

Staff/Council Relations

How a Respectful Staff/Council Relationship Leads to a Successful Municipality

A Research Report prepared for the
AMCTO
Executive Diploma in Municipal Management Program

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Executive Summary

The municipal level of government performs its function to provide local services to its constituents within a structure of the administrative staff implementing the decisions of an elected council. This design offers great benefit to the taxpayer but also offers opportunity for challenge and conflict to staff and council.

This paper will explain the need for the relationship between the municipal administration senior staff and council to be respectful for the best outcome in executing these services. After establishing an understanding of the need for a healthy relationship, the paper will review various ways to achieving this level of mutual respect between staff and council. A number of factors contribute to this relationship that are outlined within this paper. These include understanding of roles, effective code of conduct policies, having a skilled CAO with excellent communication skills, a thorough orientation, and having a shared long term vision and plan.

Overall this paper will illustrate the importance of making it a priority to have a respectful staff and council relationship in the best interest of the municipality.

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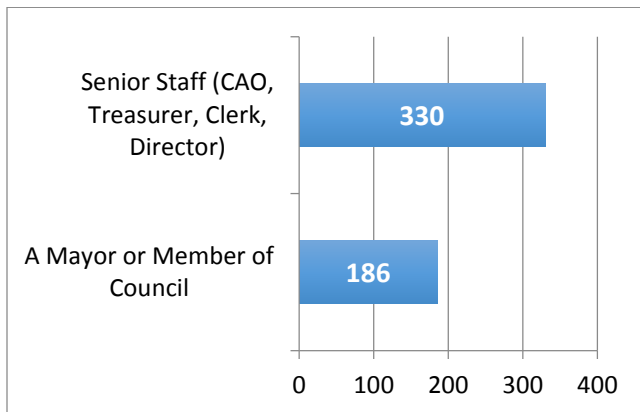
Introduction

When studying the various areas of municipal government throughout the nineteen workshops of AMCTO's Executive Diploma for Municipal Management, the consistent messaging throughout them was the need for a respectful relationship between senior municipal staff and the council within a municipality, in order to be most successful. This message may have been heard more by myself than other participants, as I hold a position on both sides; I sit on my hometown council, while I am also employed by a neighbouring municipality. As I believe this puts me in a unique position, experiencing both sides, I have decided to explore how valuable the relationship between staff and council is, for my required research report.

After establishing the value of respectful working relationship between staff members and council, the purpose of this report is therefore to explore the importance of positive relations between staff and council in a municipality and how this affects the overall efficiency of the administration. It will then recommend ways to build and/or repair this relationship to become more respectful, thus making the business of the municipality more productive. It will focus on different aspects of a municipality, including the position the CAO holds, and potential solutions to creating successful, working relationships between staff members and council.

Scope and Methodology

For the purposes of this research report, an electronic survey was created and sent via email to all senior staff and council members of the municipalities in Ontario inviting them to participate. The results were studied and used to provide insight on the value of the relationship between staff and council within this report. The survey questions were geared to both sides, senior staff members and council, to conclude whether or not both had respect for the other within the working environment. This survey also attempted to conclude whether or not a Code of Conduct was in place, or would be beneficial to create and/or maintain a respectful relationship between staff and council, as this is one of the proposed solutions within this report. The data was collected through rating based questions, participant feedback, and standard yes or no answers regarding respect towards each other. See appendix A for the complete survey and the survey results. Below is a summary of the number of surveys received.



Along with this data collected through the survey as primary research, research from various articles and one-on-one interviews were conducted and included within this report to validate the research found through the survey results. Together, the data integrates a complete and full analysis of staff and council relations within many municipalities in Ontario.

Why Staff - Council Relations Matter

It is crucial to discuss why the relationship between staff and council is so important in the large scope of municipal administration. The overall tasks of a municipality will not have the capacity to be completed if the staff members and council do not work simultaneously towards a greater common goal. In theory, no side is more powerful than the other, and this theory should therefore be implemented in practice. "The relationship between council and staff is a vital component of an effective municipal government. Staff and council rely on one another to move the municipality forward. Both staff and council provide leadership; council provides political leadership, while administration provides leadership to the organization" (The Municipal Councillor's Guide, Section 1, p.13). In summary, this means that senior staff members and council members hold equal responsibilities to the duties of the municipality, to serve the public. It is important to note though, that although they work together in equal partnership, the roles of council and staff are distinct but they are also interdependent. Therefore, they all hold key pieces to complete the full workings of municipal administration.

These relations are the binding relationships that directly affect the municipality's business, therefore it must be given the priority it deserves, as it is essential to effective municipal management. In terms of policy creation and implementation, all positions are needed for successful policy decision making; "decisions are executed and administered through the combined effort of both politicians and public administrators" (Sferrazza, 1992). This statement validates the process that requires a positive relationship between both staff and council. If a council refuses to see the staff's perspective, or vice versa, the policy will already be hindered before beginning the first stages. Negative relations have the potential to alter the outlook a council or staff member has regarding municipal administration and the overall goal, which is ensuring the municipality has their taxpayer's needs at the forefront. Thus, the policy process could be slowed down or become negatively altered due to lack of respect in the decision- making and policy-making process.

The relationship between staff and council is complex and fragile as it requires commitment from both sides to make it work. It also requires determination to work through the higher profile and difficult issues, as well as the many smaller, sometimes trivial matters which can and do arise. The cost however, to not have this commitment and determination is immeasurable. Working relationships influence either positively or negatively many aspects of any business. The cost of low productivity, low morale, and absenteeism, to name a few have been studied time and time again. It can be argued that it is worth the time and money to avoid these costs by building good and respectful relations. The municipal sector is not an exception to this. Along with the cost

savings of having a respectful working relationship between council and administration, there is also the value of having a good reputation throughout the municipality. This is not only felt by the residents, but also by the partnerships that have business with the municipality. For instance, contractors would be more apt to participate in a 'Request for Proposal' process with a municipality that has a good reputation to work with, as opposed to one that does not. This, of course brings about better competition, in turn better value received for the goods and/or services needed, and in the end equates to a savings to the taxpayer.

A recent example of the reputation of a council's reputation being scrutinized, can be found in Petrolia, Ontario. According to the local newspaper, *The Petrolia Topic*, the article of November 16, 2017 described a battle between the CAO and Council. This battle resulted in the CAO resignation, the Mayor and a councillor to be at odds with each other, and a citizens' group to form, demanding answers. These demands included viewing of an audit of the Town's financials and a full disclosure of the investigation report. This real life example illustrates how damaging one incident can be to the reputation of the municipality while demonstrating the complexity of the relationships, role of the media, and the need for respectful interactions.

Why some Staff and Council Relationships Work While Others Do Not

In reviewing the data collected from the survey created for this report (see appendix A), 204 out of 245 or 83% of senior staff surveyed, reported that they had respect for their council. Perhaps not surprisingly a similar percentage felt respect back from their council.

The next questions, regarding whether each felt the other knew their role and stayed within the role's designed boundary, produced similar numbers. To the question, "Would you agree that the Role of Councillor as per section 224/225 of the Municipal Act is followed by your Council?", 176 out of 236 or 75% answered yes, while 124 out of 136 or 91% of councillors felt their senior staff followed their role as per section of 227 of the Municipal Act.

Therefore, one could surmise that good relations between municipal staff and council are based on respect and trust along with knowing your role and staying within it. "Lack of harmonization is caused by lack of agreement on the defined roles for both staff and council members. When council 'snoopervises' staff or gets deep into operations, or when staff sets public policy and establishes community priorities, the distinction between the two is blurred. This often sets up a vicious circle of ever eroding trust and teamwork that spirals downward." ¹

My personal experience as a councillor supports this statement completely. I can feel the atmosphere shift during a committee or council meeting when, for instance, if the conversation by a council member(s) suggests he/she is stepping into "the weeds" while proposing staff direction. Although this happened more often at the beginning of the four year term, it often requires the Mayor to remind the council of the role they are to play. It has also been my experience that the Mayor has felt it necessary to remind senior management that a staff report and/or budget is to report the facts and to provide a recommendation, it is to not influence the information to support their biases.

Section 224 of the *Ontario Municipal Act, 2001* reads:

"It is the role of council,

- a. to represent the public and to consider the well-being and interests of the municipality
- b. to develop and evaluate the policies and programs of the municipality
- c. to determine which services the municipality provides

¹ Clemmer, Jim, "Bridging the Council-Staff Gap", The Clemmer Group,(July 2017):1/8.

- d. to ensure that administrative policies, practices and procedures and controllership policies, practices and procedures are in place to implement the decisions of council (d.1) to ensure the accountability and transparency of the operations of the municipality, including the activities of the senior management of the municipality
- e. to maintain the financial integrity of the municipality and
- f. to carry out the duties of council under this or any other act.”

While the role of the officers and employees of the municipality, as per the Ontario Municipal Act, section 227 reads:

- 1. “(a) to implement council’s decisions and establish administrative practices and procedures to carry out council’s decisions;
- 2. (b) to undertake research and provide advice to council on the policies and programs of the municipality; and
- 3. (c) to carry out other duties required under this or any act and other duties assigned by the municipality.”

As intended, these two roles are very distinct yet both serve a vital purpose. Council is the primary policy-making body of the municipality, while the staff is responsible for carrying out council’s policy decisions. Although the two roles are designed to be different, they are interdependent and there can be much overlap, causing potential challenge and conflict, as validated by my personal experience stated previously.

An inquiry took place as a result of a scandal in the City of Toronto concerning the purchase of computer software and hardware between 1998 and 2002. The findings of this inquiry conducted by Madam Justice Bellamy generated a significant change in municipal behaviour. In her report, under “Ethics”, listed as number 15, reads: “Both elected officials and staff should understand and honour their respective roles and responsibilities, act only within them, and never blur the distinction.” It is crucial that this remains a vital objective to be cautious of.

To further validate this point, while interviewing Roy Wiseman, instructor of the AMCTO’s workshop on Performance Management included in the Executive Diploma in Municipal Management course that took place on November 14, 2017, he made reference to this conflict by the following example. “Employees make the mistake of thinking whether a staff report recommendation gets passed or not by council defines success. It shouldn’t, it’s a result of coming from a different list of priorities” (Wiseman, 2017).

A factor being whether or not the size of the municipality affects how the roles are upheld must at least be acknowledged. Of the over 500 people who responded to the survey, 56% were from municipalities with the population of 10,000 or less. To use one of the comments from the survey “we have known each other from childhood...”, this suggests a friendly, family like relationship and where “frank and open communication between senior management and myself is a daily aspect of our working together” also may suggest a less formal relationship. These relationships however may increase the margin of error in not staying within the boundaries

of the roles. The same survey participant goes on to say, "my regular involvement with their decision making and their work is a constant interaction between us". This example may illustrate the possible reason for the small decline in percentage (75%) from those in senior management who agree that the role of council is being followed by council members. This is opposed to the higher percentage of 83% to the question of having respect for your council members.

In other words, it may be the case that although smaller municipalities may have greater opportunity to have mutual respect due to long-standing histories amongst each other, there is also more room to disallow the boundaries due to the comfort of the relationship. The size of the municipality brings with it both pros and cons in regards to positive staff and council relationship. As an employee of a larger municipality, I see the likelihood of council members having day to day involvement in the operations is significantly less than that of the smaller municipality in which I serve as a councillor.

All in all, George B. Cuff may have said it best when he wrote in the *Municipal World* magazine, March 2016, regarding the role of both council and staff: "It needs to be recognized that the mindset of someone elected is appreciably different than those who serve in administrative capacities: there is, has been, and will be a vast chasm between these two distinct and important roles" (p.3). If this is the case, it appears that knowing your role and staying within your role may be only part of the answer in establishing a healthy relationship between council and staff.

Is a Code of Conduct the Answer?

The provincial Ministry of Municipal Affairs recognized the importance of a Code of Conduct by including it in the Municipal Act of 2001. It stated that municipalities *may* pass bylaws to establish a Code of Conduct for council. The recent regulation of Bill 68, Modernizing Ontario's Municipal Legislation Act, sends an even stronger message regarding Codes of Conducts. This new legislation enhances accountability and transparency measures by including new *mandatory* requirements with respect to Codes of Conduct and an expanded role for Integrity Commissioners. To define, Integrity Commissioners are responsible for complaint resolution to municipal councils regarding ethical behavior. In addition, it will be mandatory for municipalities to adopt and maintain a policy to govern the relationship between members of council and staff of the municipality. According to AMO's (Association of Municipalities of Ontario) newsletter of September 22, 2017 regarding an update of Bill 68:

- The second proclamation date is March 1, 2019, and will bring into force changes to municipal accountability and transparency framework that include provisions respecting codes of conduct, integrity commissioner, conflict of interest, mandatory policies and other provisions. This includes the requirement for a policy regarding the relationship between members of council and the officers and employees of the municipality.

The legislation does not however state specific criteria to be applied in order to fulfill such a requirement. A Code of Conduct is not an easy task. It warrants time, immense consideration and consequence analysis, with all players being involved in the creation in order to have the Code of Conduct be respected and adhered to. A simple template will not suffice.

To reference again the situation in the Town of Petrolia, according to the newspaper in the Petrolia Topic on Nov 16, 2017, "Mayor McCharles pushed for a change in Code of Conduct for council that would have forbid councillors from speaking to the media, an effort that failed." This reflects the requirement for a Code of Conduct to be a shared view by all those expected to live by it, unlike this militant approach.

The Globe and Mail published on August 2, 2017 headlines an article regarding a city in British Columbia titled "*Nanaimo city council needs lessons in manners, report says*". The article goes on to describe the poisonous relationship between the Mayor, the council and the employees. "Nanaimo City Council has a long-standing history of conflict and dysfunction and its members need tutoring on basic ground rules for respectful behaviour, an independent investigator's report concludes. The report, by Vancouver labour lawyer Roslyn Goldner, follows months of turbulence at Nanaimo council, including allegations of bullying against Mayor Bill McKay and the release of a video of an alleged assault against a city employee." This is a prime example of a council that could

make good use of a Code of Conduct; having a policy to be accountable to, with consequences outlined that will be enforceable if not followed.

The survey (see appendix A) results suggest that in order for a Council Code of Conduct to make a difference, it must be a good one. Of the senior managers who responded, 191 out of the 238 senior managers, or 83%, answered yes to the question whether or not their municipality has a Council Code of Conduct, but only 52% of the 187 who responded answered yes that it has improved relations. Interesting too, that of the 140 councillors who participated in a similar question, whether or not their municipality had a Code of Conduct for their Senior Management, 87% responded yes and 70% answered yes that having one improved relations.

Therefore, it appears that having a Code of Conduct can certainly be useful but cannot be considered the sole answer to having a respectful staff/council relationship, even if the Code of Conduct is a satisfactory one.

Does the Answer Lay with the CAO?

Council and staff perform their individual roles and work in partnership. While it is important to have all roles be taken seriously and act in the best interest of the municipality, the staff Manager (usually referred to as the CAO – Chief Administrative Officer) holds perhaps the most valuable role. This position is the link between the council and the staff and it should not be a weak link.

In David Siegel's book, *Leaders in the Shadows - The Leadership Qualities of Municipal Chief Administrative Officers*, speaks to the importance of this leadership position in the municipal public sector by saying, "we need to be talking about a lot more". He continues, "Chief Administrative Officers – the peaks in the administrative hierarchy of most municipalities in Canada, large and small – are called upon today to go far beyond the vital tasks of orchestrating the planning, organizing, staffing, directly, coordinating, reporting, and budgeting" (Siegel 2015, p.vii).

Victor S. DeSantis, Dean of Graduate Studies & Research of Millersville University, emphasized this concept as well, in stating: "Local government managers depend upon the strength of many relationships in fulfilling their responsibilities. None is more important, however, than the relationship of a manager and his or her council."

For this reason, it is best if the CAO scores high in having what is known as "Emotional Intelligence". "Emotional Intelligence (EI) is, in layman's terms, our level of ability to:

- Recognize and understand our emotions and reactions (**self-awareness**)
- Manage, control, and adapt our emotions, mood, reactions, and responses (**self-management**)
- Harness our emotions to motivate ourselves to take appropriate action, commit, follow-through, and work toward the achievement of our goals (**motivation**)
- Discern the feelings of others, understand their emotions, and utilize that understanding to relate to others more effectively (**empathy**)
- Build relationships, relate to others in social situations, lead, negotiate conflict, and work as part of a team (**social skills**)²

To align this definition of "Emotional Intelligence" as it relates to the position of CAO, would be to have a combination of all these skills listed previously that allows the CAO to manage all of the moving parts in the ever-changing, stressful environment of the municipal world in present day. To be the most effective, the CAO

² Scuderi, Royale, www.lifehack.org/articles/communication/emotional-intelligence-why-important.html

requires the leadership style that works with both staff and council, with special attention to the relationship he/she has with the Head of Council, the Mayor, or Warden, or Reeve. This position holds the key to success for the municipality.

From my research I found that an effective CAO knows the importance of the following tools to assist in creating a positive, respectful relationship between his or her staff and the council;

- Start each new council with a solid orientation
- Start each new manager with a solid orientation
- Good communication is essential to establish and maintain a respectful relationship
- Communicate with all stakeholders
- Ensure council has agreed upon a shared vision – a strategic plan
- Insist the strategic plan is reviewed regularly
- Measure the expectations of the position of CAO to align with the strategic plan
- Ensure all policies such as the Code of Conduct(s), procedural by-law, conflict of interest, etc. are reviewed regularly and understood by both staff and council

The orientation that occurred shortly after I was elected as councillor of my town, included valuable information, (descriptions of services/operations/positions, copies of regulations/by-laws/policies/Councillor's Guide, etc.), which was presented neatly and efficiently, and I have referred to many times. It would have been more valuable however if it included the importance of having a respectful relationship and/or the costly consequences of not having one. *Educate* the real importance to both senior staff (new and existing), and councillors (new and renewing), of their "roles" as per the Municipal Act. In addition to this, it is necessary to stress the need for a worthwhile Code of Conduct and to have the consequences if it is not followed completely understood, would be very beneficial.

As this relationship between the staff and council is steered by the relationship between the CAO and Head of Council, this awareness then must first be established, honoured and exercised by these two positions. A third party may need to be used to deliver this training and help create this foundation. Like all council and senior staff, these two people who hold the position of CAO and Head of Council cannot be made to like each other, but liking and respecting are not in fact synonymous. It would be worthwhile to take the time in motivating the players by educating them on the cost of not achieving a respectful relationship by citing examples of where progress was halted due to relationships not being respected. When I sat along with the rest of council in the interviews for the position of CAO for our municipality, one of the prepared questions was, "What would you do if you weren't able to get along with the mayor?". The individual who won the competition, was the same person

who responded, "I would lay down my sword and resign for the sake of the municipality". This is remarkable answer worth recognizing when evaluating the relationship between the Mayor and the CAO.

Although this training would be worthwhile to commence at any time, the best timing for this training would be immediately after an election, with annual reviews.

It is essential to have both staff and council vow to always respectively communicate. After my successful election, it was found necessary to have this concept built into both the Council Code of Conduct, as well as our Staff Code of Conduct. For instance, as a minor example, senior staff are expected to reply to emails from councillors in a timely manner, and vice versa.

Many councils debate whether individual councilors and staff should have direct contact, or whether all contact should be channeled through the CAO. As it is the job of the CAO to be ultimately responsible for the administration, in deciding this method, it must be considered that this may prove impractical and create a bottle neck effect. Also too, in general, councillors do not like to be told who they can and cannot talk to.

In addition, an effective CAO insists on "no surprises" from both staff and council. In other words, staff should advise councillors of controversial matters before they are confronted publicly, while councillors should not surprise staff at meetings with questions unrelated to the agenda, which would therefore not allow staff the time to prepare.

Communication to all stakeholders avoids suspicion and provides transparency. A prepared and competent CAO would know who all the stakeholders are in any given issue or project and select the most appropriate communication vehicle to ensure the same message is sent to all.

The CAO within my place of employment often uses the internal monthly staff newsletter to communicate with all of the employees. Some examples of this include reviewing and reminding the employees of the list of values the municipality has, or the goals he is presently focusing on, as well as the council's vision for the upcoming year.

When I interviewed Garth Johns, author of the *Common Sense Leadership*, on October 27, 2017, he discussed his belief that a good communicator is often the difference between a good manager and a great manager. This statement emphasizes the importance of a CAO knowing how valuable it is to be a good communicator to create and maintain healthy relationships.

Having a shared vision is also a key ingredient to the success of any business with municipalities being no exception. In fact, it may be even more important to municipalities than most businesses due to the nature and structure of municipalities. As discussed previously, the council is elected to represent the taxpayers and to set policy for the municipality, and the staff's role is to manage and implement what is needed to achieve council's

vision. The best tool to have to accomplish this is a Strategic Plan. This plan allows for both staff and council to refer to often in times of decision making and staying on course.

The value of the Strategic Plan is described in the *Municipal Councillor's Guide 2014* as, "decisions, both popular and unpopular, are more easily made when seen in the context of your municipality's broader, long-term strategy. The plan is a framework that encourages consistency in municipal decision-making among both councillors and staff. When developed with public input, the plan represents a shared view of the municipality's future and encourages public commitment to achieving it" (p.13).

A CAO should recognize this plan to be very valuable and worthy of being reviewed on a regular basis. It can be viewed as the measuring stick to what is expected from his/her position as head manager within the municipality.

Finally, an effective CAO ensures for the sake of accountability and transparency that all essential policies and by-laws as required by the Municipal Act, such as the procurement of goods and services, public notices, hiring of employees, are not only followed, but are reviewed, maintained, and go beyond the minimum requirements. To not only provide copies of such documents as part of a councillor's or employee's orientation, but to have them understood by explaining why they are essential in order to be transparent and accountable.

The AMCTO's Executive Diploma for Municipal Management dedicates one of the nineteen workshops to Strategic Planning Techniques to emphasize its importance. Taken from that workshop, is the following that outlines questions to ask when developing this plan:

Vision – Where do we want to go?

Mission - Why do we exist?

Goals – Where do we need to focus over the long term?

Strategic priorities – What key actions/initiatives should be undertaken to move forward?

Objectives – What needs to be accomplished in the short term?

Operating Plans – What are we specifically going to do?

Performance Measurement – How will we know when our actions have been successful?

Values – What are the core beliefs that will influence our attitudes and actions?

Operating Principles – How will we work together given our vision, mission, and values?

In interviewing the instructor of the workshop, Kate Graham on November 16, 2017 regarding the above questions, she commented that "the ability for council and staff to trust, determines outcomes – respect is a value that is essential to be built into this process".

To summarize the CAO being the answer for staff and council to work well, a quote from previously mentioned David Siegel's book says it all: "Today, CAOs are leaders in their own right, called upon to model the noblest ethics of public service as they bring a rigorous and thoughtful approach to ensuring that districts, regional governments, cities, and towns deliver expected services and anticipate future needs. They form the glue that, if they perform effectively, will ensure that municipal councils and municipal bureaucracies will work together in a common direction. CAOs are the butter between the two proverbial slices of bread of politics and administration: the indispensable ingredient that makes the two stick together to form government and make governance as palatable as possible" (Siegel 2015, p.vii).

Another Potential Answer

Having a long term Asset Management Plan is another potential answer as it provides a framework to base decisions upon. It is designed for long term planning which helps to offset the theory that councillors make short term decisions due to the four year term. The survey results of the 237 senior staff who responded 174 or 73% believe the four year term of council influences the decision-making process of council members. This long term decision-making tool is not only needed to improve the budget process, but it also good to avoid conflict between the councillors themselves and/or council and staff.

The vitality of having an Asset Management Plan in place is so clear that the provincial government is making it mandatory for all municipalities to develop and adopt a strategic asset management policy by July 1, 2019. From the information session I attended at the Rural Ontario Municipal Association conference recently it was outlined that the policy must include:

- Which municipal goals, plans and policies the Asset Management Plan will support
- Process for how Asset Management Plan affects development of the municipal budget
- Principles that guide the Asset Management Plan
- Process for alignment with land-use planning framework
- Commitment to consider climate change mitigation and adaption
- Municipality's approach to continuous improvement
- Identification of executive lead and how council will be involved
- Commitment to provide opportunities to engage with the public

The above listed ingredients for an Asset Management Plan supports the need for a tool to be available to provide for a long term vision and sustainability.

Conclusion

By researching the topic of the importance of a respectful relationship between staff and council, brought confirmation that this relationship is extremely important to have the municipality run as effectively as possible. For a municipality to be most successful, this partnership deserves the time and effort to make this partnership a respectful relationship. In order to establish this respectful relationship however involves more than believing the answer is doing a certain thing, or creating a certain document, or passing a particular by-law, the answer is found in a variety of things – with the common thread in all of the various components being respect.

Although it is very natural to want to be liked, Joel Garfinkle, an executive coach and author, claims, “While it’s natural to want to be liked, that’s not always the most important thing.” He continues by saying that instead of trying to be liked, focus on respect – both giving it and earning it. “Even when the subject matter is difficult, conversations can remain mutually supportive. Respect the other person’s point of view, and expect them to respect yours” (Garfinkle 2017, p.13). This is easier said than done with human nature naturally working against this, but growth does not occur where comfort is. Understanding that respect has a range - from mild acceptance to total admiration, is key in this process. At a very minimum, the acceptance end of the spectrum - the values demonstrated in a behaviour are what we find tolerable - must exist to minimize conflict and maximize effectiveness!

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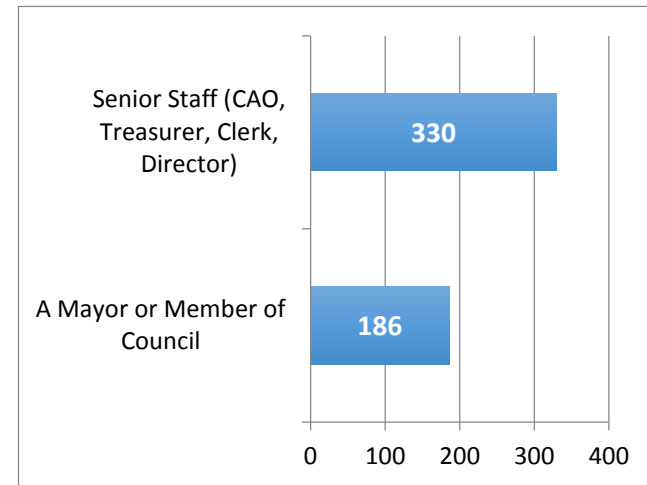
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APPENDIX A – Results of Survey sent to municipalities across Ontario

1. Are you:

	Answers	%
A Mayor or Member of Council	186	36%
Senior Staff (CAO, Treasurer, Clerk, Director)	330	64%
	516	
Skipped Question:	0	



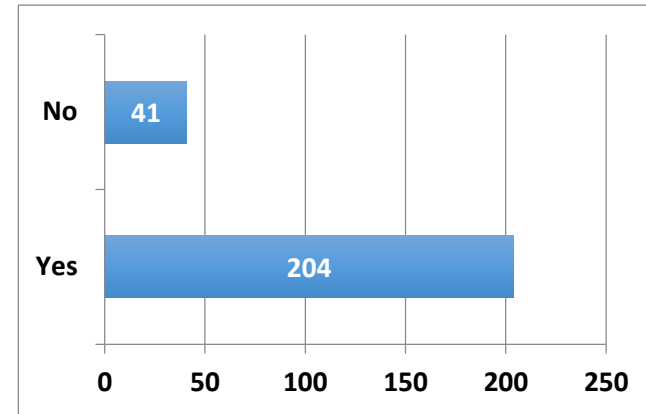
2. The size of your municipality that you represent:

	Answers	%
Under 10,000 in population	252	56%
Between 25,000 and 50,000 in population	91	20%
Over 50,000 in population	105	23%
	448	
Skipped Question:	68	

Questions for Senior Staff

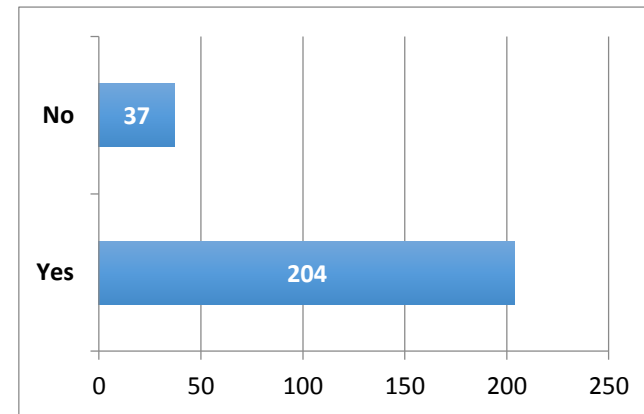
1. Would you say you had respect and trust for your Council Members?

	Answers	%
Yes	204	83%
No	41	17%
	245	
Skipped Question:	271	



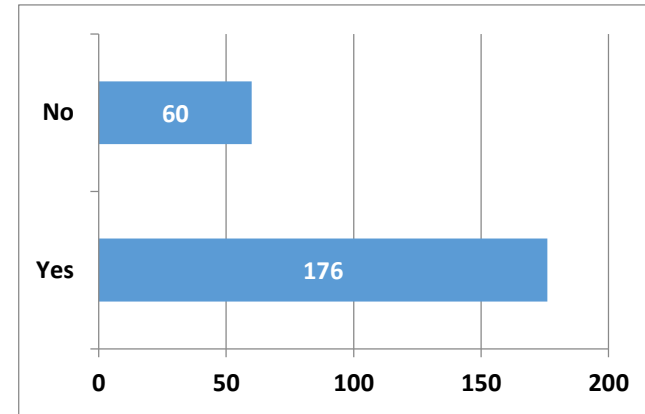
2. Would you say they have respect and trust for you?

	Answers	%
Yes	204	85%
No	37	15%
	241	
Skipped Question:	275	



3. Would you agree that the "Role of Council" as per section 224/225 of the Municipal Act is followed by your Council?

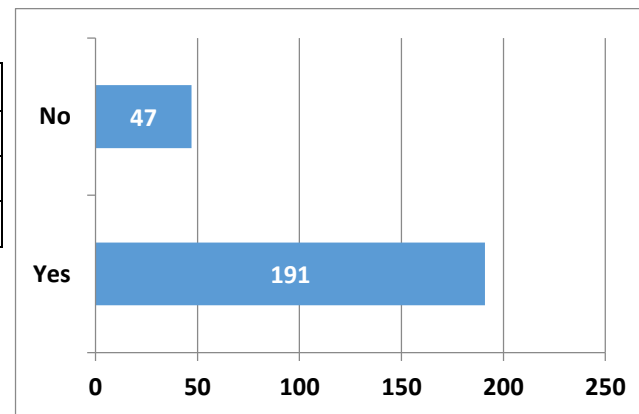
	Answers	%
Yes	176	75%
No	60	25%
	236	
Skipped Question:	280	



4. Does your Council have a Code of Conduct?

	Answers	%
Yes	191	80%
No	47	20%
	238	

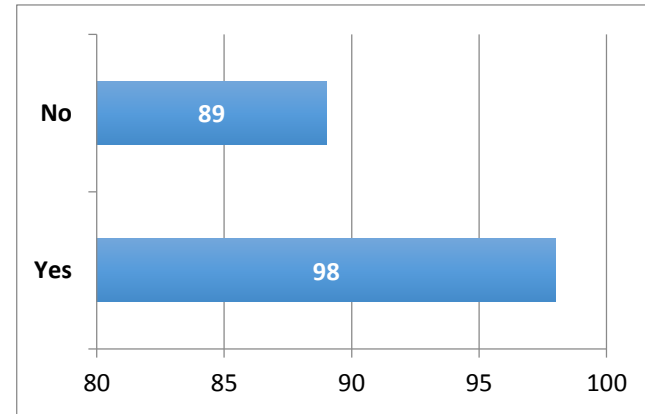
Skipped Question:	278
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b) If so, has this improved council/staff relations?

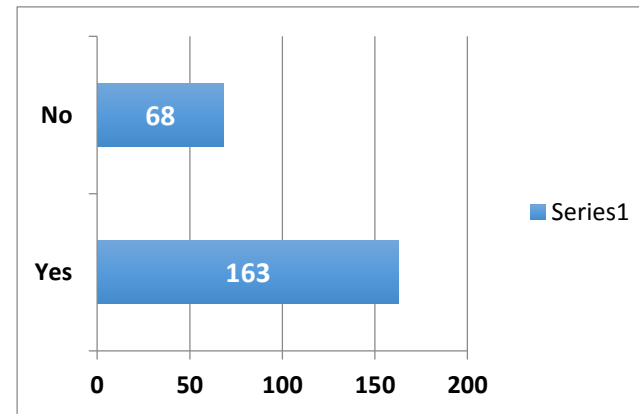
	Answers	%
Yes	98	52%
No	89	48%
	187	

Skipped Question:	329
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c) Do you believe a Council Code of Conduct helps/would help relations?

	Answers	%
Yes	163	71%
No	68	29%
	231	

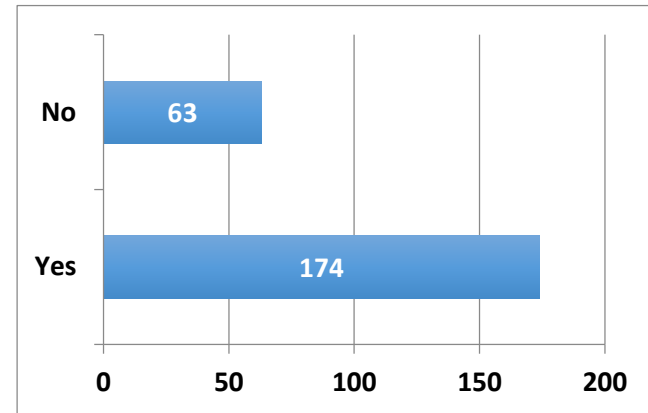


Skipped Question:	285
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5. Do you feel that the term of council, recognizing it is only 4 years, influences the decisions of council members?

	Answers	%
Yes	174	73%
No	63	27%

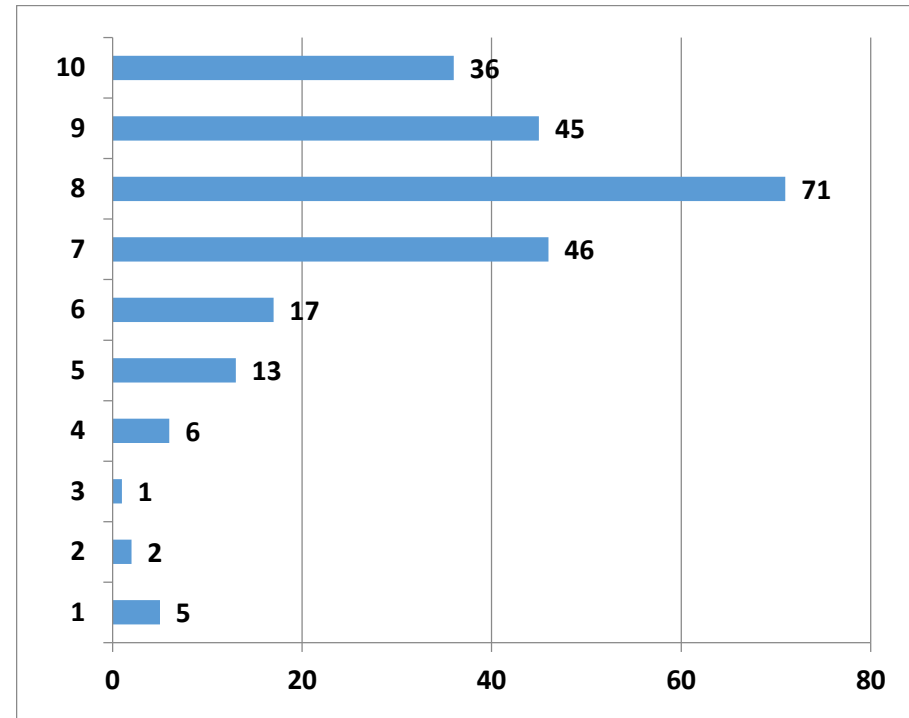
	237
Skipped Question:	279



6. On a scale of one to ten, how would you rate your relationship with your Council (with 1 being not so good and 10 being excellent)

Rating	Answers	%
1	5	2%
2	2	1%
3	1	0%
4	6	2%
5	13	5%
6	17	7%
7	46	19%
8	71	29%
9	45	19%
10	36	15%
	242	

Skipped Question:	274
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Please comment if you like to qualify your rating.

I work closely with Council on a daily basis. We have an excellent relationship. I'm clear in my discussions with them on items that I provide advice, that's it's not based on my personal opinion. They have been clear that they want to be told how to do the things they want as a council, not just to have staff say no, but rather provide advice and give caution when necessary and advise how to best protect the municipal interest in situations where they proceed with action that was not recommended by staff.

Relationships with certain members of Council are stronger than others.

Here at the Municipality of East Ferris, we never have problems with Council, Council takes to time to listen to staff. Never no issues. Council has full confident in staff

As always, not every member of Council is as respectful or respectable as the others. Overall there is a positive atmosphere.

Again, you are dealing with 5 members in my case. All 5 do not follow the code of conduct, but the majority does. My relationship with 3 members, I would rate as an 8 or 9, a 7 with the 4th and a 1 or 2 with the 5th. bringing the average down significantly.

Some Councillors review agendas, read reports and attend council meetings prepared to ask intelligent questions . Those councillors I have respect for but some attend meetings without any preparation and make decisions based on the few questions asked at the meeting.

Based on my response to Question #6.

Further to question #10, a Code of Conduct is a good measure to have in place for existing and all future Councils.

Unfortunately, some staff members undermine their Directors, Managers or colleagues. This generally occurs during regular office hours and at times when a council member is seeking additional information or background on an issue or is looking into a resident service request that has been brought to their attention.

The relationship is obviously better with some members than others.

Majority of Council

Again, I believe the relationship is very good. However there times (rarely and certain situations where the relationship can become stressed or strained. For instance when politically sensitive topic or issue comes to Council and Administration provides a report recommending the opposite of what is popular because the research conducted by Administration shows that it is the proper thing to do, Council can often get defensive and rhetorical.

Similarly, Council is usually quick to jump on administration when someone from the public is in attendance at a meeting or questions a past decision, even when that decision has been approved by Council.

Their collective memory can be very short when they are challenged, perhaps a reaction of human nature, but more likely stemming from Administration's capacity of working day to day knowledge of the municipality vs. Council's high level view.

Council members are generally respectful. Although I rated that the code of conduct helps relationships, there are always exceptions.

My rating is based generally on the majority of issues that we deal with and based on the relationship with the majority of the members of Council.

I would rate my relationship as a 10 for four of the members, and a 1 for the other 3, hence the average of 5.

Very good relationship between Council and all staff.

Of 9 Council members the relationship with 7 is very good. The remaining 2 have issues with changes and a more strict application of processes under the Municipal Act and are exceptionally critical of staff at every opportunity.

Overall the relationship is very good, however from a CAO's perspective, it can be challenging when you are dealing with a Council that is split on matters but they don't address it in a Committee of the Whole or Council meeting; rather they use the CAO as a sounding board regarding another Council members actions/ideas etc.

In my opinion it is all about trust and I feel that i have Council's trust in my position and in the way we operate.

We just went through a organizational review with a external company. Recommendations came back and Council just accepted all the recommendations. They did not allow for the CAO or Senior admin staff to comment defend any of the 173 recommendations. They made decisions based on comments received internally and externally that they did not have all the facts on and that were not true at any level. They had only been on Council for two months when they accepted all recommendations. They should have allowed the CAO and Senior staff to defend or explain their departments yet they did not. They became the experts. This killed the moral of the City as recommendations made by a consultant that truly was basing their recommendations on information that they did not get clarification on. They made recommendation to my department that clearly did not make sense. I fully understand and accept organizational reviews but when a report is submitted you would think that senior management would be able to make comments especially when it involves people losing their jobs. This happened in 2014/15 already many of the recommendations that they just accepted without receiving background information on them we have reversed. Employees received large payments when we reduced staff and guess what two and half years later those positions are back. Recommendations made in the public consultation that were accepted and the Managers said that does not make sense we tried to implement and yup they have agreed that the recommendation was wrong two had half years later. I do not respect them and they do not respect me. I have been doing my position for 23 years with the expertise to understand how things to work for them to say into how a department works and staffing levels. In the need if I don't have justification and reasoning as to the operations of my department that is up to the CAO.

In this municipality the Code of Conduct is given to each councillor but not always followed.

Council members still try to complete administrative tasks, at most times they are just trying to be helpful however it does sometimes interfere with Administration

Every relationship - no matter what that relationship - is imperfect and has good days and bad days.

some good some bad

The relationship from my part is always respectful with all of members of Council. Unfortunately, some of them are not as respectful as I am. The way they talk during council meeting is like harassment. some of those members forget that administrative team are human being, they want to do a show for their own municipality. They have a job to do but on the other side, we have also one to do.

Trying to have the members of Council follow the policies, procedures and by-laws of the municipality is very difficult and sometimes they do not care for "keeping them in line" strategies. The Code of Conduct would work much better "IF" it was followed.

AS mentioned, it is mostly the Mayor. Other members of Council seem to have a better understanding of my reasons for bringing matters forward, and also the Mayor's heavy handedness, his bullying myself and other members of the staff to do what he says rather than getting approval from all of council, he prefers to work behind the scenes and does not like to be transparent about decisions.

I have an excellent relationship with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and some councillors (rated a 8), however, my relationship with 2 of them would be a 0

As above

For some it's a 10 for others it's a 0.

Our CAO only permits senior management to attend Council/Committee meetings if the agenda has something that impacts them. Council obtains most details from CAO and has limited contact with others. This set up hampers the development of good communication with Council. Having worked with previous council's -- I have had experience of having a relationship I would have described as 9 or 10 in a rating -- but most currently I find the council very divided, lack predictability and consistency in how they approach topics -- current council is often defined by stronger personality members which may not fully represent the views of those less vocal

as upper tier government -- it seems difficult for some council members to act and make decisions for the County vs their own local area and this can negatively affect relationships with council members when staff are approaching from a system perspective

Relationships with members of council vary from councilor to councilor. Some are better than others.

There is a council code of conduct, but some councilors push the limit. Some pick on individual staff.

Regardless how many council members are great, there is always one who may not be as fun to deal with.

Council is fractured and its agenda is driven by external influences

* staff is hired based on their qualifications within their scope of work. Council meddling within departments causes friction due to Council's lack of understanding of procedures, laws, regulations and experience. This creates frustration on both sides.

Just a comment on the code of conduct. I consider that a tool for Council members to be aware of where the minimum standards of conduct are, but I feel it does not really influence Council-staff relations, which are on the whole quite respectful.

I have 9 members of Council and 2-3 are rowing to their own drummer.

The rating is based on my own opinion that I can always contribute to improving relationships with Council. I believe that it is the responsibility of staff to build these relationships and it is an ongoing process that cannot be left idle.

as discussed in question 6 - a strong and trusting relationship between senior staff and council benefits all including citizens.

I have a good relationship with Council but there is always room for better communication between Council and staff.

Council members have differing priorities and requests of staff which may conflict with each other.

Relations with Council are for the most part positive. Again, there can be underlying lack of trust among some Council members when confronted by a specific ratepayer with an agenda or grudge. This can undermine staff's ability to do their job.

Communications is very important in a relationship and respect and I have and give both.

I have been with them for one year, the longer tenure would build a stronger relationship. Our Council makes the decisions, we provide the options., I have been with them for one year, the longer tenure would build a stronger relationship. Our Council makes the decisions, we provide the options.

We have a code of conduct, but I don't believe that has in any way altered the Conduct of the Council Members, Council still carries on the way they have in the past since the implementation of the Code.

As previously stated, I believe the relationship between Council and staff is fairly decent, however, Council has a habit of micromanaging by performing the responsibilities and duties that should be done by the senior management.

Council and the CAO operate in a collaborative and supportive manner. There is a natural tension between elected officials and administration as each views issues from their unique perspective.

Council will tell you one thing when they talk to you in the back room and then another when in the public

As stated above, we respect and appreciate each others roles and responsibilities. Work well together!

Again, somewhat difficult recognizing that the head of council demonstrates very little respect or trust for staff however, individual councilors demonstrate the opposite. As a whole - sometimes yes and sometimes no.

I have a good relationship with members of Council on a one to one basis.

I am honest and straight forward with Council, provide them information in a timely manner. I am also a very personable person and have worked to have a relationship with all of them.

The relationship with council is great although every relationship takes work, evolves and changes. Always room for improvement but on a scale our relationship is almost excellent in terms of conduct, respect and trust.

Again, most Council is great, one is awful. However, all of Council lacks discipline and focus in their bi-weekly meetings. Strategic Plan...wall paper. Financial sustainability.. if convenient only. Policy... who needs policy. Rules of procedure... in theory only.

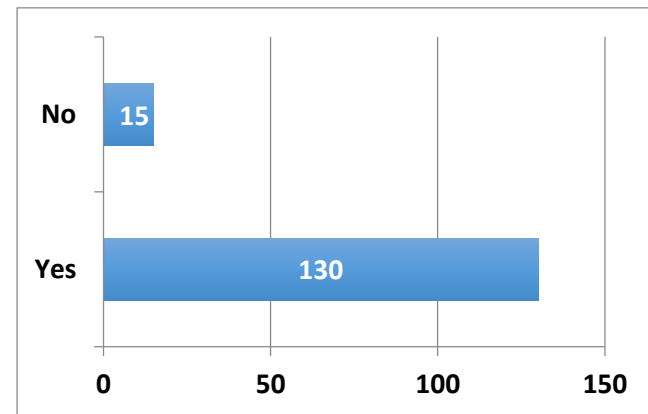
But again, most are decent well meaning people who mostly do a good job, but too often see admin as their opposition, not always their resource. Synergy between Mayor and CEO is weak, Mayor does not lead Council well. Council is fractious. They lack foresight. Council members do not respect fidelity/confidentiality of information. I have a positive relationship with Council because I have to due to the nature of my position with the municipality. However, I don't respect them or how they make their decisions. I am professional and do my job, however, I do not feel they respect administration and therefore it is difficult to respect them.

Questions for Councillors

1. Would you say you had respect and trust for your Senior Management?

	Answers	%
Yes	130	90%
No	15	10%
	145	

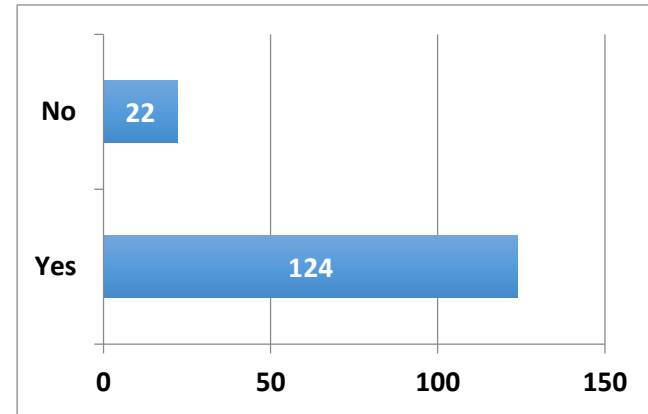
Skipped Question:	371
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2. Would you say they had respect & trust for you?

	Answers	%
Yes	124	85%
No	22	15%
	146	

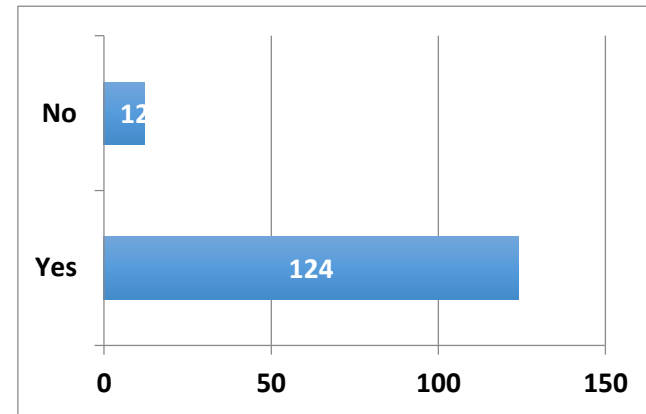
Skipped Question:	370
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3. Would you agree that the "Role of Staff" as per section 227 of the Municipal Act is followed by your staff?

	Answers	%
Yes	124	91%
No	12	9%
	136	

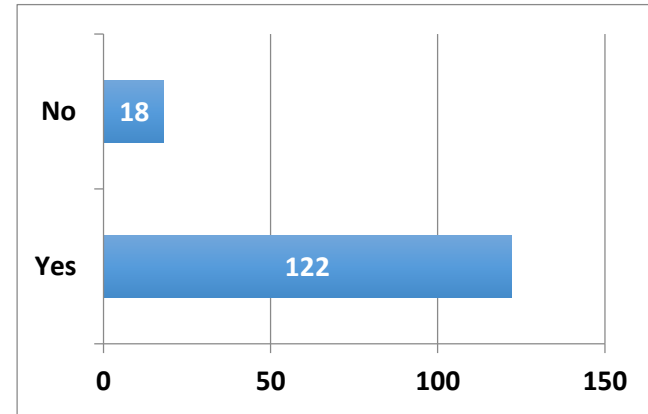
Skipped Question:	380
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4. Does your senior management have a staff Code of Conduct?

	Answers	%
Yes	122	87%
No	18	13%
	140	

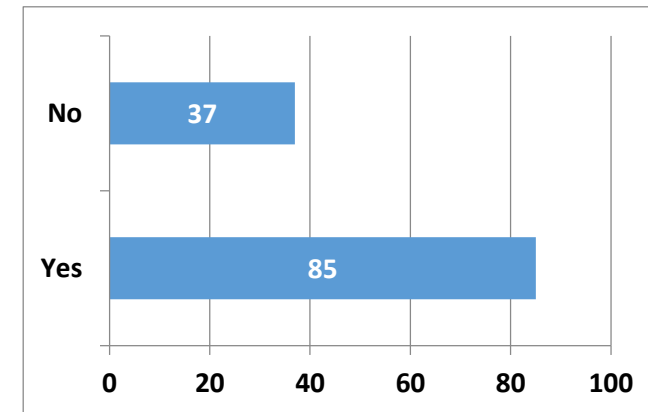
Skipped Question:	376
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b) If so, has this improved council/staff relations?

	Answers	%
Yes	85	70%
No	37	30%
	122	

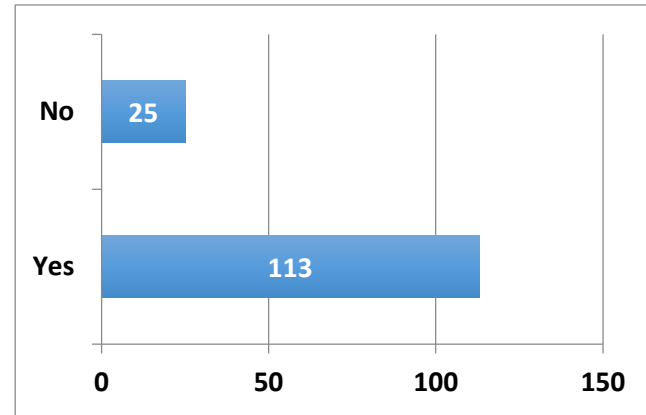
Skipped Question:	394
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c) Do you believe a staff Code of Conduct helps/would help relations?

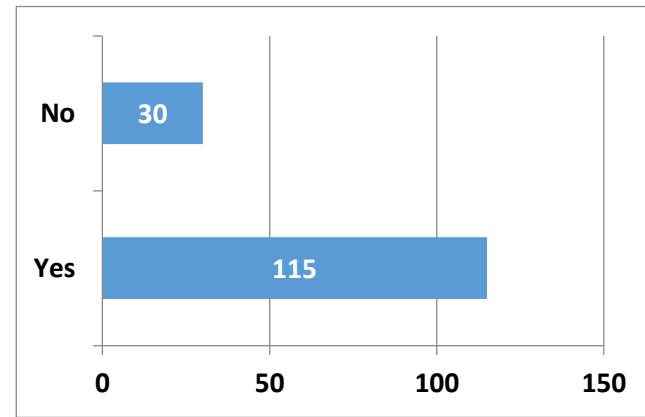
	Answers	%
Yes	113	82%
No	25	18%
	138	

Skipped Question:	378
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5. Do you feel staff provide the appropriate information for Council to make informed decisions regarding issues?

	Answers	%
Yes	115	79%
No	30	21%
	145	



Skipped Question:	486
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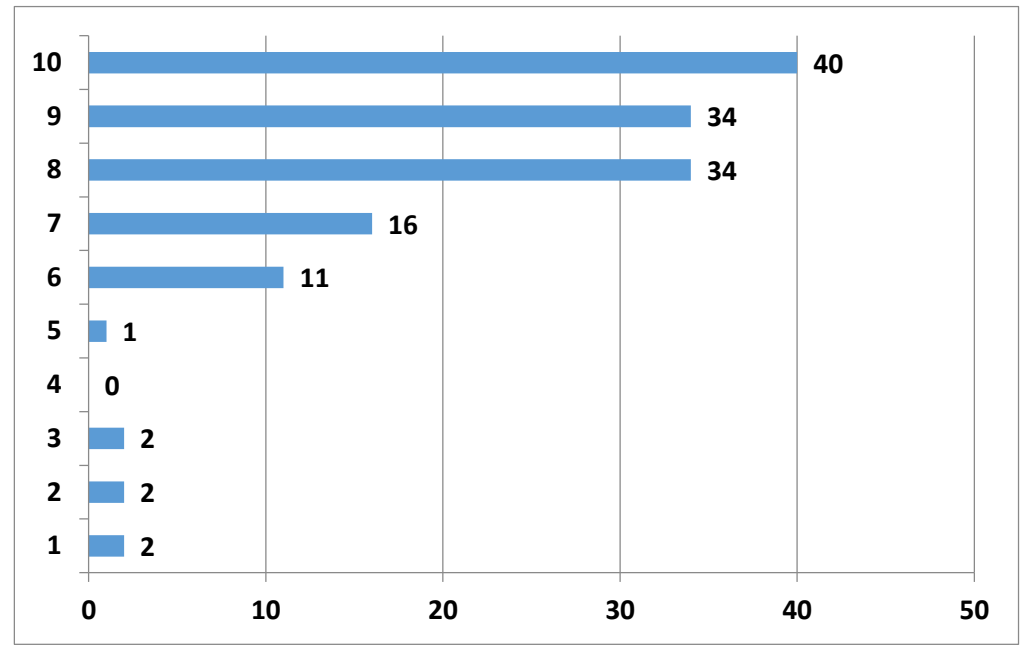
6. On a scale of one to ten, how would you rate your relationship with your senior staff (with 1 being not so good and 10 being excellent).

Rating	Answers	%
1	2	1%
2	2	1%
3	2	1%
4	0	0%

5	1	1%
6	11	8%
7	16	11%
8	34	24%
9	34	24%
10	40	28%

142

Skipped Question:	374
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Please comment if you like to qualify your rating.

As noted above, we have a very strong, open and honest relationship with our staff.

There are some staff that I trust greatly and others that never tell you the whole story. Luckily most will tell you everything.

We have mutual respect for each other and don't try to cause conflict... we try to work through difficult issues.

Always professional, helpful and make sound recommendations.

Generally a good relationship however no relationship is perfect and I think there could be improvements for more open lines of communication.

We work with committees of Council and therefore staff and elected officials work together, communicate with each other and are open to ideas from both sides of the table.

Senior staff is approachable, well informed and open-minded.

#11 - Sometimes they provide information that I feel is either too much (trying to hide the real info) or just enough that you are left wondering with many questions. It is not all but a few that still do this - it is better but still I get a sense of telling us what we need to hear.

Council has a code of conduct senior staff should be following the same code of conduct. Ultimately council is responsible to and defends their decisions to the ratepayer and staff should be as well. Good policy would be to ensure all people, councilors and staff follow the same code when interacting with ratepayers and when they deliver services.

Information provided to council at times is not objective and does not give the pros and cons and background of their recommendations and how they arrived at their recommendation.

I have been honoured to serve as Mayor for past 20 years and have worked carefully and considerably with staff during that time--they have helped me succeed.

The Mayor has to gain the confidence of Council! If not

It should be and the trust between Sr. Staff and Council

Deteriorates!

Number one resource is communicating with each other at all times.

as most of the reports come to council with only 50% of the information, there are serious problems with accounts, and the way the township is managed. Residents complaints get nowhere.

We do not always agree, but we always agree to work together

It is very important to treat staff with respect and in turn we receive respect back. Although we create the policies that they are governed by in order to do their work they are not our servants! I have witnessed poor treatment of staff by councilors in the past years and the result is a non functioning staff - council relationship, where the good of the community that they serve is set aside.

Things can go well and differing approaches can be worked out with mutual respect!

Council has the full respect for Staff. I believe its a two way street as we have very candid conversations.

Great relationship with staff starts with a really good working relationship with the CAO. I have a much more difficult time with members of council than I do with staff.

There is no global view , just piece by piece decision making

Our cao and staff have a difficult job as our mayor has always tried to be the one in charge and keep Council from the cao. Our council is making changes to rectify this. They are under extreme pressure

Always well respected and informed my staff.

lack of trust hurts progress!

Based on working relationship, response to requests, communication and comfort in discussions

Same as comments above in number 6.

8 is very good.

No comments are necessary--that is just the way they are, an excellent rating as far as ability and working relationship with council.

I would make it a 10, but you always look for room to improve!

I perform my duties in a professional manner. My relationship with senior staff is cordial and respectful even when I cannot support staff reports/recommendations or the reports fall short of enough information to make a decision requiring extra research by me.

It is important to distinguish trust and respect from relationship. Even though I do not trust and respect some of the reports and advice provided to Council, I have a working relationship and would never shame a staff member in public debate.

Some of the questions above are not quite so black and white as a yes and no answer, particularly 9, 10 & 11.

CAO sometimes will appear to be biased on a topic of discussion at council. I think some CAOs tend to regard council members not as informed on some topics as they are. This evolves over time as a CAO gains experience. Council member will change through election but a CAO is relatively permanent and therefore through time,, are more familiar with the municipal act and other topics.

With respect to question 11--I would actually say "mostly" and as a result I give number 12 an "8".

I believe that when staff who have been with an organization like a municipality for many years they become set in their ways and hold the power/control over what is shared with Council and what is not shared. Some long term staff have had the power to make decisions and resent interference from an elected body because that elected body can change every 4 years and essentially the thought could be " what do they know? They are not the "experts" I am." Although this could be true of engineering staff, planning staff etc. It is often the elected Councillor who has a better understanding therefore is an "expert' in their community. It is all find to sit behind a desk and make decisions but if a Councilor is truly involved in their community they should have a full understanding of the implications of certain decisions (ie planning /road works etc.) on the community. Sometimes senior staff " hoard" their information because they want the decision to go the way they want it to go. Therefore some Councils make decisions based on incomplete information. Just like any organization, it needs to be understood that staff wish to see their projects move forward as it is their "baby" and if the decision doesn't go their way does that have an impact on their work record. Sometimes it is important for Council to get into the "weeds" of decision making so that they have a full understanding of the implications a report/decision will have on the community.

My belief is that there is too much separation between staff and council. It seems that laws and policies are actually making dialogue worse . The transparencies currently legislated are having the effect of limiting discussion . IE : if you want to develop a new effective

policy for economic development you have to develop in the public eye and then your competition knows what your doing and innovation is not rewarded but rather copied . How does that effect staff council you are probably asking . My answer is under current laws everyone lines up in straight lines for the Province and communication and innovation are discouraged or legislated out as an option

treat them with respect

Some staff are really good at letting council one is not so good

I would say 10 with all but 1 senior staff person

Staff always keep me informed on any issue - sometimes directly or through the CAO

Our municipality is very fortunate to have a competent staff that works well individually,, and as a group with the public, council and with each other!!!

Good in general, but always room for improvement.

I have a hot and cold relationship with staff.I try to be respectful and polite at all times.

At times information is reports could have more detail. We have codes of Conduct but I feel the standard as been there before they were put in place.

For reasons noted in Question #6

Again I go back to the trust and integrity.

We do not have a staff code of conduct but have a code of conduct that applies to staff and Council which is the reason I clicked no on the survey as it pertained to staff only.

The zoning problem/

Most Sr staff attempt to provide great information.

One staff seems to believe that information is power.

By hiding information he may be seen as more important.

This is also reflected in giving the public information on a need to know basis

No qualification but while staff should have a Code of Conduct so should Council

Senior Staff are very approachable, well informed and respond in a very timely manner to Council inquires, questions, concerns. The relationship between Council and Senior staff is collegial and in keeping with a professional working relationship.

Frank and clear discussions with staff on challenges facing the city and on options to be presented to Council.

Diligence in reading and understanding information and reports provided to Council, supporting a strategic level discussion about issues.

Difficult because not all senior staff. How about rating CAO's? If CAO is poor it reflects on staff and how they treat others.

Good relations; open communications with majority of employees & council members.