



## **TOWN OF TOFIELD**

## **POLICY AND PROCEDURE HANDBOOK**

### **GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP**

**POLICY: Public Participation**

**Policy: 1.14**

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#### **POLICY STATEMENT:**

Council and Administration recognize that quality public participation is a critical component of good governance and as such, adequate resources will be allocated and the appropriate level of public participation undertaken. The Town is committed to public participation activities that are founded to the following principles:

#### **Shared Responsibility and Commitment:**

Public participation leads to better decisions and is a shared responsibility of Council, Administration and the community.

#### **Transparent and Accountable:**

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

### **Inclusive and Accessible:**

The Town endeavors to provide opportunities for public participation that take into account the diversity of needs, abilities and viewpoints of the members of the community.

### **Appropriate and Responsive:**

Public participation activities need to be appropriate to the stated goals, and reflective of the varied preferences and needs of community members for receiving and sharing information.

### **Evaluation and Continual Improvement:**

Public participation is a dynamic and evolving process that needs continual evaluation and adjustment to continuously improve and address the changing needs of the community.

### **Definitions**

1. **"Town"** shall be defined in accordance to the following:
  - a) Means the municipal corporation of the Town of Tofield.
2. **"Community"** shall be defined according to the following:
  - a) Refers to the Town, residents, businesses, schools, religious institutions and all other institutions and agencies that make up Tofield.
3. **"Public Participation"** shall be defined according to the following:
  - a) Means processes through which the Town provides opportunities for the community to have input into decision-making through public meetings, surveys, open houses, workshops, polling, resident advisory committees and other forms of engagement.
4. **"Stakeholder"** shall be defined according to the following:
  - a) Means an individual, organization or group that has an interest in an issue, will be or is likely to be affected by an issue, or has the ability to affect a decision or outcome.
5. **"Non – Statutory Requirement"** shall be defined according to the following:
  - a) Means a rule based on customs, precedents or court decisions.

6. **"Statutory Requirement"** shall be defined according to the following:

- a) Means a requirement written into a law passed by the provincial or federal government.

## **GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES:**

### **Responsibilities**

Town Council shall:

1. Consider public input obtained through public participation activities as part of their decision making process;
2. Promote public participation activities and provide, where appropriate, Council member representation;
3. Establish consistent practices, processes and timelines for statutory and non-statutory requirements for public participation;
4. Ensure appropriate resources are available to allow for the ongoing implementation of consistent, comprehensive and representative public participation program and services;
5. appropriate methods and resources required to undertake a public participation activity on a specific issue or item.

The Chief Administrative Officer shall:

1. Maintain public participation processes that:
  - a) Ensure a coordinated and standardized approach to public participation across the organization;
  - b) When determining the appropriate level of public participation that the Town:
    - Provides opportunities for early and ongoing participation.
    - Aligns resources, types and methods of public participation with the impact of the decision to the community and/or key stakeholder groups.
    - Provides opportunities for ongoing engagement as well as for emerging issues.

2. Recommend to Council practices, processes and timelines for statutory and non-statutory requirements for public participation activities.
3. Communicate to Council and community, where appropriate, how public input was gathered and used in Administrative recommendations to Council.
4. Bring forward resourcing requirements to ensure public participation programs and services are run effectively and consistently.
5. Make recommendations to Council on the appropriate resources required for public participation, when Council directs public input on a specific issue or item.

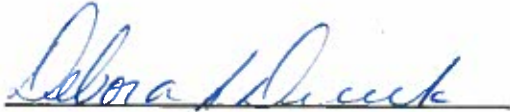
### **Service Standards/Expectations**

1. The Town shall comply with all provincial and federal statutory requirements for public participation.
2. The Town shall offer public participation opportunities when:
  - a) Gathering community input following the presentation of proposed business plans and budgets;
  - b) Establishment of new programs, services and service levels;
  - c) Issues, items or public happenings, deemed to be contentious by Council, by the community at whole; or
  - d) Otherwise deemed necessary by Council or the Chief Administrative Officer.
3. The Town shall have the appropriate allocation of resources and governance mechanisms to build organizational and community capacity for public participation through community outreach and educational activities.
4. The Town shall effectively communicate to the community its public participation goals, objectives and processes, including how information will be used and how decisions are made.
5. The Town will ensure the results of the public participation activities are publicly available, which includes posting them on the Town's website.
6. The Town shall, where reasonably possible, use various methods and techniques for public participation that meet the varied needs of the community whether it be demographic, physical, social or cultural.

7. The Town shall evaluate and learn from the feedback received from the community, as well as continuously look for new and better processes and tools that address the changing needs of the community.

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COUNCIL APPROVAL MOTION #19-02-18



MAYOR

DATE: February 12, 2018