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1.2 Corporate
1.2.16 e-Government

PURPOSE

The purpose of the e-Government Policy and Principles is to guide how and why services and information will be provided to the public electronically in order to conduct the business and achieve the performance goals of the City.

The IT Business Strategy e-Government vision is to make use of electronic services to enhance customers (citizens, businesses, other governmental agencies, community groups, organizations, boards, citizen committees, staff and visitors) engagement and to improve efficiency convenience and accessibility to City Services. *[The IT Business Strategy approved by Council October 2008]*

Definition:

“E-government is the use of information technology to directly engage customers in the provision of government services and information.”

By agreeing to an e-Government Policy and Principles that reflect the City's philosophy for electronic service delivery, the City can more easily plan, prioritize and facilitate e-Government solutions within set risk tolerance standards.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to the City's customers (citizens, businesses, other governmental agencies, community groups, organizations, boards, citizen committees, staff and visitors) and to the City's use of information technology to directly engage its customers.

POLICY STATEMENT

The City of Burlington is committed to providing services and information directly to customers through information technology to improve customer service, citizen engagement, access, and/or value.

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GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The policy can be best understood through the use of the principles that it is based upon. The e-Government policy statement is supported by six principles:

- Customer First Service
- Access
- Value
- Privacy and security
- Corporate leadership
- Collaboration

CUSTOMER FIRST SERVICE

Customer First Focus: E-Government initiatives will support the City's customer service principle of "customer first" and support the corporate Customer Service Standards.

Timely: Services will provide timely information and prompt customer response to promote a greater understanding of Burlington's current and planned business activities. Customers will have convenient access through a variety of platforms and options of extended hours of service availability.

Engagement: E-Government information and services will endeavour to create two-way communication with customers. This will strengthen customer participation and provide valuable input for continuous improvement opportunities.

Transparency: The move to e-Government will provide additional opportunities for information openness, communication and accountability.

ACCESS

Choice: With e-Government, customers will have choice in the method of interacting with the City. E-Government can be offered through emerging information communication technologies such as internet, kiosks, telephony and personal digital devices to deliver information and services to customers. E-government will provide expanded hours of service and availability of many access options.

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Inclusive: E-government offers the option to provide information and services in a variety of languages, audio/visual formats and service delivery alternatives that will meet the needs of our diverse community and legislated requirements (e.g. Accessible Ontario Disabilities Act). This will provide a user friendly and flexible experience.

User Friendly: The implementation of e-Government will consider standardization of process, data, ease of use and user navigation.

Awareness: E-government will promote greater awareness of City services and information. E-Government can strengthen public awareness of important government administrative information and services.

VALUE

Sustainable: E-Government initiatives must be financially and technically sustainable. E-Government spending, where appropriate, needs to be treated as an investment in reliable options that improve connectivity with our customers to provide convenient and innovative service.

Responsible Investment: The value of the e-Government service must justify the total cost to deliver. Each use of e-Government will be subject to business case analysis to identify customer value, customer demand, total cost of ownership, benefits, resource efficiencies, process improvements, sustainment and describe how performance improvements will be measured. E-Government initiatives may integrate with traditional service delivery to enhance it.

Environmental: E-Government will provide automation of processes to reduce the City's environmental footprint. e-Government initiatives will align with the City's environmental policies.

Strategic: E-Government initiatives will be required to align with the City's strategic goals and support critical priorities.

Measurable Results: E-Government service performance measurement will monitor and evaluate value and effectiveness to ensure performance expectations are met.

Accountability: E-Government service will ensure that it is clear who is responsible for the service, implementation initiatives, maintenance, data management, performance metrics, targets and policy success.

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PRIVACY AND SECURITY

Compliance: E-Government will be delivered respecting all required legislation including the goal of protecting individual privacy as outlined in Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA), the Municipal Act 2001, and federal laws. Compliance with all relevant laws, policies, regulations and standards will be applicable to staff, agents, and contractors to guide their decisions and actions.

Risk mitigation: E-Government will deliver services in a manner that will minimize the City's operational risk and ensure auditable processes.

Corporate Data: E-Government services will take reasonable precautions to protect information from loss, misuse or alteration. Corporate data as an asset should be shared rather than duplicated and must be managed to minimize inconsistencies, incompatibility between applications, maximize technical resources and decision-making processes.

Trustworthy: E-Government will use trusted, reliable computing and digital rights management technologies that maintain the integrity of City-held information.

CORPORATE LEADERSHIP

E-Government's success will require leadership and commitment at the political and administrative levels. Committed leaders are required to deal with change, to persevere when benefits take time to emerge, to respond when things go wrong, and to establish visions and plans for the future.

E-Government is an enabler. It is a new way of providing service and information so it will need time and open minds to be accepted into current practices. It needs to be integrated into broader policy and service delivery goals and corporate practice as a potential service avenue and assessed for its potential impact in the same way current processes are reviewed and approved. E-government needs to be treated as a long-term investment requiring guaranteed funding so that it can reach its potential of return that will be measurable in tangible and intangible results.

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COLLABORATION

E-Government is most effective when departments and levels of government work together in collaboration as customer-focused groupings. Service provision needs to be able to operate within common frameworks to ensure interoperability, maximize implementation efficiency, and avoid duplication to provide seamless customer service.

POLICY CONNECTIONS

Information Technology Security Corporate Policy
Web Communications Policy

(Approved by City Council on July 5, 2010)