

January 6, 2024

Re: COR-2025-02 > **Policy #GP-23-01**

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Intro. / Overview

Over 35 years ago, on Good Street in New Hamburg, our children were excited about Christmas, and about getting gifts, as young children still do. In those days there were still Christmas Sale Catalogues from Eatons and Sears, and the kids would search carefully through the toys section to find out what they desired that year.

Like a lot of people today, they didn’t know what they wanted until they saw it, OR they knew what they wanted and were searching carefully, to selectively pick it out.

They’d cut out pictures of what they wanted and glue their desires onto a montage “Christmas List”, sending it to Santa Claus.

This policy proposal, GP-23-01, is a “cut-and-paste Christmas List”. Three roles (Director of Corporate Services, CFO, and CAO) have creatively “made-it-up”, including what they wanted, or selectively choosing particular items from somewhere and ignoring the rest of the options among the 444 Ontario municipalities.

Three roles have stated that they did a “municipal scan” researching to find 15 comparator municipalities that had Council-Staff Relations policies. They “cut-and-pasted” together their wish list of “best practices” contents and concluded that there was consistency with comparator municipalities’ policies in their structure and content, to that structure and content proposed in the COR-2024-28 policy.

There are 444 municipalities in Ontario.

A reasonable person would ask: “*Why choose those 15 in particular?*”

A reasonable person would ask, “*Why did the 3 roles, when updating COR-2024-28 to version COR-2024-56, drop 12 off their original list, keep 3, and add one*” after a councillor asked for clarification of the comparators?

Have you ever played the ‘shell game’, where the grifter puts a pea under a peanut shell and by sleight of hand, faster than the eye and brain can track it, shift the target around so you can’t keep track? Just wondering.

However, those who have actually compared the 15 comparator municipalities to GP-23-01, have found:

- + cut-and-paste out the Ontario Municipal Act;
- + cut-and-paste of carefully selected and edited wording from 3 of 4 comparators listed in COR-2024-56 (that’s the 2nd version of this);
- + a lot of manure to help it grow.

Manure? Yes. Some of this report ‘somewhat resembles the structure’ of other municipal policies, but is dramatically different in content – recognizing that GP-23-01, represents only 4 comparator municipalities of 444 in Ontario.

Instead of a compilation of some “worst practices” which are common practice to only 2 of the potential 444 I’ve seen so far, Wilmot would be better served by considering an alternative policy version. One which is home grown, addressing Wilmot’s realities – and which I, of course, am offering as one option for consideration as an attachment to this delegation.

Not one policy available on the web has this “label, “**Focus**”. These postulations are superfluous, arrogant and in at least one case, a falsehood. [Note: a postulation is a suggestion or assumption of the existence, fact or truth of something as the basis for a belief, when it is not so.]

There is no such thing in any other availed municipalities of “**Policy Focus**”, or “**Direction focus**”, or “**Implementation focus**”, or any subjective anecdotal commentary reflecting the opinion by one person of the role of the mayor.

In one community where I taught, the farm boys referred to this nonsense as “cow patties”, and in winter-time, as “horse pucks”.

Falsehood: In GP-23-01, on page 6, item 6.4, the three roles that created this proposal state, “*The Chief Administrative Officer leads in three dimensions. Up to Council, down to Staff and out to the community stakeholders.*”

FALSE. A CAO, per the OMA, is an optional role in the “*Municipal administration*”. The CAO comes, in order in the OMA, after the Clerk, and the Deputy Clerk. An optional CAO is responsible for “*exercising general control and management of the affairs of the municipality for the purpose of ensuring the efficient and effective operation of the municipality*”.

In the OMA, a CAO is a sub-heading in the “senior management” group, within the total hired administration complement of a municipal corporation.

A CAO, per the hierarchical structure defined in the OMA, and thus in practice, **provides leadership down ONLY** to the administration staff. A CAO **reports upward** to the elected Council.

A CAO **DOES NOT** lead upward to Council. A CAO does not lead outward to community stakeholders. This also eliminates the press.

These “**focus** footnotes” are the Christmas List interpretations of someone’s aspirations to redefine reality in their myopic terms.

A careful review of the “intent” of this proposal confirms that COR-2024-28, COR-2024-56 and GP-23-01 are 3 evolutionary versions of “best practices for creating the corporate structure and administration practices for **establishing an “autocracy”**”.

***He who controls the flow of information, controls knowledge.
He who controls knowledge, has power over decision-making.***

GP-23-01 would establish an “autocracy” in Wilmot.

In an autocracy one role has absolute power. He/she/they) controls the creation of all information (or not). One role controls the flow of any and all information (or not). One role controls how and when that information is packaged and as knowledge shared (or NOT). One role then controls the process of decision-making and has absolute power.

This person is no longer a chief **administration** officer, but now has the powers and authorities to be referred to as, “Your Highness”, or “Your Excellency”, or “Your Majesty”, or “Jawohl” – yah-VOL, which means “Yes, certainly” or “yes, indeed”. Two things missing in this proposal is the heel-click and the snappy salute.

This proposal (COR-2024-28, COR-2024-56, GP-23-01) creates that autocracy. One person controls all information, determines knowledge, controls decision-making power, eliminates the need for councillors, or citizens for that matter.

This autocratic sweeping control over information, and knowledge, over the authority to decide who gets what, when and why (or at all) is summarized in GP-23-01 on page 7, item 7. Policy in the sentence;

“Members of Council have the same rights of information as members of the community.”

In reality this means you aren’t getting anything that the CAO does not want you to have and know.

Look at some real-life items:

1. The CAO is responsible for the total knowledge of the administration affairs of the corporation. They get it from department heads regularly.
Council needs to know everything a CAO knows:
2. What if, after being directed to provide it, a CAO does not give a report of all actions that were completed by each service area, and which are planned for the current week in each service area, and what actions will be taken by each service area on a yearly planning calendar? [Council does not need to know > it gets nothing or filtered data.]
3. What if, after being directed to provide it, Council is not provided with information need for its consideration of and deliberation on upcoming items weeks, months and years ahead for time and resources? (OMA

224, (d) and (d.1)) [Council does not need to know > it gets nothing or filtered data.]

4. What if, after being directed to provide it, Council is not provided with all the policies which exist in the Township, when they were last reviewed, when they are next due for review, and when to schedule these deliberations on its own Council agenda? [Council does not need to know > it gets nothing or filtered data.]
5. What if, after being directed to provide it, Council is not provided with a tracking record, for providing leadership planning to staff, of all reports that have been submitted to council for information only, so that council can direct staff when to report back for direction by Council for action – or not – for each and every report? [Council does not need to know > it gets nothing or filtered data.]
6. What if, because Council knows no better, staff may choose to leave any actions that should arise out a report on an “undone” pile (such as the lack of CAO direction to produce an educational program for the PMP project since 2015), or an “doesn’t comply with our preferences” pile (such as the Corporate Re-structuring and People Plan Strategy report), or an “Urgent Action” pile dealing with something which staff perceive as urgent and staff just assume that, because they “informed” council of a report’s existence, that they now have “Marching Orders from Council” to go off into the darkness of bureaucracy and do whatever the CAO chooses to “lead” staff in doing, without Council direction in a passed motion of approval? [Any councillor want a starter list of such actions I’m aware of?] *Communication and Engagement Strategy; Restructuring and People Plan; Castle Kilbride future staffing proposal and building renovation plan; 10-year capital budget reports for 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025.* [Council does not need to know > it gets nothing or filtered data.]
7. What if Council needs comprehensive information of past spending, current spending and budget anticipated spending, and it gets a whiner response from a CFO or CAO? If Council knows that these records are currently held, or should be held, by a CFO, and need be provided to Council by the CAO upon demand, and the direction is refused, what does Council do, just because GP-23-01 gives the CAO a written ‘get-out-of-work” card? [Council does not need to know > it gets nothing or filtered data.]
8. Council is responsible for hiring an auditor annually. The last RFP was in 2010 – 14 years ago. That contract was extended “administratively” ever since, without Council leadership, so said CFO Dan Elliott. A

CAO just arbitrarily took it upon themselves to usurp the authority of Council – and act without providing the information to Council about a need to award a contract at a given future date. This is probably insubordination and malfeasance by a CAO. What is Council going to do about it? Councillor Cressman questioned the auditor selection process in public session. [Council does not need to know > it gets nothing or filtered data.]

9. Has Council received the **audited financial statements** for the year's 2022 and 2023 and have they been released to the Wilmot residents? What is each council member's liability if any CAO chooses not to release this information to Council because GP-23-01 creates a written policy that gives them, this one (autocrat) person, the option to not release information to Council that they don't want the tax payers to know? The tone of this entire proposed policy, and especially the single sentence, "*Members of Council have the same rights of access to information as members of the community.*" provides that power to any CAO that rolls through here for a couple of years at a time, now and in future, in Wilmot. [Council does not need to know > it gets nothing or filtered data.]
10. Each year, as part of their report, an auditor submits a "**Management Letter**" which hi-lights things they have observed during the course of their audit, such as 'internal control weaknesses', "insufficient reserves", "non-standard" practices of recognizing operating budget expenses as capital budget expenses instead, etc. What is each council member's liability if any CAO chooses not to release this information to Council because GP-23-01 creates a written policy that gives them, this one (autocrat) person, the option to not release information to Council that they don't want the tax payers to know? The tone of this entire proposed policy, and especially the single sentence, "*Members of Council have the same rights of access to information as members of the community.*" provides that power to any CAO that rolls through here for a couple of years at a time, now and in future, in Wilmot. [Council does not need to know > it gets nothing or filtered data.]
11. Each year, after the audited statements are released by the auditor, a report called the "**Financial Information Return**" (F.I.R.) must be submitted to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. What is each council member's liability if any CAO chooses not to release this information to Council because GP-23-01 creates a written policy that gives them, this one (autocrat) person, the option to not release

information to Council that they don't want the tax payers to know? The tone of this entire proposed policy, and especially the single sentence, "*Members of Council have the same rights of access to information as members of the community.*" provides that power to any CAO that rolls through here for a couple of years at a time, now and in future, in Wilmot. [Council does not need to know > it gets nothing or filtered data.]

Just because any single occupant of the CAO chair promises to be good and apparently, as far as one knows, gives 'everything' demanded, a verbal or written commitment is meaningless, and does not have any force. That is because this GP-23-01 legitimizes obstruction, obstreperousness, defiance, insubordination, and non-compliance with any Council direction.

I have personally submitted several FOIs, at \$5 each, to get access to public documents. This senior administration, as led downward by 2 recent CAOs, has denied that access repeatedly.

My requests have been labelled as "*frivolous*" and "*vexatious*" and that my requests were made in "*bad faith*". Name-calling does not earn co-operation, positive support, and respect.

I have submitted appeals to the FOI Commissioner in Toronto, at \$25 each, to ensure that the Township provides all the information. The mediator has addressed 4 appeals so far and has instructed the Township to provide the requested information. I know already that I will have to submit additional appeals (at no additional cost to me) to ensure that the mediator's directions to the township are in fact complied with in the timely manner.

This is what it means, in real life, when the writer of this proposed policy states, "*Members of Council have the same rights of access to information as members of the community.*" If a citizen is consistently refused, and Council has consistently had push-back, then we have a proven administration culture problem. This proposal attempts to codify that we all have the **same right to get nothing a hired staff person, a CAO, wants kept secret.**

The CAO would become the ultimate judge of what information the public or council gets to know. Only in an autocracy.

Anecdotal Parable:

When a youth is directed by a parent to gather all the garbage from the bins in all the rooms of the house, put it together in the disposal bags, and take the bags out to the street for collection tomorrow, and to have it done before they go to bed, the response is “Yes, mom!”

And mom tracks interim actions and final actions when the bins are at the curb for tomorrow’s collection.

Responses from that youth, which are unacceptable and have dramatic consequences might include:

- + I’m too small to carry all that responsibility.
- + I’ll need to hire some friends to help me because I don’t have the capacity or skills to do it alone.
- + That work load will take me a dozen hours to do, and I only work on that stuff right after school for 15 minutes each day, and it doesn’t fit my schedule.
- + I can get all that done, maybe, by next month at the earliest.
- + I’ll have to buy a computer software program to track all these tasks in an organized, easily-accessible format, can I have \$300 to buy it?
- + I was too busy checking my emails today, and didn’t plan ahead to get started like you told me last time, so I’ve decided this job does not take priority – I’m too busy.
- + That’s not fair because you didn’t ask me to do that, exactly that way, last week, you told me to do something else and differently.
- + You can’t make me do that because you didn’t check with dad first.

Whiners. Whiners learn their trade in childhood. Without logical consequences, consistently through their lives, whiners just get older and don’t change their behaviours.

I, and anyone else tracking the Youtube videos of Council meetings, have heard a series of CAOs use variations of those childish responses.

Childish whiners just become older, often pleasantly-spoken, but just older whiners. Old whiners get dismissed and replaced with competent adults. I may be old, fat, bald and ugly, but I’m not naïve or stupid. I’m not here to whine. I’m here as an adult who is providing a tax-paying citizen’s direction to Council, which I will summarize below as a motion, and an alternative policy document.

Whining is another reason why the call, “*Fire them!*” was frequently heard at 2 townhalls.

Analysis of comparators in COR-2024-28

This report COR-2025-02 summarizes the sequence of evolutionary steps for a proposed revised “Council-Staff Relations Policy”:

“Report COR-2024-28 Council-Staff Relations Policy Review was brought to Council on November 4, 2024.”

- 2 more bullets
- “At the November 25, 2024 Council meeting, Council deferred **the report** to the January Council meeting.”

This states that “*the report*” was deferred, but does not state that the deferred report was a different report in its cover and contents. The deferred report was not COR-2024-28, it was report COR-2024-56. Report COR-2024-56 was also dated as November 4, 2024, but was in fact presented on November 25th.

There are significant differences between the two versions.

Report COR-2024-28 provided as rationale that there had been a “**Comparator Review**” conducted. It listed 15 municipalities that had been “*included in the municipal scan for best practices*”.

Furthermore, the COR-2024-28 version stated that, “*The attached policy is consistent with comparators in its structure and content. The majority of comparators also include similar language related to complaints in that it refers to existing corporate policies specifically designed to deal with respective issues.*”

I don’t know what the process of conducting a “*municipal scan*” means, but I know that the individual words mean. *Municipal* is obvious – 15 municipalities. *Scan*, according to the Oxford dictionary means to “*look at all parts (of something) carefully in order to detect some feature*”.

What was the *feature*? The report says the writer was scanning, looking carefully at all parts for *consistency with the comparator municipalities’ policies in their structure and content to that structure and content proposed in the COR-2024-28 policy.*

Maybe municipal officials have inside connections or strategies for “scanning” (more on that later) other municipalities’ policies. I used Google. I used every possible key word and phrase combinations I could reasonably think of to find these 15 comparator Council-Staff relations’ policies.

I found, on municipal websites, policies for Oakville and Dufferin only.

On the City of Waterloo website, I found a page titled “*Corporate policies*” and a list of their policies. There were 106 policies under 8 sub-headings, but nothing about Council-Staff Relations.

On the Stratford website there is a page called “*Accountability and Transparency*”, and a sub-heading for “*Municipal Act Policies*”, and a listing called “*Council Staff Relations*”, but it was not a clickable link to access the document electronically.

I then did my own scan to confirm “*consistency*” alignment between the “*structure and content*” of the proposed document and the two I could find online; Oakville and Dufferin.

PURPOSE

Oakville: **Purpose** statement = 1 clear, simple sentence.

Dufferin: Purpose = 2 clear, simple sentences.

Wilmot: 2 complex, extensive paragraphs

Oakville: **Scope**: 1 sentence

Dufferin: Scope: no section, but it was one of the 2 sentences in the Purpose section.

Wilmot: Scope: 1 paragraph, but includes categories: consultants, contractors, volunteers. It adds interactions not required elsewhere such as “*all interactions*” on-site, off-site, before and during work hours (whatever those hours are?).

PRINCIPLES

Oakville: **Principles**: 5 numbered sentences. (Resolution, Responsibility, Open and Clear Communication, Respectful workplace, working partnership)

Dufferin: no *Principles* section, just mentions OMA section 270, requirement for a policy under heading “*Legislative and Administrative Authorities*”. Included in scope in Wilmot’s.

Wilmot: Principles: mentions OMA 270 in “*Purpose*” and again in “*Legislative Requirements*” – a duplication. Under the “*Principles*” section, Wilmot has an extraneous quotation from a decision somewhere that simply states in different words what the OMA describes as the roles of Council (section 224) versus the role of Municipal administration (227) and an optional CAO (229).

The OMA (229, states, “*A municipality may appoint a chief administrative officer who shall be responsible for,*

(a) exercising general control and management of the affairs of the municipality for the purpose of ensuring the efficient and effective operation of the municipality; and

(b) performing such other duties as are assigned by the municipality. 2001, c. 25, s. 229.”

The OMA states that the CAO is responsible for, and accountable to Council and the citizens for their action. That duty to perform is clearly stated. Whether it is “*unequivocal*” or not is semantics, simply meaning that the CAO is where the ‘buck stops’ within administration. My personal opinion is this is redundant, superfluous and “arch” (meaning affectedly teasing) and thus is arrogant in this formal legal document.

Wilmot: Principles (continued): 15 paragraphs.

+ 1st 5 paragraphs copy, almost exactly, Oakville’s 5 simple sentences (Resolution, Responsibility, Open and Clear Communication, Respectful workplace, working partnership).

BUT, in communication Wilmot states that any communication should be restricted to routine and non-routing matters only. Oakville defines Routine and non-routine matters for communication, but does not restrict council’s communications as does Wilmot’s wording.

Oakville’s “*Principle*” re. workplace makes no reference to a Violence and Harassment Policy. My personal opinion is this addition sets an ominous tone, and is not conducive to positive Council-Staff relations.

Neither Oakville or Dufferin saw any need to include extensive paragraphs defining:

- + “Mutual Respect,
- + Professionalism,
- + A Formal relationship,
- + Politics of Management,

- + Staff not being targets,
- + Representing Whole Community (Dufferin has one sentence in “Statement” about good governance, high level of public confidence)
- + Effective Use of Council Time (My observation is this a way to encode how administration will report to council with *concise* reports which means potentially too brief, insufficient detail, incomplete submission of optional actions, etc. This is a *get out of work* card.)
- + Respect Chain of Command (This reeks of military, hierarchical power authorities, and “marching orders” to go off and do whatever we want to “implement our concise / brief / sketchy reports” as we see fit. This is an arrogant paragraph which is insulting by deeming it necessary to include. If someone needs this added, they are working from a perception of weakness and need documented support to revert to.)
- + All Members of Council are Equal Defined in the OMA > redundant and superfluous
- + Members of Council This one is not in any of the other policies I have seen, but my personal opinion, and based on the 2 townhalls I have attended, this is an essential inclusion for Wilmot. The error in wording that needs deleting is the phrase “*and the media*” At present, as many townhall participants have described in dismay, there are hired staff calling press conferences and issuing press releases, and participating in interviews and discussions on radio and television. This is totally unacceptable and probably insubordination. **Staff do not discuss issues with the media. Staff only discuss facts. Issues are political and out-of-bounds to all except the mayor and councillors. I cannot emphasize enough how much frustration, anger, and disgust this behaviour by hired staff has created among residents.**

ROLES

Oakville: Roles of Council are described briefly in 6 statements that **all** begin with the word **may**.

Dufferin: Roles = more closely align with the Wilmot wording of **will and shall** when discussing communications. Also includes a paragraph restricting council access to only that information the public gets. **This is a dysfunctional restriction for effective council leadership and policy setting, as Council will not get information before the public when considering alternatives, confirming accuracy of data when potentially proactively preparing their own list of timeline activities (yearly calendar of work programs, purchasing considerations, potential consultancy practices), creation of Council reports. Setting of policy**

and practices is the role of Council and it need not wait until a CAO or staff decide to bring up a topic to be addressed. Council leads down. The CAO leads down to staff only.

Wilmot: Roles = copied very closely to Dufferin's **only**.

Wilmot restates some of the contents of the OMA which is superfluous in and of itself, and then adds statements which are not needed as the writer's interpretation of what should be.

The inclusion of statements titled "*Policy Focus*" are not clarifying, they result in defining the role of the mayor and council in a restrictive definition, and expand the authorities of the CAO and provide vagueness to the role of Directors as it indicates potential interpretation of an authority to hire which is defined in the Hiring and Termination policy HR-002.

The CAO does **NOT** lead **UP** to Council. The CAO does **NOT** lead out to the community. The CAO **DOES** lead down to staff – and in that direction only. The Staff, through and including the CAO **REPORT TO COUNCIL** and are **ACCOUNTABLE TO THE RESIDENTS THROUGH COUNCIL**. That's the law!

DEFINITIONS

Oakville: Definitions = only > Management staff, Member, Non-routine matter, Routine matter, Senior management (as is written in the OMA), Staff (contractors, consultants, students, agents (but council is not restricted from communications with any of them))

Dufferin: Definitions = only > CAO, Clerk, Council, County, Member, Policy, Staff, Warden (head of council as equivalent to our mayor)

Wilmot: Definitions = only > Director, Member of Council, Member of public, Routine matter, Non-routine matter, Staff, Volunteers

POLICY

These words describe the requirement for compliance in order of compulsion or force, from least restrictive to most restrictive

May = might > could > should > will = shall

Oakville: What Wilmot describes as Policy, Oakville describes as **Guidelines**. The Guidelines of actions by Members of Council are all **may** guidelines. The Guidelines for actions by Staff are all **will** mandated guidelines

Dufferin: Does not have a Policy summary section. Described once in roles section

Wilmot: Both reports COR-2024-28 and COR-1024-56 included the absolute compulsion to comply using the word **will**. **[Amended to may]**

Report COR-2024-28 stated reference to 15 comparators, and I found only 2 full policies on the web.

I concluded that the Director of Corporate Services, or the CFO, or the CAO who all participated in writing this report, and being employees of the Corporation, had access somehow to these 15 municipal policies that I did not.

FOI response to access to 15 comparators (A pattern of refusal)

They must have had them, because they stated that they had scanned the 15 municipalities to get the comparator wordings. Having been used as reference comparators, they therefore need exist within the corporation.

Therefore, I submitted an FOI in early December to have access to the 15 documents because I assumed they must know more than I do. This was the decision response:

*“Despite a thorough and reasonable search, staff have been unable to locate any records related to your request within our custody or control of the institution. Access, therefore, cannot be granted as **the records do not exist.**”*

*In responding to requests made under the legislation, staff determine if the records being requested are in the custody or control of the institution. It was determined that there were **no records** responsive to your request in our custody or control.*

The Council-Staff Relations policies for the listed comparator municipalities may be available on their website, or by making a request for general records through their Freedom of Information Co-ordinator.”

The FOI Officer in Wilmot is the Clerk. The Clerk reports to the CAO. The Clerk and the CAO are both employees of “*the institution*”.

The Township, and its CAO, does not have the “*Council-Staff Relations Policy*” records of the comparator municipalities used as rationale in an official report submitted by three roles, including the Acting CAO, according to the FOI response.

Being a fair and reasonable person (and not overly naïve, but a wee bit cynical in my old age), I came to the fair and reasonable conclusion that this

report had been written without the writer having access to the documents being referenced as comparator documents. Or, is refusing to provide it so as to keep the information secret – for some reason that appears on its face to be nefarious? The report stated that the “*attached policy is consistent with comparators in its structure and content. The majority of comparators also include similar language related to complaints.*” How can a person state that their report is consistent with the 15 comparators, without having access as an employee within the institution” to the documents?

Either the FOI Officer or the 3 roles participating in the writing of this policy are being disingenuous at best or deceptive. Pick one. Suggest an alternative plausible explanation, if possible, please.

Analysis of comparators in COR-2024-56

That leads us to Report COR-2024-56, dated November 4, 2024, but presented on the agenda for November 25, 2024. This report was produced at the request of an astute councillor seeking more details about the comparators

COR-2024-28 was much more detailed. COR-2024-56 confined the **Report** section to a **newly revised list of comparators**.

In Ontario there are 444 municipalities. The first report listed 15 that were stated as being consistent comparators in their policies’ structure and content. 8 out of 15 would be a majority for a complaints process.

Oops! Now, we’re down from 15 to 4 – Oakville, Brampton, Waterloo, and Oshawa. A majority of 4 is 3. But Oshawa wasn’t even mentioned in the original list. **426 other municipalities were ignored. Why? Did they not align with a cherry-picking goal?**

A reasonable person might wonder whether these particular policies were “cherry-picked” to make it appear to be what a writer was looking for?

A reasonable person might wonder why 12 of the original 15 were suddenly dropped and another parachuted in with all the appearances of gerrymandering? (Gerrymandering occurs when the boundaries of a constituency are manipulated to favour one desired outcome.)

How valid are these municipalities as comparators when considering:

- + total resident population
- + % of tax base generated by single residential, by agricultural, by commercial, by industrial, by all the tax categories?
- + Is the largest share of the tax load carried by residential? By agricultural like in Wilmot?
- + Is the tax load carried by commercial and industrial?

Do other municipalities they look like Wilmot when using comparator criteria?

Statistical comparators may be used for any purpose.

Let's try a municipal comparison of the 4 used by the Acting CAO to compare SALARIES FOR COUNCILLORS AND CAOS:

- + How many councillors does each comparator have?
- + How much is the compensation to the mayor?
- + What is the compensation for each councillor?
- + What is the compensation for the CAO?

I used Google for data.

Oshawa: Population 414,000 /2024 # of Councillors: 11
18.83 times larger than Wilmot

Mayor	\$133,563	3.38 X > Wilmot
Councillor	\$48,648	2.22 X > Wilmot
Total cost	\$883,851	
CAO salary 2023	\$281,215.09	1.22 X > Wilmot

Oakville: Population 224,781 / 2022 # of Councillors: 14
10.23 times larger than Wilmot

Mayor	\$134,953	3.42 X > Wilmot
Councillor Oakville	\$53,953	2.47 X > Wilmot
Regional + Oakville	\$107,582	
Total cost		
CAO salary	\$307,322 / '23	1.33 X > Wilmot

Brampton: Population 697,335 / 2024 # of Councillors: 11
31.73 times larger than Wilmot

Mayor	\$149,022.06	3.78 X > Wilmot
Councillor	\$94,704.42	4.33 X > Wilmot
Total cost	\$1,096,066.26	7.37 X > Wilmot
CAO salary	\$309,471.78	1.34 X > Wilmot

Waterloo: Population 673,910 / 2023 # of Councillors: 8
30.66 times larger than Wilmot

Mayor	\$128,445.92	3.26 X > Wilmot
Councillor	\$50,159.03	7.47 X > Wilmot
Total cost	\$479,559.13	3.22 X > Wilmot
CAO salary	\$315,412.44	1.37 X > Wilmot

Wilmot: Population 21,978 / 2024 # of Councillors: 6

The average population of the 4 comparators is 502,506 OR 22.86 times greater than Wilmot.

Mayor	\$39,425	
Councillor	\$21,872	
Total cost	\$148,785	
CAO salary 2022	\$230,943.33	

The average CAO salary of the 4 comparators is \$303,355 OR 1.31 times greater than Wilmot.

The average CAO salary of the 4 comparators, per Capita is \$0.60 per person.

The CAO salary per Capita in Wilmot is \$10.51.

**The CAO salary in Wilmot is 17.51 times greater per Capita than the average of the 4 comparators cherry-picked by the writers of this report.
Is the average tax payer in the 4 comparators getting 17.51 times greater value for their money than in Wilmot?**

The validity of using the 4 particular comparators is lost when the roles of councillors is actually compared by number and compensation.

The validity of using the 4 particular comparators is dramatically lost when the value of a CAO in Wilmot is compared in compensation cost per Capita.

My comparison of Wilmot's proposal being "*consistent with comparators in its structure and content*" does not come close to Oakville's. That means logically by default, to validate the writers' statements, that all 3 Brampton, Waterloo, and Oshawa must be "*consistent with comparators in its structure and content*".

But the Township does not have the policies for Brampton and Waterloo, because I have already asked for them in an FOI and was told they don't

exist in the institution (Wilmot). That brings us down to one potential policy in alignment – Oshawa. One-out-of-four is **NOT A MAJORITY**.

This gerrymandering of comparators, while ignoring or dismissing the other 427 unnamed municipalities and the unwillingness to be transparent and open about the sources - is why the consultants who submitted the Strategic Plan Review, and the Corporate Communications and Community Engagement Strategy Reports found that there was significant distrust in Wilmot.

GP-23-01 contrary to Consultants' reports for trust

This is why the Mayor and this Council and the previous Council all told Redbrick Communications, on page 7, “Increased public communications and engagement is needed to help strengthen community trust and confidence in local government”, and;

“Belief that elected officials should be able to get information from all levels of staff. Not just the department director, to save time and ensure efficient use of staff resources.” and;

“Strong desire for more high-quality, timely information from staff to support informed decision-making, issues management, and interactions with constituents.”

This is why Redbrick Communications reported (from your own hired staff) on page 8; “staff also indicated that they do not believe residents receive enough information from the Township. There is a mismatch between residents’ desire to engage and their level of knowledge about Township matters.

This proposed policy, as presented as COR-2025-02, is a hand-wringing manipulation of COR-2024-28 and COR-2024-56. It also does not align with the stated objectives and espoused interests and aspirations of your own staff, councils (previous and present) and with the emotionally expressed complaints by residents at ward town hall sessions.

To vote for this proposed policy is to vote against everything that the corporation’s staff aspires to, against everything that the previous and this council has espoused as its aspirations, and is diametrically opposite to what Wilmot citizens need to be able to rebuild trust – over time – with this corporation – and especially the corporation’s administration practices.

Redbrick Communications reported from stakeholder groups that, “*The Township does not have a reputation for being helpful. A positive culture shift is needed.*”

The culture shift, downward, must be led - in the administration staff – by a CAO who is hired with the specific job description of what needs to occur within the administration practices of this Township. Consultants’ reports proved that the line level hired staff are ready and willing for a change. The previous and present councils have stated their desire to implement a culture shift.

That appears to leave us with a need to shift the administration leadership – a change in direction is needed. We keep getting the same old, same old in reports: “Maintain the current direction!”, “Maintain the current direction!”, “Maintain the current direction!” **The only species that maintains the current direction and current leadership, when a change is needed – is the lemming.**

That culture shift is being pushed backwards toward further distrust, further disempowerment in decision-making by council and residents. This is a blatant power-grab by senior administration that does not even refer to itself as other comparator municipalities do, and the OMA defines them. Proposal responses to RFP use the term senior administration or senior management. So too do all other municipalities I am aware of. It is only Wilmot that uses the term “*Corporate Leadership Team*”. This name change was inserted in a review of the Violence and Harassment Policy document in December 2022, during a “lame-duck” period between when the previous council knew they were all defeated, and before the new council took office, when a new CAO introduced the name change. This is a senior administration name change, it implies a perception of power and authority other than reality in the OMA, and a codifying of culture shift backwards.

It is widely known, as reflected at townhalls in wards 2 and 3, that **there is a division within Council**. A previous senior administration has done a great job of creating factions, divide-and-rule, of ‘sucking-up’ to some and alienating others. Citizens are not stupid. Citizens observe behaviours and interactions and recognize when and how ‘cliques’ are created.

It is widely recognized within the citizenry that some on council aspire for a state of nirvana and kumbaya; “Let’s all be friends” or “We’ve got to get along.”, or “We must treat everyone with respect.” Great aspirations.

Let us remember that trust and respect are similar to friendship. Friendship is something that someone **receives** from another after a long, proven pattern of consistent, positive behaviours that allow a person to **give** friendship to another. Friendship is **earned**, not assumed and taken.

CAO’s Power over information access & optimum decision-making

Trust and respect are the same. There is a lot of frustration and simmering anger among an ever-growing sector of those who are ‘in-the-know’ after personal observations and experiences with this corporation.

Espousing at the council table an attitude through words that “we must trust and respect” any particular person, just because they have a title or role, is naïve. Residents are not children first learning how to get along in the sandbox. As mature adults we recognize when any individual is not to be trusted or respected, and asking for it does not get it given.

We all agree with that aspirational destination of mutual trust and respect. But in Wilmot we are not anywhere near there yet. There needs to be a lot of confrontation of the issues. Which means council and residents need to confront the underlying causes of the issues. And that means some individual roles and the faces in those roles have to be confronted and put back in their place in the pecking order. – or removed. Lee Iacocca, famous for successfully bringing the Mustang and the Chrysler Minivan to market, has stated, “**Lead! Follow! Or Get out of the way!**”

This policy proposal is getting in the way of democratic decision-making, with an informed and positively enthused citizenry actively participating. Council needs to “**Get it out of the way!**”.

Council must no longer **ask staff** for information. Council must **tell staff** what information it wants, and when it wants it by. There is no place in successful private enterprises, nor any place in the hierarchy of government, at any level, when hired administration staff will dictate to the executive board which information it will permit it / council to have and which information staff will keep secret to itself.

A CAO or hired director does not decide who needs-to-know what. Council does that. One person deciding who knows to need what occurs in a private corporation wholly owned by one person, or an autocracy.

They who control access to information control knowledge.
They who control knowledge control power.

GP-23-01, page 7, item 7. Policy. ***“Members of Council have the same right of access to information as members of the community.”***

This policy proposal of arbitrary restriction of access to information, this secrecy, is an aspiration to control power. Councils have allowed this over time by passivity, and a lot of laziness to do their duty.

The power, legally, in this corporation is with the residents, through their elected councillors. Staff are hired to discover information and provide it, unfettered, unfiltered, un-sanitized to council, and council decides what and when that information is communicated to citizens. STAFF DO NOT DECIDE WHAT INFORMATION COUNCIL AND EVENTUALLY CITIZENS HAVE.

This **policy proposal needs to be rejected on the basis of page 7 alone**, within GP-23-01, where it states, **“7. Policy**

Members of Council have the same rights of access to information as members of the community.”

which means you aren't getting anything we don't want you to have. This is reason enough to table this report definitely until after a new CAO is hired and a new approach that will contribute to a “culture shift” within the administration practices of this corporation may begin.

I have personally submitted several FOIs, at \$5 each, to get access to public documents. This senior administration has denied that access repeatedly.

My request have been labelled as “*frivolous*” and “*vexatious*” and my requests were made in “*bad faith*”. Name-calling does not earn respect.

I have submitted appeals to the FOI Commissioner in Toronto, at \$25 each, to ensure that the Township provides all the information that the mediator

has instructed the Township to provide. I know already that I will have to submit additional appeals (at no additional cost to me) to ensure that the mediator's directions to the township are complied with in the timely manner.

This is what it means, in real life, when the writer of this proposed policy states, "*Members of Council have the same rights of access to information as members of the community.*" If a citizen gets refused, then Council gets refused. We all have the same right to get nothing a hired staff person wants kept secret.

That's another reason why the call, "*Fire them!*" was frequently heard at the 2 townhalls.

Suggested motion for Council's consideration

There is no urgent need to deal with a policy review of this topic at this time. It is already 2 years and 11 months past its review date, and there is no emergent condition that will be addressed by this proposal.

This proposal will, in fact, potentially exacerbate public concerns and anger as the corporation moves to seeking a new CAO who will drive the culture change required in the administration of this Township.

The focus of the present Acting - CAO needs to be upon the role of CFO and over the next few months using their full time and attention to the fiscal affairs of the corporation. This policy review, at this time, is an unnecessary distraction. A few more months, until the appropriate CAO is chosen, will only result in a better policy.

Of course, I have an alternative suggestion:

"THAT Report COR-2025-02 Council – Staff Relations Policy be received; and,

"THAT Council-Staff Policy # GP-23-01 be tabled until the 3rd Quarter meeting of Council in late September 2025, or after the hiring of a new CAO, whichever comes latest."

I would not be fulfilling my responsibility as a citizen of Wilmot if I did not have a constructive alternative suggestion for a proposed policy for Council's consideration.

The detailed wording of a comprehensive Council-Staff Relations Policy is attached below.

Respectfully submitted,
Barry Wolfe,
Baden

P.S.

If Council tables this policy review until the 3rd Quarter meeting of Council in September, or after the hiring of a new CAO, then there would be the opportunity for Council to do its own interim policy review using a process, I suggest as a draft concept, below.

1. When was the last time a councillor or council as a body wrote an administrative policy? I don't mean a great idea like Lillianne's to install a Veteran's Memorial Crosswalk. I mean a policy or practice or procedure. The OMA says council's role is, 224, (d) *"to ensure that administrative policies, practices and procedures and controllership policies, practices and procedures are in place to implement the decisions of council."*
2. There is no requirement that some hired staff have to create and write policies, practices and procedures. Council just has to ensure that they are in place. Council can write their own. If an *"old, fat, bald, and ugly"* guy like me can give it a shot, then so can council.
3. Practice in Wilmot has been a bottom-up process wherein:
 - a. Staff, apparently at random, come up with a perceived need, write a policy, put it in the form of a "Report to Council".
 - b. Council "receives the report for information".
 - c. The policy disappears and staff start to implement it (*Corporate Restructuring and People Plan* report) without Council's specific directions of how to implement and a legal motion to approve the detailed implementation plan. OR
 - d. The policy/motion/direction is approved by Council and direction given to staff, and it disappears (*Education Program as a significant part of the implementation of the PMP* project). OR
4. The policy is approved, staff starts to implement it as they see fit, and Council is prevented from ensuring, *"the accountability and transparency of the operations of the municipality, including the activities of the senior management of the municipality"*, because the CAO refuses to provide any information unless a formal motion passed by a majority of councillors, at a public meeting of Council, at a time on an agenda that has been set in coordination with the clerk and CAO. [Your own procedures, and GP-23-01 are killing progress.] Here's a strategy to take control of policy making.

HERE'S HOW TO WRITE POLICY, PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

Recognize, that **if GP-23-01 is passed, then the following model** for how to “transform community engagement and consultation processes in Wilmot Township in a way that encourages greater openness, accountability and citizen participation in decision making” **would never be possible**. That is so because there is some implication that senior staff (CAO) be consulted for advice. This model, I suggest, is most effective if staff are invited only at specific times to **observe** and not participate in any events.

This suggested model is led by Council in consultation with the community as is its role per the OMA 224, (d).

1. An individual or small number of councillors would identify a need. What is the goal or outcome that you want to achieve. I have provided a sample topic in my attachment, a “*Council-Staff Relations Policy*”. OR,
2. An individual councillor writes their own draft proposal of a new policy, or revision to an existing policy and presents it to the mayor.
3. The councillor approaches the mayor to consider adding the topic to the agenda at an appropriate meeting of council; *Closed, Emergency, Open?*
4. The mayor names a “Special Meeting of Council”, places the meeting date, time, location, and topic/purpose on the annual Council Meetings’ calendar by informing (not asking permission), the Clerk. It is thus publicly advertised as an “official meeting of Council. A recorder, Clerk, is required to be present. A townhall and the like are different.
 - a The location needs to be large enough to accommodate a large number of residents – such as a community centre on a rotating basis.
 - b Participation is closed to Wilmot residents only.
 - c The only “officials” participating are: the mayor, councillors, Clerk, the Executive Officer to the Mayor and Council, and Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Communications – only.
5. At the initial meeting, the chair (mayor) describes the purpose of the meeting (maybe we’re going to write a revision of the existing *Council-Staff Relations Policy* from a perspective of resident citizens, and as an example of how Wilmot is engaging in the consultation process by providing an opportunity by Wilmot residents to participate in making a policy decision. The final decision is Council’s, but residents’ input is an essential part of the process.

6. As a part of the advertising / promotion the following items would have been provided for accessing on a dedicated website page:
 - a Review existing legislation, regulations and documents arising out of the legislation to provide a legal context, if appropriate.
 - b Identify which legal parameter language should be included, and eventually, where to place it in the document.
 - c Identify which existing Wilmot policies would have an impact on the implementation and interpretation of the policy, and list and refer to them as appropriate in your final policy document.
 - d A copy of the existing policy.
7. Facilitators at the meetings will suggest how the whole policy might be sub-divided into various sections. Residents may suggest others.
8. Residents are divided into 'break-out' groups by choosing to go to an area in the hall where that topic will be discussed. A maximum number will be set for each group based on the total number of residents in attendance.
9. Facilitators (councillors / previously trained residents) will guide discussion starting with identifying the fundamental values, principles and goals for positive (Council-Staff Relations in this case) as they would apply to that section of the policy they are addressing.
10. Brain-storming techniques, ideas without judgement of value until later, will record ideas on easel boards with large flip over paper pads. Recorders could be members of the groups.
11. Ideas are cut apart, and moved to be taped on a wall so all ideas (from multiple flip-over pages) can be seen.
12. Participants are given cue-cards or Post-It notes to add ideas and details to each major idea.
13. The facilitators ask participants to weigh each idea – verbally if practical – by commenting on how they see the major or minor details as being practical / positive / useful or not. Similar ideas may be consolidated, preferred wording of a similar idea identified and the others eliminated. Consensus may arise as to which ideas / Post-It notes are to be eliminated. There are various techniques of “weighting” ideas such as a number system, or a cut up piece of different coloured Post-it note (each colour having a pre-determined ‘weight’) placed on the idea. The “weightings” are compiled and recorded.
14. The approved ideas are then sequenced into to a practical order of appearance within that section of the bigger policy.
15. The ideas, presently in cut-up fashion are taped in order onto a fresh piece of chart paper for easy reading and understanding.

16. A “reporter” / spokesperson from the group is chosen. It is their task to report their findings, when it is their turn in a pre-established order, to report to the entire group. Some “reporters” prefer to do a practice / rehearsal presentation so the “doers” can add positive suggestions for the “real-thing”. A “supporter” can be chosen to help flip pages, etc.
17. The meeting chair, calls all groups, and their facilitators to assemble so all can see each other’s easels and display materials.
18. Each group reports in turn.
19. Facilitators may accept comments from other groups as each group presents, or wait until all groups have presented before leading discussion.
20. All materials are gathered, collated and displayed in an appropriate fashion on the website page dedicated to this topic.
21. Residents may submit comments, suggestions, critiques via the dedicated webpage portal.
22. This process may be repeated, from start to finish as outlined, at a different community centre to facilitate easier access by ‘distant’ residents. OR
23. The process could be “continued” by using the display materials from the preceding session, and using them as a basis for a second “review” of the materials by fresh voices. The same process (#9 to 15) would occur, but on fresh easel pad paper. This encourages a broader base of opinion, perspective, process ideas. Anyone who had participated in the first session would have to join a different group within the whole policy content.
24. Council’s staff (Carly and Brett) compile the product into a “print”, formatted document, similar to how and a final policy might be structured. This document is posted on the website’s dedicated page for public review and comment.
25. Administration staff may be invited to comment on the product to identify:
 - a those items which are provably illegal,
 - b incompatible with the legislation and regulations,
 - c require amendments to other Township policies
 - d items that could be added to augment, complement the content
 - e technical sequencing, etc.Staff would be commenting on structure, appearance, but not tone, intent, or direction.
26. Council brings the “final draft” Report document to a “Committee of the Whole” public meeting (first meeting of the month) at Castle Kilbride to “receive” the document, and provide its own recommendation for action,

OR call a “special meeting at the Castle, for unlimited delegations – similar to budget deliberations.

27. The public will be invited to delegate at this “Committee of the Whole” meeting or/and a “special” meeting as in #26 above.
28. This is a Council agenda item. It will be presented by the mayor or a designated councillor.
29. Depending on the direction given by Council at the “Committee of the Whole”, Council will place it on the agenda for the last meeting of the month and decide accordingly.
30. If approved, Council will specific direction to staff regarding how the policy will be implemented, including a public comment page on the website, as it might be expected that the residents will be watching closely to see how Council and Staff act per the policy they helped create. Public comments will be monitored by the Manager of Strategic Initiatives and Communication with regular reports by the Manager to Council as an agenda item.
31. Residents who have participated in this consultation process will now be experienced in how to conduct public input meetings. With some fine-tuning, they will have been trained, by the facilitators, to become facilitators themselves. They will, in future topics, train other resident participants. The facilitators train the next facilitators, who ... so on down through time. It’s a “train-the-trainers” model.

I would suggest that such a draft process for public consultation and participation in the decision-making process could help turn the present atmosphere of anger, mistrust, and disrespect for the Township’s administration processes.

It’s hard to be mad about, or angry with something you helped create – if your creation is being acted upon appropriately.

I digress with an editorial comment, that if this process had been used in 2015, and if Staff had implemented an Educational Program, there would have been increase “buy-in” and commitment to making a project a success. There would have been intellectual and emotional commitment to defending and protecting and adjusting the project and its components on display. It could have been a focal point for discussion and bonding. I’m concerned that the present consultation process is a repeat of the failed initial try as it is a

top-down directed process, focussed on one identifiable group, and not presently considering the grievances of other identifiable groups. This is, presently, another top-down process. It, presently, is not a truly consultative process with residents leading how and where it goes.

DRAFT