



TOWN OF LAKE COWICHAN

COUNCIL POLICY

DATE APPROVED: _____

APPROVED BY: Resolution No. R. _____ /22

SUBJECT: Freedom of Information Policy

Submitting a Freedom of Information Request

If you would like to receive information from the Town that is not routinely available, you will need to submit a Freedom of Information Request, containing your name, address and contact information, and details of what you are requesting. The Town has 30 business days from the time of receipt of the request to respond. An effort is made to provide the information as quickly as possible.

You have the right to request any record in the custody or control of the Town of Lake Cowichan. A record includes documents, maps, drawings, photographs, letters, vouchers, papers, and any other thing on which information is recorded or stored by graphic, electronic, technical, or other means, but does not include a computer program or any other mechanism that produces records. Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act establishes the process by which an individual may request access to records held by the Town.

Availability

Most of the information held by the Town is available to the public through matters reported on departmental operations, agendas, minutes, bylaws, publications, policies, and procedures. However, the general right of access to information may be restricted by specified and limited exceptions - a person will not for instance get access to closed Council meeting agendas, minutes or materials, someone else's personal information or information that would harm third party business interests or law enforcement investigations and proceedings. Each request is evaluated individually vis-à-vis the provincial legislation.

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy legislation ensures that public bodies are accountable and open to the public. This is accomplished through a balance of the public's right to "Freedom of Information" and "Protection of Privacy."



Freedom of Information Request Form

You may request a Freedom of Information Request Form, or simply send your name, address, telephone number and the nature of your request by [email](#). The more details provided on the form, the more accurate our response to you will be.

Cost

Access to records requests generate additional expenses for the Town. The Act allows public bodies to charge for search time in some cases and to charge to produce copies of the information. All requests from non-commercial individuals will be charged \$7.50 per quarter hour after the initial three hours of search and retrieval time.

Information That Won't Be Released includes:

- Bulk property registry data (Assessment Roll);
- Contact information for property owners;
- Disclosure harmful to the conservation of heritage sites;
- Disclosure harmful to law enforcement;
- Disclosure harmful to personal privacy;
- Information that would reveal:
 - (a) trade secrets of a third party; or
 - (b) commercial, financial, labour relations, scientific or technical information of a third party; or
 - (c) supplied, implicitly or explicitly, in confidence; or
- Legal advice given to the Town of Lake Cowichan;
- Public body confidential documents;
- Names and contact information of homeowners; and
- Policy advice or recommendations provided in confidence including information supplied to, or the report of, an arbitrator, mediator, labour relations officer or other person or body appointed to resolve or inquire into a labour relations dispute.

Additional Information

If you have any questions regarding the Freedom of Information process, please call 250-749-6681 or refer to <https://www.oipc.bc.ca/>.

