



City of Leduc Policy

Policy Title: Public Engagement Policy

Policy No: 11.00:29

Supersedes: Original Policy
Revision #: 1

Authority: Council
Approval Date: March 11, 2024
Effective Date: March 12, 2024
Relevant Legislation: Government of Alberta's Municipal Government Act
Relevant Council Date of Resolution(s): March 11, 2024
Relevant Bylaw and Date(s):
Authority's Signature:

Policy Statement:

The City of Leduc values Public Engagement and recognizes that Stakeholder input plays a critical role in good governance and in providing the best possible information to support decision making by both Council and Administration. Council is committed to ensuring the appropriate level of Public Engagement is employed and adequate resources are allocated.

Purpose:

The policy guides when to use Public Engagement and provides direction to Administration to determine how to engage Stakeholders on issues and decisions affecting the community.

Further, this policy provides direction to Administration to ensure that the City of Leduc establishes and applies a consistent, coordinated and outcomes-driven approach to Public Engagement.

This policy is in addition to and does not modify or replace the statutory public hearing requirements in the Municipal Government Act.

This policy applies to both Administration and external consultants employed by the City.

Definitions:

"Administration" means the staff of City of Leduc.

"City" means the City of Leduc.

"City Manager" means the chief administrative officer of the City of Leduc.

"Council" means the elected officials of the City of Leduc.

"Public Engagement" means a process that provides opportunities for Stakeholders to contribute to decisions made by the City.

"Public Engagement Framework" means a system or approach that identifies the City's commitments and expectations related to Public Engagement. It also includes a Public Engagement Spectrum, information on the steps required for public engagement and roles and responsibilities for those involved.

"Public Engagement Plan" means a plan that identifies how the engagement will support a project or help inform an issue or decision. It will outline how the engagement will be carried out, and when and how a report on the engagement will be shared.

"Public Engagement Spectrum" means a continuum designed to assist with selecting the level of engagement with the public's involvement in a decision-making process. The Spectrum includes different levels of participation. Identification of the appropriate level to apply to a project depends on the goals, timeframe, resources and degree of concern in the decision to be made. The Spectrum also identifies the commitment being made to the public by the City at each level.

"Stakeholder" means an individual or group who has a specific interest or is impacted by a topic or issue. Stakeholders may include residents, non-residents, businesses, groups, organizations, individuals, representatives and/or Administration, depending on the issue.

Responsibilities:

Council Responsibilities:

Council shall:

- a) Approve the Public Engagement Policy and subsequent Public Engagement Framework to establish consistent practices, processes and timelines for statutory and non-statutory requirements for Public Engagement;
- b) Consider input obtained through Public Engagement activities, while balancing public interest and other considerations, as part of the decision-making process;
- c) Ensure appropriate budget allocation to allow for the ongoing implementation of consistent and comprehensive Public Engagement programs and services;
- d) Review the Public Engagement Policy at least every four years.

Council may:

- a) Promote Public Engagement activities and provide, where appropriate, Council member representation;
- b) Request information from the City Manager on the scope, timing, appropriate methods and resources required for Public Engagement, prior to directing Administration to undertake a Public Engagement activity on a specific issue or item;
- c) Review Public Engagement Plans developed by the City Manager in accordance with this Policy or as directed by Council;
- d) Identify issues or initiatives that may require Public Engagement;
- e) Identify issues or initiatives where Public Engagement shall occur, when not already identified by the policy.

Administration Responsibilities

The City Manager shall:

- a) Develop, recommend to Council and implement practices, processes and timelines for statutory and non-statutory requirements for Public Engagement activities (including a Public Engagement Framework) that shall be used in the development of Public Engagement Plans;
- b) Ensure Administration adheres to this policy and the Public Engagement Framework when conducting Public Engagement;
- c) Advise Council of Public Engagement activities relating to upcoming projects, plans or initiatives;
- d) Evaluate, report back to Council and Stakeholders, and account for how Public Engagement was used to form Administration's recommendations to Council;
- e) Make recommendations to Council on the appropriate budget allocation required for Public Engagement when Council directs public input on a specific issue or item.

The City Manager may:

- a) Assess this Policy and make recommendations to Council about budget allocation;
- b) Evaluate the effectiveness of the Public Engagement Framework and the Public Engagement techniques used in a particular circumstance;
- c) Communicate to Council and Stakeholders, where appropriate, the effectiveness of a Public Engagement Plan(s) used;
- d) Delegate any of his/her responsibilities under this policy to any person or work group within Administration.

Public Engagement Opportunities:

The City is committed to having an intentional approach to build an understanding of when and why Public Engagement shall occur, and as such:

The City shall offer Public Engagement opportunities when:

- a) Required by legislation (i.e., provincial and federal statutory requirements);
- b) Required to meet the expectations of grant funding agreements; or
- c) As otherwise directed by Council.

The City may offer Public Engagement opportunities when:

- a) Establishing new programs, services or service levels;
- b) Reviewing existing programs, services, and associated service levels;
- c) Otherwise deemed necessary by Council or Administration; or
- d) When requested by the Stakeholders.

Policy Expectations:

Legislative and Policy Implications

- a) All Public Engagement will be undertaken in accordance with the *Municipal Government Act*, the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and any other applicable legislation.

- b) This policy shall meet the requirements of the *Municipal Government Act's* mandatory *Public Participation Policy*.
- c) All Public Engagement will be undertaken in accordance with all existing municipal policies.
- d) This Policy shall be available for public inspection and may be posted to the City's website.
- e) This Policy will be reviewed at least once every four years.