



Department: Council /Administration

Policy No: 36

Policy Title: Public Participation

Resolution No: 103/23

Date: May 17, 2023

Review Date: 2025

Purpose:

In accordance with Section 216.1 of the *Municipal Government Act*, this Public Participation Policy has been developed to recognize the value of public participation and create opportunities for meaningful public participation in decisions that directly impact the public.

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

Policy Statement:

Council and Administration recognize that good governance includes encouraging stakeholders involvement through various and appropriate public participation processes by:

- 1) Identifying circumstances in which stakeholders will be engaged;
- 2) Promoting sustainable decisions by recognizing various stakeholders interests;
- 3) Providing stakeholders with the appropriate information and tools to engage in meaningful participation;
- 4) Communicating clearly and openly about public participation opportunities, its processes and provides factual and evidence based information.
- 5) Sharing outcomes of public participation, including how the information was used in the decision making process.

Definitions:

- 1) “**CAO**” means the chief administrative officer of the Municipality or their delegate.
- 2) “**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.

- 3) “**Municipality**” means the Village of Alix.
- 4) “**Public Participation**” includes a variety of non-statutory opportunities where stakeholders receive information and/or provide input to the Municipality.
- 5) “**Public Participation Plan**” means a plan which identifies which Public Participation Tool to be used to obtain public input in a particular circumstance.
- 6) “**Public Participation Tools**” means the tools that may be used, alone or in combination, to create Public Participation opportunities including, but not limited to:
  - a) in-person participation which may included at-the-counter interactions, door-knocking, interviews, meetings, round-tables, town halls, open houses and workshops;
  - b) digital participation which may include online workbooks, online polls or surveys;
  - c) written participation which may include written submissions, email, and mail-in surveys, polls and workbooks; and
  - d) representative participation which may include being appointed to an advisory committee, ad hoc committee or citizen board.

Responsibilities:

1) Council Responsibilities

a) Council shall:

- i) review and approve Public Participation Plans developed by the CAO in accordance with this Policy or as directed by Council;
- ii) consider input obtained through Public Participation; and
- iii) review this Policy to ensure the Policy promotes the spirit and intent of Public Participation.

2) Administration Responsibilities

a) CAO shall:

- i) in accordance with this Policy or as directed by Council, develop Public Participation Plans, for Council approval;
- ii) implement approved Public Participation Plans; and ensure the Policy complies with all relevant legislation and municipal policies.
- iii) report the findings of the Public Participation to Council.

## Public Participation Opportunities

- a) CAO shall develop and implement a Public Participation Plan in the following circumstances:
- i) when new programs or services are being established;
  - ii) when existing programs and services are being reviewed;
  - iii) when identifying Council priorities;
  - iv) when gathering input or formulating recommendations with respect to budget;
  - v) when gathering input or formulating recommendations with respect to the Municipality's strategic plans or business plans;
  - vi) when gathering input or formulating recommendations with respect to the Municipality's capital plan and/or financial plan; or
  - vii) as otherwise directed by Council.

## Policy Expectations

### 1) Legislative and Policy Implications

- a) All Public Participation will be undertaken in accordance with the *Municipal Government Act*, the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and any other applicable legislation.
- b) All Public Participation will be undertaken in accordance with all existing municipal policies.
- c) This Policy shall be available for public inspection and may be posted to the Municipality's website.
- d) This Policy will be reviewed at least once every four years.

### 2) Public Participation Standards

- a) Public Participation will be conducted in a sustainable and inclusive manner having regard to different levels of accessibility.
- b) Public Participation activities will be conducted in a professional and respectful manner.
- c) Public Participation plans will consider early, ongoing and diverse opportunities to provide input.
- d) Stakeholders who participate in any manner of Public Participation are required to be respectful and constructive in their participation. Stakeholders who are disrespectful,

inappropriate or offensive, as determined by Administration, may be excluded from Public Participation opportunities.

e) The results of Public Participation will be made available to Council and stakeholders in a timely manner in accordance with municipal policies.

### Public Participation Plans

a) When so directed by this Policy or Council, the CAO shall develop a Public Participation Plan for approval by Council which shall consider the following:

- i) the nature of the matter for which Public Participation is being sought;
- ii) the impact of the matter on stakeholders;
- iii) the demographics of potential stakeholders in respect of which Public Participation Tools to utilize, level of engagement and time for input;
- iv) the timing of the decision and time required to gather input;
- v) what information is required, if any, to participate; and
- vi) available resources and reasonable cost

b) Public Participation Plans will, at minimum, include the following:

- i) a communication plan to inform the public about the Public Participation plan and opportunities to provide input;
- ii) identification of which Public Participation Tools will be utilized;
- iii) timelines for participation;
- iv) information about how input will be used;
- v) the location of information required, if any, to inform the specific Public Participation.

### Reporting and Evaluation

a) Information obtained in Public Participation will be reviewed by the CAO and a report shall be provided to Council.

b) The report shall include, at minimum:

- i) an overview of the Public Participation Plan and how it was developed;
- ii) an assessment of the effectiveness of the plan based on the level of engagement and the quality of input;

iii) a summary of the input obtained;

iv) may include recommendations for future Public Participation Plans.

c) Reports shall be provided to Council for review.

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Mayor

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CAO

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Date