



Municipal Policy Manual

NAME: Public Participation

Section: 100 **No:** 112

COUNCIL MOTION NUMBER: 462 2002 24

UPDATED: 24 February, 2020

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. In accordance with Section 216.1 of the *Municipal Government Act*, this Public Participation Policy has been developed to recognize the value of public participation and create opportunities for meaningful public participation in decisions that directly impact the public. This Public Participation Policy is in addition to and does not modify or replace the statutory public hearing requirements in the *Municipal Government Act*.

2. GENERAL POLICY PRINCIPLES

- 2.1. Council recognizes that good governance includes engaging Municipal Stakeholders in Public Participation by:
 - 2.1.1. Creating opportunities for Municipal Stakeholders who are affected by a decision to influence the decision;
 - 2.1.2. Promoting sustainable decisions by recognizing various Municipal Stakeholder interests;
 - 2.1.3. Providing Municipal Stakeholders with the appropriate information and tools to engage in meaningful participation; and
 - 2.1.4. Recognizing that although councillors are elected to consider and promote the welfare and interest of the Municipality as a whole and are generally required to vote on matters brought before Council, facilitating Public Participation for matters beyond those where public input is statutorily required can enrich the decision making process.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1. “Chief Administrative Officer” or “CAO” means the chief administrative officer of the Municipality or their delegate.
- 3.2. “Municipal Stakeholders” 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.
- 3.3. “Municipality” means the Town of Picture Butte.
- 3.4. “Public Participation” includes a variety of non-statutory opportunities where Municipal Stakeholders receive information and/or provide input to the Municipality.
- 3.5. “Public Participation Tools” means the tools that may be used, alone or in combination, to create Public Participation opportunities including, but not limited to:
 - 3.5.1. in-person participation which may include at-the-counter interactions, door- knocking, interviews, meetings, round-tables, town halls, open houses and workshops;
 - 3.5.2. digital participation which may include social media, online workbooks, chat groups, webinars, message boards/discussion forums, and online polls or surveys;
 - 3.5.3. written participation which may include written submissions, email, and mail- in surveys, polls and workbooks; and



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- 3.5.4. representative participation which may include being appointed to an advisory committee, ad hoc committee or citizen board.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1. Council shall:
 - 4.1.1. Help identify issues and decisions that may need or could benefit from Public Participation.
 - 4.1.2. Review recommendations from the CAO on issues requiring Public Participation and assess the level of Public Participation to be undertaken relative to the nature of the issue and the capacity of the Town.
 - 4.1.3. Support effective and meaningful Public Participation through the appropriate allocation of budget and staff resources.
 - 4.1.4. Promote public participation opportunities and encourage participation.
 - 4.1.5. Consider input obtained through Public Participation.
 - 4.1.6. Use the input received through Public Participation Tools as a part of their Council discussions, deliberations and decision making.
 - 4.1.7. Review this policy to ensure the policy complies with all relevant legislation, municipal policies and the spirit and intent of Public Participation.
- 4.2. Chief Administrative Officer shall:
 - 4.2.1. Identify issues that may need or could benefit from Public Participation.
 - 4.2.2. Assess the level and type of Public Participation that is appropriate and recommend an overall approach to Council.
 - 4.2.3. Summarise and report to Council and the community, when appropriate, the input received through the Public Participation.
 - 4.2.4. Consider the input received through the Public Participation when making recommendations to Council.
 - 4.2.5. Evaluate the Public Participation methods in order to continually improve Public Participation effectiveness.
 - 4.2.6. Continually build up skills and experience in Public Participation to be able to deliver effective and meaningful Public Participation.
 - 4.2.7. Develop the necessary procedures to implement this Policy;

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES

- 5.1. The CAO shall develop and implement opportunities for Public Participation using Public Participation Tools in the following circumstances:
 - 5.1.1. When new programs or services are being established;
 - 5.1.2. When existing programs or services are being changed; and
 - 5.1.3. When directed by Council.
- 5.2. Council and the CAO shall consider the Public Participation Spectrum (Appendix A) when determining which Public Participation Tools should be initiated to facilitate Public Participation.

6. POLICY EXPECTATIONS

- 6.1. Legislative and Policy Implications



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- 6.1.1. All Public Participation will be undertaken in accordance with the Municipal Government Act, the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and any other applicable legislation.
 - 6.1.2. All Public Participation will be undertaken in accordance with all existing municipal policies.
 - 6.1.3. This Policy shall be available for public inspection and may be posted to the Municipality's website.
 - 6.1.4. This Policy will be reviewed at least once every four years.
- 6.2. Public Participation Standards
- 6.2.1. Public Participation will be conducted in a sustainable and inclusive manner having regard to different levels of accessibility.
 - 6.2.2. Public Participation activities will be conducted in a professional and respectful manner.
 - 6.2.3. Public Participation plans will consider early, ongoing and diverse opportunities to provide input.
 - 6.2.4. Municipal Stakeholders who participate in any manner of Public Participation are required to be respectful and constructive in their participation. Municipal Stakeholders who are disrespectful, inappropriate or offensive, as determined by Administration, may be excluded from Public Participation opportunities.
 - 6.2.5. The results of Public Participation will be made available to Council and Municipal Stakeholders in a timely manner in accordance with municipal policies.