

Staff Report

Report To: City Council
Report From: Kristen Van Alphen, Manager of Legislative Services
Meeting Date: September 14, 2026
Report Code: CR-26-086
Subject: Municipal Innovation Internship Program – Privacy Intern
2027

Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report CR-26-086 respecting the Municipal Innovation Internship Program – Privacy Intern 2027, City Council receives the report for information purposes.

Highlights:

- Beginning January 1, 2027, the City has new privacy obligations under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Privacy Act*.
- The City has applied to the Municipal Innovation Internship Program, hosted by AMCTO and Mitacs, to host a Privacy Intern from January to August 2027.
- The City has been paired with an intern and now needs to submit a final proposal for funding before September 18, 2026. The internship will be eight months and will cost the City \$15,000.
- The internship will allow the City to meet its new obligations by dedicating a resource to the development of consistent, efficient, and user-friendly operational practices across departments.

Vision 2050 - Strategic Plan Alignment:

[Strategic Plan](#) Priority: Fostering Mutually Beneficial & Respectful Relationships - Establishing, reconciling, and continually nurturing relationships that result in mutual benefit, trust and shared understanding.

The Privacy Intern supports this priority because strong privacy practices directly build trust, transparency, and shared understanding between the City and its stakeholders.

Previous Report/Authority:

[Report CR-26-059: Bill 97 Impacts on MFIPPA Legislation](#)

Background:

The Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers, and Mitacs, a national innovation connector in Canada, offer an application-based program that matches Ontario municipal governments with post-secondary students in Ontario to work on innovation and/or research projects over an eight (8)-month period.

The collaboration is designed to address gaps in innovation and/or research while giving students invaluable exposure to life in municipal government across Ontario. Interns work with their municipalities from January to August 2027 and receive a salary of \$30,000 for their work.

The City of Owen Sound applied to this program to support the municipality in modernizing its privacy framework in response to amendments to the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (MFIPPA). The project addresses a key municipal challenge: translating legislative change into consistent, efficient, and user-friendly operational practices across departments.

The program matches each successful municipality with a student applicant. The City of Owen Sound has been matched with Natalie Mole, a former By-law Enforcement Summer Student at the City, who is eager to help deliver implementation-ready tools such as process maps, RACI matrices and privacy review frameworks, as well as a corporate roadmap for continuous improvement.

After matching, the municipality and student must submit a final proposal package to confirm the project and access funding. This application is due September 18, 2026. If the application is approved, Mitacs will pay \$15,000 toward the intern's salary, and the City will provide the remaining \$15,000.

Analysis and Options:

The City will be advised later this fall if we have made it through the last stage of the application process.

The following is a breakdown of the work to be completed:

- January–February: Project initiation and research.
The intern will review MFIPPA amendments, assess existing municipal privacy practices, and develop a detailed work plan and Privacy Impact Assessment ("PIA") research framework.
- March–April: Current state assessment and engagement.
The intern will map existing workflows involving personal information, audit current privacy risk practices, and consult with key departments to identify gaps and operational needs.
- May–June: Framework and tool development.
The intern will design a draft corporate-wide PIA framework, including triggers and governance, and develop standardized procedures, workflows, and guidance aligned with privacy-by-design principles.
- July: Validation and refinement.
The intern will pilot draft tools and processes, test them against service scenarios, and refine them based on staff feedback.
- August: Finalization and knowledge transfer.
The intern will deliver a final report, finalized PIA toolkit, implementation roadmap, and presentations to support organizational adoption.

Resource Alignment:

Financial Resources

The total cost to the City will be half the intern's salary (\$15,000). The 2027 staff-prepared budget will reflect the City's program cost.

Human Resources

Adding a Privacy Intern will allow the City to meet new legislative obligations related to privacy that come into effect on January 1, 2027. It will also give the new Records, Access, and Privacy Coordinator time to address the increasing number of Freedom of Information requests while adopting new privacy processes. Hosting Natalie Mole as the Privacy Intern also provides an opportunity to continue a positive relationship with an engaged student who is familiar with the City's operations and has demonstrated a strong interest in municipal administration.

Time and Scheduling

The project timeline is included in the Analysis section of this report. Because the Privacy Intern is an additional resource, staff believe that the workplan is feasible.

The project will alleviate workload pressures on the Records, Access, and Privacy Coordinator and allow them to focus on time-sensitive requests for information while developing privacy protocols.

Technology and Infrastructure

The intern will require a workstation, computer, and City email address. They will work with the City's records and divisional staff to understand how personal, confidential, and sensitive information is collected, stored, accessed, disclosed, and disposed of. The intern will have access to Vayle, a Canadian platform that manages freedom of information requests for the City of Owen Sound and has developed a Privacy Impact Assessment module the City will begin using in 2027. Additionally, the intern will have access to AMCTO training on the upcoming legislative changes.

Climate and Environmental Impacts:

No climate or environmental impacts are anticipated.

Communication and Engagement:

Staff members on the City's Privacy Team have been made aware of the potential internship. This report provides public notice. A report to the next Council will be provided before the end of the year confirming if the project is moving ahead.

Report Developed in Consultation With:

City Clerk, Director of Corporate Services

Attachments:

None.

Reviewed by:

Briana Bloomfield, City Clerk

Kate Allan, Director of Corporate Services

Submission approved by:

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Kristen Van Alphen, Manager of Legislative Services at kvanalphen@owensound.ca or 519-376-4440 ext. 1228.