

TOWN OF
VEGREVILLE

GOVERNANCE MODEL

Developed based on the models, writings and teaching of Dr. Gordon McIntosh

Approved by Town of Vegreville Council September 8, 2025

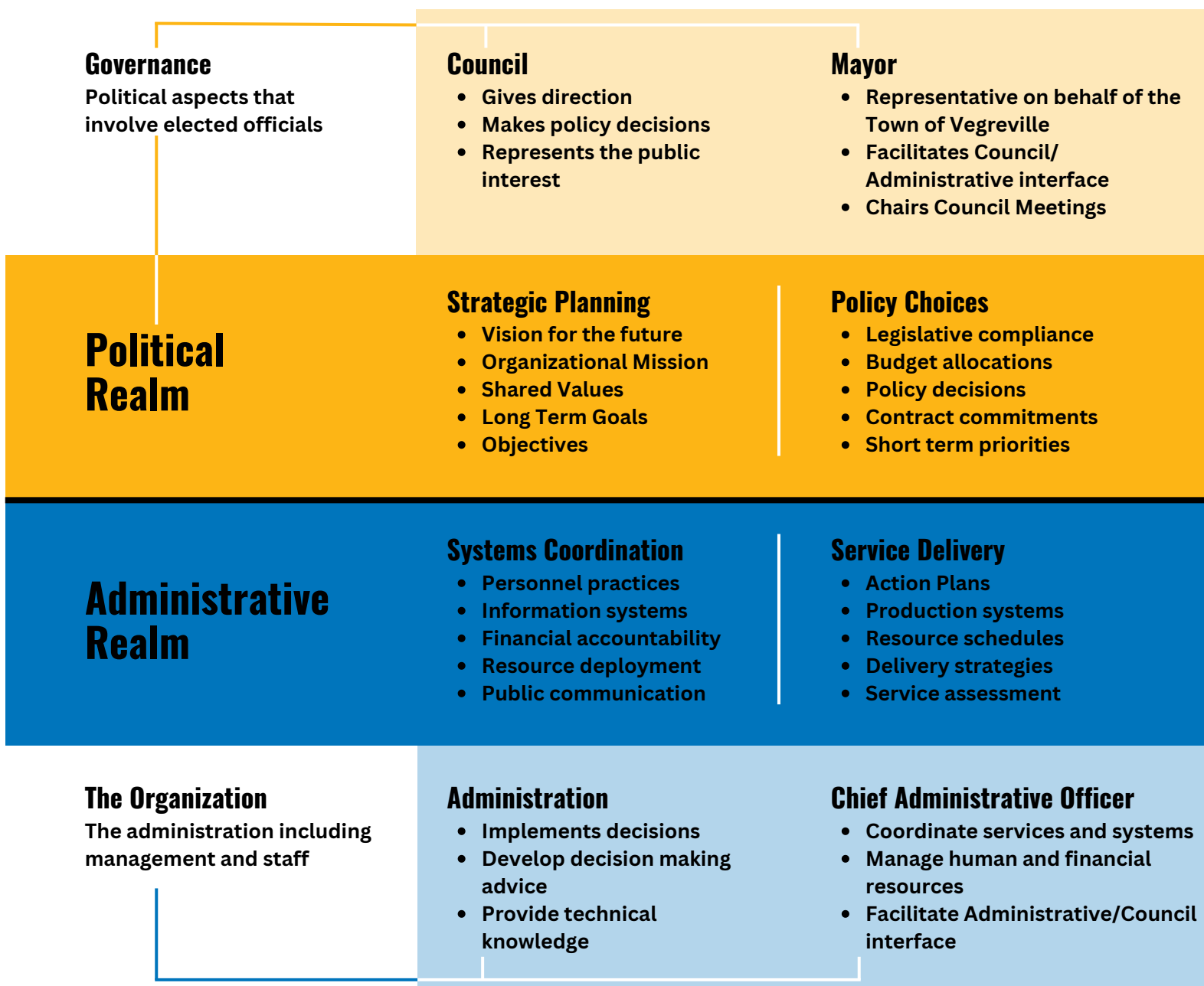


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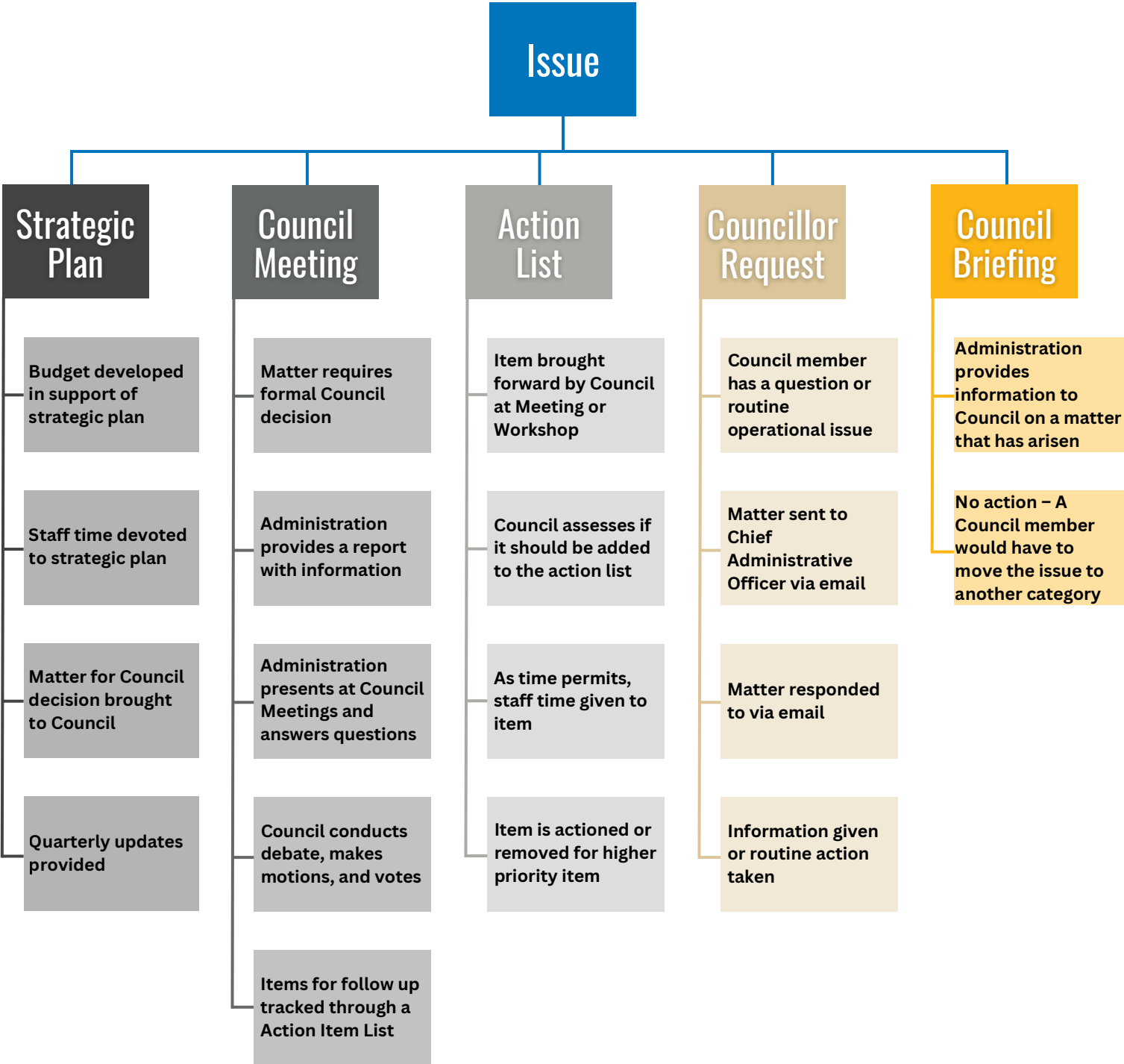
Core Government Functions

Understanding how Council and Administration work together is the fundamental core of our governance model. Below are some of the basic principles and simplified understandings of how roles and responsibilities are looked at in our municipality.



How Issues are Addressed

In our Governance Model, issues can be handled through the following methods:



Council Meeting Formats

Meeting Type	Business Meeting (Regular, Special, or Organizational Meeting)	Closed Session	Legislative Committee Meeting	Public Hearing
Key Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debate • Decision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matters protected under FOIP Act 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversation • Connection • Collect input 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect input
Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal Government Act (MGA) • Council Procedural Bylaw 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal Government Act (MGA) • Council Procedural Bylaw • Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal Government Act (MGA) • Council Procedural Bylaw 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal Government Act (MGA) • Council Procedural Bylaw
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To make decisions publicly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive information and conduct debate protected under the MGA and FOIP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive information from administration and debate issues prior to Regular Council Meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assist in facilitation of public input for proposed bylaws or resolutions
Decision Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resolutions • Bylaws 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No decisions can be made in a closed session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decisions cannot be made. Direction can be given for more information to be provided or that an item is ready for a Council Meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resolutions • Bylaws (Typically decisions are made at the Council Meeting following a Public Hearing)

Council Meetings

Purpose

FORMAL DECISION MAKING

- Through resolutions and bylaw
- Administrations opportunity to provide information and recommendations
- Council determines adequacy of information

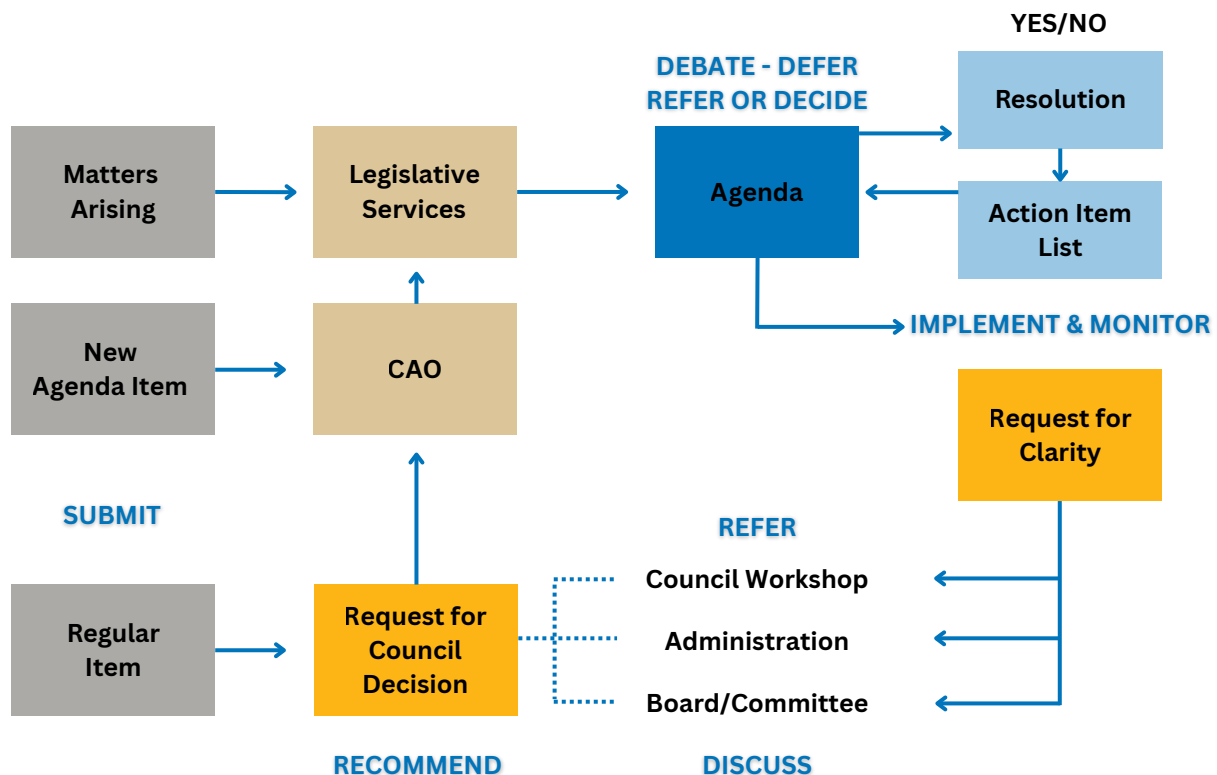
Agenda Creation

The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) is responsible for agenda creation submitted to Legislative Services to confirm schedule and order of agenda.

Decision Making

The decisions Council make include:

- Receive and file information (Information will be filed in accordance with Records Management and Retention Bylaw)
- Make a decision – yes or no
- Refer the item – more information required (Items can be referred to administration or committee)
- Defer the item – need more time to ensure there’s a good debate



Request for Council Decision

Reports prepared by administration to provide Council with the information necessary to make a decision. Reports must be reviewed and approved by the CAO prior to presentation to Council.

They should include:

- Title
- Background – reference background material and state questions to be answered, key results and benefits, studies (may include attachments), previous actions, status
- Implications and Consequences
 - Policy/legislative – MGA or other legislation, bylaw, or policy
 - Financial – cost, current budget, future budget, ongoing
- Strategic – alignment with corporate and/or community plan
- Communication – public awareness, internal organization awareness, input and/or feedback
- Recommendation – What, when, who, how
- Other
- Reviewed by – name and title of director/manager who reviewed the report

Principle of Informed Agreement

The principle of informed agreement ensures that Council had adequate information to make a decision and ensure a good debate was held that allowed all points of view to be heard. By having informed agreement, it should be easier for members of Council to support the implementation of a decision even though they didn't vote for it because they understand the information and why other members of Council voted a different way.

How the Principle of Informed Agreement is supported:

- Member of Council support the principle of informed agreement by
 - Ensuring they have the information they need to make a decision
 - Refer means more information is needed. Council must be able to define exactly what new information is needed.
 - Defer means a delay of decision (ex. Council has the information, but are just not ready at this moment to make a decision or Council does not feel they have had sufficient time to debate the issue). Deferring should not be used to unnecessarily stall decision making thereby negatively impacting efficiency.
- Administration supports the principle of informed agreement by providing well written reports that have been reviewed by Senior Management Team and assessing which items require further discussion at a Legislative Committee Meeting or Council Workshop before going to a Council Meeting

Council and Administration work together to balance the principle of informed agreement with other principles of good government such as timely decision making. Not every matter for Council decision will go to a Legislative Committee Meeting, have public consultation, etc.

Council-CAO Quarterly Meetings

Quarterly, or at the request of the Mayor, Council should check in with the CAO and each other regarding the conduct of meetings.

They should be asking and sharing their thoughts about:

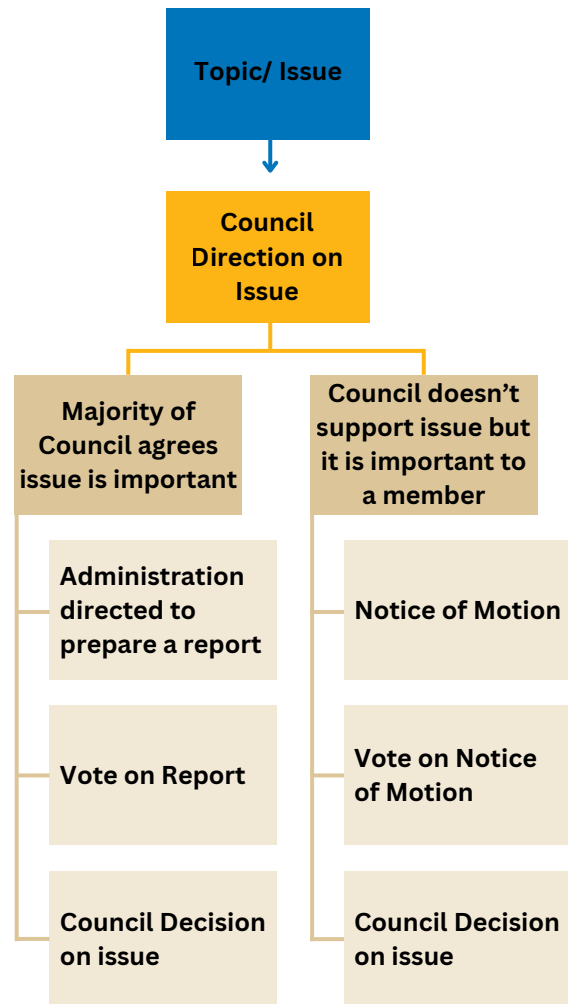
- Adequacy of information being provided
- Was everyone heard?
 - Was there a lot of repetition
 - Did everyone get a chance to speak?
- How did staff treat Council?
 - What was the tone or responses from Administration?
- How did Council treat staff?
 - Did Council focus on the Request for Decision and not the people presenting?

The CAO will have an opportunity to provide Council Briefings and Council may direct the CAO if any issues should move forward to a Legislative Committee Meeting or Council Meeting.

How do Members of Council get Action on a Matter?

Council operates by majority. This can make it difficult for an individual member or Council to get a matter addressed as it may not be of enough importance to make into the Strategic Plan or into an Administrative report.

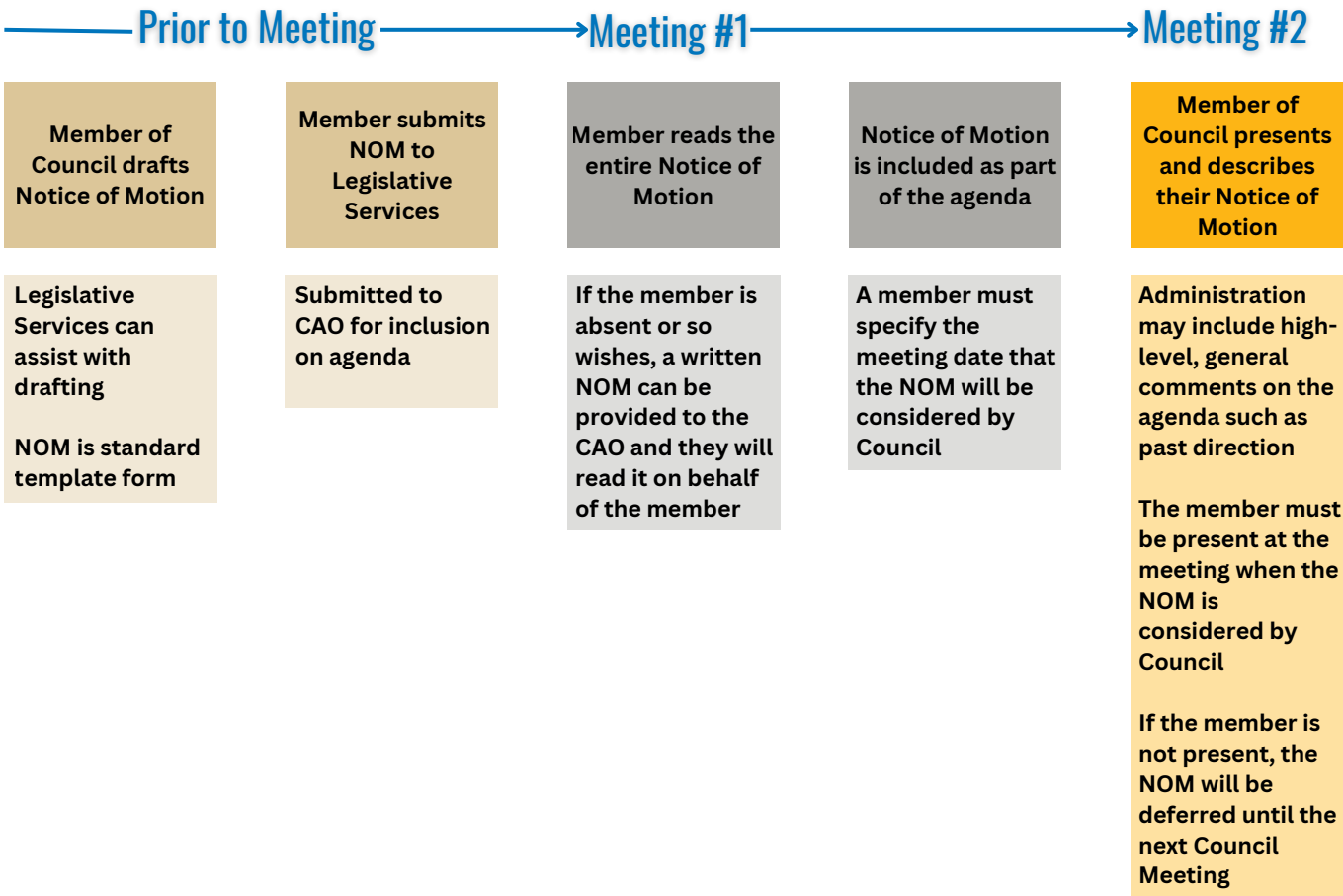
The typical process for how items are actioned is:



Notice of Motion

A Notice of Motion (NOM), as the title indicates, is a notice to Council’s colleagues, Administration, and the public that a member of Council would like to put forward a motion. A NOM is introduced at a meeting and considered at the next regular Council Meeting. The purpose of this notice is to ensure that Council and Administration are not caught off guard or ill-prepared to address a matter in alignment with the principle of informed agreement.

The process looks as follows:



Drafting Notices of Motion

- Legislative Services can assist with drafting Notices of Motion
- When drafting a NOM it is important to include relevant background information so your colleagues can understand why you are bring the matter forward. The NOM must also state the date of the Council Meeting at which the Motion will be made
- A NOM must be submitted to the CAO in order to be placed on the meeting agenda
- Generally, Notices of Motion request Administration to bring forward further information so that Council can make an informed decision on a matter. Making decisions without Administrative input is not recommended as Administration has been hired as Council's technical experts and they should be given the opportunity to perform their responsibilities. This ensures that Council understand background, such as financial implications, how the matter may relate to past Council decisions, how Administration's work plans may be impacted, legal implications, and much more. Administration does not provide this information at the meeting where the matter is considered because a Notice of Motion is a request of a single member and should not inadvertently become a way for a single member of Council to adjust Administration priorities or workplans.

When working with Notices of Motion, members must be aware of rules for motions related to the previous action of Council. Highlights are as follows:

- **Reconsider** – a request to debate a vote on a matter again
 - A motion to reconsider can be made at the meeting where the vote was taken or the next regular meeting
 - Can only be put forward by a member who voted on the prevailing side
 - Member must state the reason for making a motion to reconsider
 - Administration should be asked if any action has been taken that cannot be undone as it is not in order to reconsider a matter that cannot be undone
 - Council debates the reconsideration (should we talk about the matter again – this is not debate on the matter)
 - If the motion to reconsider is carried the original motion is back on the floor exactly as it was before the vote was conducted
 - Council debates the matter again
 - Council votes on the matter again
 - The result of the vote doesn't have to be different
- **Rescind** – a request to undo a previous action (make it null and void)
 - Brought forward by a Notice of Motion
 - A NOM relating to an action taken at a previous Council Meeting is different than a regular NOM because there are additional rules related to rescinding motions that must be addressed. Some of these include:
 - The NOM will express a desire to consider the matter again, if passed a motion to rescind will then be on the floor (the vote on the NOM does not automatically rescind the original motion)
 - A motion to rescind cannot undo actions that have already been taken and as such, a motion to rescind is not in order if it has been fully executed or action has been taken that cannot be undone

When Council Considers the Notice of Motion

- The NOM is introduced by the member at either a Council Meeting or Legislative Committee Meeting (as Administration would for a normal report). The CAO may read the Notice of Motion if the member is not present at the meeting or requests the CAO to do so
- Council may ask the member questions relating to their Notice of Motion
 - Minimal questions should be directed to Administration as it is the member's recommendation, not Administrations
- The Motion will then be presented at the meeting date indicated in the NOM. If the member is not present for the indicated date, the Motion will be deferred to the next Council Meeting. If the member is not present at the next Council Meeting, the Motion will be removed from the agenda and may only be made by new Notice of Motion
- As with any Motion, Council can take action such as amend, refer, or defer

Relevant Legislation

- Municipal Government Act (MGA)
- Council Procedural Bylaw

Council Workshops

Purpose

- Not a public meeting
- Learning sessions for Town Council. For example, orientation training or professional development
- Topics are limited. For example, strategic planning.

How is the Agenda Prepared?

- Administration prepares a Workshop Schedule
- Members of Council and Senior Management Team will have the opportunity to provide topics to be included on the agenda. Topics and issues will be placed on the agenda based on Council priorities

When is the Agenda Provided?

As this is not a formal Council Meeting, the rules relating to Council Meeting agendas do not apply. Administration will provide the agenda when it is ready – this may be right up until the start of the meeting based on the information and items coming forward.

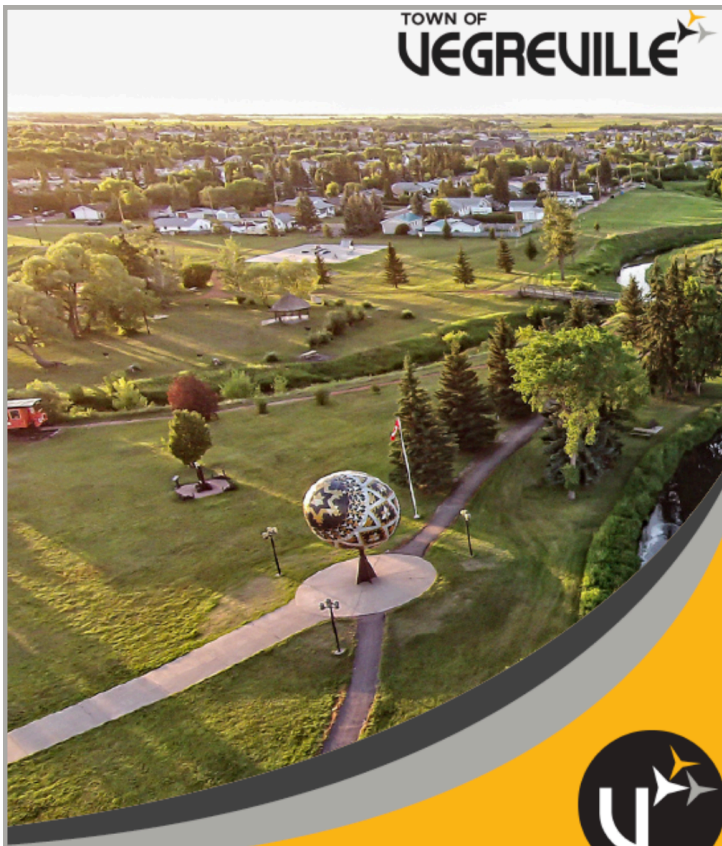
Decisions During a Council Workshop

- Like a Legislative Committee Meeting or Closed Session, Council cannot make decisions during a Council Workshop
- If a decision is required, Council will direct Administration to bring an item forward to a regular Council Meeting or a member of Council may make a Notice of Motion at the next regular Council Meeting

Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan guides the work of the organization by setting high level priorities and goals for Council’s term of office and identifying the projects to be looked at next so that priorities and resources are in alignment. The Strategic Plan is updated within the first year of term of office. Council develops the Strategic Plan through strategic planning workshops with the assistance of either Administration or a hired consultant.

All projects and proposed budget items should have alignment with Council’s strategic priorities.



TOWN OF
VEGREVILLE

STRATEGIC GOAL #1 - People & Culture

Vegreville Town Council has identified staffing recruitment, retention, and succession planning as the primary strategic plan objective and goal.

Staff are often the first and primary point of contact for Vegreville’s citizens. They are the boots on the ground in the mission to enact Council’s strategic goals. They are, or should be, the municipality’s cheerleaders and major promoters. When Town of Vegreville employees are satisfied, engaged, and fulfilled, they complete the essential tasks that make our community function, grow and prosper. In short, staff are paramount to the vitality that is the ‘Town of Vegreville’ organization.

Staffing is additionally important in the broader national and economic context. With more than five million Canadians turning 65 this decade, many of the ‘baby boomer’ generation will retire in the 2020-decade, creating one of the most impactful employee exoduses in our country’s history. Meantime, the presently underway ‘Great Resignation’ has seen millions of employees leave their jobs for new opportunities, creating massive recruitment and retraining costs for employers across North America.

Staffing is the number one risk factor to the organization’s long term success.

With this in mind, the goal of the municipality is to create a work environment that makes the ‘Town of Vegreville’ an employer of choice.

STRATEGIC GOAL #2 - Growth

Community growth encompasses a broad range of topics including a sustainable population increase, development of housing options and business expansion across small, medium and large-scale enterprises all resulting in an expanding residential and commercial tax base.

Council is committed to actively promoting growth in the community to, over the long term, fall in line with the average population growth for the province of Alberta.

This will ensure the stability, viability, and sustainability of the Town of Vegreville.

STRATEGIC GOAL #3 - Quality of Life

In order to achieve meaningful growth, Vegreville must not only work to attract new residents and businesses, but also ensure retention of existing citizens and corporations.

Every year, news agencies rank the ‘Top 10’ places to live in Canada. Most often, rankings are determined by affordability, crime rates and access to recreational and cultural amenities. The provision of abundant recreation opportunities, the maintenance of green spaces, parks, and trails and the promotion of festivals, events, and functions are essential in today’s retention and attraction of residents.

Council believes that existing recreation facilities and opportunities should be optimized as opposed to the construction of new facilities, especially when factoring in life cycle costs of maintenance, upkeep and staffing for new facilities in future planning.

Vegreville Town Council is committed to ensuring the existing facilities are maintained to the highest degree possible and are ready and available for public use.



STRATEGIC PLAN

2022 - 2025

STRATEGIC GOAL #4 - Infrastructure

Town infrastructure, such as water, sewer, roads and facilities, are critical to the long term viability of Vegreville.

As costs continue to rise, Council is committed to ensuring that infrastructure considerations are planned for, and that diligent maintenance is performed to ensure taxpayers of Vegreville are getting the maximum service life out of all Town assets.

Councillor Requests

Council has the right to ask questions of Administration through the CAO.

Three ways to bring something forward include the following:

Type of Councillor Request	Councillor Inquiry	Concern	Request for Service
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To gather information To better understand background or increase knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To action a concern received by a member of Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To request a standard service that has been missed or there was an unintended issue with a standard service
Example	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When will Council consider Fire Services Bylaw amendment? When does the regional recreation agreement expire? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why have the potholes in a road not been fixed? Why is the spray park closed? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> My garbage collection was missed The snow has not been cleared from my street
How it's Submitted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email to CAO directly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email to CAO directly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report a Problem https://www.vegreville.com/p/service-request
Expected Response Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dependent on Service

When a Member Doesn't Agree with the Response

When a member does not agree with the response or result provided through these mechanisms, other routes have to be taken to advance the matter.

To make a request to change a policy or service level standard, the member can:

- Add to Action List
- Add to Council Workshop agenda
- Notice of Motion

If a member of Council does not agree that a standard level of service has been achieved or adequate customer service has been provided, the member can raise the issue with the CAO. After raising the issue with the CAO, the investigation and findings will likely be related to personnel performance and, in accordance with Core Government Functions (page 3), the responsibility for the item will be transferred to the CAO.

Adhering to our routes for action when a Member doesn't agree with a response ensures that Councillor Requests are not being misused as a mechanism for one member of Council to direct the work of Administration, impact Administrative workplans, require unauthorized expenses, etc.

Municipal Enforcement

It is important to remember that the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act still applies to Councillor Requests. An example of where privacy will impact a Councillor Request is enforcement.

- Enforcement – information that will be provided
 - Step 1 Validation – Council can be told if a complaint/concern is valid
 - Step 2 Investigation – Council will be told an investigation is occurring but no details of the investigation will be provided
 - Step 3 Enforcement – Council will be told the investigation proved correct, now we are enforcing (ticketing, charging, etc.). Details of enforcement will be dependent on the enforcement method being pursued

Further, Council members must be cautious when involving themselves in matters such as enforcement issues as they may end up in Court and the Council Member would not want a direct connection to the matter as they may end up being asked to testify.

Examples – Cannabis enforcement, unsightly properties

Council Briefings

A Council Briefing is a tool utilized by Administration to proactively inform all members of Council at the same time of an issue or matter that Administration is aware of that Council may not be aware of. The goal of a Council Briefing is to prevent Council from being surprised by a matter of importance that Administration already has information on.

Council Briefings are provided through the following methods:

- **Verbal Updates** – CAO Briefing is a verbal session used for the CAO to inform Council of information. The CAO invites all members of Council to attend, and Council's attendance is optional, but encouraged. The CAO provides information only (there is no discussion or debate in this forum).
- **Written Council Briefing** – provided by email to all Members of Council.

Council Briefings are an information tool only and if a member of Council would like further action, different action, etc., they must move the item to a different category (ex. Bring forward a Council Request, add to Action List, prepare a Notice of Motion, etc.)

Examples of Matters Council Briefings will be considered for:

- Issues believed may get unexpected media attention
 - Rate payer takes concern to media and Town of Vegreville is asked to comment
 - Does not include routine media coverage such as public events that Council has been informed of, matters arising from Council Meetings, etc.
 - Service disruption – the water is off, the road is closed
 - Impact to the provision of Town services
 - Does not apply to mowing, street sweeping, snow removal, etc. that is routine business
 - Community Engagement – if Town is hosting an event or consultation in your area
 - Major Development Prospects
 - FOIP will protect some information as third party business interests and competitive positions are involved
- When Administration receives development inquiries they are not shared with Council as they are not serious
- When Administration has agreements in principle, there is concrete information that can be shared with Council and protected through Closed Session