

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF SMITHS FALLS

BY-LAW NO. 8098-2007

**A BY-LAW TO ADOPT AN ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY POLICY FOR
THE TOWN OF SMITHS FALLS**

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 Town of Smiths Falls enacts as follows:

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

Read a first and second time this 3rd day of December, 2007

Read a third time and passed this 3rd day of December, 2007

Mayor

Clerk

Sensational!



SUBJECT: ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY POLICY

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1.0 PURPOSE & GOAL

1.1 The *Municipal Act, 2001* (the Act) requires that all municipalities adopt and maintain a policy with respect to the manner 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. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for the delivery of the municipality's activities and services in accordance with the principles as outlined herein.

The goal of this policy is ensure that the Town of Smiths Falls 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.

2.0 LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

2.1 This policy has been developed in accordance with the Municipal Act to comply with section 270.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy:

“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.

“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 is open and clear to the public.

4.0 SCOPE

4.1 The Council of the Town of Smiths Falls acknowledges that it is responsible to provide good government for its stakeholders in an accountable and transparent manner by:

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

5.0 ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK

- 5.1 Accountability, transparency and openness are standards of good government 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 municipality will engage its stakeholders throughout its decision making process which will be open, visible and transparent to the public.

6.0 GENERAL PROVISIONS

6.1 Financial Matters

The municipality will be open, accountable and transparent to its stakeholders in its financial dealings as required under the Act. The Town of Smiths Falls 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

6.2 Internal Governance

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

- i) Code of Conduct for Mayor & Council / Staff
- ii) Employment By-law (Recruitment, Performance Appraisals, Compensation/Benefit Policies etc..)
- iii) Recruitment Policy
- iv) Orientation/Continuing Education
- v) Health and Safety Policy

6.3 Public Participation and Information Sharing

The Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls 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 / practices include:

- i) Procedure by-law
- ii) Code of Conduct for Councillors
- iii) Strategic plan
- iv) Records Retention
- v) Public Notice Policies
- vi) Delegation of Powers and Duties Policy
- vii) Signing Authority
- viii) Planning Process

7.0 POLICY REVIEW

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