

County of Wetaskiwin No. 10 Municipal Policy

Department: Communications

Policy No.

12.0 Corporate Services

12.0.15

Title Public Participation Policy

1. Policy Statement:

1.1. The County of Wetaskiwin believes that its success lies with the stakeholders it serves. We see the value in engaging the public through a variety of mediums and are committed to open, accountable and responsive decision making, including different levels of engagement with the public as outlined in this policy.

1.2. This policy speaks to the level of public participation and engagement opportunities the County will consider when addressing programs, services, policies, projects, plans or other issues and initiatives that may have an impact on ratepayers in the County. All Public Participation will be undertaken in accordance with the *Municipal Government Act*, the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, any other applicable provincial or federal legislation and existing municipal policies.

1.3. The Public Participation Policy is in addition to and does not modify or replace the statutory public hearing requirements in the *Municipal Government Act*.

1.4. This policy applies to all County of Wetaskiwin employees and Council when they engage the public. It also applies to consultants working on behalf of the County of Wetaskiwin, as well as any boards, committees, and other quasi-judicial bodies as appointed by Council through a bylaw, policy or other legislation.

2. Responsibilities:

2.1. Council as a whole shall:

2.1.1. review and approve Public Participation Plans, which outlines public participation tools to be used to obtain public input;

2.1.2. consider input obtained through Public Participation, keeping in mind that Council is responsible to make the final decision;

2.1.3. review this Policy to ensure the Policy complies with all relevant legislation, municipal policies and the spirit and intent of Public Participation.

2.1.4. ensure appropriate resources are available to solicit Public Participation in accordance with this Policy;

2.1.5. promote and support Public Participation.

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2.2. Public Participation Committee shall:

2.2.1. in accordance with this Policy or as directed by Council, develop Public Participation Plans, for Council approval;

2.3. The CAO shall:

2.3.1. implement approved Public Participation Plans and Policies;

2.3.2. report the findings of the Public Participation to Council;

2.3.3. consider timing, resources and engagement when developing and modifying Public Participation Plans;

2.3.4. evaluate the effectiveness of the Public Participation Plan and the Public Participation Tools used in a particular circumstance;

2.3.5. communicate to Council and the public, when appropriate, the effectiveness of a Public Participation Plan and the Public Participation Tools used;

2.3.6. develop the necessary procedures.

2.4. The County of Wetaskiwin:

2.4.1. Will inform, consult, and engage the public about decisions that may affect them, and will provide public participation opportunities that are open and transparent;

2.4.2. Will give consideration to the public's input gathered in public participation processes;

2.4.3. Is committed to working together with the public to continuously improve its public participation processes;

2.4.4. Supports the belief that involving the public and stakeholders, including individuals, organization or persons that may have an interest in, or are affected by, a decision, in public participation can lead to better, more informed decisions.

2.5. The public and stakeholders of the County of Wetaskiwin:

2.5.1. Are encouraged to meaningfully engage so their voices strengthen decisions and their involvement helps to build a strong community;

2.5.2. Have the right to be heard, but also to listen and be open to different ideas and opposing views;

2.5.3. Are encouraged to increase their understanding and knowledge about local issues, as well as their role in County of Wetaskiwin's decision-making process so that they can participate in a meaningful way.

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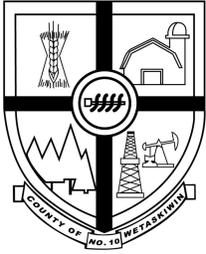
3. Guidelines:

- 3.1. Council recognizes that good governance includes engaging municipal stakeholders in Public Participation by:
 - 3.1.1. Creating opportunities for stakeholders to engage;
 - 3.1.2. Promoting sustainable decisions by recognizing various interests;
 - 3.1.3. Providing stakeholders with the appropriate information and tools to engage in meaningful participation; and
 - 3.1.4. Recognizing that Public Participation for matters beyond the statutory requirements can enrich the decision making process.
- 3.2. Public participation will be applied to decision-making processes that support:
 - 3.2.1. when gathering input or formulating recommendations with respect to budget;
 - 3.2.2. when gathering input or formulating recommendations with respect to the municipality's strategic plans or business plans; or
 - 3.2.3. as otherwise directed by Council.
- 3.3. All participation activities will occur within approved funding and any requests outside of these approved plans must be referred to Council.
- 3.4. This policy will be reviewed by Council at least once every 4 years and will be posted to the County's website.

4. Related Documents:

- 4.1. Communication and Engagement Strategy
- 4.2. Public Participation Administrative Directive

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County of Wetaskiwin No. 10 Administrative Directive

Title Public Participation Directive

5. Procedure:

5.1. Administration is encouraged to use the following 11-step process, and is encouraged to engage citizens as early as possible:

- 5.1.1. Evaluate the purpose of the engagement.
- 5.1.2. Define the objectives and identify the level of engagement.
- 5.1.3. Identify those with a stake in the process.
- 5.1.4. Select the scope, size, and sample.
- 5.1.5. Review the time and cost factors.
- 5.1.6. Select the appropriate engagement tools.
- 5.1.7. Promote.
- 5.1.8. Implement the initiative.
 - a. Communicate openly, honestly and proactively.
 - b. Provide clear, relevant information.
 - c. Keep citizens informed and provide notice of change.
- 5.1.9. Analyze the results.

5.2. The County of Wetaskiwin will promote and communicate opportunities for public participation in a matter they feel is appropriate. This may include, but is not limited to, a combination of the following:

- 5.2.1. County Pages in the County contracted newspaper
- 5.2.2. Website
- 5.2.3. Direct Mail / flyers
- 5.2.4. Radio
- 5.2.5. Social Media
- 5.2.6. Open House
- 5.2.7. Surveys
- 5.2.8. Delegations

5.3. An evaluation is necessary to assess how effectively the Public Participation Policy requirements and commitments were met. An assessment of whether the information was timely, balanced, accurate, accessible, etc. can be completed. In addition to the impact of the participation / engagement on decisions, stakeholders can be asked to express their level of satisfaction with the process and resolution of issues.

6. Related Documents:

- 6.1. Communication and Engagement Strategy
- 6.2. Public Participation Policy

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Schedule "A"



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Public Participation Plan (P2 Plan) Template

SECTION A: PROJECT BACKGROUND

PROJECT NAME:		
Project background:		
Project Overview:		
Project timeline:		
Project Team:		
Initial Stakeholder List:		
PROJECT STEPS	DECISION-MAKER	TIMELINE
Develop P2 Plan		
Approve P2 Plan		
Implement P2 Plan		
Evaluate Process		
Review Input		
Determine use of input		
Communicate back to the public		

SECTION B: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

PURPOSE OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:	Policy 12.0.15 <i>Council recognizes that good governance includes engaging municipal stakeholders in Public Participation by:</i> 2.1. <i>Creating opportunities for stakeholders to engage;</i> 2.2. <i>Promoting sustainable decisions by recognizing various stakeholder interests;</i> 2.3. <i>Providing stakeholders with the appropriate information and tools to engage in meaningful participation; and</i> 2.4. <i>Recognizing that Public Participation for matters beyond the statutory requirements can enrich the decision making process.</i>		
Public engagement goals:			
Related issues/ decisions:			
DECISION TO BE MADE	REQUIRED INPUT	LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT	TIMELINE
<i>Topic/question</i>			

Schedule "A"

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Public Participation Plan (P2 Plan) Template

Decision Making Process



SECTION C: PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS

PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS AND IMPACT	Our promise to public is			
Who will likely be involved?	Whom do they represent?	What are their interests, concerns, values or positions?	Have promises been made about their involvement?	Do they have unique involvement/reach considerations?

SECTION D: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PHASE	LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT	ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES	TIMELINE
Phase 1: Communication	Inform	Newsletter articles, Facebook, website, etc.	
Phase 2: Topic/ Question		Could be multiple phases if multiple engagement tools/ topics are used.	
Phase 3: Evaluation		External - Survey: ask participants to evaluate the events. Internal – P2 Committee and Council evaluate process.	
Phase 4 -5: Data analysis, reporting to Council, review – decision making process			
Phase 5: Communication	Inform	Communicate back to the public on the decision that has been made and how the information collected was used.	

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Schedule "A"

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Public Participation Plan (P2 Plan) Template

SECTION E: REQUIRED RESOURCES

Resources	Resource Coordinator	Budget
Communication: Newsletter, website, facebook	Communications Officer	Staff time
Venue:		
Tables and chairs at Hall		
Projector (at hall or county)		
Coffee, tea, juice, water		
Food/ Snacks?		
Communication table		

SECTION F: INPUT MANAGEMENT

INPUT TO BE GATHERED	INPUT MANAGEMENT
Phase 2:	<i>Example: survey, Index, verbal summaries, etc.</i>

Draft Survey/Discussion Questions:

Insert a copy the survey or discussion questions for the event

DRAFT SCHEDULE:

COUNTY OF WETASKIWIN PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TIMELINE		
DATE / LOCATION		
Time:	Activity:	Lead:
3:00 p.m.	<i>Set up</i>	
4:45 p.m.	<i>Doors Open</i>	
5:00 – 5:10 p.m.	<i>Welcome</i>	
5:10 – 5:30 p.m.	<i>Presentation</i>	
5:30 – 6:30 p.m.	<i>Engagement Technique: Round Tables</i>	
6:30 – 6:50 p.m.	<i>Questions</i>	
6:50 – 7:00 p.m.	<i>Wrap-up</i>	
7:00 – 7:30 p.m.	<i>Clean-up</i>	

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Public Participation Plan (P2 Plan) Template

SECTION G: EVALUATION

P2 EVALUATION	
<i>What are the indicators of success for the public engagement activities?</i>	<i>When and how will evaluation take place?</i>
<i>What will you measure or evaluate?</i>	<i>How will you use our results to enhance our engagement?</i>
<i>Was the engagement completed within approved budget and timeframe?</i>	<i>What was the level of stakeholder satisfaction with process and outcomes?</i>
<i>How were the results used by decision makers?</i>	<i>Do stakeholders understand how the input was used?</i>

SECTION H: COMMUNICATION PLAN:

Project Name:		
Objectives of Communication:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness of <i>Topic/ Question</i> Determine prioritizes Gather information on 		
Related Strategic Priorities: Strategic Plan		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategy Strategic Goal 		
Public Consultation:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 		
Target Audience:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See stakeholder Section C: Project Stakeholders 		
Key Message:		
Pre-Event Communication	During Event Communication	Post Event Communication
Key Dates:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 		
Preferred method of distribution:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website Social Media Press Release Newspaper Spring Newsletter Posters in key locations – post offices, stores, community bulletin boards 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portable Signs Email Councillor Coffee Nights Direct phone calls from Councillors inviting people to attend 		

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