notion that members of the public should be reasonably able to observe the workings of the municipality's operations and decision-making processes, subject to

provisions respecting confidentiality including those outlined in the [\*Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25\*](#), the [\*Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. 56\*](#), and other statute law.

## **RELATED PROCEDURES/DOCUMENTS**

- Council Code of Conduct
- Customer Service Strategy
- Delegated Authority By-law
- Employee Code of Conduct
- Procedural By-law
- Procurement By-law
- Public Notice Policy
- Records Retention By-law
- Reserves and Reserves Fund By-law
- Routine Disclosure and Active Dissemination Policy
- Sale of Municipal Land By-law

## **REVISION HISTORY**

- December 17, 2007 – New policy created and known as Policy # CS-2007-04.
- March 11, 2011 – Policy revisions.
- March 2, 2015 – Policy revisions
- June 2025 – Policy placed into new template, provided a new number consistent with the new policy framework and revised with minor amendments. The revised policy was approved by Committee of the Whole on September 15, 2025, via Report LS-09-25 and ratified by Council on September 22, 2025, via Resolution RC-2025-78.