



## City of Quinte West

### Accountability and Transparency Policy

---

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to comply with Section 270(1) of the Municipal Act, as amended, which 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. This policy will provide guidance for the delivery of the City's activities and services in accordance with the principles as outlined herein and has been developed in accordance with the Act to comply with Section 270.

#### **Definitions**

**Accountability** – The principle that the City of Quinte West will be responsible to its stakeholders for decisions made and policies implemented, as well as its actions or inactions.

**Transparency** – The principle that the City of Quinte West actively encourages and fosters stakeholder participation and openness in its decision making processes. Additionally, transparency means that the City's decision making process is open and clear to the public.

#### **Policy Statement**

The City of Quinte West acknowledges that it is responsible to provide good government for its stakeholders 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.

Accountability, transparency and openness are standards of good government that enhance public trust. They are achieved through the City adopting measures ensuring, to the best of its ability, that all activities and services are undertaken utilizing a process that is open and accessible to its community stakeholders. In addition, wherever possible, the City of Quinte West will engage its stakeholders throughout its decision making process which will be open, visible and transparent to the public.

The City of Quinte West also acknowledges that there will be matters that due to their nature must be considered at meetings that are not open to the public, and when these occasions occur, the City of Quinte West commits to compliance with the statutory requirements regarding closed meetings under Section 239 of the Municipal Act.

## **Policy Requirements**

The principles of accountability and transparency shall apply equally to the political and decision making processes as well as the administrative management of the municipality.

### **1) Financial Matters**

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

- Internal/external audit
- Regular reporting/statements
  - FIR – Financial Information Return
  - MPMP – Municipal Performance Management Program
  - Financial Reports to Council
- Purchasing/procurement policies
- Sale of Land policy
- Asset management
- Long-term financial planning
- Open budget process
- Fees and Charges By-law
- Development Charges By-law

## **2) Internal Governance**

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

- Performance management and evaluation
- Hiring policy
- Orientation / Continuing education
- Health and Safety
- Compensation / Benefits
- Commitment of senior management to ensure that administrative practices and procedures recognize Council's commitment to accountability and transparency

## **3) Public Participation and Information Sharing**

The City of Quinte West ensures that it is open and accountable to its stakeholders through implementing processes outlining how, when and under what rules meetings will take place. The City's meetings will be open to the public when and as required under the Municipal Act, and members of the public will have an opportunity to make delegations or submit comments in writing on specific items at these meetings. In addition, the City of Quinte West has adopted policies which ensure that participation by the public can be meaningful and effective, through timely disclosure of information by various means including print media, websites, etc. Some specific examples of accountability and transparency include:

- Procedure By-law
  - Agendas, minutes, delegations, meeting conduct, closed meeting, conduct of proceedings and conduct of members
- Public Notice By-law
- Closed Meeting Investigator By-law
- Planning Processes
- Records Retention
- Strategic Plan
- City Website
- Webcasting of Council Meetings