

**THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF STRONG
BY-LAW 2018-026**

A BY-LAW TO ESTABLISH AN ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY POLICY

WHEREAS Section 270. (1) 5. of the *Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c.25*, as amended, provides that a municipality shall 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;

AND WHEREAS Section 224.(d.1) of the *Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c.25*, as amended, states it is the role of Council to ensure the accountability and transparency of the operations of the municipality, including the activities of the senior management of the municipality;

AND WHEREAS Council of the Corporation of the Township of Strong deems it necessary to adopt an Accountability and Transparency Policy;

NOW THEREFORE THE COUNCIL OF THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF STRONG ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. That the Accountability and Transparency Policy attached hereto as Schedule "A" and forming part of this by-law be approved;
2. That this By-law shall come into force and effect as of the final passing thereof.

READ A FIRST AND SECOND TIME THIS 24th DAY OF JULY 2018

READ A THIRD AND FINALLY PASSED THIS 24th DAY OF JULY 2018

Original Copy Signed

Mayor Christine Ellis

Original Copy Signed

Clerk Administrator Caitlin Haggart

CERTIFIED to be a true
copy of a by-law 2018-026
enacted in open Council this
24TH day of JULY 2018.

SEAL

SCHEDULE "A"

ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY POLICY TOWNSHIP OF STRONG

Policy Statement:

The Council of The Corporation of the Township of Strong acknowledges that it is responsible to provide good government for its stakeholders in an accountable and transparent manner by:

- a) Encouraging public access and participation to ensure that decision making is responsive to the needs of its constituents and receptive to their opinions; and
- b) Delivering high quality services to our citizens according to accepted best practices;
- c) Promoting the efficient use of public resources and in ensuring a process of continuous improvement; and
- d) Commitment to providing information disclosure, subject to any limitations established under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Accountability, transparency and openness are standards of good government that enhance public trust. They are achieved through the Township of Strong 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 Township of Strong will engage its stakeholders throughout its decision making process which will be open, visible and transparent to the public.

Purpose:

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 attempt to ensure that it is accountable to the public for its actions, and the manner in which the municipality will attempt to ensure that its actions are transparent to the public. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for the delivery of the Township of Strong's activities and services in accordance with the principles as outlined herein. This policy has been developed in accordance with the Act to comply with section 270.

This policy applies to the political process and decision making and to the administrative management of the municipality.

Definitions:

For the purpose of this policy, the following terms shall have the meaning as ascribed to them:

- a) 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
- b) Transparency – 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.
- c) Stakeholder – Any individual person, organization or entity that has an interest or stake in the Township's business, actions or inactions.

Specific Policy Requirements:

The principles of accountability and transparency shall apply equally to the political process and decision making and to the administrative management of the Township of Strong.

I - Financial Matters

The Township of Strong will be open, accountable and transparent to its stakeholders in its financial dealings as required under the Act. Some examples of how the municipality provides such accountability and transparency are as follows, but not limited to:

1. External audits

2. Internal audits
3. Reporting/statements
4. Long term financial planning
5. Procurement Policy By-law
6. Sale of Land By-law
7. Budget process
8. Fees and Charges by-law

II – Members of Council

1. Council Code of Conduct
2. Integrity Commissioner

III - Internal Governance

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

1. General Employment Policies and Procedures
2. Statement of Principles/Code of Conduct for staff
3. Performance management and evaluation
4. Health and Safety

IV - Public Participation and Information Sharing

The Township of Strong 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 Township facilitates public involvement in its activities by providing for and hosting a variety of public meetings, open houses, workshops, presentation and stakeholder consultations to inform the public/stakeholders of initiatives that are under consideration. The Township's meetings will be open to the public when and as required under Provincial Legislation and/or Township By-laws, members of the public will have an opportunity to provide comments in writing on specific items at these meetings or deputations outlining their opposition, prior to Council's consideration of a matter. In addition, the Township 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. Some specific examples include:

1. Procedural By-law
2. Delegation of powers and duties policies and by-laws
3. Records Retention by-law
4. Planning notice requirements and courtesy notice regarding staff reports
5. Township of Strong's website www.strongtownship.com
6. Publication of agendas and minutes
7. Appointment of an Integrity Commissioner
8. Social Media (Facebook)

Other legislative measures which ensure accountability and transparency include, but not limited to:

1. Municipal Conflict of Interest Act
2. Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
3. Planning Act
4. Building Code Act
5. Fire Protection and Prevention Act
6. Municipal Elections Act
7. Development Charges Act
8. Safe Drinking Water Act
9. Occupational Health and Safety Act
10. Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act

Monitoring Contraventions:

The Clerk shall be responsible for receiving complaints and/or concerns related to this policy. Upon receipt of a complaint and/or concern the Clerk shall notify:

- a) For all matters related to staff, the Department Manager or Supervisor responsible for the area and/or Clerk Administrator;

- b) For all matters related to a closed meeting, the Closed Meeting Investigator or designate; OR
- c) For all matters related to Council, the Mayor or Head of Council designate and/or the Integrity Commissioner.

Implementation:

This policy shall become effective immediately upon approval by Council.