

Accountability & Transparency Advisory Committee – Draft end of term report

Accomplishments:

- Reviewed and successfully developed a new Accountability and Transparency Policy
- Development of Lobbyist Registry bylaw (inclusive of NFP), communication material, infographic and addition of tutorial video to the website
- Recommended the quarterly and annual reporting template which now includes colour coded status, etc.
- Strategic Planning process.....
- Provided significant input to:
 - Council Staff Relationship Policy
 - Employee Code of Conduct
 - Procedural Bylaw
 - Whistleblower Policy and
 - Surveys

Accountability and Transparency Advisory Committee

Accomplishments:

- Recommended new Staff Template which was approved by Council to the CAO and key features included:
 - In-depth analysis including alignment with Strategic Plan, Public input, Financial and Environmental Impacts
 - Basis for recommendation: three options, one of which is the recommended and one of which can be 'do nothing'
- Freedom of Information TBM Annual Statistics now readily accessible on Town website
- Council Code of Conduct: Provincial approval and enactment required
- Updating of Communicating and Participation with Council and remains ongoing
- Discussion Paper post Strategic Plan – *Our Path Forward*

Discussion Paper post Strategic Plan – *Our Path Forward*

Purpose of the Discussion Paper was to:

- Provide recommendations to operationalize and measure impact of the "Guardian Layer"—the accountability and transparency framework to implement *Our Path Forward* strategic plan by means of the Accountability and Transparency of Town Actions to the Public Policy POL.COR.24.05 including metrics
- Provide guidance with respect to accountability and evidence based decision making

Types of Accountability

To understand this better, consider looking at the different layers of accountability that keep a community functioning:

- **Political Accountability:** This is the check that voters hold over elected. If a leader fails to deliver on promises, they can be voted out
- **Administrative Accountability:** This ensures that Council and staff developing and implementing policies are doing so efficiently and without bias
- **Social Accountability:** This is where community organizations and the media step in. They hold Council and staff answerable for their impact on their lives, often through newsletters, social media, deputations, correspondence and or public comments

Evidence Based Decision Making

To ensure consistent execution, the following four specific sources of evidence are proposed for consideration to guide Decision Making:

Pillar	Description
Internal Data	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), financial metrics, and operational realities
External Evidence	Upper tier government mandates, economic climate, and peer-reviewed benchmarks
Stakeholder Values	Direct feedback from Council, residents, and community partners
Professional Expertise	The "knowledge and experience" applied to interpret data accurately

Proposed Metrics

Three-Filter Test

The importance of the Strategic Plan as a "**filter**" for all major decisions through a **Three-Filter Test** (Stop, Synergy, and KPI filters) for current and planned projects:

Consider the benefit of running them through these questions to assess strategic alignment – especially important in the preparation of the annual budget and capital process:

- Stop" Filter: What are we currently doing that conflicts with the new strategy?
- Synergy Filter: Does this help another department or remain a siloed effort?
- KPI Filter: Which specific metric in the strategic plan will this move?

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Staff and Council: Strategic Plan Alignment

- **Staff Alignment:** % of reports explicitly tied to a Strategic Pillar and alignment accuracy (quality control).
- **Council Decision-Making:** % of motions with a verified link to *Our Path Forward* and "Strategic Tagging Integrity".
- **KPI Velocity:** Quarterly audit results showing the % of strategic KPIs on track vs. delayed
- **Public Trust:** A "Trust Index" via annual surveys and a "Community Impact Score" measuring how public input modified final recommendations.

Accountability and Transparency Committee

- The Accountability & Transparency Advisory Committee is a **unique and strategically valuable governance asset**
- While not common in Canadian municipalities, its existence provides our Town with a competitive advantage in governance maturity, public trust, and strategic execution
- By maintaining and strengthening this committee, Council reinforces its commitment to transparent, evidence-based, and accountable decision-making
- Therefore, it is recommended that the next Term of Council given Accountability & Transparency is a Key Strategic Priority as outlined in the new Strategic Plan - *Our Path Forward* continue the work of the Accountability and Transparency Committee in some governance form to serve as the bridge between high-level strategic goals and day-to-day operations.