



SECTION: Administration  
SUBJECT: Public Participation Policy

02-09

## **PURPOSE AND APPLICATION**

In its role in the provision of municipal services, and 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 municipal 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*.

## **GENERAL POLICY PRINCIPLES**

The Special Areas Board recognizes good governance includes engaging Municipal Stakeholders in Public Participation by:

- Creating opportunities for Municipal Stakeholders who are affected by a decision to influence the decision;
- Promoting sustainable decisions by recognizing various Municipal Stakeholder interests;
- Providing Municipal Stakeholders with the appropriate information and tools to engage in meaningful participation; and
- Recognizing that although Advisory 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 Advisory Council, facilitating Public Participation for matters beyond those where public input is statutorily required can enrich the municipal decision-making process.

## **DEFINITIONS**

1. “The Chair” means the chief administrative officer of the Municipality or their delegate.
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. “Municipality” means the Special Areas Board.
4. “Public Participation” includes a variety of non-statutory opportunities where Municipal Stakeholders receive information and/or provide input to the Municipality.
5. “Public Participation Plan” means a plan which identifies which Public Participation Tools to be used to obtain public input in a particular circumstance.
6. “Public Participation Tools” means the tools that may be used, alone or in combination, to create Public Participation opportunities including, but not limited to:
  - 6.1. in-person participation which may include at-the-counter interactions, ratepayer meetings, road committee meetings, service board meetings, door-knocking, interviews, meetings, round-tables, town halls, open houses and workshops;



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- 6.2. digital participation which may include online workbooks, webinars, message boards/discussion forums, and online polls or surveys;
- 6.3. written participation which may include written submissions, email, and mail- in surveys, polls and workbooks; and
- 6.4. representative participation which may include being appointed to a committee, ad hoc committee or citizen board.

## **POLICY RESPONSIBILITIES**

### Advisory Council and Board Responsibilities

7. Advisory Council or Board shall:
  - 7.1. Consider input obtained through Public Participation;
  - 7.2. Promote and support Public Participation;
  - 7.3. Review this Policy to ensure the Policy complies with all relevant legislation, municipal policies and the spirit and intent of Public Participation;
  - 7.4. review and approve Public Participation Plans developed by the Chair in accordance with this Policy; and
  - 7.5. ensure appropriate resources are available to solicit Public Participation in accordance with this Policy;

### Administration Responsibilities

8. The Chair shall:
  - 8.1. in accordance with this Policy, or as directed, develop Public Participation Plans for approval;
  - 8.2. implement approved Public Participation Plans; and
  - 8.3. report the findings of the Public Participation.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES**

9. The Chair shall develop and implement a Public Participation Plan when required or as directed by Advisory Council or Board.

Some examples of when a Public Participation Plan may be required include, but are not limited to:

- when new programs or services are being established;
- when existing programs and services are being reviewed;
- when identifying Advisory Council priorities;
- when gathering input or formulating recommendations with respect to budget; or
- as otherwise directed.

## **POLICY EXPECTATIONS**

### 10. Legislative and Policy Implications

- 10.1. 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.
- 10.2. All Public Participation will be undertaken in accordance with all existing municipal policies.
- 10.3. This Policy shall be available for public inspection and may be posted to the Municipality's website.
- 10.4. This Policy will be reviewed at least once every four years.



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## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLANS**

11. A Public Participation Plan should consider the following:
- 11.1. the nature of the matter for which Public Participation is being sought;
  - 11.2. the impact of the matter on Municipal Stakeholders;
  - 11.3. the demographics of potential Municipal Stakeholders in respect of which Public Participation Tools to utilize, level of engagement and time for input;
  - 11.4. the timing of the decision and time required to gather input;
  - 11.5. what information is required, if any, to participate; and
  - 11.6. available resources and reasonable costs.
12. A Public Participation Plan may include the following:
- 12.1. a communication plan to inform the public about the Public Participation plan and opportunities to provide input;
  - 12.2. identification of which Public Participation Tools will be utilized;
  - 12.3. timelines for participation;
  - 12.4. information about how input will be used;
  - 12.5. the location of information required, if any, to inform the specific Public Participation.

## **REPORTING AND EVALUATION**

13. Information obtained through Public Participation will be reviewed by the Chair and a report may be provided to Advisory Council and Board.
14. The report should include:
- 14.1. an overview of the Public Participation Plan and how it was developed;
  - 14.2. an assessment of the effectiveness of the plan based on the level of engagement and the quality of input;
  - 14.3. a summary of the input obtained; and
  - 14.4. may include recommendations for future Public Participation Plans.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Christianson'.

Jordon Christianson, Chair  
Special Areas Board

Board Motion  
12-10-18