

TO: Mayor and Members of Council

FROM: June Porter, Chair of Accountability and Transparency Committee

DATE: April 30, 2026

SUBJECT: Accountability and Transparency Advisory Committee – End of Term Report

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council receive the Accountability and Transparency Advisory Committee – End of Term Report for information;

AND THAT It is recommended that the next Term of Council given Accountability and Transparency is a Key Strategic Priority as outlined in the new Strategic Plan – Our Path Forward continue the work of the Accountability and Transparency Advisory Committee in some form to serve as the bridge between high-level strategic goals and day-to-day operations.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Accountability & Transparency Advisory Committee has been a **unique and strategically valuable addition to the Town’s Advisory Committees.**

While not common in Canadian municipalities, its existence aims to provides our Town with a competitive advantage in governance maturity, public trust. By maintaining. 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.

The Accountability and Transparency (A&T) Advisory Committee has completed its mandate for the current term. This report summarizes the committee’s significant accomplishments.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

During our term of two years the Committee successfully reviewed and developed
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.
- Created a unique value in the Strategic Planning process leading to the development of the Guardian Layer of Accountability and Transparency surrounding the three pillars of Community for Everyone, Resilient Growth, and Strong and Diverse Economy.
- Provided significant input to:
 - Council Staff Relationship Policy
 - Employee Code of Conduct
 - Procedural Bylaw
 - Whistleblower Policy and
 - Surveys
- Recommended and provided as our mandate required a new Staff Advice Template by means of 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*

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 engagement vehicles.

Evidence-Based Decision-Making Framework

To ensure consistent execution of the Strategic Plan, the committee proposes four sources of evidence to guide Council decisions:

- **Internal Data:** KPIs, financial metrics, and operational realities.
- **External Evidence:** Upper-tier mandates, economic climate, and peer benchmarks.
- **Stakeholder Values:** Feedback from Council, residents, and community partners.
- **Professional Expertise:** Knowledge and experience applied to data interpretation.

Proposed Metrics

1. The 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?

2. 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.

CONCLUSION

- The Accountability & Transparency Advisory Committee has been a **unique and strategically valuable addition to the Town's Advisory Committees**
- While not common in Canadian municipalities, its existence aims to provide our Town with a competitive advantage in governance maturity, and public trust
- 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 Accountability and Transparency in some form to serve as the bridge between high-level strategic goals and day-to-day operations