

**City of Maple Ridge  
Office of the Integrity Commissioner (“OIC”)**

**ANNUAL REPORT:  
January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025**

**Anita K. Atwal, Integrity Commissioner**

**April 30, 2026**

### **Message from the Integrity Commissioner**

On July 16, 2024, I was appointed by the City of Maple Ridge’s Mayor and Council for a two-year term as the first independent Integrity Commissioner for the City. It continues to be a privilege to serve in this capacity and to support the City’s commitment to good governance, ethical conduct, and accountability.



I would like to thank the Mayor and Council for their respect of the OIC’s independence and to City staff for their assistance in supporting the OIC when needed. The OIC operates independently from the City, however staff provided administrative and structural support when requested.

The OIC continues to play a vital role in promoting public trust in local government. As I continue in this role, I remain committed to fostering public confidence that the City is meeting its ethical and governance responsibilities.

In 2025, I received and closed two inquiries/complaints and closed one complaint that was filed in late 2024. I also finalized Policy Number 2025-001 – Privacy and Confidentiality (the “Privacy Policy”) which applies to all records compiled and created by the Integrity Commissioner when carrying out its duties. The OIC’s webpage was updated to include a complaint form and educational information, including infographics on the complaints process. Over the past year, the foundational elements of the OIC have been firmly established, including the development of educational resources, a formal complaint process, and the publication of key materials such as the complaint form and Privacy Policy on the OIC’s webpage. I am confident that the infrastructure in place can effectively receive and address complaints.

Looking ahead to 2026, my priorities include continuing to be available to the Mayor and Council for advice and recommendations, responding to inquiries and complaints in a timely and impartial manner, and providing education and training as requested.

I am proud to continue to serve as the City’s Integrity Commissioner and remain committed to advancing the principles of integrity and accountability. I look forward to building on the progress achieved to date and continuing to work collaboratively with the Mayor, Council, City staff, and the community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anita K. Atwal'.

Anita K. Atwal, KC

Integrity Commissioner

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## **Introduction**

The appointment of the Integrity Commissioner came after Council adopted the Code of Conduct Bylaw No. 7976-2023 (the “Bylaw”) in January 2024, which outlined expectations for ethical behaviour among the City’s elected officials.

This annual report to the Mayor and Council includes a summary of the Integrity Commissioner’s activities in 2025. This is the second annual report. Although the Bylaw does not contemplate an Annual Report, it is being provided as a form of good governance and transparency.

## **Bylaw and Policies**

The Integrity Commissioner operates under the Bylaw and only has the jurisdiction provided to it by Mayor and Council in the Bylaw. Pursuant to section 43 of the Bylaw, the duties and responsibilities of the Integrity Commissioner are to:

- a. Provide advice and recommendations to a Council Member on questions of compliance with the Bylaw, where requested to do so by a Council Member;
- b. Provide advice and recommendations to a Council Member, regarding their compliance or disclosure obligations under a provincial statute, such as the *Financial Disclosure Act*, or other such statute that imposes an express compliance or disclosure obligation on the Council Member due to their position as an elected official, where requested to do so by a Council Member;
- c. Deliver educational programs regarding the role of the Integrity Commissioner and the ethical obligations and responsibilities of Council Members under the Bylaw;
- d. Adopt procedures, policies and protocols as necessary to aid in the resolution of complaints under the Bylaw;
- e. Assist with informal resolution of complaints;
- f. Receive and assess all complaints to determine if the complaint must be rejected, closed, resolved informally or investigated;
- g. Investigate and conduct inquiries into violations of the Bylaw;
- h. Report to Council as to whether a Council Member has breached the Bylaw; and,
- i. Make recommendations on an appropriate remedy if a Council Member has breached the Bylaw.

Pursuant to section 10 of the Bylaw, the Bylaw only applies to Council Members, which is defined as the “Mayor and Councillors for the City of Maple Ridge.” Pursuant to sections 45 and 46 of the Bylaw, complaints against Council Members may only be brought by Council Members, Staff, Committee Members or Volunteers (see definitions in section 9 of the Bylaw).

In 2025, I finalized the Privacy Policy, which assists in implementing the Bylaw ([Policy Number 2025-001 – Privacy and Confidentiality](#)). This policy applies to all records compiled and created by the Integrity Commissioner when carrying out their duties and responsibilities pursuant to section 43 of the Bylaw.

## **The OIC**

The Integrity Commissioner [webpage](#) provides information on the Integrity Commissioner’s role and responsibilities, the complaints process and filing a complaint. It also includes links to the Bylaw and the Privacy Policy and my contact information.

In early 2025, a complaint form and additional educational information, including infographics on the complaints process, were added to the webpage. The webpage will be updated as necessary throughout the remainder of my term as Integrity Commissioner.

### **Education and Advice to Elected Officials**

At the outset of my appointment in 2024, a top priority was delivering educational programs regarding the role of the Integrity Commissioner and the ethical obligations and responsibilities of Council Members under the Bylaw. This priority is consistent with section 43(a) of the Bylaw.

In October 2024, I delivered a full day of training on the Bylaw, conflicts of interest, relevant provisions of the *Community Charter*, SBC 2003, c 26, the *Local Government Act*, RSBC 2015, c 1, and relevant case law and to Mayor and Council on October 29, 2024. I did not provide additional training in 2025 as Council did not require it.

Pursuant to sections 43(a) and (b) of the Bylaw, I continue to be available to Mayor and Council to provide advice and recommendations on questions of compliance with the Bylaw as well as compliance or disclosure obligations under a provincial statute, when requested.

### **Complaints**

As per section 43(f) of the Bylaw, I received two inquiries/complaints in 2025. I processed and closed each inquiry/complaint prior to December 31, 2025. In January 2025, I also closed one complaint that was filed late in 2024.

The two inquiries/complaints that were filed and closed in 2025 were closed following a preliminary assessment as I determined they were outside the scope and/or jurisdiction of the Bylaw. The complaint that was filed in late 2024 and was closed in January 2025 was also closed following a preliminary assessment it was outside the scope and/or jurisdiction of the Bylaw. The fact that each inquiry/complaint fell outside of the jurisdiction of the Bylaw reinforces the need for continued delivery of educational programs regarding the role of the Integrity Commissioner and the scope of the Bylaw.

As each inquiry/complaint was closed following a preliminary assessment, I was not required to investigate or conduct inquiries into violations of the Bylaw, report to Council as to whether a Council Member breached the Bylaw or make recommendations on an appropriate remedy when a Council Member breached the Bylaw.

### **Looking Ahead and Closing Comments**

The first full year of my appointment was a success. I processed and closed three complaints (one filed in late 2024), finalized the Privacy Policy and completed updates to the OIC's website.

Now that the complaints process has been implemented and is established, the handling of complaints and investigations is expected to be more efficient in the coming year. In 2026, I look forward to continuing to deliver education when requested, engaging with the community, and supporting Mayor and Council, as requested, through advice, recommendations, and educational initiatives.

My primary goals of upholding the objectives of the Bylaw and carrying out the duties and responsibilities of the Integrity Commissioner with impartiality and independence remain. I look

forward to continuing my work with the City, Mayor, Council, and the residents of Maple Ridge in support of transparent, accountable, and effective governance.