



Purchasing Policy

Policy Number: FIN-006

Date in Effect: July 8, 2025

POLICY STATEMENT

- 1 It is the policy of the Town of Canmore to foster open, transparent, and accountable purchasing practices that comply with provincial legislation and relevant agreements such as CETA, CFTA and NWPTA.

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PURPOSE

- 2 The purpose of this policy is to establish the practices under which the Town conducts purchasing activities.

DEFINITIONS

- 3 In this policy:

a) *Repealed 176-2021*

b) “Best Value For Money” means the most advantageous balance between performance, price, operating (lifecycle) costs and quality.

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c) “CEAP” means the Climate Emergency Action Plan, adopted by Town of Canmore Council in 2024 to guide efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero and prepare for the impacts of a changing climate.

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d) “CETA” means the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement between Canada and the European Union, which provides access to EU government contracts and promotes fair, transparent procurement.

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e) “CFTA” means the Canadian Free Trade Agreement, an intergovernmental Canadian trade agreement established to replace the Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT), developed to reduce and eliminate, to the extent possible, barriers to the free movement of persons, goods, services, and investments within Canada by establishing an open, efficient, and stable domestic market that enhances the flow of goods and services, investment, and labour mobility, eliminates technical barriers to trade, greatly expands procurement coverage, and promotes regulatory cooperation within Canada.

f) “Circular Economy” means a system approach based on designing out waste and pollution, keeping products and materials in use, and regenerating natural systems.

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- g) “Embodied Carbon” means the total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with a product’s entire lifecycle.
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- h) “Emergency” means a situation posing immediate risk to public safety, health, or property, requiring urgent action due to unforeseen circumstances (e.g., critical equipment failure, structural issues, or regulatory mandates).
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- i) “Essential Services” are municipal services essential to the daily lives of Canmore residents, including but not limited to supply of potable water, treatment of wastewater, road care and maintenance, waste pick-up, and Emergency and protective services.
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- j) “NWPTA” means the New West Partnership Trade Agreement, an agreement between the Governments of British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan to form a barrier-free interprovincial market.
- k) “Procurement Value” means the total estimated cost, net of Federal and Provincial taxes, of the goods or services that are or will be procured over the longer of:
 - i) the term of a procurement contract, including any extension options, or
 - ii) the period commencing with the first procurement from a vendor or service provider and ending 12 months from that date.
- l) “Purchase” means to acquire goods, services, or construction in response to a business need.
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- m) “Request For Proposal” means an invitation for a supplier to propose a solution to a problem, requirement or objective. It defines the scope of the project, deliverables or supplies and the criteria that will be used to identify the successful proposal.
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- n) “Request For Quotation” means a request for a supplier to provide prices on specific products and/or services.
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- o) “Substances of Very High Concern” means chemicals that can have serious, potentially irreversible, negative effects on human health or the environment.
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- p) “Tender” means a formal public invitation to suppliers to bid on the provision of a service at a specific price, based on detailed specifications.

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PURCHASING AUTHORIZATION

- 4 The chief administrative officer, general managers, managers, supervisors, and project managers are authorized to approve expenditures (e.g. invoices) within the capital and operating budgets approved by council for their service area or areas.
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- 5 For clarity on designated signing authorities for contracts, refer to Designated Officers Bylaw 2014-17, which outlines roles authorized to commit the Town to expenditures.
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- 6 An expenditure not included in the approved operating or capital budget must be approved by council before the expenditure is made, unless the Purchase is due to an Emergency. Emergency Purchases may bypass standard procedures with CAO approval.
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- 7 In the event of an Emergency, the chief administrative officer is authorized to make expenditures not included in the approved operating or capital budget to ensure continuous delivery of the Town's Essential Services.

PURCHASING GUIDELINES

- 8 Prior to making new Purchases, employees are expected to consider: the need for the Purchase, opportunities to extend the life of the existing item or material (if applicable) and meeting the operational need through a different means (ex: renting vs. purchasing).
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- 9 All purchasing decisions shall be based on the principles of transparency and obtaining the Best Value For Money, considering any of the following criteria, as applicable:
 - a) fitness for purpose,
 - b) quality,
 - c) reliability,
 - d) price competitiveness,
 - e) lifetime costs and transaction costs,
 - f) useful-life expectancy,
 - g) innovation,
 - h) assurance of supply and deliverability,
 - i) anticipated customer service,
 - j) past performance, and
 - k) experience.

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- 10 The lowest price ~~will~~ normally be accepted but shall not be the sole determinate of Best Value For Money. To align with the CEAP, all purchasing decisions shall consider energy and greenhouse gas emissions reduction, and resilience to the impacts of climate change.

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- 11 Additional strategies for consideration related to sustainable procurement and in further alignment with the CEAP are as follows:

- a) Utilize processes, technologies, products, or services that reduce consumption of natural resources or chemicals.
- b) Employ processes, technologies, products, or services that reduce waste.
- c) Seek processes, technologies, products, or services that support a Circular Economy.
- d) Seek processes, technologies, products, or services that support biodiversity and healthy, resilient natural habitats.
- e) Seek out, specify, and Purchase products with lower Embodied Carbon than the status quo.
- f) Seek out, specify and Purchase products that minimize exposure of Substances of Very High Concern to people and the environment.
- g) Seek out processes, technologies, goods, or services that support transparency in either or both the Town's supply chain or product disposal endpoints regarding compliance with environmental regulations and rights in the workplace.

- 12 *Repealed 176-2021*

- 13 Joint purchasing with other agencies, such as the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) or Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA), and municipalities is encouraged whenever it is in the interest of obtaining Best Value For Money.

PURCHASING PROCESS

- 14 For Purchases of goods and services of \$10,000 or less and for construction with a Procurement Value of \$25,000 or less:

- a) no competitive quote is required; and
- b) where more than one supplier has been considered, the employee making the Purchase must record the reason for their selection.

176-2021; 206-2025

- 15 For Purchases of goods and services between \$10,001 and \$49,999 and of construction between \$25,001 and \$99,999, a minimum of two written quotations or proposals must be received.

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16 For Purchases of goods and services with a Procurement Value between \$50,000 and \$74,999 and of construction with a Procurement Value between 100,000 and \$199,999:

- a) a Request For Quotations or Request For Proposals must be issued and posted on the Town website, and
- b) a minimum of three written quotations or proposals must be received.

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17 For Purchases of goods and services with a Procurement Value of \$75,000 or greater, and for construction with a Procurement Value of \$200,000 or greater:

- a) a Request For Quotations, Request For Proposals or Tender must be issued and posted through an electronic Tendering system such as the Alberta Purchasing Connection, in accordance with CETA, CFTA and NWPTA;
- b) a minimum of three written quotations or proposals must be received; and
- c) in accordance with the requirements of articles 516 and 517 of the CFTA, a detailed public disclosure of the contract award, including the name of the supplier and value of the contract, be made.

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18 If the number of responses received are insufficient to meet the requirements in this policy, the employee initiating the Purchase has the discretion to:

- a) extend the deadline for responses; or
- b) select from among the responses received, if this is approved by the next level of management.

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19 Exceptions to the purchasing process must be documented with justification and authorized by a general manager or the chief administrative officer:

- a) where the compatibility of a Purchase with existing equipment, facilities, or service is a paramount consideration;
- b) where the Purchase can only be made from a sole source;
- c) where an item is Purchased for testing or trial use;
- d) where the only supplier is a department, agency, or utility of the federal, provincial, regional, or municipal government;
- e) where the Purchase is of a highly specialized nature and/or is available from only one supplier;

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- f) where professional qualifications are a paramount consideration; or
- g) in an Emergency.

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- 20 Purchases may be combined into a single Purchase if this results in Best Value For Money.
- 21 When Purchases are combined in accordance with section 20, this policy will apply as if the combined Purchases were one Purchase.
- 22 Contracts may be extended:
 - a) where there is a continuing need for the product or service being supplied;
 - b) where the additional obligations would be contained within a normal operating or capital budget approved by Council; and
 - c) where the extension was either provided for in the original Request For Quotations, Request For Proposals or Tender, or was offered through a purchasing process approved in this policy.

PROHIBITIONS

- 23 Employees may not seek or receive personal gain when engaging in purchasing activities for the Town.
- 24 Employees who are responsible for managing or supervising a contract:
 - a) are prohibited from providing goods or services related to that contract; and
 - b) may not participate in the arrangement of a contract involving a business in which a member of the employee's immediate family has a financial interest or holds a position of influence or authority.
- 25 Purchases may not be split to avoid the requirements of this policy.
- 26 Vendors engaging in bribery, coercion, or unethical practices will be disqualified from current and future procurement opportunities.

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RESPONSIBILITIES

27 The chief administrative officer must ensure:

- a) all employees are aware of and understand this policy,
- b) all employees comply with this policy, and
- c) the policy is reviewed once every four years, or when a practice changes.

28 Any employee engaged in purchasing for the Town must ensure:

- a) all Purchases are performed in accordance with this policy,
- b) all providers are given the same information and equal opportunity,
- c) the selection process is carried out honestly and impartially, and
- d) they can account for all decisions and provide evidence that this Policy was followed.

POLICY REVIEW

29 This policy will be reviewed at least once in every term of Council.

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RELATED DOCUMENTS

Budget Amendment Policy
Employee Code of Conduct Policy
Designated Officers Bylaw 2014-17

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REPEALS POLICY: 147-2013 Purchasing

AUTHORIZATION:



Sean Krausert
Mayor



Cheryl Hyde
Manager, Municipal Clerk's Office

Policy approved by:  

REVISION HISTORY

Action	Date	Council Motion	Notes
Approved	2005-05-24	234-2005	
Repealed	2013-05-21	147-2013	
Approved	2013-05-21	147-2013	
Repealed	2017-08-22	FIN-006	
Approved	2017-08-22	64-2017FIN-006	Approved by the Finance Committee
Amended	2021-07-06	176-2021	Remove definition of advertising, increase purchasing authorization, remove local preference, adjust purchasing process limits
Amended	2025-07-08	206-2025	General language updates

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