



Municipality of Meaford Candidate Questions

Week of August 24, 2026

- 1. Have the Sale and Disposal of Municipal Property Corporate Policy been updated to reflect current practices? If so, when was the most recent update approved?**

The Sale and Disposal of Municipal Property Policy was adopted by By-law 104-2007 on October 9, 2007.

- 2. Based on the current implementation of the Administrative Penalty System and the staff reports previously presented at Council, what is the current projected variance from the approved \$200,000 budget?**

The process of the Administrative Penalty System program was delayed significantly due to some shifting of priorities along with the determination of how Council wanted to deal with the Short-Term Accommodation Licensing program. This question was and still is "If Council wishes to increase the number of Bedrooms from more than 3 to determine occupancy". Staff also projected that a Sewer Discharge By Law would be brought forward in 2026 that would have been helpful in the challenges with Inflow and Infiltration.

- 3. The Corporate Management budget includes \$1.5 million in anticipated revenue under account 4170 (Sale of Assets), as well as \$437,750 in new principal and interest debt repayment expenditures under accounts 6350 and 6355. Could you please provide a link to the public report, approved budget document, or budget meeting materials that clarify (1) how the remaining \$1,062,250 of the anticipated sale-of-assets revenue has been allocated, including how these proceeds were directly connected to the repayment of debt associated with the 2025/2026 acquisition of commercial and industrial lands near Highway 26 and Muir Street; and (2) the rationale and supporting documentation demonstrating the understanding that using proceeds from the sale of municipal land to reduce the tax levy is not considered a sustainable long-term practice?**

Council will have the opportunity to provide direction on how the revenues from the sale of municipal lands should be allocated. At the time of the land acquisition, the financial impact identified that, ideally, the proceeds from

the sale of other lands deemed surplus could be used to offset the purchase cost. However, the ultimate funding approach, whether through the sale of municipal lands or long-term debt, remains at Council's discretion, as identified in the [CAO2025-37](#) report considered in November 2025.

At the time of purchase, consideration was also given to the potential future sale of the acquired lands, with the Municipality retaining control over their future use through the disposition process. Since the acquisition, however, the potential development of a permanent OPP detachment has emerged as an opportunity. As a result, if the OPP detachment project proceeds, the potential sale of the commercial lands and the allocation of any resulting sale proceeds will need to be reconsidered.

4. Please provide the justification, based on the approved Development Charges Background Study (DCBS) and/or applicable Development Charges legislation, supporting the eligibility of the Edwin Street purchase as a development-charge-funded project, particularly given that the public information contained in Staff Report CAO2026-14 indicates that the purchase is intended to replace existing municipal space.

The purchase of the Edwin Street property provided an opportunity to consider the use of development charge funding, as the additional space is specifically intended to address growth-related requirements for parks and trails. The potential eligibility for development charge funding is therefore based on the portion of the acquisition that supports identified growth-related parks and trail needs.

5. Can I see a list of all active policies approved by Council and those still in force from prior Councils?

A list of all active policies approved by Council is attached as Appendix 1 to this document. The current term of Council began on November 21, 2022; any policies preceding that date or noted as "undated" can be taken as remaining in force from prior terms of Council.

Please note that a Policy Governance Framework was adopted by Council in July 2026, which you can read more about here: [By-law 2026-58 – Adopt a Policy Governance Framework](#). As part of the enactment of the Policy Governance Framework, a comprehensive review of the Municipality's policies is currently underway.

Please provide a copy of the Corporate Customer Service Policy.

The Customer Service Standards Policy is attached as Appendix 2.

Municipal Policies (Council Adopted by By-law)

Active as of August 26, 2026

By-law Number	Short-form Title
2004-58	Tax Sale Cancellation Fee Policy
2005-74	Amend Cancellation Fee Policy
2007-104	Policy - Sale of Real Property
2009-26	Policy - Site Plan Control
2009-98	Policy - Site Plan Control (amendment)
2011-50	Policy - Recreation space as condition of development
2012-48	Policy - Council Conference and Workshop
2013-50	Policy - Municipal Investment
2013-111	Policy - General Reserve and Reserve Fund
2014-66	Policy - Site Plan Control (amendment)
2014-76	Policy - Site Plan Control (amendment)
2015-42	Policy - Debt Management
2016-11	Policy - Formal Complaints
2016-20	Policy - Development Charges Deferral of Payment
2016-58	Policy - Anti-Idling
2017-19	Policy - Streetlight Installation
2017-42	Policy - Integrated Accessibility Standards
2017-58	Policy - Records and Information Management
2018-23	Policy - Use of Corporate Resources for Election Purposes
2018-39	Policy - Fire Service Standard
2018-44	Policy - Communications
2018-45	Policy - Social Media
2018-52	Policy - Council Parental Leave
2018-59	Policy - Flag & Water Tower Lights
2018-63	Policy - Specialized Transit
2018-87	Policy - Appointments
2019-25	Policy - Tree Canopy
2019-37	Policy - Community Builder Award
2019-52	Policy - Strategic Asset Management

2019-84	Policy - Business Recognition Program
2020-09	Policy - Cannabis Retail Store
2020-14	Policy - CAO Annual Performance Review Process
	Policy - Capital Donor Recognition for the Meaford Public
2020-19	Library Project
2020-33	Policy - Recreation Programs & Facility Cancellation
2020-76	Policy - Street, Park and Facility Naming
2020-83	Policy - Tangible Capital Asset
2021-38	Policy - Streetscape Banner
2021-43	Policy - Roadside Vegetation Management
2021-75	Policy - Cost of Living Adjustment
2021-76	Policy - Land Acknowledgement
2021-86	Policy - Council Remuneration
2022-28	Policy - Commercial Patios on Municipal Lands
2022-54	Policy - Purchasing
2022-61	Policy - Community Well-being Bursary
2022-66	Policy - Infrastructure Renewal Fee
2023-66	Policy - Customer Service
2023-68	Policy - Significant Weather Event
2024-50	Policy - Staff Communication Protocol
2025-27	Policy - Recreation Fund
2025-63	Policy - Municipal Alcohol Risk Management
2026-27	Policy - Municipally Significant Events

Municipal Policies (Council Adopted by Resolution)

Effective Date	Policy Name
2011	Policy - Access to Municipal Records
Undated	Policy - Accountability and Transparency
Jan-13	Policy - Disaster Recovery for Vital Records
29-May-06	Policy - Indemnification
	Policy - Issuance of Correspondence and Use of
Undated	Corporate Letterhead
19-Apr-04	Policy - Legislative Public Notice
28-Mar-11	Policy - Media Relations
Jan-13	Policy - Municipal E-mail Policy and Procedures
May-22	Policy - Disconnecting from Work
Jul-09	Policy - Property Standards Enforcement
Undated	Policy - Special Events
2012	Policy - Tobacco-Free Recreation
Undated	Policy - Video Surveillance
Undated	Policy - Winter Service Operations



Municipality of Meaford Corporate Policy

Policy: Customer Service Standards Policy

Division: Legislative Services

Last Revision: October 2023

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Policy Statement

The Municipality of Meaford is committed to providing a positive, fair and consistent standard of service that is timely and accessible, delivered by staff who are knowledgeable and courteous at each point of contact and in every interaction.

Purpose

This policy provides guidance on minimum standards in the area of customer service to reinforce staff communication with the public that is effective, efficient, consistent and respectful.

Definitions

“Contact Us” is the resident request management software, including the online portal where customers can ask a question, submit feedback or report a concern into the case tracking system.

“Customers” include staff, residents, business owners, visitors, tourists, investors and other stakeholders.

“Customer Service Team” includes staff who are directly interacting with members of the public as part of their regular municipal duties.

Scope

The Customer Service Standards policy sets out clearly defined expectations regarding the minimum level of customer service expected to be delivered by municipal staff and provides standards for delivery of services through in-person, telephone, electronic/written correspondence, and through the resident request management software (“Contact Us”).

This document provides comprehensive minimum standards. Divisions may institute higher standards in alignment with statutory and non-statutory requirements.

The standards outlined in this document aim to:

- Provide a consistent and positive customer service experience;
- Enhance communications with customers and staff;
- Reduce calls and inquiries from being “bounced around” internally; and

- Focus on the key drivers of customer satisfaction at all levels of the Municipality to:
 - Respond and acknowledge receipt of customer contact within a reasonable time frame;
 - Provide accurate information and/or the avenue for the customer to receive it;
 - Provide a response and ensure completeness of service or request;
 - Provide fair and consistent treatment; and
 - Be polite and respectful.

Policy Requirements

Responsibilities

This policy applies to all employees of the Municipality of Meaford, including full-time, part-time, permanent, temporary, casual and students. It is important to recognize that customer service is the responsibility of all municipal employees.

Employees

Employees are responsible for:

1. Adhering to the standards set out in this policy;
2. Acting as ambassadors and providing guidance to customers and other staff in meeting the policy standards;
3. Participating and engaging in training opportunities that support the Customer Service Standards policy; and
4. Discussing any difficulties or barriers encountered in meeting the objectives of this policy with their immediate supervisor.

Staff should do what is necessary to help a customer even if it is not their area of responsibility or if they have no personal knowledge of the subject



matter. This may involve taking down relevant details relating to the issue as well as contact information to be inputted into “Contact Us” for tracking and follow-up. There should be no circumstances where employees respond with “that is not my responsibility”.

Directors and Managers

Directors and Managers are responsible for:

1. Ensuring staff are aware of the Customer Service Standards policy and relevant procedures;
2. Providing and supporting attendance at the necessary training and providing coaching to help staff understand and meet the standards; and
3. Continuing to monitor the standards through the performance evaluation process.

Chief Administrative Officer

Chief Administrative Officer or delegate may approve reasonable deviations from this policy on an exception basis.

Members of Council

Members of Council are responsible for:

1. Directing inquiries and complaints that require corporate action to “Contact Us” for tracking and follow up;
2. Adhering to the Staff/Council Relations policy when addressing inquiries and complaints.

If required, the Mayor will respond on behalf of Council if the correspondence is sent to all members of Council.



Principles of Customer Service

The Municipality of Meaford is committed to the following customer service principles:

1. Delivering a positive and consistent customer experience, focused on building trust and credibility with all customers;
2. Proactively responding to customers and their changing needs, including leveraging opportunities to modernize services to improve customer convenience and enhance efficiencies; and
3. Ensuring staff have the appropriate knowledge, skills and resources to deliver successful customer service.

In-person Customer Service

Two primary customer service desks are the main point of contact for in-person customer service, 21 Trowbridge Street West (main Administration office) and 15 Trowbridge Street West (Development Services office).

In-person customer service is provided in these two locations Monday to Friday, except holidays, from 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Every effort will be made to provide as much notice as possible if service will be temporarily unavailable by posting a closure notice on the door. Closure notices may be accompanied by social media notices or other forms of additional communication based on the level of closure (or disruption to service) and the resources available.

A number of secondary customer service locations across the Municipality are open to the public including Meaford Hall, Meaford Museum, Meaford Public Library and Meaford & St. Vincent Community Centre. Operating hours for these locations may vary seasonally or be based on events or other factors. Current operating hours shall be posted on the municipal website and every effort will be made to provide as much notice as possible regarding changes to operating hours at these locations.

For both primary and secondary customer service locations, customer service team members will aim for wait times to be less than 10 minutes



unless otherwise advised, serving people in the order that they appear. The only exception is for customers who have scheduled appointments with staff.

Telephone

Customer Service staff are available by phone at 519-538-1060 with the aim to answer calls live and provide resolution on first contact where possible. If needed, callers will be directed to the correct staff member to have their issue resolved by involving as few municipal staff as possible. Alternatively, the customer service staff may take down relevant details relating to the issue as well as contact information to be inputted into "Contact Us" for tracking and follow-up. Where the call is not answered live and the customer leaves a voicemail, calls will be returned as soon as possible and within one business day.

For all other staff members, calls that are not answered live and where voicemails are left are expected to be returned within 2 business days. Depending on the nature of the call, staff's response within two days may not always provide a complete resolution. If this is the case, there shall be an acknowledgement that the message has been received within this time frame and an outline shall be provided of when a more detailed response or action can be expected.

Text messages may be received but are not tracked as a formal customer service inquiry. To ensure a timely and appropriate response in writing, customers shall contact the Municipality through e-mail.

Written and Electronic Correspondence

Written Correspondence

Written mail (letters) and fax correspondence are monitored at all municipal facilities daily Monday to Friday. Correspondence received through these means are date stamped and forwarded to the relevant division to be processed.

Staff will ensure correspondence is responded to within five days of receipt by the Municipality (ie mailing a reply).



Electronic Correspondence

Customer Service staff monitor the general email (info@meaford.ca) daily and will provide a resolution or acknowledgement within one business day. Where appropriate, the email query will be inputted into "Contact Us" and assigned to the appropriate staff member for tracking and follow-up. Upon the case being created, an email will be sent which shall serve as the acknowledgement.

For all other staff members, an initial response to an email inquiry shall be provided within two business days. Depending on the nature of the written or electronic correspondence, staff's response within two days may not always provide a complete resolution. If this is the case, there shall be an acknowledgement that the message has been received within this time frame and an outline shall be provided of when a more detailed response or action can be expected. If a different timeframe for response is required by law or for other reasons, staff should meet that timeframe.

For written or electronic correspondence that represent comments or feedback regarding large projects and applications, for example planning applications or official plan review comments, submissions will be acknowledged as received but not addressed individually. Instead, feedback will be summarized and concerns will be addressed through a staff report or other appropriate capacity to the process.

Electronic and written correspondence does not include text messages.

"Contact Us"

The Municipality of Meaford uses a resident request management system called "Contact Us". A file can be opened by staff or my members of the public through the municipal website at www.meaford.ca/ContactUs .

This system allows staff to log requests made to customer service staff that cannot be resolved at the first point of contact, and where a request is made to a staff member outside of the responsible division. This applies to in-



person requests, telephone/voicemails and written/electronic correspondence.

Upon creation and where an email address has been provided, “Contact Us” will send out a confirmation email that includes a case tracking number. Cases shall not be closed by staff until the issue has been resolved. Upon resolution and where an email address has been provided, a confirmation e-mail shall be sent indicating the case has been closed with staff notes on action taken to resolve the case. If an email has not been provided, staff shall call back the member of the public or otherwise notify them of the action taken to resolve the case and confirm it is closed.

Staff shall adhere to the same standards as outlined in electronic correspondence for responding to requests received through “Contact Us”.

Extended Absences

When staff members are going to be absent for longer than two consecutive business days, their voicemail and email out of office messages shall reflect their time away and shall provide the contact of an alternate staff member where possible.

This standard shall not apply to unexpected absences such as the staff member being absent due to illness. In this instance, Human Resources will coordinate an update with Information Technology as soon as practical.

After-hours Inquires

All after-hour high priority or public safety issues received through telephone will prompt the caller to engage with the Municipality’s after-hours emergency call handling service.

Unacceptable Behaviour or Conduct

Providing high quality customer service is important to delivering programs and services in the Municipality. Municipal staff, volunteers and anyone acting on behalf of the Municipality are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful manner.



Equally, customers are responsible for behaving in a respectful manner to promote a safe and positive environment.

For the purposes of this policy, unacceptable conduct is any action by a customer, which because of its nature or frequency, has a disproportionate and unreasonable impact on the Municipality, staff, other customers, services, time and/or resources.

Dissatisfied Customers

Dissatisfied customers are encouraged to work with municipal staff in an informal manner to resolve the situation. If an issue cannot be resolved in this way, customers should be directed to the Formal Complaints process (www.meaford.ca/FormalComplaints). This process is designed to address major dissatisfaction with actions, or lack thereof, of the Municipality of Meaford regarding operations, facilities or services provided, or the conduct of a municipal employee.

Service requests, general feedback or dissatisfaction with a Council-adopted policy are not formal complaints.

Review

This policy shall be reviewed every term of Council.

Monitoring

The Chief Administrative Officer shall be responsible for receiving complaints and/or concerns related to this policy.

Authority

This policy is established pursuant to Section 11 (2) of the Municipal Act, 2001 which provides for the passing of by-laws and adoption of policies pertaining to the accountability and transparency of the Municipality.



Contact

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Change History

Policy Name	Effective Date	Significant Changes	By-law No.
Customer Service Policy		New policy	