



Policy COU2024-01

Council Correspondence Policy

Implemented: February 2024

Revision Date: N/A

References and Related Documents: Council Procedure By-Law, Petition Form

This document is public and available in an accessible format upon request.

Policy Statement

The Council of the Township of Georgian Bluffs receives correspondence in various formats, including email and written correspondence. To ensure that all correspondence is dealt with expediently and appropriately, this Policy will provide guidelines to ensure that the community's opinions are relayed to Council while ensuring that such correspondence is presented consistently and respectfully.

Purpose and Scope

To ensure that correspondence addressed to Council is provided consistently, appropriately, and timely.

This policy applies to all correspondence received by Council in all formats.

Policy Requirements

Council Correspondence for Inclusion on Council Agendas

Where the subject matter of communication is properly within the jurisdiction of the Council or a Council Committee or Board, and if the author requests to have correspondence included on a Council Agenda, the following provisions shall apply:

1. Correspondence shall be addressed to Council, to the attention of the Township Clerk.
2. Correspondence received through Canada Post or received by hand delivery at a Township facility and addressed to Members of Council at the Township of Georgian Bluffs Administration Building address will be opened, date stamped, and distributed through the electronic Council agenda.
3. Correspondence, including petitions, intended for inclusion in a Council agenda or to be otherwise considered by Council, shall be typewritten, or legibly printed, addressed to Council, and shall include the name and signature of at least one person or agency, and may include the address, telephone numbers, and email addresses, and shall specifically state that the correspondence is intended to be placed on a Council agenda. Petitions shall be in the prescribed form, Appendix "A" appended hereto.



4. Names and addresses contained within the correspondence will be included in the agenda package published on the Township's website. Telephone numbers and email addresses will be redacted so as not to appear on the published agenda, either on the written paper agenda or on the internet publication, save and except on a petition wherein all information will be included on the public Council agenda.
5. Communications received after the deadline as specified in the Procedural By-law shall be held over for consideration by Council at the next subsequent regular meeting.
6. Council meeting agendas, minutes, and all information presented at an open meeting, including correspondence or delegation materials, are public documents and are published on the Township of Georgian Bluffs website as part of a Council agenda package, as well as in paper form upon request.
7. Correspondence for inclusion on the agenda shall not contain any defamatory statements, allegations, inferences, impertinent, disrespectful, or improper matter, and where infractions are found, shall be either redacted by the Clerk in consultation with the Mayor and CAO, or returned to the author.

Correspondence intended for inclusion on a Council agenda shall be received by the Office of the Clerk per the Township's Procedure By-law.

Correspondence not submitted in accordance with the criteria of this policy, or the Procedure By-Law, as deemed by the Clerk and in consultation with the Mayor and CAO where applicable, will be returned to the sender (except in the case of anonymous correspondence) with an explanation as to why the material cannot be included in the Council agenda. The correspondence will be withheld from inclusion on the agenda, with a copy maintained by the Clerk.

Correspondence provided to Council through the Council agenda package will be classified into one of the following sub-categories:

1. Information Correspondence – included on the Consent Agenda.
2. Correspondence for Council Direction - to be received and referred to staff for action or report.

Correspondence not filed with the Clerk but addressed to all of Council will be received for information and not included on an agenda. However, a member of Council may request the correspondence be included on an agenda with the permission of the author by bringing forward a notice of motion.

Resolutions from Other Municipalities

Resolutions from Other Municipalities regarding matters not yet considered by the Council of the Township of Georgian Bluffs will be included on the next available Council consent agenda for information and may be lifted by any Member of Council for separate consideration, support, or endorsement.

Resolutions from Other Municipalities that relate to matters which have already been considered by Council will be forwarded to Members of Council electronically, or placed in the Council mail bins, for information.



Public Meeting Correspondence

Communications received in response to a Public Notice under the *Planning Act, 1990*, or any Act that requires a Public Meeting, addressed to the Mayor and Council, or to the Clerk, shall be placed on the pertinent Public Meeting agenda to be considered as part of the submissions relating to the application under consideration, and shall be received by resolution.

Communications relating to a development application that are addressed to the Planning Department in the manner outlined in the Public Notice shall also be included on the Public Meeting Agenda. i.e. correspondence between an individual and a member of staff relating to the development.

Correspondence relating to a development application included on the agenda becomes part of a public record. Names and addresses contained within the correspondence will be included in the agenda package which is published on the Township's website. Telephone numbers and email addresses will be redacted so as not to appear on the published agenda.

General Provisions

All correspondence received through Canada Post or received by hand delivery and addressed to Members of Council and staff at the Township of Georgian Bluffs Administration Building address will be opened, date stamped, and distributed for information. Envelopes marked "private" or "confidential" shall not be opened but will be date stamped on the envelope and placed in the Council mail bin(s).

If the intention of the correspondence cannot be determined from the outside of the envelope, the Township Clerk is authorized to open the envelope and contact the author to determine whether the correspondence is intended for the Council agenda or information.

Anonymous correspondence will not be circulated or acknowledged.

Correspondence, including e-mail correspondence, intended for Council and/or Committee is generally received as public information subject to the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 1990* (MFIPPA). The Clerk shall be advised of any confidential items, the general nature thereof, and will determine if the item meets identified criteria for confidential correspondence as to whether it will be included within the public agenda, circulated under separate cover, or included on a closed session agenda.

Correspondence addressed to Council, including correspondence addressed to individual members of Council is subject to MFIPPA and may be disclosed via a Freedom of Information Request (FOI) with personal information redacted.

Correspondence marked "private" or "confidential" may also be disclosed via FOI if the correspondence is not exempt from disclosure under MFIPPA.

Questions regarding this policy, or questions regarding addressing correspondence to Council shall be directed to the Township Clerk.



Monitoring and Review

This policy shall be administered by the Township Clerk and updated as required.



Appendix “A”

Prescribed Petition Form

To: Council of the Township of Georgian Bluffs
c/o Township Clerk
177964 Grey Rd 18
Georgian Bluffs, ON N4K 5N5
Via Email: clerks@georgianbluffs.ca

I/We the undersigned, petition the Council of the Township of Georgian Bluffs as follows:

Description of matter being brought to the attention of Council:

--

Printed Name	Printed Address	Signature

By signing this petition, I/we hereby acknowledge that this petition will become a record belonging to the Township of Georgian Bluffs and that the contents of this petition will be available for viewing by the public and may be included on a Council agenda, published on the Township of Georgian Bluffs website.

Please duplicate this form for each page required for signatures. Page ___/___



Report Approval Details

Document Title:	COU2024-01 - Correspondence Policy.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Feb 1, 2024

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Michael Benner, Principal Planner

Brittany Drury, Director of Corporate Services

Niall Loble, Chief Administrative Officer