



117C  
Engagement

Prepared By: Office of CAO

Council Approval Date: October 26, 2020

Effective Date: Upon Approval

Council Resolution No.: 20-446

References: Municipal Government Act (MGA), Section 216.1  
International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

The Town is committed to creating opportunities for meaningful dialogue and participation in decisions that impact residents and will conduct transparent and inclusive engagement that is responsive and accountable, by:

- a) Ensuring those affected by a decision have an opportunity to be involved in the decision-making process.
- b) Promising that the public's contribution will influence the decision.
- c) Promoting sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers.
- d) Seeking out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.
- e) Seeking input from participants in designing how they participate.
- f) Providing participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
- g) Communicating to participants how their input affected decisions.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to:

- a) Create an environment that encourages community participation.
- b) Achieve a consistent, coordinated and outcome-driven approach to public engagement.
- c) Enhance the legitimacy of decision.
- d) Forge a bond of trust between the Town of Olds and the community.
- e) Provide balanced and objective information to assist with understanding the problems challenges, alternatives and/or solutions.
- f) Facilitate public input into decision-making through effective and efficient consultation, involvement, collaboration and empowerment processes.
- g) Improve the quality of decisions being made.

## **SCOPE**

This policy applies to all Town of Olds employees who plan and/or implement Public Engagement processes. All Employees are to understand and adhere to this policy, recognize the benefits and serve as an advocate for public engagement.

## **DEFINITIONS**

"Public Engagement" includes a variety of non-statutory opportunities where Stakeholders receive information and/or provide input to the Municipality.

“Public Participation Plan” is a document prepared in advance that identifies the purpose and level of engagement, key stakeholders, tools, timelines and resources required and other information that assists to achieve a successful public engagement.

“Stakeholders” for the purposes of this policy, means the residents of the Municipality, as well as other individuals, organizations or persons that may have an interest in, or are affected by a decision made by the Municipality.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) is responsible to implement the policy, and approve procedures.

## **STANDARDS**

1. All projects are reviewed to determine the appropriate level and timing of public engagement, and make every effort to identify and involve as many affected or interested individuals as possible by implementing a comprehensive Public Engagement process.
2. A Public Participation Plan shall be used to provide a guide for an organizational wide approach of consistent and clear practices and provide an appropriate level of engagement for all stakeholders,
3. A Public Engagement shall be within the Town’s ability to finance and resource.
4. All relevant documents will be publicly available.
5. Clear, timely and complete information, shall be provided to endeavour to ensure decision processes, procedures, and constraints are understood and followed.
6. Involve and hear from all of those who are affected directly and endeavour to accommodate diverse needs, backgrounds, and challenges.
7. Stakeholders will be given adequate time to respond and provide input.
8. Feedback will be provided on what stakeholders said and how their input was considered by the decision makers.
9. Final decisions will be documented and made available to stakeholders along with the rationale and process of arriving at that decision.
10. This policy is in accordance with Section 216.1 of the Municipal Government Act and will be reviewed once, every four years.

Appendix A

**Engagement Policy Spectrum of Strategies and Promises**

The Town of Olds Engagement Policy includes a spectrum of five strategies and associated promises that follow the Spectrum of Engagement of the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2). When the Town embarks on an engagement process for planning, policy, and project purposes, the scope of engagement and the 'promise' to stakeholders will be clarified at the beginning of the process.



Type of Engagement				
Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Engagement Goal				
To provide stakeholders and the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives and/ solutions.	To obtain stakeholder and public feedback on analysis, alternatives and or/ decisions	To work directly with the stakeholders and the public throughout the process to ensure that their concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the stakeholders and the public in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the stakeholders.
Promise to Stakeholders				
We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how your input influenced the decision.	We will work together, seek your advice and innovation in formulating solutions and we will incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decision to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
Engagement Tools				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fact sheets</li> <li>• Newsletters</li> <li>• Web sites</li> <li>• Information booths</li> <li>• Open houses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus groups</li> <li>• Surveys</li> <li>• Feedback forms</li> <li>• Public meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshops</li> <li>• Deliberate polling</li> <li>• Charrettes</li> <li>• World Cafes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Citizen advisory committees</li> <li>• Consensus-building</li> <li>• Participatory decision-making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elections</li> <li>• Plebiscites</li> <li>• Delegated decisions</li> </ul>

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