

TOWNSHIP OF WILMOT

ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY POLICY

Effective Date: December 10, 2007
Subject: ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY POLICY
Authority: Approved by Council

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance with respect to the manner in which the Township of Wilmot will ensure that municipal matters are approached in an accountable and transparent manner, with emphasis on openness, ethics, performance outcomes and fiscal responsibility.

APPLICATION:

As required by Section 270 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, this policy applies to all Township of Wilmot operations.

DEFINITIONS

Accountability:

The principle that the municipality is obligated to demonstrate and take responsibility for its actions, decisions and policies and that it is answerable to the public at large.

Transparency:

The principle that the municipality will conduct its business in an accessible, clear and visible manner and that its activities are open to examination by its stakeholders.

POLICY STATEMENT:

The Council of The Township of Wilmot acknowledges that it is responsible to provide and to promote good governance for its stakeholders in an accountable and transparent manner, guided by the following principles:

1. Public access and participation will be encouraged to ensure that decision making is open and transparent.
2. Municipal operations will be conducted in an ethical and accountable manner.
3. Financial resources and physical infrastructure will be managed in an efficient and effective manner.
4. Municipal information will be accessible so that it is consistent with legislative requirements.
5. Inquiries, concerns and complaints will be responded to in a timely manner.
6. Financial oversight, service standards and performance reporting and all other accountability documents will be made available and accessible, in language that the public can understand, to increase the opportunity for public scrutiny and involvement in municipal operations.
7. High quality services will be delivered to citizens
8. The efficient use of public resources will be promoted.

Accountability, transparency and openness are standards of good governance that enhance public trust. They are achieved through the municipality 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 stakeholders. In addition, wherever possible, the Township of Wilmot will engage its stakeholders throughout its decision-making process which will be open, visible and transparent to the public.

POLICY REQUIREMENTS:

The Township demonstrates its commitment to accountability and transparency by providing a framework of policies, procedures and practices that create sound governance and sustainability. The Township ensures accountability and transparency by providing various policies, procedures and practices that have been divided into the following categories:

1. Legislated Requirements
2. Financial Accountability, Oversight and Reporting
3. Performance Measurement and Reporting
4. Open Government/Public Participation and Information Sharing
5. Internal Accountability and Ethical Standards

Legislated Requirements:

The Township of Wilmot is accountable and transparent to taxpayers by fulfilling various legislated responsibilities and disclosure of information. The following are examples of provincial statutes that govern how the Township conducts its business in a public, accountable, and transparent manner:

The Municipal Act, 2001; the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act; the Provincial Offences Act, the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act; the Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act; the Municipal Elections Act; the Planning Act; Environmental Assessment Act; The Safe Water Drinking Act.

Financial Accountability:

The Township of Wilmot is accountable and transparent to taxpayers by identifying the source of Township funds and how those funds are used to deliver services. The following policies, procedures and practices demonstrate the Township's best-practice financial accountability, and reporting mechanisms, including:

1. External Auditor and their annual report
3. Annual and Quarterly Financial Statements
4. Ten Year Financial Plan
5. Capital Status Reports
7. Procurement of Goods and Services Policy
8. Sale/Disposition of Land Policy
9. Asset Management

Performance Measurement and Reporting:

The Township of Wilmot is accountable to taxpayers by using various results-orientated tools to measure progress on performance and the achievement of corporate service standards and goals.. The Township is committed to producing performance information that measures how the Township is doing in all areas over which it has responsibility, from financial reporting to human resource management to service delivery, including:

1. Annual Report
2. Quarterly Performance Reports to Council
3. Participating in the Ontario Municipal Benchmarking Initiative and Report
4. Annual Departmental Workprograms

Open Government/Public Participation and Information Sharing:

The Township of Wilmot is accountable and transparent to taxpayers by providing governance in an open manner through communication, consultation, and collaboration. The following, are policies, procedures and practices that ensure the Township is transparent in its operations and residents are aware of how decisions are made and carried out:

1. Council Procedure By-law
2. Public Distribution of Council and Committee Agenda Meeting Documentation
3. Appointment (Recruitment and Selection) of members of Advisory Committees
4. Public Notice By-law

Internal Accountability and Ethical Standards:

The Township of Wilmot has established policies, procedures and practices that govern internal accountability and ethical standards for the Township of Wilmot, including:

1. Appointment of CAO
2. Code of Conduct for Elected Officials
3. Appointment of Integrity Commissioner
4. Employee Policy Manual :

- a. Hiring and Employment of Family Members Policy
 - b. Responsible Computing Policy
 - c. Workplace Harassment Policy
5. Election-Related Resources Policy

RESPONSIBILITIES

Township Council and administration are responsible for adhering to the parameters of this policy and for ensuring accountability for their actions and transparency of municipal operations.

MONITORING / CONTRAVENTIONS:

The Clerk shall be responsible for receiving complaints and/or concerns related to this policy. Upon receipt of a complaint and/or concern, the Clerk shall notify:

- a) In the case of staff, the CAO and/or the Department Head responsible for the area;
- b) In the case of a closed meeting, the Meeting Investigator; and
- c) In the case of Council, the Integrity Commissioner

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITIES:

Section 270 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* as amended by Bill 130 requires that the Township adopt and maintain a policy with respect to ensuring accountability and transparency.

ENQUIRIES:

Clerk
Township of Wilmot
Telephone: 519 634-8444 Extension 228