

Report to Council



Date: September 11, 2023
To: Council
From: City Manager
Subject: Lobbyist Registry & Interaction with Developers Policies
Department: Office of the City Clerk

Recommendation:

THAT Council receives, for information, the report from the Office of the City Clerk dated September 11, 2023, with respect to the Lobbyist Registry Policy;

AND THAT Council adopts Council Policy No. 390, being Lobbyist Registry, as outlined in the report from the Office of the City Clerk dated September 11, 2023;

AND FURTHER THAT Council adopts Council Policy No. 391, being Council Interaction with Developers, as outlined in the report from the Office of the City Clerk dated September 11, 2023.

Purpose:

To establish a Lobbyist Registry Policy and Council Interaction with Developers Policy.

Background:

Following a review of options, Council directed staff to prepare policies to establish a Lobbyist Registry that applies broadly to those attempting to influence a decision of Council, with progressive enforcement provisions to encourage compliance.

Previous Council Resolution

Resolution	Date
THAT Council receives, for information, the report from the Office of the City Clerk dated June 5, 2023, with respect to options for a lobbyist registry;	June 12, 2023
AND THAT Council directs staff to prepare the necessary bylaws and policies to implement a Lobbyist Registry in accordance with Option 2 with enhanced	

progressive enforcement as described in the report from the Office of the City Clerk dated June 5, 2023.	
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Discussion:

A Lobbyist Registry supports transparency and accountability around Council decision-making through registration and disclosure requirements for those seeking to influence a Council decision. Those engaging in these lobbying activities are required to register with the City, and the Registry will be published for the public to access. The Policy and associated processes are designed to promote transparency without creating significant barriers to accessing members of Council.

The Lobbyist Registry Council Policy applies to individuals or groups, whether paid or unpaid, who communicate with a member of Council in an attempt to influence a decision of Council. Other elected officials and public sector staff acting in their official capacity are exempt from the Policy. Activities like submitting written correspondence to all of Council or participating in a public process like a public hearing are not considered lobbying since they are part of the public record.

When the Policy applies, lobbyists must register with the City within 5 days of communicating with a member of Council. An online form will make it easy to provide the required information, including name and contact information, business or organization, the initial date of the communication, and the topic(s).

The Office of the City Clerk is responsible for maintaining and publishing the Lobbyist Registry. It will be updated regularly and available to view online and in-person at City Hall. Staff will develop resources to support a user-friendly experience for both those registering and those viewing the Registry.

Progressive enforcement will be used to support compliance with the Lobbyist Registry Policy and will include the following mechanisms:

1. Contacting the lobbyist informing them of the Registry requirements and giving them an opportunity to register.
2. Providing Council with a list of individuals or groups who are not in compliance with the requirements after being contacted to register. Council is not obligated to meet with individuals or groups and may choose not to engage with those who are not in compliance.
3. If the applicant of a development application is not in compliance with Lobbyist Registry requirements, Council will not consider their development application until they comply.

Council Interaction with Developers Policy

Property owners and applicants seeking Council approvals for a development application often engage with members of Council regarding their proposed development. Council may choose to meet with applicants at various stages in the development process. Documented guidance for these types of interactions supports a fair and transparent process that follows relevant legislation and procedures. It offers clear and consistent direction for Council and gives applicants and the public a better understanding of expectations.

The Council Interaction with Developers Policy provides guidance to Council on considerations when interacting with developers. These include reserving decisions for Council meetings, appropriate locations for meetings, and seeking information from staff ahead of time. Additional guidelines for

specific stages of an application clarify interactions regarding a permit application when an associated bylaw is at third reading and receiving summaries of public consultation.

Staff recommend Council adopt the Council Interaction with Developers Policy alongside the Lobbyist Registry Policy.

Conclusion:

The Lobbyist Registry and Council Interaction with Developers Council Policies support increased transparency in decision-making through disclosure practices and guidelines. The requirements of each Policy are designed to be simple and easy to follow to encourage compliance, limit barriers to accessing elected officials, and create a common set of expectations for Council, lobbyists, developers, and the public. The Policies work together to achieve these objectives. Implementation will include online options to register and access the Lobbyist Registry along with resources to support awareness and compliance with the Lobbyist Registry Policy.

Considerations applicable to this report:

Financial/Budgetary Considerations:

Staff from the Office of the City Clerk will administer the Lobbyist Registry using existing resources. The need for additional resources to support this and other initiatives will be monitored.

Considerations not applicable to this report:

Legal/Statutory Authority:

Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:

Existing Policy:

External Agency/Public Comments:

Communications Comments:

Submitted by:

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cc:

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