

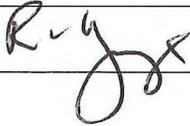


City of Leduc Policy

Policy Title:
Public Engagement Policy

Policy No: 11.00:29

Supersedes: n/a
Revision #: NEW

Authority (Council or City Manager): Council	
Section:	Approval Date: July 9, 2018
Responsible Department:	Effective Date: July 9, 2018
Relevant Legislation: Section 216.1 of Government of Alberta's Municipal Government Act	
Relevant Council Resolution(s) and Date(s): July 9, 2018	
Relevant Bylaw and Date(s):	
Authority's Signature: 	

I. 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.

II. PURPOSE:

The policy guides when 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 employs 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 staff and external consultants.

III. GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

Council recognizes that good governance includes engaging Stakeholders in Public Engagement through the following guiding principles:

Citizen focused: The City respects that people have wisdom and ought to be engaged in the decisions that affect their lives.

Transparency and accountability: The City communicates clearly and openly about Public Engagement opportunities, its processes and provides factual and evidence-based information. It shares the outcomes of Public Engagement, including how the information was used in the decision-making process and makes decisions in the best interest of the community as a whole.

Credible: Public Engagement will be initiated reasonably early to allow Stakeholders to provide input that may influence, inform or impact decisions of Council.

To honour Stakeholder input and to allow timely review and evaluation of said input, engagement will be done reasonably early and as necessary throughout the process.

Diversity and inclusiveness: Stakeholders are provided with a reasonable opportunity to contribute, striving for representative input enabling an inclusive and balanced perspective. Council and Administration strive to have a fulsome picture of Stakeholder input and endeavour to reach and include both representative and underrepresented groups in relevant Public Engagement opportunities.

Public Engagement employs a range of methods to engage various audiences to encourage and maximize participation to improve the quality of feedback and ensure participants feel heard and know their input is valued.

Responsive and ongoing: Public Engagement provides an ongoing focus on relationship building, active listening and two-way dialogue to increase understanding. This will ensure Stakeholders, Administration and Council are better equipped and more responsive to future Public Engagement opportunities.

Clear and focused: Council, Administration and Stakeholders understand their respective roles in a public engagement process, including the level of involvement and how input will be used to inform decisions. Engagement will be conducted with an identified purpose and desired outcomes.

Value added and unsolicited: Public Engagement for matters beyond those where public input is required by law is good practice and improves decision making. Further, Stakeholders are encouraged to approach the City with ideas, comments or concerns, as opposed to waiting for an invitation to provide input.

Evaluation and Continual Improvement: Public Engagement is a dynamic process that needs continual evaluation and adjustment to improve and address the changing needs of the community. Further embracing new and better engagement processes, tactics (as deemed appropriate and relevant) will produce better outcomes.

IV. DEFINITIONS:

- 1) "**Administration**" means the staff of City of Leduc.
- 2) "**Council**" means the elected officials of the City of Leduc.
- 3) "**City Manager**" means the chief administrative officer of the City of Leduc or their delegate.
- 4) "**Stakeholders**" means an individual or group who has a specific interest or is impacted by a topic or issue. Stakeholders may include residents, non-residents, groups, organizations, individuals, representatives and/or City staff, depending on the issue. May also be referred to as "**Public**".

- 5) "**Municipality**" or "**City**" means the City of Leduc.
- 6) "**Public Engagement**" means a process and opportunity for interaction between municipal government and residents (and other stakeholders) in order to stay informed and/or contribute to high quality decision-making. May also be referenced as "**Public Participation**".
- 7) "**Public Engagement Framework**", means a system or approach, which identifies a spectrum of public engagement to use when determining the level of engagement required to inform the development of specific public engagement plans. The framework may include, but not be limited to: different types of public engagement, the purpose and degree of impact or influence of the types of engagement, responsibilities of those involved in the engagement, timing, possible tactics, etc.
- 8) "**Public Engagement Plan**" means a plan, which identifies the purpose and degree of participation required and further outlines how the engagement will be carried out (identifies audiences, objectives, the actions/tactics, responsibilities, resourcing/ budget, etc.) to obtain public input in a particular circumstance. The plan will also provide an evaluation of its effectiveness and recommendations for future plans.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES:

1) Council Responsibilities

(a) Council **shall**:

- i. 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;
- ii. consider public input obtained through Public Engagement activities, while balancing public interest and other considerations, as part of the decision-making process;
- iii. ensure appropriate resourcing to allow for the ongoing implementation of consistent, comprehensive and representative Public Engagement programs and services.

(b) Council **may**:

- i. promote Public Engagement activities and provide, where appropriate, Council member representation;
- ii. 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;
- iii. review Public Engagement Plans developed by the City Manager in accordance with this Policy or as directed by Council;
- iv. identify issues or initiatives that may require public engagement;

- v. identify issues or initiatives where public engagement shall occur, when not already identified by the policy.

2) Administration Responsibilities

(a) The City Manager shall:

- i. 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;
- ii. Ensure Administration adheres to this policy and the Public Engagement Framework when conducting public engagement;
- iii. advise Council of Public Engagement opportunities relating to upcoming projects, plans or initiatives;
- iv. evaluate, report back to Council and Stakeholders, and account for how Public Engagement was used to form administrative recommendations to Council;
- v. make recommendations to Council on the appropriate resources required for Public Engagement, when Council directs public input on a specific issue or item.

(b) The City Manager may:

- i. assess this Policy and make recommendations to Council about the Public Engagement Framework and resourcing.
- ii. evaluate the effectiveness of the Public Engagement Framework and the Public Engagement Tactics used in a particular circumstance;
- iii. communicate to Council and Stakeholders, where appropriate, the effectiveness of a Public Engagement plan(s) used;
- iv. bring Public Engagement Plans to Council for approval

VI. 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:

- 1) 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;
 - (c) identifying Council priorities (i.e. strategic, budget and financial planning)
- 2) 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;
- (d) when requested by the Stakeholders.

VII. POLICY EXPECTATIONS

1) 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 Municipality's website.
- (e) This Policy will be reviewed at least once every four years.