

**THE CORPORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY  
OF HASTINGS HIGHLANDS  
BYLAW 2017 - 016**

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Being a Bylaw to adopt an Accountability and Transparency Policy for the Municipality of Hastings Highlands.

**WHEREAS** under Section 270 of the Municipal Act 2001, c.25 SO 2001, a municipality shall adopt and maintain policies 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.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of Hastings Highlands enacts as follows:

1. That the Accountability and Transparency Policy attached as "Schedule A" forming part of this bylaw is hereby adopted.
  
2. That this bylaw shall take effect on the date of its passing.

**READ A FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD TIME AND PASSED** on this 9<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2017.

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Vivian Bloom, Mayor

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(Ms.) Pat Pilgrim, CAO/Clerk

## Schedule "A" to Bylaw 2017- 016

### 1. **Purpose and Goal:**

The *Municipal Act, 2001* (the Act) requires that all municipalities adopt and maintain a policy with respect to the manner in which the municipality ensures that it is accountable to the public for its actions, and the manner in which the municipality ensures that its actions are transparent to the public. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for the delivery of the activities and services of the Municipality of Hastings Highlands in accordance with the principles outlined. This policy has been developed in accordance with the Municipal Act to comply with Section 270.

The goal of this policy is to ensure that the Municipality of Hastings Highlands is accountable to the public for its actions, and describes the manner in which the Municipality will try to ensure that its actions are transparent to the public.

### 2. **Definitions: Accountability and Transparency:**

- 1) **Accountability**-The principle that the Municipality will be responsible to its stakeholders for decisions made and policies implemented, as well as its actions or inactions. Accountability involves setting out expectations about the outcomes to be achieved; monitoring and reporting publicly on progress; using that information to improve performance; and working to achieve results and taking responsibility for them.
- 2) **Transparency** – Transparency is the basis of an accountable, democratic government. To participate effectively in a democratic process, citizens must be able to see fully and clearly what their government is doing. Transparent communication with citizens involves not just making information available, but also ensuring its integrity and clarity. 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 open and clear to the public.

### 3. **Policy Statement:**

The Council of the Municipality of Hastings Highlands acknowledges that it is responsible to provide good governance for its stakeholders in an accountable and transparent manner by:

- Encouraging public access and participation to ensure that decision-making is responsible to the needs of its constituents and receptive to their options;
- Delivering high quality services to our citizens; and
- Promoting the efficient use of public resources.

Accountability, transparency and openness are the standards of good government that enhance public trust. They are achieved by 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 Municipality of Hastings Highlands engages its stakeholders throughout the decision-making process that is open, visible and transparent to the public.

### 4. **Policy Requirements:**

The principles of the accountability and transparency apply equally to the political process, decision-making and the administrative management of the Municipality.

#### 1) **Financial Matters**

The Municipality will be open, accountable and transparent to its stakeholders in its financial dealings as required under the Act. The Municipality of Hastings Highlands demonstrates such accountability and transparency through the following policies/practices:

- i) Internal/External Audit
- ii) Financial Reporting/Statements
- iii) Long-Term Financial Planning
- iv) Asset Management
- v) Purchasing/Procurement
- vi) Disposition of land
- vii) Budget process

#### 2) **Internal Governance**

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

- i) Performance management and evaluation
- ii) Hiring policy
- iii) Orientation/continuing education
- iv) Health and safety
- v) Compensation/benefits
- vi) Responsibility for ensuring that administrative practices and procedures recognize Council's commitment to accountability and transparency

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

The Corporation of the Municipality of Hastings Highlands 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 Municipality's meetings will be open to the public when and as required under the Act, and members of the public will have an opportunity to make delegations or comments in writing on specific items at these meetings. In addition, the Municipality 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. Those policies and practices include:

- i) Procedure Bylaw
- ii) Strategic Plan
- iii) Records Retention
- iv) Public Notice Policy
- v) Delegation Rules
- vi) Planning processes
- vii) Signing Authority
- viii) Provincial/Municipal benchmarking

## 5. **Policy Review**

- 5.1. Council shall review the Accountability and Transparency Policy during at least each term of Council.
- 5.2. This policy may be amended from time to time as deemed necessary.