

COUNCIL - ADMINISTRATION PROTOCOL

POLICY NO	CP-192.26
DIVISION DEPARTMENT	Administration
REVIEW PERIOD	Every 4 Years or as Required

1. POLICY PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this Policy is to establish expectations that Council and Administration will work collaboratively and effectively in serving the public interest, supporting stable governance, and fostering a positive, respectful organizational culture. This Policy aims to:
- 1.1.1 establish a framework to clarify the roles of Council and Administration.
 - 1.1.2 set out communication standards between Council and Administration.
 - 1.1.3 establish a regime of protocol for regulating relations and communications between Council and Administration.
 - 1.1.4 promote positive working relationships and a healthy workplace environment between Council and Administration.
 - 1.1.5 guide both administrative and operational interaction between Council and Administration.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

- 2.1 Effective governance depends on Council and Administration having a clear, shared understanding of their distinct roles and responsibilities, supported by a structured and well-defined framework that guides how they interact, communicate, and carry out their respective duties. This clarity fosters consistency, accountability, and a cohesive approach to managing and operating the municipality.
- 2.2 Council provides leadership, establishes policy direction, and makes decisions on behalf of the municipality through resolution. Administration is responsible for implementing Council decisions, providing professional advice, and managing day-to-day operations. This Policy ensures that interaction between the two bodies occurs in a manner that preserves good governance, maintains organizational integrity, and supports effective service delivery.
- 2.3 Council provides direction only through formal resolution, and Administration receives direction only through the CAO, ensuring proper lines of authority are maintained.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 “**Act**” means the *Municipal Government Act*, R.S.A., 2000 c M-26, as amended.
- 3.2 “**Administration**” collectively means all the Employees of the Town.
- 3.3 “**CAO**” means the Chief Administrative Officer of the Town.
- 3.4 “**Communication (s)**” means correspondence or a letter addressed to Council, including but not limited to letters and emails that are on paper or in a printable form as well as verbal inquiries.
- 3.5 “**Council**” means the Council of the Town of Blackfalds elected pursuant to the *Local Authorities Election Act* of Alberta, as amended.
- 3.6 “**Employee**” means, as defined in Section d.1(k) of the Alberta Employment Standards Code, an individual employed to do work who receives or is entitled to wages and includes a former employee, but does not include an individual who is a member of a class of individuals excluded by regulations.
- 3.7 “**Integrity**” means consistently acting with honesty, transparency, and adherence to ethical principles in all Council duties and decisions, including the following:
- Making decisions based on facts, fairness, and the public interest.
 - Being truthful and accountable in communications, commitments, and conduct.
 - Following legislation, bylaws, policies, and governance processes.
 - Being consistent between words and actions.
 - Avoiding conflicts of interest.
 - Upholding the responsibilities and authority of the Council role, respecting boundaries between governance and Administration.
- 3.8 “**Mayor**” means the chief elected official as defined in the Act.
- 3.9 “**Non-political**” means anything not related to politics, political parties, political processes, government policy, elections, or political debate. Something that is non-political:
- Does not express political opinions, support, or opposition.
 - Does not aim to influence government or public policy.
 - Is neutral with respect to political ideologies or issues.
- 3.10 “**Respect**” means conducting oneself in a manner that values the dignity, contributions, and perspectives of others, including the following:
- Listening actively and with an open mind to colleagues, Administration, and the public.
 - Engaging in debate constructively, focusing on ideas rather than personal attributes.

- Recognizing the legitimacy of differing viewpoints and treating them with fairness and civility.
- Communication professionally in formal meetings, public settings and written or electronic communication.
- Upholding the roles and responsibilities of Council, Administration, and governance processes.
- Fostering a safe, inclusive, and collaborative environment where all participants can contribute without fear of ridicule, hostility, or dismissal.

3.11 “**Town**” means the municipality of the Town of Blackfalds.

4. SCOPE

4.1 This Policy applies to Council and Administration.

5. MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

5.1 Council constitutes the political component of the Town and is led by the Mayor, while Administration constitutes an administrative and operational component of the Town, led by the CAO.

5.2 The legal responsibilities, functions, and powers of the Council and Administration are both interdependent and interrelated. The statutory powers of Council and Administration are as set out in the Act.

6. AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 Council to:

6.1.1 Adopt and support this Policy by resolution.

6.1.2 Consider the allocation of resources for the successful implementation of this Policy in the annual budget process.

6.2 Chief Administrative Officer to:

6.2.1 Advise Council on the development, implementation, and amendment of this Policy.

6.2.2 Ensure Policy review occurs and verify the implementation of this Policy.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 7.1 The Mayor coordinates Council decisions, acts as Council spokesperson, facilitates the Council/Administration interface, and performs the duties of the chief elected official as per the Act. In the absence of the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor will assume the above duties.
- 7.2 A Council member who is authorized to act as Council's official spokesperson must ensure that their comments reflect the official position and will of Council as a whole, even if the Council member personally disagrees with Council's position.
- 7.3 Members shall accurately communicate the decisions of Council, even if they disagree with Council's decision, in a manner that conveys and fosters respect for the decision-making process of Council.
- 7.4 Council members with social media accounts may share official Town posts on their personal or professional channels, provided the content is not altered in a way that changes meaning, tone, or accuracy.
- 7.5 Council members who participate in social media groups may share official Town posts within those groups in accordance with this section.
- 7.6 Information from Council's personal media accounts will not be shared by the Town.
- 7.7 The Town will not post responses to comments which are not on the Town's social media accounts. Council members may wish to post responses on other social media accounts but are to do so as individual members of Council, not as representatives of Council as a whole.
- 7.8 Council provides direction, makes strategic policy decisions, represents the public interest, and performs the duties of a Councillor as per the Act.
- 7.9 Council is responsible for hiring, supervising, and terminating the CAO. Council has one employee, being the CAO.
- 7.10 The CAO coordinates the organization's systems, manages organizational resources, facilitates the Administration/Council interface, and performs the duties as outlined in the Act and the CAO Bylaw.
- 7.11 The CAO is responsible for the hiring, managing, and terminating of all Employees of the Town.
- 7.12 Council and Administration will adhere to formal channels of communication between each other as established by legislation, bylaws and policy, which will include the copying of the CAO on all requests.

8. GENERAL PROTOCOL

- 8.1 Council and Administration shall treat each other with respect and integrity.
- 8.2 The Mayor will advise the Councillor and/or Council when a Councillor's activities are affecting Administration's performance.
- 8.3 Council will deal with Administration performance concerns by communicating them through the Mayor to the CAO.
- 8.4 The CAO will provide information to all of Council when responding to a request from one member of Council.
- 8.5 Administration will advise the CAO if a request for information from a member of Council will create a significant impact on performance/workload.

9. COMMUNICATION BETWEEN COUNCIL AND ADMINISTRATION

- 9.1 When a Communication is addressed to Council, it shall be directed through the CAO, and if the CAO determines it is within the governance authority of Council, the CAO will forward the Communication to Council without delay.
- 9.2 As per the Council Procedural Bylaw, follow-up on the Communication may include:
 - 9.2.1 Discussion on the item under Business at a Council Meeting;
 - 9.2.2 Directive to Administration to provide a response to the item of correspondence.
- 9.3 Council will provide direction to Administration through a resolution of Council.
- 9.4 Council may make information requests of Administration with the following understanding:
 - 9.4.1 The CAO is Council's main direct point of contact.
 - 9.4.2 The CAO will forward the information request to the applicable Employee.
- 9.5 Council shall, when approached, encourage all Employees to use appropriate channels within the organization for an operational issue or concern.
- 9.6 As outlined in the table below, each communication type is assigned a specific method of direction, accompanied by its definition, and any applicable requirements to share information. The CAO will develop and implement an Administrative Policy to delegate

responsibilities to specific Employees in the Town for responses to Council Communications.

Communication Type	Definition	Administrative Delegate as delegated by the CAO	Requirement to Share
Simple or Resident Related Information Requests	<p>An inquiry of Administration to obtain information on the operations and administration of the organization that is readily available and will not result in any external financial implications.</p> <p>Examples: include but not limited to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resident inquiries on basic policies or procedures • Question regarding upcoming events or Council meetings • Requests on where to find information that is already available 	Chief Administrative Officer	<p>Inquiry request communicated by the Council member to all Council members.</p> <p>Response will be provided to all members of Council within 48 hours on business days, within 72 hours on weekends.</p>

<p>Complex Inquiries or Requests Requiring Significant Staff Time</p>	<p>Requests that require a substantial amount of research, more than four (4) hours of administrative effort, or any budget allocation will necessitate a Notice of Motion</p> <p>Examples: include but not limited to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requests for detailed reports on a particular issue or project that do not already exist • Requests for legal opinions or in-depth policy reviews • Request that require extensive research and data analysis 		
<p>Support with Governance Meeting Procedures</p>	<p>Requesting clarification with process related Council meeting processes.</p>	<p>Senior Legislative Advisor</p>	<p>No requirement to share.</p>
<p>Support with Notice of Motions</p>	<p>Assistance with Notice of Motions</p>	<p>Legislative and Executive Coordinator</p> <p>cc. Chief Administrative Officer</p>	<p>No requirement to share.</p>

<p>Inquiries related to citizen or stakeholder concerns</p>	<p>Request for information or concerns related to matters brought to Council by a citizen or other stakeholder</p>	<p>Chief Administrative Officer</p>	<p>Inquiry request communicated by the Council member to all Council members. Response will be provided to all members of Council.</p>
<p>Inquiries related to prospective Economic Development</p>	<p>An inquiry from an external agency that was funnelled through or included a Member of Council requesting information, or an initial consultation regarding a prospective new development investment in the Town.</p>	<p>Chief Administrative Officer cc. Director of Corporate Services and Director of Infrastructure and Planning Services</p>	<p>No requirement to share unless the matter is relevant to Town operations.</p>
<p>Council support matters</p>	<p>Inquiry regarding Council schedules, expenses, course registrations, conferences and travel</p>	<p>Legislative and Executive Coordinator</p>	<p>No requirement to share</p>
<p>Request for Additional Information or Clarification</p>	<p>Council member wishes to be given additional training on a matter before Council or on a matter related to Committee work.</p>	<p>Chief Administrative Officer</p>	<p>Inquiry request communicated by the Council member to all Council members. Response will be provided to all members of Council.</p>

Committee Responsibilities	Inquiry related to issues or concerns with a Council Committee	Chief Administrative Officer	Inquiry request communicated by the Council member to all Council members. Response will be provided to all members of Council.
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10. RESIDENT INQUIRIES TO COUNCIL

- 10.1 A member of Council may choose to respond to requests for information from residents that are Com, such as the examples outlined in the table above under “Simple Information Requests” where the information is readily available to the public. Such responses must be shared with all of Council and the Chief Administrative Officer.
- 10.2 Council will direct requests from residents for services or information that are not routine in nature to info@blackfalds.ca.
- 10.3 Communication to Council directly as a result of a statutory public hearing will be directed to the Chief Administrative Officer to ensure that the concern is documented accordingly.
- 10.4 All inquiries from residents to Council regarding enforcement matters, including complaints against a Peace Officer, must be directed to the Chief Administrative Officer.
- 10.5 All inquiries from residents to Council regarding criminal matters or other operational complaints related to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police should be directed to the Blackfalds RCMP Detachment.

11. SPECIAL SITUATIONS

- 11.1. In all routine and operational situations, the CAO and designated staff may exercise delegated authority without returning to Council, provided actions remain within approved budgets, bylaws, policies, and legislative requirements. These situations include, but are not limited to:
 - Managing logistics for municipal participation in community events, including staff coordination, scheduling representation, and handling operational planning that does not require political direction.

- Preparing routine communications and event materials, such as speaking notes, scripts, agendas, programs, and public notices related to protocol activities where no new political commitments are created.
- Authorizing standard use of municipal symbols, including municipal flags, banners, branding, and official insignia, in accordance with approved municipal standards.
- Issuing standard letters of recognition, greetings, or congratulations, where content is ceremonial and Non-Political.
- Selecting and providing standard municipal gifts or recognition items, within established protocol and financial limits.
- Managing routine Human Resources matters, including recruitment, hiring, onboarding, staff performance management, employee relations, workplace practices, routine disciplinary actions, scheduling and leave administration, position adjustments, and implementation of approved compensation policies for all positions other than the CAO.

12. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- 12.1. *Municipal Government Act*
- 12.2. CAO Bylaw
- 12.3. Council Procedural Bylaw
- 12.4. Council Policy – Social Media

13. END OF POLICY

-Original Signed-

 Mayor

-Original Signed-

 Chief Administrative Officer

-Original Dated-

 Date

-Original Dated-

 Date

POLICY RECORD HISTORY

	Resolution No:	Date
Policy Adopted	111/26	2026-04-14
Policy Reviewed		
Policy Revised		

ADMINISTRATIVE REVISIONS

Date	Description