

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION POLICY [PLAIN LANGUAGE SAMPLE]

POLICY STATEMENT

Sample:

The municipality (Council and Administration) recognizes that municipal decisions have an impact on the public, and that decisions may be improved by engaging with the public before a decision is made.

WHAT IS PUBLIC PARTICIPATION?

Sample:

Public participation is any process that involves the public, or anyone interested in or affected by an issue or opportunity, in contributing to a decision to be made by the municipality about that issue or opportunity.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Sample:

The municipality is committed to transparent public participation processes. We will tell the public early on why they are being engaged and how the information will be used.

The municipality is committed to inclusive public participation processes. We acknowledge that people are busy and have many responsibilities; we endeavour to make it as easy as possible for people to participate.

THE WHY

Your policy statement is one sentence that explains why you believe engaging with the public is important.

THE WHAT

Definition of public engagement.

WHAT MAKES IT MEANINGFUL

Your guiding principles are short and sweet value statements that explain, at a high level, how you will engage with the public.

The municipality is committed to accountable public participation processes. We will measure the outcomes of each public participation process and use the information to improve future processes.

The municipality is committed to effective public participation processes. We will make sure we communicate in plain language, and that the process respects the time and energy of everyone involved.

The municipality is committed to using empathy in public participation processes. We will strive to understand and respond to other people's viewpoints.

HOW WE WILL USE INPUT

Sample:

The municipality recognizes there are varying levels of influence found within public participation processes. Depending on the level(s) selected, there is an increasing amount of public influence over the decision.

- 1) Inform: providing the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.
- 2) Listen and Learn: obtaining public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.

LEVELS OF INFLUENCE

The five levels of public participation are based on the International Association of Public Participation's (IAP2) Spectrum of Public Participation.

This section is required under the MGA.

- 3) **Involve:** working directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.
- 4) **Collaborate:** partnering with the public in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.
- 5) **Empower:** delegating aspects of the final decision to the public.

WHEN WE ENGAGE THE PUBLIC

Sample:

The municipality recognizes that the public is affected by municipal decisions, and recognizes the following opportunities for participation: planning, policy, and projects.

HOUSEKEEPING

The municipality will review this policy at least once every four years.

Public Participation will be undertaken in accordance with the Municipal Government Act and any other applicable legislation.

This policy will be made available to the public for information.

WHEN

This section is required under the MGA.

UPDATES, ETC.

This section is required under the MGA.