



Public Engagement

PREPARED BY:	Communications Services & Planning and Development Services	COUNCIL APPROVAL DATE:	
EFFECTIVE DATE:			
REFERENCES:	C-AD51-P1 – Public Engagement Procedures	PREVIOUS REVISION DATE:	April 12, 2016
FUNCTION:	Public Engagement	LS REVIEW DATE:	August 15, 2018

PURPOSE

To ensure public engagement in County matters, and allow for more informed decisions, greater public understanding and acceptance, and more enduring solutions.

POLICY STATEMENT

Council believes that public engagement is crucial. They acknowledge that public engagement is a process that requires time and effort from all participants. Council is committed to open, accountable and responsive decision-making, which includes appropriate and timely levels of engagement with the public, as outlined in the public engagement continuum.

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions and interpretations apply in this policy:

1. **Major Development** means a new commercial, industrial, resource extraction, institutional, recreational or multi-unit residential project that may create off-site impacts in terms of:
 - a. traffic generation
 - b. environmental considerations
 - c. municipal infrastructure
 - d. similar effects as deemed an impact by the development authority

In cases of a discrepancy in interpreting this definition, the development authority will determine if a proposed development is a major development by reviewing the proposed development against regulations in the County's Land Use Bylaw.

2. **Major Community Issue/Opportunity** means an issue/opportunity that:
 - a. Has a high impact on the whole community including significant changes to the natural environment or general health and safety of residents, high degree of interest across the community and/or the strong possibility of conflicting perspectives on the issue. Example - elimination of a facility or service that serves whole community.
 - b. Has a high impact on a select area and/or community group including high impact on a specific neighborhood, group or community and/or strong possibility of conflicting perspectives at the neighborhood level or the need for potential trade-offs among particular

groups. Example - Installation of a community wide amenity on a neighborhood subdivision reserve.

3. **Minor Community Issue/Opportunity** means an issue/opportunity that:
 - a. Has a modest impact on the whole community including a sufficient degree of interest across the community to warrant public engagement and/or a moderate possibility of conflicting perspectives. Example - Proposed changes to a community wide service, or provision of a community wide event.
 - b. Has a modest impact on a select area and/or community group including a modest impact on a neighborhood area, community group(s) or specific facility or service and/or a modest risk of controversy or conflict at a local level. Example - local road or sidewalk improvements, changes to a local activity or service such as library hours.
4. **Non-Statutory Plan** means a plan or policy document created by administration or a consultant working for administration, or by an applicant that is not approved as a formal by-law by Council. Non-statutory plans are typically accepted by Council as information.
5. **Open House** means a method of public engagement that involves an informal session with displays or other information available for participants to review. The developer, applicant, consultant or administration, depending on who is organizing the event, are available to answer any questions the public may have. A feedback form or survey is used to record public comment, and a sign-in sheet for names and addresses of attendees is required. This form of public engagement is often used to present a draft plan or report to the public.
6. **Public** means residents, businesses, associations, and other stakeholders who may have a vested interest whether statutory, legal, or otherwise in the issue, project, policy, plan, initiative or bylaw being proposed by Parkland County.
7. **Public Engagement** means the process of informing and/or engaging with the public in the preparation of County plans, studies or reports. This also includes informing and/or engaging with the public on developer/ applicant initiated projects and applications. It could include:
 - a. Informing the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives and/or solutions.
 - b. Engaging the public to obtain feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.
8. **Public Engagement Plan** means a written document outlining the types of public engagement, the tools to be used, and the process to be followed in conducting public engagement on a proposed planning and/or development project.
9. **Public Hearing** a statutory requirement under Section 692 of the *Municipal Government Act*.
10. **Public Meeting** means a method of public engagement that involves a formal presentation by the organizer on the issues and options. Members of the public are able to ask questions and provide input in a public forum, and a Record of the proceedings is kept.

11. **Public Notification** means a method of informing the public. Notified landowners may include, but are not limited to those located within the site for which the application has been made (not including the applicant) and other landowners within a defined area as specified in this Policy.
12. **Record** means: for all engagement formats - written report prepared by the project consultant, applicant, or administration. The record shall include:
 - a. written summary of the presentation
 - b. written summary of public concerns heard at the engagement
 - c. number of participants who engaged in the process (including number in favor, number against, and number indifferent) responses to the public concerns by the developer, applicant, consultant, or administration
 - d. summary of how the public concerns will be addressed

SCOPE

This Policy will apply to all County departments, consultants, applicants, and developers undertaking work in Parkland County. The policy covers all public engagement processes as part of statutory, non- statutory and other proposed applications, plans, projects and studies that may have an impact on the greater public.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Director of Communications is responsible for evaluating and monitoring this Policy. General Managers and Directors are responsible for ensuring implementation of this Policy.

STANDARDS

Public Engagement Plans

1. The Director of the department, or designate, is required to develop a Public Engagement plan to outline the level of public engagement that will be used to inform or address a project, issue, initiative or bylaw proposed by Parkland County.
2. Public Engagement Plans shall be prepared by all developers, applicants, and consultants working with, and on behalf of the County and submitted to the Manager of the department for which the application or plan is being prepared. Public Engagement Plans shall be prepared to the satisfaction of the Manager of the department, and in accordance with this Policy.
3. Public Engagement Plans for County initiated plans, studies, or reports are to be presented to Council.
4. The Administrative Procedures outlines **minimum public engagement requirements** for County plans and processes.

NOTE: At no time shall the notification or engagement be reduced so that it no longer meets the overall intent of this policy, or the requirements for referral, notification, and consultation as defined in the Municipal Government Act, the County's Municipal Development Plan, or the Land Use Bylaw.

ATTACHMENTS

"Schedule 1" IAP2 Continuum of Public Participation

"SCHEDULE 1"**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION CONTINUUM**

The Participation Policy includes a spectrum of five strategies and associated commitments that follow the Spectrum of Engagement of the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2). When Parkland County embarks on an engagement process for planning, policy, and project purposes, the scope of engagement and the commitment to stakeholders will be clarified at the beginning of the process.



Inform To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	Consult To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	Involve To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	Collaborate To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	Empower To place final Decision making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the Public				
We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how your input influenced the decision.	We will work together, seek your advice and innovation in formulating solutions and we will incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decision to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
Engagement Tools				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fact sheets • Web sites • Open Houses • Media • Face-to-face meetings • Reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus groups • Surveys • Feedback forms • Online and personal comments • Public meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Deliberate polling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen advisory committees • Consensus-building • Participatory decision-making • Workshops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ballots • Plebiscites • Delegated decisions