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City of Kelowna

Council Policy No. 368

Council Policy Framework

Responsible Department: Office of the City Clerk	Adopted: 2013/07/15
Amendments: 2025/05/05, 2015/05/25	Last Reviewed: 2025/05/05

Purpose

Council policies play an important role in promoting good governance and guiding the delivery of the City's programs and services to the residents of Kelowna. The purpose of this policy is to promote transparency and accountability by setting out a framework for the establishment, management and review of Council policies.

Application

This policy applies to each Council policy; it does not apply to an administrative policy.

Definitions

"Council policy" or "policy" means a policy document endorsed through a resolution of Council that provides ongoing guidance or direction on matters related to governance, programs and services provided by the City of Kelowna.

"Administrative policy" means a policy document that provides a common understanding of strategic direction on an organizational matter that is under the authority of the City Manager.

"Responsible department" means the department, division or other unit that has been assigned responsibility for managing a Council policy.

Policy Statements

General Framework

1. A Council policy is a means for Council to provide guidance or direction with respect to the governance of the City and the delivery of its programs and services. Depending on a policy's subject matter, the guidance or direction it provides may take the form of one or more of the following illustrative examples:
 - a) guiding principles;
 - b) broad strategic direction;
 - c) priority-setting;
 - d) levels of service; or
 - e) prescribed practices, rules or procedures.
2. A responsible department will be designated for each policy. A policy's responsible department may be changed at any time at the discretion of the City Manager. In general, the responsible department will be the department, division or other unit with the strongest connection to the policy's subject matter or area of focus. The role of a responsible department includes:

- a) implementing any directive, strategy, plan, guideline, or process set out in the policy;
 - b) creating, where necessary, documentation to direct implementation of the policy;
 - c) performing administrative tasks required under the policy;
 - d) ensuring that the policy is regularly reviewed as required under this policy; and
 - e) bringing forward amendments to the policy for Council consideration.
3. Council may, at its own discretion and in circumstances it considers appropriate, choose to depart from the requirements of a policy in specific instances. Policies remain valid and generally applicable notwithstanding such departures.
4. Once approved by Council, a policy will be made available in electronic format online or upon request from the Office of the City Clerk. The City will promote openness and transparency by making a reasonable effort to ensure barrier-free access to policies by all members of the public.

Form and Content of Policies

5. Each policy will have a title and number. A policy title will be brief and describe the policy's subject matter. The Office of the City Clerk will assign a number to each new policy before the policy is brought forward for Council consideration.
6. Each policy will include at least the following sections:
 - a) Guiding Principles (if applicable)
 - b) Purpose
 - c) Application
 - d) Definitions (if applicable)
 - e) Policy Statements

Proposing a New Policy or Amending an Existing Policy

7. A proposed new policy or policy amendment may be brought forward for consideration either at the direction of Council or on the initiative of the responsible department.
8. A new policy will be considered for adoption only when a clearly demonstrated need for additional policy guidance or direction exists. The following are examples of factors that may demonstrate the need for a new policy:
 - a) ongoing Council direction is required on a matter that is non-regulatory or is otherwise unnecessary to include in a bylaw;
 - b) a bylaw requires additional Council guidance;
 - c) a policy is called for by requirements imposed on the City by provincial or federal legislation; or
 - d) a policy is needed to establish a level of service.
9. For each proposed new policy or policy amendment, appropriate consultation will be undertaken to understand potential impacts and ensure proper planning and coordination.
10. The responsible department will ensure that a proposed new policy or policy amendment is consistent with the overall goals and strategic direction of the City as expressed in Council-endorsed plans, strategies, priorities and other express direction of Council.
11. A proposed policy amendment will be presented for Council consideration in a manner that clearly and concisely identifies the proposed amendments.

12. Before bringing a new or amended policy forward for Council consideration, the responsible department will engage the Office of the City Clerk to ensure that the policy conforms to the requirements of the Council Policy Framework and any applicable legislation and bylaw.
13. A proposed new policy or significant policy amendment will, to the extent required as determined by the City Manager, be brought forward to Council for review and discussion prior to adoption consideration.

Policy Reviews

14. The responsible department will complete regular reviews to ensure that each policy remains up to date, consistent with all relevant legislation and bylaws, and aligned with the strategic direction of Council. For each policy a review must be completed at least once every four years.
15. Upon completion of a policy review, the responsible department will determine whether to bring forward for Council consideration any recommendations respecting the policy. A policy that is obsolete, unnecessary, or contrary to legislation or a bylaw will be brought forward in a timely manner for rescission.
16. The Office of the City Clerk will support responsible departments in carrying out policy reviews as required under this policy.