TITLE: Municipal Governance Framework and Document Hierarchy

Approved by Council	Date: August 25, 2026
Revised by Council	Date:

PURPOSE OF POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to establish a consistent governance framework for the creation, approval, implementation, maintenance, and review of all municipal Guiding Documents. This Policy distinguishes between the distinct types of Guiding Documents based on their intended purpose, level of authority, approval requirements, and application.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. The Municipality will follow the standardized system detailed to support administration in the development, approval, and implementation of Guiding Documents to support the operations of the Municipality. The Guiding Documents shall support Council's strategic direction, ensure consistent decision making, while providing operational clarity.

DEFINITIONS

2. For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:
   a. "Administration" shall mean the departments and all employees that operate under the leadership of the CAO.
   b. "Bylaw" shall mean a legally enforceable governing document adopted by Council to exercise the Municipality's legislative authority under provincial legislation. Bylaws are subordinate to and must be consistent with or must not conflict with applicable federal and provincial legislation.
   c. "Directive" shall mean an administrative document that communicates executive direction or establishes operational requirements necessary to implement legislation, bylaws, or policies.
   d. "Guiding Documents" shall mean Municipal Bylaws, Policies, Directives, Procedures.
   e. "Policy" shall mean a governing document approved by Council that establishes the principles, objectives, expectations, and decision-making framework for recurring municipal matters.
   f. "Procedure" shall mean a document that describes the required sequence of activities, responsibilities, and processes to consistently implement legislation, bylaws, policies, or directives.
   g. "Safe Work Practices" shall mean steps implemented to ensure tasks are performed safely and in accordance with Health and Safety legislation, policies, and directives.

MUNICIPAL GUIDING DOCUMENT HERIARCHY

3. Guiding Documents must uphold the strategic objectives and values of Council along with being compliant with Federal and Provincial legislation. The hierarchy is explained below and represented in Appendix A.

4. **Municipal Bylaws**

   Intent
   A legal instrument enacted by Council under the authority of applicable provincial legislation that establishes legally enforceable rules, requirements, powers, or authorities governing municipal affairs.

   Approval
   COUNCIL

5. **Municipal Policy**

   Intent
   A document subordinate to a Municipal Bylaw that establishes the principles, values, and expectations that guide the Municipality in conducting its day-to-day operations. A policy defines what is to be achieved and why but does not prescribe the detailed processes for implementation.

   Approval
   COUNCIL

6. **Municipal Directive**

   Intent
   A document that provides executive direction by communicating operational requirements necessary to implement legislation, bylaws, or policies through internal administration. A directive defines what Administration must do.

   Approval
   CAO

7. **Municipal Procedure**

   Intent
   A document that provides employees with the sequence of steps and responsibilities required to consistently implement bylaws, policies, and directives. A procedure defines how work is performed.

   Approval

CAO with Department head input

8. **Municipal Safe Work Procedures**

   Intent
   A document developed and maintained by Health and Safety, where required, to support applicable directives and provide specific procedures for performing work safely and consistently.

   Approval
   CAO with Department head input

RESPONSIBILITIES

9. The CAO must:
   a. Approve Directives and Procedures.
   b. Ensure the implementation of all Municipal Guiding Documents.
   c. Ensure the timely review of Guiding Documents on a regular basis to ensure they are working effectively and still relevant.
10. Department Directors must:
   a. Follow applicable directives and procedures to ensure the effective implementation of the Guiding Documents within their department.
   b. Ensure employees have reviewed and understand the Guiding Documents.
   c. Initiate and recommend new Guiding Documents or the revision of current Guiding Documents.
11. Managers/Supervisors must:
   a. Follow applicable directives and procedures.
   b. Ensure employees have reviewed and understand the Guiding Documents.
12. All Employees must:
   a. Follow applicable directives and procedures.
   b. Review Guiding Documents as directed by the Supervisors.
   c. Clarify any questions or ambiguities with the Guiding Documents.

PROCESS

13. Development of Policies, Directives, and Procedures should include consultation and participation of relevant departments, employees, and committees depending on the scope of the documents.
14. Approved Policies are made available to Council, Employees, and the Public. Directives and Procedures are internal for administrative purposes.

Appendix A

Document Hierarchy

Document	Purpose	Focus	Approval
Bylaw	Legally enforceable municipal legislation	Establish legal parameters	Council
Policy	Governance framework to guide decision making	What is to be achieved and why	Council
Directive	Executive administrative direction	What Administration must do to	CAO
Procedure	Operation processes	How to achieve policy/directive expectations	CAO with Department head Input
Safe Work Procedure	Operational safety	Employee safety and Health and Safety compliance	CAO with Department head Input

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