

HALDIMAND COUNTY

POLICY No. 2004 - 03

Subject: **REPORT PREPARATION PROCESS**

Purpose:

To establish a report preparation process.

Policy:

All reports and memos to be submitted to Council in Committee and/or Council will be prepared in accordance with clearly defined procedures as attached. The procedures will be revised as required to reflect current circumstances.

Topical Index	Administration
Policy Number	2004-03
Short Title	Report Preparation Process
SMT Approval Date	July 7, 2004
Council in Committee	Not applicable
Council Approval Date	Not applicable
Originating Department	Chief Administrative Officer
Revisions	
# 1	<u>July 21, 2004</u> - Replaced Policy No. 01-01
# 2	<u>October 21, 2004</u>
# 3	<u>April 21, 2008</u> – Changed Report and Memo Numbering Chart on Page 6 to reflect current Divisions. Approved by SMT April 17, 2008.
#4	<u>December 1, 2008</u> – Changed Report and Memo Numbering Chart on Page 6 to reflect renaming of Physical Services Department to Public Works Department. Name changes approved by Council December 1, 2008 effective January 1, 2009. Report PS-GM-04-2008 Procedures revised.
#5	<u>March 17, 2010</u> – Changed Report and Memo Numbering Chart on Page 6 to reflect reorganization. Procedures revised.
#6	<u>December 21, 2011</u> – Changed Report and Memo Numbering Chart on Page 6 to reflect reorganization in Public Works Department. Procedures revised.
#7	<u>February, 2015</u> – Procedures revised to reflect current practices.
#8	<u>September, 2015</u> – Procedures revised to reflect current practices.

INDEX

Contents

Reports in Progress Document 3

Overall Considerations Before Preparing a Report:..... 3

 When Should a Council Workshop Accompany a Report? 3

 When is a Memo to Council Adequate (vs. a Report)? 3

Closed Session Reports 4

Report Preparation Procedures..... 5

 1. Request a Report Number 5

 2. Prepare the Report from a New Document 5

 3. Insert Attachments..... 5

 4. Turn on Track Changes Feature 6

 5. Name and Save the Report (Authors Folder or Authors Closed Session Folder) 6

 6. Preliminary Review..... 6

 7. Seek Input from Affected Divisions 6

 8. Report Review by General Manager in General Manager Folder 6

 9. Report Review by CAO in CAO Folder 7

 10. Report Signatures..... 7

Finalization of Reports 7

Access to Report Folders 7

Report Signatures..... 8

Numbering - Reports and Memos..... 8

Agenda Preparation Deadlines 9

Reports Received After the Deadline 9

Recommendations..... 10

By-law Preparation 10

Council Approval and Follow-up 11

Reports in Progress Document

Managers will list all upcoming reports in the “Reports in Progress” Excel spreadsheet located on the T: drive in the “In Progress” folder. Reports addressing recurring matters, reports that are anticipated to be written, and reports in the early stages of development should all be noted, even if it is merely the topic that is listed. The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), all General Managers, Managers, Deputy Clerk, Administrative Coordinators and Administrative Assistants have access to this document. After Council in Committee and Council have dealt with reports, it is the responsibility of the respective Departmental Administrative Coordinator to remove the reports for their department from the Reports in Progress list once they are complete.

Overall Considerations Before Preparing a Report:

When Should a Council Workshop Accompany a Report?

Considerations:

1. Topic is a very complex issue and of significant importance (potential political and/or financial implications)
2. Topic is difficult to properly communicate in written format (report or memo)
3. Topic requires more time to present than a traditional Council in Committee or Council report.
4. Presentation format will best achieve required objectives

Procedure:

1. Consider the topic that may be best communicated through a Council workshop
2. Propose idea to GM/CAO
3. Book workshop as a Committee of the Whole meeting through the Clerk’s Division
4. Determine if the meeting will be held in camera and provide information to Clerk’s Division
5. Clerk’s Division to send meeting invitation and background material to Council

Preparation:

1. Determine what background information should be included in the package
2. Arrange background material in a manner that will support but not undermine the presentation
3. Be prepared for questions prior to the workshop
4. Develop a presentation that will communicate the topic in a thorough yet concise manner
5. Ensure that the presentation complements the written material
6. Schedule a time to make the presentation to SMT prior to Council
7. Rehearse the presentation, ensuring that the timing is accurate
8. Anticipate potential questions
9. If the issue has any financial implications, have the numbers ready

When is a Memo to Council Adequate (vs. a Report)?

There are 3 situations where memos may be prepared for Council’s consideration:

1. Concise updates of a routine nature (these will typically be placed under Motions of Consent on the CIC agenda).
2. Staff are requested to provide further information beyond what was previously provided in a report.
3. A portion of information being provided to Council is of a confidential nature – the companion private and confidential memo will reference the public report number (i.e. Confidential Addendum to Report xxx-xxx-xx-xxxx Re: ...).

Memos must be prepared utilizing the Council Memo template and following a very similar process as used for report approval, i.e. requesting the memo number from the appropriate Administrative Coordinator (using the same numbering sequence as reports but preceded by an M – for example CAO-M01-2015); and initialed by the General Manager and CAO. Memos are to provide additional information or provide clarification. To access the Council Memo Template, open WORD, select Shared and then click on Council Memo. Memos directly related to another report are to incorporate the corresponding report number and title in the Reference line. Only under extenuating circumstances should a memo include a recommendation, and when it does, the title of the memo should include the phrase “- with Recommendation”.

Closed Session Reports

Recommendations that require specific action, i.e. declaring land as surplus, expenditure of funds, etc., must be considered in Open Session. Wherever possible, a matter should be addressed through a public report, and the confidential aspect should be addressed in a confidential memo that cross-references the report.

There are limited reasons for considering information in Closed Session. These are listed in the County’s Procedural By-law (see excerpt below), and are based on the requirements of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, as amended. Closed Session reports should be limited to those specific areas. Please contact the Clerk or Deputy Clerk for a final determination of whether the report should go in closed session or not.

Haldimand County Procedural By-law, Section 7.3 Closed Meetings

7.3.1 - A Meeting or part of a Meeting may be closed to the public if the subject matter being considered pertains to:

- the security of the property of the municipality or local board;
- personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees;
- a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the municipality or local board;
- labour relations or employee negotiations;
- litigation or potential litigation, including matters before administrative tribunals affecting the municipality;
- advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose;
- a matter in respect of which the Council, board or Committee or other body may hold a closed meeting under any another Act; or
- consideration of a request under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c.M.56 if the Council is designated as head of the institution for the purposes of that Act.

Any reports that are presenting recommended appointments to committees should be prepared as a public report with confidential attachments containing the relevant applications and resumes.

The recommended wording in the public report regarding the actual appointment is:

“AND THAT the following individuals be appointed to the XXXX XXXX Committee for a term concurrent with Council: _____”

Report Preparation Procedures

1. Request a Report Number

The Report Author provides the Departmental Administrative Coordinator with the report title and Council in Committee (CIC) target meeting date and the Administrative Coordinator will assign a report number. Report numbers are to be assigned when there is a high level of certainty that the report will go forward to CIC.

In cases where the Report Author is aware that there will be a Closed Memorandum or Report related to the primary report, a separate Memo / Report number is required to ensure that the documents can be tracked.

2. Prepare the Report from a New Document

All staff reports will be consistent in format, utilizing the report template in WORD entitled "Council Report" Template. To begin a new report, the Report Author must first determine whether or not the contents of the report will be discussed in Open or Closed Session. In case of uncertainty, the Clerk or Deputy Clerk should be consulted. For Closed Session (Private and Confidential) Reports, ensure that the "Closed Session" box is checked in the report template window.

Always start from a fresh document. Avoid using a previous report and changing the contents. If there is a duplication of information from a previous report, cut and paste the information into the new document.

In WORD, select Shared; Click on Council Report. The report will be automatically formatted with a draft watermark on each page. The Report Details window will appear with dropdown menu options. Prompts will request the input of various fields e.g. the objective of the report. Wherever dropdown menu options are available, they are to be used to ensure consistency. Formats, font sizes, justification, etc. should not be altered or adjusted.

Completing the "Report Reviewed By" Textbox. At the end of each report, there is a text box headed by the words "Report Reviewed By:" and then a list of the divisions most commonly required to review and provide comments on reports. The default is set for "Not applicable". If however, once the report is ready for review, the Author requires input from one or more of these divisions, they will (using track changes) change the words "Not applicable" in the right hand column and replace them with the word "Required". By the Author indicating the required review in this manner, the Administrative Co-ordinator can then track reviews by the applicable division(s). Please refer to Section 7 below. Once the peer review is completed, the reviewer or the Administrative Co-ordinator will revise the text box by changing the "Required" to read "Reviewed".

Please note that if the author has had conversations with a divisional representative prior to, or during the preparation of the report, but does not require a review of the actual report, they should leave the default as "Not applicable".

3. Insert Attachments

Any attachments referred to in the text of the report must be inserted into the report using a consistent method as follows: The first page of each attachment is to be labeled at the top right-hand corner of the document by report number and attachment number, right-justified and underlined e.g. Report: CMS-GM-01-2015, Attachment 1. Ensure clarity of attachments by copying and pasting directly into reports from electronic copies when possible. When only a hard copy is available, such as external correspondence received, scan and then insert into the report. If there are no attachments, please indicate with the word "None". Coloured attachments are to be used only when absolutely necessary to provide clarity not

otherwise available through grayscale. When required, the Administrative Co-ordinator must provide the Clerk's Division Support with twenty copies of each coloured attachment.

In the case where there are landscape pages as part of an attachment, please notify the Clerk's Division Support.

4. Turn on Track Changes Feature

Before closing out of the document, it is the responsibility of the Author to turn on the track changes feature. It is very important that the document is saved with this feature turned on to ensure that all text and comments inserted by other staff members are easily detected.

5. Name and Save the Report (Authors Folder or Authors Closed Session Folder)

The Author names the report starting with the report number and then saves the report on the T: drive in the appropriate departmental Authors Folder or Authors Closed Session Folder. When naming a report file, keep it to a maximum of 75 characters and avoid using special characters excluding a dash (-) or underscore (_). Reports in the Authors Folder or Authors Closed Session Folder are still a work in progress, and although at this stage in the review process they are not ready for final departmental General Manager approval, the departmental General Manager has access to these folders and may be collaborating with the Authors and providing input and editing the reports in these folders.

6. Preliminary Review

Administrative Co-ordinators (AC) will be the first to check the report for accuracy.

7. Seek Input from Affected Divisions

Once the Administrative Co-ordinator has reviewed the report, the AC will notify affected Managers, as indicated in the review box at the end of the report, that the report is in the Authors Folder and requires their review and input.

All input should be considered by the Author and may not be arbitrarily rejected without conversing with the person who provided the input, and they must come to a satisfactory agreement. If they cannot reach agreement, then the matter must be referred to the General Manager.

When the affected Managers complete their review of the report, the Managers will insert their initials with the track changes feature still on, in the signature section of the report. Overall comments may also be added in the signature section. Additions or comments specific to certain headings should be inserted in the appropriate location, utilizing track changes and/or "New Comment" feature of WORD.

Reports are to remain in the Authors Folders until the Author has received all required comments and input, and the Author's Manager has reviewed the report(s).

General Managers may also choose to review reports in their departmental Authors and Authors Closed folders during this collaborative input process.

8. Report Review by General Manager in General Manager Folder

When the report is ready to be reviewed by the General Manager, the Manager:

- inserts their initials above their name on the signature page
- moves the report to the appropriate General Manager folder
- notifies their General Manager that it is ready for his/her review.

Ideally for every report, or as time permits, the General Manager will indicate any suggested changes using the track changes feature. If the Manager disagrees with any of the General Manager's changes, the Manager must discuss the matter with the General Manager.

9. Report Review by CAO in CAO Folder

When the General Manager is satisfied with the report, he/she:

- inserts their initials above their name on the signature page
- moves the report to the CAO folder.

When the report is moved to the CAO folder, the draft watermark, track changes feature and initials of those who have previously reviewed the report, should remain on the document. The remaining track changes inserted throughout the review process should be removed.

The CAO and Executive Assistant to the CAO will review and initial the reports in the CAO folder and notify the departmental Administrative Coordinators when the review process has been completed.

10. Report Signatures

After the CAO initials the report, the departmental Administrative Coordinator will then remove the inserted initials, remove the draft watermark, turn off the track changes feature, ensure no track changes remain in the document, print the report, gather departmental signatures and deliver a signed copy to the CAO for signature.

Finalization of Reports

Administrative Coordinators will move the electronic version of the reports to the Agenda Reports Folder or the Agenda Closed Session Reports Folder located on the T: drive. The Executive Assistant to the CAO will deliver the original signed version of the reports to the Clerk's Division. The Clerk's Division will post reports on the Haldimand County website. The WORD version of the documents are available, following the completion of action sheets, on the T: drive in the "Reports – Final Open Session" or "Reports – Final Closed Session" folders.

Access to Report Folders

Departmental report folders are located on the T: drive. These report folders contain a "Reports" folder with four sub-folders:

1. Authors
2. Authors Closed Session
3. GM (General Manager)
4. CAO

General Managers are responsible for the Council report folder security and delegation of access to their departmental Report Folders.

All Managers and Administrative Coordinators have read only access to the Agenda Reports and Agenda Closed Session Reports folders located on the T: drive.

All Managers and Administrative Coordinators have read only access to the Reports – Final Open Session and Reports – Final Closed Session folders on the T: drive.

All Staff have read only access to the Reports – Final Open Session folder.

Report Signatures

The signature section of the Council report template identifies the staff involved in writing the report to ensure that each individual receives recognition for their contribution in the preparation of the report.

Numbering - Reports and Memos

All reports and memorandums going to Council in Committee, Committee of the Whole and Council meetings are to be identified and numbered using the following Department and Division codes:

	Dept.	Report #	Year
Chief Administrative Officer	CAO	xx	xxxx
Corporate Services:			
General Manager	CS-GM-	xx	xxxx
Clerk	CS-CL-	xx	xxxx
Finance	CS-FI-	xx	xxxx
Human Resources	CS-HR-	xx	xxxx
Information Systems	CS-IS-	xx	
Support Services	CS-SS-	xx	xxxx
Community Services:			
General Manager	CMS-GM-	xx	xxxx
Emergency Services	CMS-ES-	xx	xxxx
Grandview Lodge	CMS-GL-	xx	xxxx
Facilities & Parks Operations	CMS-FP-	xx	xxxx
Libraries	CMS-LI-	xx	xxxx
Planning & Economic Development:			
General Manager	PED-GM-	xx	xxxx
Building Controls	PED-BC-	xx	xxxx
Economic Development and Tourism	PED-EDT-	xx	xxxx
Community Development & Partnerships	PED-COM-	xx	xxxx
Planning & Development	PED-PD-	xx	xxxx
Public Works:			
General Manager	PW-GM-	xx	xxxx
Engineering Services	PW-ES-	xx	xxxx
Water and Wastewater	PW-WW-	xx	xxxx
Fleet & Equipment Operations	PW-FLE-	xx	xxxx
Roads Operations	PW-RO-	xx	xxxx
Solid Waste	PW-SW-	xx	xxxx

Agenda Preparation Deadlines

These deadlines apply to Council in Committee reports.

Wednesday of the week preceding agenda preparation week:

- Reports have been prepared, peer reviewed and are ready for the General Manager's final review

Thursday of the week preceding agenda preparation week:

- General Manager (if the Author is other than the General Manager) does final review of reports

Friday of the week preceding agenda preparation week:

- Reports and memos are placed in the CAO Folder for the CAO to review.
- 12:00 noon - Departmental draft agenda facer sheets listing all reports and memos are to be electronically forwarded by the Departmental Administrative Coordinators to the Clerk's Division, the CAO and the Executive Assistant to the CAO.
- 1:00 p.m. - Clerk's Division will send the draft agenda to members of Haldimand County Council, Senior Management Team, Managers, Administrative Coordinators and Executive Assistant to the CAO.

Wednesday of agenda preparation week:

- 12:00 noon - CAO will finalize review and initial reports and memos.
- Clerk's Division will post Public Planning reports to the website.

Thursday of agenda preparation week:

- 2:00 p.m. - Clerk's Division will finalize agenda and prepare agenda packages for distribution.
- 4:00 p.m. - All Managers and Administrative Coordinators can view reports on the County website.

Reports Received After the Deadline

Addendums and tabled reports should be avoided and will only be accommodated in urgent situations.

If the deadline has passed but the agenda has not been finalized, arrangements must be made between the General Manager, CAO and Clerk in order for a report to be received and processed. In this case, if the report is not ready to be included in the agenda package, the Clerk's Division will note the title of the report on the agenda facer and show it as being circulated under separate cover.

If the agenda packages have been circulated and there arises an urgent issue that **must** go to the Council in Committee meeting or Council meeting, a tabled report may be necessary. The Author must receive approval from the CAO before proceeding with a tabled report. In this case, it is the responsibility of the appropriate Departmental Administrative Coordinator to supply the Clerk's Division with 20, three-hole punched copies of the tabled report and an electronic copy of the tabled report so that a motion can be prepared. In the case of tabled reports, the Clerk's Division will prepare an addendum to the agenda listing reports that are being tabled but not previously listed on the agenda.

Recommendations

- ❑ Recommendations will be numerically listed, providing clear, concise and specific direction as to the actions being approved by Council in Committee or Council.
- ❑ Recommendations may not refer simply to “contents contained in the report” or “as outlined in the report”. Each Recommendation must give clear direction on a standalone basis, as if the remainder of the report was not attached.
- ❑ As Council is the body making the recommendations, recommendations should not include reference to Council. For example, “AND THAT Council approve the agreement” is incorrect and should read “AND THAT the agreement be approved.”
- ❑ Recommendations should be written from a positive approach. For example, “that staff does not support” should be phrased “that staff recommend that it be denied”. One exception is for some Planning reports where staff will either recommend approval or denial.
- ❑ If there is a by-law attached to a report, there should also be a corresponding Recommendation that reads as follows: “THAT the by-law attached to Report XXX-XXX-XX-XXXX be presented for enactment.
- ❑ With the exception of Closed Session Reports (see below) the first Recommendation will always identify the Recommendation and Report as follows:

THAT Report (report number) dated (date report prepared) Re: (Reference information) be received;

The remaining recommendations will identify the actions requiring approval.

- ❑ The first recommendation for Closed Session Reports will always identify the recommendation and report as follows:

THAT Report (report number) dated (date report prepared) Re: (Reference Information),...be received and remain confidential;

By-law Preparation

When drafting a report that requires a specific by-law to be prepared and presented for approval, unless it is a standard authorizing by-law normally prepared by the Clerk’s Division, it is the responsibility of the Report Author to take the lead, working in conjunction with the Deputy Clerk and other relative divisions/agencies to draft the by-law utilizing the By-law Template. Starting from a fresh document for each by-law, the template is accessible from WORD by clicking on Shared; then By-law. Draft by-laws must be attached to Planning Reports in the agenda package. For the most part, for the remainder of Departments, it is not necessary to attach the draft by-laws to reports going to Council in Committee and Council unless there is a regulatory or legislative requirement to do so.

Draft By-laws should be checked for accuracy at the Departmental level then submitted to the Deputy Clerk for review to ensure formatting, legislative authority and processes outlined (in case of amendments and repeals of previously enacted by-laws) are proper. The Report Author is responsible for the overall content of the by-law and any legislated circulations associated with its enactment.

Upon request, the Deputy Clerk will review any draft by-law and provide comments to assist the Report Author in its preparation prior to the by-law appearing in a Council in Committee report or being forwarded in final form for inclusion in the Council Agenda.

Once Council in Committee has dealt with the report and the terms of the by-law have been accepted and/or amended, the Report Author will remove the draft watermark and e-mail the final by-law to the Deputy Clerk by no later than the Wednesday afternoon, immediately following the Council in Committee meeting. The Clerk's Division will include the final by-law into the appropriate Council agenda.

There should be specific by-laws presented for the following:

- all real estate agreements
- all matters pursuant to the Planning Act
- setting rates, fees and charges
- items specifically referred to being adopted "by by-law" (legislation)
- any amendments or repeals of existing by-laws

Council Approval and Follow-up

Staff reports will be presented to Council in Committee for review and debate, with Council in Committee recommending to Council that direction be taken. Once Council has adopted and ratified the recommendations, staff has the authority to act on the recommendations.

Once Council approves reports, the Clerk's Division will complete the action box on each report to reflect Council's resolutions. The reports can then be accessed on the T: drive in the Reports – Final Open/Closed Session folders. It is the responsibility of each Report Author to view the completed Action Box and to follow up on the required action. Reports will be indexed by Division.

The Clerk's Division will send official notification of a resolution of Council to those affected by a decision, identifying Council's actions in the matter and referring the recipient to the appropriate Division for follow-up. In order to complete these letters in a timely fashion, it is the responsibility of the Division to provide the Clerk's Division with accurate name and address information either in advance, or by the day of the meeting. If the direction from Council is to write to a third party respecting an issue, the appropriate departmental staff will prepare the correspondence.

In the case of a tender, the Clerk's Division will notify the successful bidder only. If the affected Division wants to send letters to the other bidders, it is the responsibility of that Division to do so. In the case of a user fee increase, for instance, unless there is a specific company or group named, the Clerk's Division would not send notification. In this example however, the affected Division may notify user groups of the fee increases.

