Title:	Municipal Services Guidelines
Policy No:	2025-02
Approval:	Village Council
Effective Date:	
Supersedes Policy No:	None
Amendments:	

Policy Statement: The purpose of all municipalities is to deliver effective and efficient services to residents and businesses while supporting a safe, healthy, and prosperous community. The Village of Spring Lake invests considerable resources to ensure that essential municipal services are delivered reliably and at a level that reflects the unique needs of our community.

Due to fiscal constraints, limited taxation capacity, and growing demands to improve, expand, or support additional services and external agencies, Council requires a structured approach to decision-making. This policy establishes a framework for classifying services as core, discretionary, supplementary, or future, to guide budgeting and service level decisions.

Purpose: This policy provides a consistent and transparent guideline for Council when reviewing, prioritizing, and allocating municipal services during the annual budget and long-range planning processes. It supports sustainable service delivery and asset management by clearly identifying the services the Village provides, their importance, and how they align with available resources and community needs.

Objectives:

- To provide clarity and consistency in the classification and prioritization of municipal services.
- To align service delivery with the Village's legislative responsibilities, fiscal realities, and strategic priorities.
- To support effective budgeting, asset management, and risk mitigation.
- To ensure residents are informed and engaged in service delivery decisions where appropriate.

Principle Guidelines

1. Classification of Services

Council has classified municipal services into four categories to support informed decision-making and clear communication with residents:

a. Core Services

Core services are fundamental responsibilities of municipal government, established under provincial legislation, and form the basis of the Village's annual budget. These services are considered essential and are prioritized accordingly:

- Governance (Council and Committees)
- Stormwater Management
- Waste and Recycling
- Road Maintenance
- Emergency Management
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Financial Services and Budgeting
- Emergency Services (Policing, Fire, and Bylaw Enforcement)
- Community Engagement and Communication

- Legislative Services (AIA, POPA, Minutes, Records Management)
- Land Use Planning and Development
- Safety Codes Permitting and Compliance

b. Discretionary Services

Discretionary services enhance quality of life but are not legislatively required. These services are a higher priority than supplementary services and are considered based on available funding and community interest:

- Recreational Facilities and Programs
- Library Services
- Horticultural Services (e.g., flowers, plants, tree pruning)
- Parks and Playgrounds
- Economic Development Initiatives

c. Supplementary Services

These are services that support external agencies, community groups, or broader government initiatives. They are considered lower priority in the budgeting process:

- Grants to Non-Profit Organizations

d. Future Services

These are aspirational services that may be introduced in future years based on community demand, growth, and sustainable funding capacity:

- Family and Community Support Services (FCSS)
- Community Centre
- Expanded Water and Wastewater Services
- General Ad Hoc Committees

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2. Annual Review Process

- Council will review the classification and funding of municipal services annually at the beginning of the budget process.
- This ensures that core services continue to meet performance expectations, while discretionary and supplementary services are evaluated based on community demand, strategic priorities, and available funding.

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3. Sustainable Service Delivery

- Sustainable service delivery is central to long-term infrastructure planning and financial sustainability.
- Services exist to meet community needs—assets are acquired and maintained specifically to deliver those services.
- Clearly defining services, service levels, and how needs may evolve over time helps Council anticipate risks, plan infrastructure investment, and manage costs.
- Residents are the primary recipients of municipal services and play a critical role in shaping service delivery priorities. The Village will engage residents, where appropriate, in decisions related to service level changes or new service proposals.

Responsibility

The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) is responsible for implementing and administering this policy, presenting service review information to Council, and facilitating resident engagement in service planning as needed.

Policy Review Date: Annually in conjunction with budget deliberations or as otherwise directed by Council.