



Town of Whitby Procedure

Procedure Title:	Digitization of Records
Procedure Number:	CA 030-003
Reference:	Records Classification and Retention By-law No.7707-20, Information Governance Policy (CA 030), Access and Privacy Policy (CA 060), Electronic Records as Documentary Evidence (CAN/CGSB-72.34-2017), Information and documentation - Implementation guidelines for digitization of records (ISO/TR 13028:2010)
Date Approved:	October 13, 2021
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Approval:	Chief Administrative Officer
Point of Contact:	Manager, Information & Content Services, x 2855

Purpose

The purpose of this Procedure is to outline consistent standards to ensure that defensible Digitization practices are in place. This ensures that the Town can demonstrate that a Digital Record is a true and accurate version of the physical source record. Digitization processes, including scanning, must be documented in order to show that the Town has adhered to all requirements for producing an authoritative Digital Record. This Procedure will set out best practices for Digitization activities. These guidelines are not a comprehensive method for Digitization, but serve as a starting point to ensure that basic requirements are met.

This procedure serves to:

- Assist Town staff in providing a clear outline of the basic requirements for Digitization;
- Provide guidance for determining if defensible Digitization has occurred; and,
- Educate Town staff on the potential to destroy physical source records that have been converted and stored in an approved digital format when specific conditions are met.

Scope

The Corporation of the Town of Whitby (the “Town”) is mandated, through the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c.25 and the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.56 (“MFIPPA”), to preserve records in its custody and control. This Procedure applies to the Digitization and/or Scanning of all Records when the Official Record would otherwise exist only in a paper format.

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1 Definitions

Confidential Information means any restricted business-related, financial or administrative information that, if disclosed, could cause harm and must be treated securely.

Corporate Repository means a corporate standard database or application used for capturing content that is approved by the Town Clerk.

Digital Record means information and documentation created, modified and/or received by the Town that is recorded or stored in a digital format in a medium that can be read by a computer system or other similar device.

Digitization means the activities and processes, following a rigorous set of standards, which reproduce a physical Record into a Digital Record.

Official Record means a Record in the custody and control of the Town that has business value in that it serves important functions, such as supporting program delivery or policy development, committing the Town to an action, meeting legal, financial and operational, and other official requirements, or providing evidence of obligation, responsibilities, decision, and actions.

Personal Information means recorded information about an identifiable individual, as defined in Section 2(1) of MFIPPA.

Record means any information, however recorded, whether in printed form, on film, by electronic means or otherwise as defined in Section 2 of MFIPPA.

Records Classification and Retention By-law means the by-law enacted by Council to establish a classification structure and retention periods for Records of the Town.

Scanning means making a copy of a physical Record for convenience without specific quality and audit parameters in place which would allow the destruction of the original Record.

Transitory Record means a Record that does not document a business decision, transaction or activity and is useful for only a short time. These records are not required to meet statutory obligations, set policy, established guidelines or procedures, certify a transaction, commit the Town to an action, become a receipt, or provide evidence of legal, financial, operations, or other office requirements for the Town. Transitory Records may include, but are not limited to, personal emails, drafts, unsolicited advertising, convenience copies of Official Records, or matters not related to the business of the Town.

2 Responsibilities

Senior Leadership Team will:

- Support the adherence to this procedure by advocating for responsible Records and information management practices.

Manager, Information and Content Services will:

- Oversee and provide guidance on Digitization initiatives, including the proper control of Digital Record assets following Digitization.
- Work with Town staff through their Digitization projects and initiatives to ensure that Records management, quality control and audit practices are in place to preserve the integrity of the Records.

Supervisors will:

- Seek the guidance of this Procedure and the assistance of the Office of the Town Clerk when planning Digitization initiatives.
- Seek the guidance of TIS when planning to acquire technology in support of this procedure.

Technology and Innovation Services will:

- Help facilitate the safe storage of Digital Records by ensuring proper access, control, and backups are in place.

Legal Services will:

- Provide guidance on the legal admissibility of Records and any known requirements related to Digitization.

3 General

3.1 Record Lifecycle Management

Official Records that are in a digital format are subject to and must be maintained, used, disseminated, and disposed throughout their lifecycle in accordance with the Information Governance Policy and the Records Classification and Retention By-law.

3.2 Security and Access

Digitized Official Records that contain Personal or Confidential Information must have the same level of security and access as their physical source Records.

Access to these Records should be limited to those Town staff who need them to perform their duties.

4 Digitization Requirements

4.1 Standard Practices

Digitization processes will be defined and documented to ensure that Record structure, content, identity and recordkeeping metadata are protected and preserved. Digitized Official Records must adhere to the criteria as outlined in Section 4.2 of this Procedure.

4.2 Standard Criteria

Digitized Official Records shall:

- Be saved in PDF format (PDF/A if stored in excess of 10 years);
- Have an image quality set at a minimum of 300 dpi;
- Have Optical Character Recognition (OCR) preformed;
- Have the following quality assurance verification confirmed for all records (or a representative sample approved by the Manager, Information & Content Services):
 - Quantity check
 - All pages of a document have been digitized.
 - Quality check
 - Digitized text and annotations are clearly legible.
 - There is no incorrect line or page break.
 - The pages are correctly oriented.
 - The image is not too light or too dark.
 - The image does not have noise (disturbance in the image such as dust or unwanted pixels).
 - No unwanted materials have been captured blocking the image (sticky notes, paper clips, rubber bands etc.).
- Have a standardized naming format which includes the subject, the relevant document date (YYYY-MM-DD) and other relevant metadata to the content of the Record; and,
- Be stored in a Corporate Repository with limited and specific access permissions designed to maintain integrity during the Records lifecycle.

4.3 Personal or Confidential Information

During the Digitization process, any records containing Personal or Confidential Information (physical source and digital) must be kept secure. Records should be kept secure through the establishment of vendor requirements/obligations or in accordance with Information Governance practices established by the Town's Records and Information Management Division.

4.4 Ineligible Records

The Electronic Commerce Act, 2000, S.O. 2000, c.17 excludes several types of Records from conversion to electronic format, such as documents, including agreements of purchase and sale, that create or transfer interests in land and require registration to be effective against third parties, negotiable instruments, and documents that are prescribed or belong to a prescribed class.

These Records may be scanned for ease of use; however, the physical format Official Record cannot be destroyed after scanning.

5 Disposition

5.1 Destruction of Official Records in Physical Format after Digitization

Official Records in physical format that are eligible and have undergone Digitization in accordance with this Procedure may be destroyed. Authorization to destroy these Records will proceed under the standard destruction approval process established by the Office of the Town Clerk.



Matthew Gaskell, Chief Administrative Officer, x2211

October 13, 2021

Date