

## Organizational Roles and Responsibilities

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**Lead Role:** Council

**Replaces:** N/A

**Last Review Date:** 05/2011

**Next Review Date:** 05/2013

**Administrative Responsibility:** N/A

### Policy Statement

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The statutory powers of Council and Administration are defined in the *Municipal Government Act*, R.S.A., 2000 ("the Act"). Elected official and staff roles are inter-dependent. The effective governance and management of Strathcona County therefore requires Council and Administration to have a common vision for the municipality and a common understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities for key government functions.

The role of Council includes:

- Providing [strategic direction](#) of the organization through a clear community vision, services expectations and realistic priorities
- Making [policy decisions](#) based on good information and debate to guide organizational operations and resource allocations
- Providing a broad level of advocacy for citizens, the community and municipality
- Appointing an individual to carry out the powers, duties and functions of the position of Chief Commissioner and providing the Chief Commissioner with an annual written performance evaluation of the results he or she has achieved with respect to fulfilling those powers, duties and functions.
- Suspending or revoking the appointment of the Chief Commissioner in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

The role of the Chief Commissioner and Administration includes:

- Ensuring that the policies and programs approved by Council are implemented in a manner that is cost efficient, responsive to community needs and customer friendly
- Coordinating [organizational systems](#) that maximize internal capacity to achieve strategic, policy and service excellence
- Providing decision-making advice that reflects their area of expertise.

### Key Government Functions

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The key government functions and expectations, together with roles and responsibilities of Council and Administration in fulfilling these key government functions, are more particularly set out in Schedule "A" attached to and forming part of this Policy.

**A. To set a strategic direction** – translate a preferred community vision and emerging strategic topics into strategic priorities compatible with organizational capacity within an ongoing process.

**B. To develop effective policy** – make informed decisions based on adequate information and good debate about policy issues, outcomes, options and actions that reflect the public interest and legislated mandate.

**C. To effectively allocate resources** – deploy fiscal and human resources in an efficient, effective and accountable manner.

**D. To ensure a healthy work environment** – promote a work environment that is safe, respectful and free from harassment, discrimination or any other behaviour that may discredit Strathcona County's reputation as an employer of choice.

**E. To respect communication protocols** – promote internal and external communication practices that respect the integrity of the workplace and roles of council and staff members.

**F. To liaise with other agencies** – such as not for profit organizations, service agencies and other levels of government.

**G. To deliver quality services** – determine the service agenda that best fits with the community need and organizational capacity to deliver efficient and effective services.

## Guidelines

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1. Schedule "A" as attached hereto, will guide organizational and individual actions that reinforce the distinct, yet overlapping nature of political and administrative roles by:

- Defining and clarifying the political and administrative realms and key functions shared by Council and Administration.
- Defining specific responsibilities of Council and Administration to strengthen compliance and maximize organizational effectiveness.
- Describing success indicators as a means to assess organizational and individual efforts in achieving role clarity and governance excellence.
- Identifying organizational practices to promote sound working relations between Council and Administration.

2. In fulfilling key government functions, Council and Administration shall have reference to the Strathcona County Strategic Plan, the Social, Environment and Economic

GOV-001-029  
Handbook

Strathcona County  
Municipal Policy

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Sustainability Frameworks, the annual Business Plan and Budget, Council-approved Bylaws and Policies and any other documents which set the long and short term vision for Strathcona County.

**SCHEDULE “A”**

**A. TO SET A STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

Translate a preferred community vision and emerging strategic topics into strategic priorities compatible with organizational capacity within an ongoing process.

**Expectations:**

- Opportunities for staff, public and stakeholder engagement, input and feedback
- Timely and thorough consideration of emerging strategic issues
- Plans translate into results-oriented action compatible with internal capacity
- Regular reporting, review and updating of strategic priorities and work programs
- Communication and celebration of strategic directions, progress and results
- Staff and stakeholders feel that their contribution has been heard and valued

**Roles and Responsibilities:**

<b>Council</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a community vision in the best interests of the public reflecting the unique makeup of a specialized municipality</li> <li>• Set priorities for budget allocations for programs and services</li> <li>• Consider the organization’s capacity to implement strategic directions</li> <li>• Review and monitor work program progress and results regularly</li> <li>• Update strategic directions and priorities annually</li> </ul>
<b>Mayor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversee the political process to establish and monitor strategic directions</li> <li>• Ensure emerging issues from councillors and Administration are considered</li> <li>• Facilitate information sharing to ensure everyone’s issues are heard</li> <li>• Facilitate priority setting based on adequate information and established criteria</li> <li>• To promote/represent Council’s strategic direction to public and other agencies</li> </ul>
<b>Chief Commissioner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide to Council options and emerging topics for timely and informed priority setting</li> <li>• Advise Council of the organization’s capacity to pursue emerging issues</li> <li>• Keep Council informed on the progress of strategic priority implementation</li> <li>• Facilitate the establishment and updating strategic directions and priorities</li> <li>• Ensure councillor work program requests are processed in a timely manner</li> </ul>
<b>Administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assemble information required for discussing strategic topics</li> <li>• Provide information on organizational capacity to pursue strategic topics</li> <li>• Recommend strategic priorities for organizational attention</li> <li>• Advise Council on the progress and results for strategic priorities and directions</li> </ul>

**SCHEDULE “A”**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide timely response to Program Requests</li> </ul>
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**B. TO DEVELOP EFFECTIVE POLICY**

Make informed decisions based on adequate information and good debate about policy issues, outcomes, options and actions that reflect the public interest and legislated mandate.

**Expectations:**

- Adequate and thorough information provided in a timely and objective manner
- Timely response to emerging issues and/or policy feedback
- Comfortable atmosphere to achieve respectful debate
- Consistent approach to similar issues and policy implementation
- Staff and Council adherence to *Meeting Procedures Bylaw* and adopted practices
- Public awareness of policies and opportunities for input into policy development

**Roles and Responsibilities:**

<b>Council</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek and review public/citizen and staff advice prior to making decisions as appropriate</li> <li>• Provide staff with clear direction as to its decision-making information needs</li> <li>• Play an active part in the respectful exchange of ideas and debate</li> <li>• Suggest discussion topics for policy consideration</li> <li>• Assume an open mind and actively listen to differing viewpoints</li> </ul>
<b>Mayor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that staff advice is available and presented to Council</li> <li>• Chair respectful debate within approved meeting procedures</li> <li>• Advise the Chief Commissioner regarding Council interests and needs</li> <li>• Oversee the Chief Commissioner’s attention to implementing Council decisions</li> </ul>
<b>Chief Commissioner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guide Council decision adherence to existing policy and legislation</li> <li>• Ensure all options and information are presented with recommendations</li> <li>• Oversee staff compliance of, and follow-up to, Council decisions</li> <li>• Identify possible consequences of policy options and emerging issues</li> </ul>
<b>Administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek to clarify Council’s view on the policy issues and outcomes</li> <li>• Provide thorough objective information in response to Council’s parameters</li> <li>• Advise Council of fiscal and human capacity implications of policy options</li> <li>• Maintain an efficient policy retrieval process as established in Policy GOV-002-021</li> <li>• Monitor and report on the policy implementation outcomes and issues</li> </ul>

**SCHEDULE "A"**

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**C. TO EFFECTIVELY ALLOCATE RESOURCES**

Deploy financial and human resources in an efficient, effective and accountable manner.

**Expectations:**

- Long and short term operational and capital planning
- Timely and accurate financial and program reporting from administration
- Innovative expenditures, revenue and external resource approaches
- Proactive information to make choices among competing demands
- Clear budget linkage to priorities and work programs
- Budget parameters and direction established by Council
- Skillful effective resource management without wasting time, effort or expense

**Roles and Responsibilities**

<b>Council</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider fiscal, strategic plan and staff implications in all its decisions</li> <li>• Establish the annual and longer term operational and capital budgets</li> <li>• Ensure fiscal planning and reporting are transparent to the public</li> <li>• Seek staff, stakeholder and public input to resource allocations</li> <li>• Council will review concerns regarding Councillor fiscal accountability</li> </ul>
<b>Mayor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversee the political process to establish and monitor the budget</li> <li>• Chair financial planning meetings of Council</li> <li>• Ensure full discussion of resource implications prior to making decisions</li> </ul>
<b>Chief Commissioner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indicate the resource implications of all Council decision and direction options</li> <li>• Oversee financial resource controls and timely reporting</li> <li>• Ensure public accountability for the prudent use of organizational resources</li> <li>• Approve staff and budget adjustments within policy parameters</li> <li>• Investigate any fiscal accountability concerns in a timely manner</li> <li>• Approve unbudgeted expenditures as established within Policy GOV-001-024</li> <li>• Refer emergency expenditures to Council by way of a special meeting</li> <li>• Will identify any concerns regarding Council financial improprieties</li> </ul>
<b>Administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess resource implications for strategic direction and policy recommendations</li> <li>• Control expenditures within budget guidelines</li> <li>• Report revenue and expenditure variances as soon as they are known</li> <li>• Report and provide accurate financial reporting of extraordinary expenses</li> <li>• Maximize efficient and innovative use of organizational/community resources</li> </ul>

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**SCHEDULE "A"**



**SCHEDULE “A”**

**D. TO ENSURE A HEALTHY WORK ENVIRONMENT**

Promote a work environment that is safe, respectful and free from harassment, discrimination or any other behaviour that may discredit Strathcona County’s reputation as an employer of choice.

**Expectations:**

- Regular check-in to monitor and enhance governance excellence
- Regular check-in to monitor and enhance organizational excellence
- High internal morale and spirit
- Demonstrated respect for an elected official and for the professional/technical expertise of staff

**Roles and Responsibilities:**

<b>Council</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respect the role of staff to perform their duties without apprehension</li> <li>• Agree that a Councillor will not directly order a staff member to perform activities unless approved by Council or the Chief Commissioner</li> <li>• Direct concerns regarding a staff member to the Chief Commissioner</li> <li>• Direct concerns regarding the Chief Commissioner to the Mayor or Council</li> <li>• Discuss individual Councillor concerns directly with the Council member</li> <li>• Discuss unresolved negative behaviours with the Mayor/Council</li> <li>• Refer staff performance concerns to the Chief Commissioner</li> </ul>
<b>Mayor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refer staff concerns regarding the Chief Commissioner to Council</li> <li>• Address behaviours that impact Council effectiveness directly with the Councillor</li> <li>• Work with the Chief Commissioner to address negative councillor impacts in the workplace</li> <li>• Facilitate Council discussion regarding unresolved negative councillor behaviours</li> <li>• Facilitate Council discussion on unresolved personnel or Chief Commissioner matters</li> </ul>
<b>Chief Commissioner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate the regular and confidential appraisal of staff performance</li> <li>• Ensure health, safety, security and respectful workplace practices</li> <li>• Work with the Mayor and Council to address negative councillor impacts in the workplace</li> <li>• Provide assurances of efforts to address unresolved performance concerns</li> </ul>
<b>Administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respect the differences in abilities and capacities of individuals</li> <li>• Demonstrate attention to sustaining a safe and respectful workplace</li> <li>• Report factors or incidents diminishing the health of the workplace</li> <li>• Facilitate efforts to enhance work place productivity and health</li> </ul>

**SCHEDULE “A”**

**E. TO RESPECT COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS**

Promote internal and external communication practices that respect the integrity of the workplace and roles of council and staff members.

**Expectations:**

- Timely communication to avoid political or administrative surprises
- Clear chain of command is known and followed
- Proactive and innovative public communication and engagement efforts
- Flexibility in organizational hierarchy to deal with urgent matters
- Every Councillor has access to the same information as appropriate

**Roles and Responsibilities:**

<b>Council</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Request information from Managers that will not impact programs or service delivery</li> <li>• Direct program requests to Council</li> <li>• Submit service complaints to the Associate Commissioner/Manager or Chief Commissioner</li> <li>• Provide direction to Administration through Council resolution</li> <li>• Represent Council policies or position when designated as a spokesperson and acknowledge Council’s position when conveying political viewpoints</li> </ul>
<b>Mayor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refer administrative matters requiring action to the Chief Commissioner</li> <li>• Serve as the official spokesperson with the media and other agencies</li> <li>• Coordinate Council communication on sensitive matters with the Chief Commissioner</li> <li>• Pursue proactive efforts to enhance the County image and reputation</li> <li>• Refer media questions of an administrative nature to the Chief Commissioner or designate</li> <li>• Disseminate information to Council from the Mayor’s office in a timely fashion</li> </ul>
<b>Chief Commissioner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate communication support for Council on political matters</li> <li>• Assist the Mayor in keeping Council informed on political matters</li> <li>• Ensure that Council is aware of operational matters of potential political interest</li> <li>• Provide input when requested at a Council meeting</li> <li>• Refer media questions of a political nature to the Mayor</li> </ul>
<b>Administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure timely responses to Council requests</li> <li>• Channel requests for decisions to Council through the Chief Commissioner</li> <li>• Forward correspondence directed to a member of Council and external correspondence directed to Council via the Office of the Mayor without delay</li> <li>• Provide general information to Council and ward related information to the appropriate Councillor in a timely manner</li> <li>• At the discretion of the Manager, allow a Councillor to deal with a Coordinator</li> <li>• Refrain from commenting on the political aspects of any matter</li> </ul>

**SCHEDULE “A”**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deviations from these protocols shall be permitted only during times of emergency.</li> </ul>
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**F. TO LIAISE WITH OTHER AGENCIES**

Not for profit organizations, service agencies and other levels of government.

**Expectations:**

- Up to date agency information
- Timely reporting on relevant initiatives and issues
- Maintain high potential for cooperation
- Respected partner or stakeholder in interagency relationships
- Council is well represented on external committees

**Roles and Responsibilities:**

<b>Council</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote cooperative relations with other agencies and levels of government</li> <li>• Approve governance and resource sharing agreements with agencies</li> <li>• Act as Council liaison with another agencies at the request of the Mayor</li> <li>• Represent Council policies or position when designated as a spokesperson</li> </ul>
<b>Mayor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act as primary spokesperson for Council</li> <li>• Provide timely reports on agency liaison activities to Council</li> <li>• Represent Council based on existing policies, budget and strategic plan</li> <li>• Obtain Council direction on significant issues before advancing its position</li> </ul>
<b>Chief Commissioner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate an ongoing and targeted agency liaison program</li> <li>• Act as primary liaison with senior staff of external organizations and government agencies</li> <li>• Provide timely reports on liaison activities</li> <li>• Refer invitations and events of a political nature to the Mayor</li> </ul>
<b>Administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interact with staff of other agencies as delegated by the Chief Commissioner</li> </ul>

**SCHEDULE “A”**

**G. TO DELIVER QUALITY SERVICES**

Determine the service agenda that best fits with the community need and organizational capacity to deliver efficient and effective services.

**Expectations:**

- High public and customer satisfaction with services
- Noted for innovative service delivery approaches
- Favorable comparison to historical and external benchmarks
- Timely response to service complaints and requests
- Balance service levels to resource capacity

**Roles and Responsibilities:**

<b>Council</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solicit and interpret the community's needs</li> <li>• Define and adjust service levels to meet community needs</li> <li>• Assess the capacity of the organization to meet service expectations</li> <li>• Require the ongoing review of operational efficiency and effectiveness</li> <li>• Seek community feedback on service aims, levels and delivery</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>Mayor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refer new service and service adjustment requests to the Chief Commissioner</li> <li>• Facilitate Council's regular review of the organization's service capacity an levels</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>Chief Commissioner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversee the efficient deployment of resources to deliver services</li> <li>• Promote innovation in service delivery and customer service</li> <li>• Seek Council approval for major adjustments to service levels</li> <li>• Coordinate the review of internal and external services</li> <li>• Bring forward suggestions to improve effectiveness and efficiency</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>Administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggest ways to maximize effectiveness and efficiency</li> <li>• Expect all staff to provide excellent customer service</li> <li>• Promote public awareness of services as well as public and client feedback</li> <li>• Evaluate and adjust services to meet changing needs and conditions</li> <li>• Pursue partners and leverage local resources to meet community needs</li> </ul>