

1. Policy Statement

The Corporation of the Municipality of Trent Lakes acknowledges that accountability, transparency and openness are standards of good government that enhance public trust. They are achieved through the municipality:

- delivering high quality services to residents and businesses;
- promoting the efficient use of public resources; and
- adopting measures to ensure, to the best of its ability, that all activities and services are undertaken utilizing a process that is open and accessible to stakeholders.
- Engaging its stakeholders, whenever possible, throughout the decision making process which will be open, visible and transparent to the public.

The Council of the Municipality of Trent Lakes also acknowledges that there will be matters that, due to their very nature, must be considered at meetings that are not open to the public. When these occur, the Corporation of the Municipality of Trent Lakes commits to compliance with the statutory requirements regarding closed meetings under Section 239 of the Municipal Act, 2001.

2. Purpose

Section 270 of the Municipal Act, 2001 requires that all municipalities adopt and maintain a policy with respect to the manner in which they will try to ensure that they are accountable to the public for its actions, and the manner in which they will try to ensure that they are transparent to the public. The purpose of this policy is to support the delivery of municipal services in alignment with the principles of accountability and transparency.

3. Definitions

Accountability is the principle that the Municipality will be answerable to its stakeholders for decisions made and policies implemented, as well as its actions or inactions.

Transparency is the principle that the Municipality actively encourages and fosters stakeholder participation and openness in its decision making processes. Additionally, transparency means that the Municipality's decision-making process is open and clear to the public.

4. Scope

This policy applies to the political decision making and to the administrative management of the Municipality. In addition to this policy, various pieces of legislation impose their own frameworks of Accountability and Transparency on local governments and the principles established herein are intended to compliment any legislative requirements.

5. Responsibility

Council, committees of Council, local boards and municipal staff shall be responsible for adhering to the parameters of this policy and for ensuring accountability for their actions and transparency of municipal operations.

6. Policy

The principles of accountability and transparency shall consistently apply to municipal service delivery. Council has endorsed policies that contribute to creating an accountable and transparent municipal organization and will continue to support these principles in its future initiatives.

6.1 Legislated requirements

The Municipality of Trent Lakes is accountable and transparent to taxpayers by fulfilling various legislated responsibilities and through disclosure of information. The following are provincial statutes that govern how the Municipality conducts its business in an accountable and transparent manner:

- Municipal Act, 2001
- Municipal Conflict of Interest Act
- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

6.2 Financial Matters

The Municipality will be open, accountable and transparent to its stakeholders in its financial dealings, as required by the Municipal Act. Some examples of how the Municipality provides such Accountability and Transparency are as follows:

- External audit
- Annual financial reporting and quarterly updates
- Annual financial statements

- Long Term Financial Plan Policy
- Strategic Asset Management Policy and Plan and annual asset management plan updates
- Open budget process with public consultation
- Annual operating and capital budget review and adoption
- Operating and Capital Budget status reports
- Purchasing Policy
- Disposal of Real Property and Disposal of Municipal Assets Policies
- Development charges background study and by-law
- User Fees and Charges By-law
- Council Remuneration By-law
- Capital Asset Policy
- Debt Policy
- Community Grant Policy
- Municipal Budget Administration Policy
- Investment Policy
- Tax Billing and Collection Policy
- Council Conferences and Expense Claims Policy

6.3 Internal Governance

The Municipality will be accountable and transparent to its stakeholder in its administrative practices, as required by the Municipal Act. Some examples of how the Municipality provides such Accountability and Transparency are as follows:

- Employee Code of Conduct
- Code of Conduct for Members of Council and Local Boards
- Building Department Code of Conduct

- Use of Corporate Resources for Election Purposes Policy
- Respect in the Workplace Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy which speaks to the hiring of relatives
- Human resources policies
- Performance Management Policy and regular performance management/evaluations
- Orientation and continuing education programs
- Health and Safety Policy
- Joint Health and Safety Committee
- Council-Staff Relations Policy

6.4 Public Participation and Information Sharing

The Municipality will be open, accountable and transparent to its stakeholders through implementing processes outlining how, when and under what rules meetings will take place. The Municipality's meetings will be open to the public when and as required by the Municipal Act, and members of the public will have an opportunity to make delegations or comments in writing on specific items. In addition, the Municipality has adopted policies which ensure that the 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 include:

- Procedure By-law
- Retention By-law
- Accountability and Transparency Policy
- Planning Act applications in accordance with provincial legislation
- Public Notice Policy
- Emergency Management Program and Emergency Response Plan
- Public meetings and open houses on municipal initiatives
- Establishment of advisory committees

- Public distribution of Council, committee and local board meetings Agenda documentation
- Posting of financial statements, reports, agendas and plans to the Municipality's website
- Distribution of information on social media

6.5 Transparent Decision Making

Accountability and Transparency require that the Municipality ensure that it is open and accountable to its stakeholders by developing and implementing processes that outline how, when and under what rules meetings will take place. As a rule, the Municipality's meetings will be open to the public and members of the public will have an opportunity to make delegations on specific items at these meetings. Meetings will only be closed to the public where holding a closed meeting is permissible by law. Some specific examples include:

- Procedure By-law for Council and Committees
- Adhering to legislated open meeting requirements and, where necessary, closed meeting procedures
- Delegation of Authority Policy and By-law
- Strategic Plan
- Integrity Commissioner and Closed Meeting Investigator

7. Review Cycle

This policy will be reviewed every four years.

8. Repeals

This Policy repeals a previous version, and all revisions.

This Policy was previously referred to as AD-09.

9. Related Information

Revisions to this document may impact the following policies, procedures and/or by-laws.

#	Document Title
B2021-123	A by-law to adopt an Accountability and Transparency Policy.

10. Policy Revisions

Version	Date Approved	Council Resolution
1	January 1, 2008	R2007-736
2	February 21, 2017	R2017-81
3	November 16, 2021	R2021-755