

## TOWN OF PINCHER CREEK POLICY



<b>Approved by:</b> Council	<b>Date:</b> November 27, 2023	<b>Policy Number:</b> 166-23
<b>Reference Motions:</b> 18-346 23-586	<b>Revision Date:</b> 2027	
<b>Title: Public Participation Policy</b>		

### Policy Statement

This Public Participation Policy has been developed to encourage residents to have a voice in the decision making process, and to provide Town Council with more information to make informed decisions. The Public Participation Policy will help guide Administration and Council on appropriate times and methods to formally engage the public and make the process of public engagement more transparent.

### **POLICY**

#### **1. General Policy Principles**

1.1 Council recognizes that good governance includes engaging in Public Participation by:

- 1.1.1 Creating opportunities for residents and other stakeholders to influence decisions which may affect them;
- 1.1.2 Promoting inclusive decisions by recognizing various municipal stakeholder interests;
- 1.1.3 Providing residents and stakeholders with the appropriate information and tools to engage in meaningful participation; and
- 1.1.4 Recognizing that engaging in Public Participation can enrich the decision making process.

#### **2. General Considerations for Public Engagement**

2.1 Reasons for Public Participation may include but are not limited to any of the following;

- 2.1.1 Changes in process/service level;
- 2.1.2 Reviewing existing programs and services;
- 2.1.3 Large scale project with major budget implications;

- 2.1.4 Budget process;
- 2.1.5 Strategic priorities;
- 2.1.6 Direction for Council
- 2.1.7 Statutory Requirements

### **3. Policy Expectations/Standards**

- 3.1 All Public Participation will be undertaken in accordance with the Municipal Government Act, the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, Municipal Policies and any other applicable legislation. This Policy shall also be available for public inspection.
- 3.2 The Town of Pincher Creek is committed to achieving the following standards with our Public Participation:
  - 3.2.1 **Transparency** – To be clear and open about the public process, purpose, and how the information will be used.
  - 3.2.2 **Authentic Intent** – To gather public views and ideas to help shape decisions, rather than persuade members of the public to accept a decision that has already been made.
  - 3.2.3 **Informed Participation** – Ensure participants have the information and/or access to expertise in relation to the issue at hand.
  - 3.2.4 **Accessible Participation** – To ensure our Public Participation is broadly accessible in terms of time, location, and available to all that wish to participate.
  - 3.2.5 **Feedback to Participants** – Results of Public Engagement will be reported back to Council and the public in a timely manner, along with how the results are being considered.

### **4. Engagement Levels/Tools**

- 4.1 There are generally five levels of engagement that would have different public involvement and tools. This is reflected in the attached Public Engagement Spectrum and outlined below in order of increasing public influence.
  - 4.1.1 **Inform** – To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.
  - 4.1.2 **Consult** – To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.
  - 4.1.3 **Involve** – To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.
  - 4.1.4 **Collaborate** – To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.
  - 4.1.5 **Empower** – To place final decision making in the hands of the public.

**5. Responsibilities**

5.1 Council shall:

- 5.1.1 Review and approve Public Participation Plans developed by the CAO and Directors in accordance with this Policy or as directed by Council;
- 5.1.2 Consider input obtained through Public Participation; and
- 5.1.3 Review this Policy to ensure the Policy complies with all relevant legislation, municipal policies and the spirit and intent of Public Participation;
- 5.1.4 Ensure appropriate resources are available to solicit Public Participation in accordance with this Policy;
- 5.1.5 Promote and support Public Participation; and
- 5.1.6 Request and review information from the CAO on the scope, timing, appropriate methods and resources required for Public Participation prior to directing the development of a Public Participation Plan.

5.2 The Chief Administrative Officer shall:

- 5.2.1 In accordance with this Policy or as directed by Council, develop Public Participation Plans, with the Director team, for Council approval;
- 5.2.2 Implement approved Public Participation Plans;
- 5.2.3 Report the findings of the Public Participation Process to Council;
- 5.2.4 Consider timing, resources and engagement when developing and modifying Public Participation Plans;
- 5.2.5 Evaluate the effectiveness of the Public Participation Plan and the Public Participation Tools used in a particular circumstance;
- 5.2.6 Communicate to Council and the public, when appropriate, the effectiveness of a Public Participation Plan and the Public Participation Tools used;
- 5.2.7 Develop the necessary procedures to implement this Policy; and
- 5.2.8 Assess this policy and make recommendations to Council about the Public Participation and resources.

**6. Definitions**

6.1 CAO means the Chief Administrative Officer for the Town of Pincher Creek.

6.2 Council means the Council for the Town of Pincher Creek, in the Province of Alberta.

6.3 Directors means all director level management positions.

6.4 Managers means all manager level management positions such as; Legislative Services Manager, Operations Manager and Recreation Manager.

6.5 MGA means the Municipal Government Act for the Province of Alberta.

6.6 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.

**7. End of Policy**



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Mayor, Town of Pincher Creek



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CAO, Town of Pincher Creek

November 27, 2023

DATE



## Public Engagement Spectrum

*Public Consultation increasing in involvement and influence.*



**Our goal is to provide authentic, transparent, accessible, and informed public engagement opportunities.**

Note: The Town's spectrum has been modified based on the International Association of Public Participation's spectrum.