



Municipal Council and Staff Training

An informed Council is a successful Council

Knowing the rules

The collective success of a municipal Council is heavily influenced by a shared understanding and acceptance of their roles, responsibilities, and expectations of their conduct. When elected officials are aware of the rules that regulate them—and their rationale—municipalities, their staff, and the community all benefit. A Council that is informed about the scope of their authority and jurisdiction helps contextualize policy goals and improves their execution, all while limiting the liability of the municipality.

A unified approach to best practices

The nature of being a political representative has changed rapidly across every jurisdiction in the country. The rising wave of populism, access to social media and spread of misinformation, decline of curated journalism, and worsening socio-economic inequalities have led to a marked shift in the tenor and quality of civic dialogue, including at the local level. As a result, it's more important than ever for public officials to lead by example in how they govern and serve the public.

Training and education can make all the difference. It can provide Council with clarity on the murky roles and responsibilities set out in the *Municipal Act* and direct them to tools and best practices that can support and empower them in their roles as elected officials. It can also shape a shared standard and set of expectations to guide their relationships with municipal staff and the community at large.

An informed Council is a powerful tool in prioritizing the needs of their constituents and reaffirms to the public that Council understands the honour and responsibility of their role.

Tried-and-tested

A leader in training and education in all things municipal

With over 25 years of experience, StrategyCorp's Municipal Services Practice has established a reputation for fairness, pragmatism, and expertise in local government.

Our firm is built on the importance of political acuity, and our clients know they can trust us to give them the advice they need to succeed and deliver on their priorities.

Our team is well-equipped to train Councils from large urban centres to small, rural communities. Well-known

in the municipal circuit, StrategyCorp has the professional experience and in-depth municipal knowledge to design training and education sessions that are engaging, aligned with best practices, and reflect current realities and legislative requirements.

A customized and dynamic approach

Key to StrategyCorp's approach is grounding the legal realities and content of the *Municipal Act* in real-world scenarios and examples. Our sessions bring to life some of the more theoretical and abstract concepts related to effective local governance so that they resonate for our audiences.

Our sessions are tailored to each municipality's context and specific policies and procedures. We work with our clients ahead of each session to understand their unique governance landscape and specific policies and procedures so that we can develop and present the content that will best meet their needs.

What our clients say about us

Past clients report that our training sessions leave them with greater confidence in their roles, improved relationships with their fellow elected officials and staff, and a stronger reputation and presence in their communities.

StrategyCorp expertly blended the need for Council and staff to appreciate and understand each other's perspectives, strengthening our ability to collaboratively tackle the realities of today's municipal landscape.

An investment in local governance

StrategyCorp has provided training to many Councils and municipal staff across Ontario, both at the onset of and through the term of Council.

Legislative clarity and best practices on:

- What is the role and responsibility of Council?
- What is the role and responsibility of the Chair?
- What are the best practices in Council-staff relations?
- How to balance being a good constituency Councillor while respecting municipal procedures?

Training customized to your Council's needs:

- Codes of Conduct
- Council-staff relations
- Communications, news media, and social media policies
- Confidentiality provisions
- Chain-of-command
- Procedures for citizen inquiries and service requests

Special packages to address specific needs:

- Local procedural by-laws
- Managing the transition to a Strong Mayor Council
- Best practices in community and citizen engagement
- Intergovernmental relations and advocacy
- Issues management and resolution
- Team-building



Sabine Matheson

Sabine has been a Principal at StrategyCorp since 1998 and has led hundreds of policy and strategy facilitation discussions of all shapes and sizes and across various sectors.

She is the founder of StrategyCorp's Municipal Services Practice Group, which has served well over a hundred municipalities across Canada and trained multiple Councils as they navigate strategic planning, post-election transitions, and staff-council relations.

A known quantity in the municipal world, she has been an advisor to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, Ontario's Big City Mayors (OBCM), Mayors and Regional Chairs of Ontario (MARCO), the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks & Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO), and Ontario Municipal Administrators Association (OMAA).

Sabine is a former Chief of Staff to Ontario's Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. In that capacity, she was instrumental in the creation of a new municipal taxation and assessment regime and key reforms to the Municipal Act and the Planning Act.

Since 2007, Sabine has been an instructor in Ontario Tech University's Municipal Management Program and also teaches municipal policy subjects and provincial-municipal relations through AMCTO. Sabine's policy expertise is grounded in her legal background. She was called to the Bar of Ontario in 1993 and practiced law in Toronto with a major Bay Street firm.



Stacy Hushion

Stacy is a Vice President in StrategyCorp's Municipal Services Practice and has been working in or with municipalities for a decade.

She has assisted dozens of municipalities across Ontario with strategic planning, organizational and operational reviews, long-term financial planning, Council orientation and training and intergovernmental affairs. Stacy is also a lead author of SCI's Annual CAO Survey.

She is passionate about helping organizations identify their strategic priorities and develop implementation plans and performance metrics designed to help them realize progress against those priorities.

Stacy has also worked with major municipal associations such as the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), Ontario Big City Mayors (OBCM), and AMCTO giving her a strong understanding of the municipal landscape, the diversities, and distinct challenges therein, as well as the sensitivity and acuity needed to engage at both the political and staff levels.

Prior to joining StrategyCorp, Stacy served as Chief of Staff to Toronto City Councillor Jaye Robinson. She holds an MA and PhD from the University of Toronto as well as a Yellow Belt in Lean Six Sigma and Certificate in AMCTO's Municipal Administration Program.