



Public Participation Policy

POLICY NUMBER: 204-AD-18

Approval Date: February 27, 2018

Revise Date:

Motion Number: CM20180227.1005

Repeal Date:

Supersedes:

Review Date: July 9, 2024

1.0 Policy Intent

The City of Cold Lake wishes to involve stakeholders in providing input into decisions that affect the community.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of the Public Participation Policy is to ensure the public is given an opportunity to participate in decisions that affect them while recognizing that the right to participate is not absolute as it must be balanced with Council's obligation, as the elected authority for the City, to ultimately bear the burden of making difficult decisions.

3.0 Policy Statement

- 3.1 The City of Cold Lake values quality public participation because it leads to stronger decisions and is a critical component of good governance.
- 3.2 Adequate resources need to be allocated to ensure the public participation opportunities are present, clearly and openly promoted, communicated to the public, and appropriate to the stated goals.
- 3.3 Quality public participation requires a shared responsibility and commitment of Council, Administration and the community.
- 3.4 The City shall consider public input obtained through public participation activities when making decisions, however, it is acknowledged that while taking into account all of the information available to them, Council, as the elected authority for the City, ultimately bears the burden of making significant and difficult choices.
- 3.5 In order to ensure public participation opportunities are meaningful, they must:
 - 3.5.1 Be available for a reasonable time period prior to decision making, and where appropriate, shall be ongoing.

- 3.5.2 Engage the appropriate stakeholders who may be impacted by the decision and/or be in a position to provide the most pertinent insights;
 - 3.5.3 Be authentic, in that they will aim to genuinely engage the public, not persuade the public of a decision that has already been made;
 - 3.5.4 Be inclusive of the diverse viewpoints of the community and reflective of the population.
 - 3.5.5 Be accessible to the community members and/or stakeholders whom they seek to engage.
- 3.6 As per Section 216.1(5) of the *Municipal Government Act*, RSA 2000, c M-26, no resolution or bylaw of a council may be challenged on the ground that it was made without complying with a public participation policy established by a resolution of the council.

4.0 Managerial Guidelines

Approaches to Community Engagement

- 4.1 The following approaches to engage stakeholders will be utilized at the discretion of the City of Cold Lake CAO:
- 4.1.1 **Inform:** Informing the public of issues/initiatives to make them aware of decisions already made (for example: a press release to inform the public of a new service);
 - 4.1.2 **Consult:** Consultation to educate the public and collect opinions which may influence decision making and recommendations (for example: public hearings and delegations to council);
 - 4.1.3 **Involve:** Involving the public through debate to clarify issues, values and to gather information which will shape the alternatives developed and conclusions reached (for example: seeking input from local taxi companies prior to the new taxi bylaw);
 - 4.1.4 **Collaborate:** Collaboration and working with the public directly to identify alternative and outcomes (for example: Economic Development Advisory Committee);
 - 4.1.5 **Empower:** Empowerment of the public through delegation of authority for decision making and implementation where decisions made by the public will be implemented and community capacity can be improved (for example: Subdivision and Development Appeal Board).

Inform and Consult

- 4.2 Regularly scheduled council meetings and corporate priorities committee meetings are advertised to the public, open to the public, and offer community members and stakeholders the opportunity to hear directly from Council and Senior Administration as well as to communicate with Council directly through:
- 4.2.1 Public question period at the beginning of each regular council meeting;
 - 4.2.2 Delegations to Council (permitted at each regular council meeting) can make direct requests to council and/or provide information to Council.

- 4.3 The full council meeting and corporate priorities committee meetings agenda packages (which includes all issue summaries and attached documentation) are published on the City website prior to the meetings. Following the meetings, the minutes are published on the City website.
- 4.4 Councillor's contact information is available to the public to ensure municipal stakeholders and community members can contact their elected officials directly with questions, concerns and information. Councillors may share these concerns with senior administration during the councillor question period at the end of every regularly scheduled council meeting, or it may be shared directly with the CAO.
- 4.5 Notice and opportunities for input are provided as required by the *Municipal Government Act*, RSA 2000, c M-26.
- 4.6 Social media, publications, newspaper, radio, City website, advertising boards, and press releases are utilized to share information with community stakeholders. For example, the public is notified of new City initiatives and programs and new City services.

Involve and Collaborate

- 4.7 Community perspectives and expertise are leveraged through membership on volunteer Boards which provide recommendations and direction to Council. The current volunteer boards are listed on the City website and board member opportunities are advertised.
- 4.8 The City hosts a number of open houses throughout the year and conducts surveys as required to seek feedback from the public as directed by Council or the City of Cold Lake CAO.
- 4.9 The City consults directly with specific interests groups at the direction of the CAO when bylaws and/or process could impact a specific stakeholder group.
- 4.10 The City has established Policy No. 105-AD-08, Citizen's Request for Service to ensure all written and verbal concerns of the public are responded to in a timely and consistent manner.
- 4.11 There shall be an opportunity offered at least once per year to garner City resident's overall perceptions of the quality of life, program satisfaction and service quality.

Empower

- 4.12 Authority is delegated to community members who are invited to make important decisions as a quasi-judicial board member on the Local Assessment Review Board, Composite Assessment Review Board, and the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board.

Guiding Standards for Public Engagement

- 4.13 When public participation opportunities are offered, Administration shall ensure that the following information is publicly available, including being posted on its website:
- 4.13.1 The time and place of the opportunity;
 - 4.13.2 The purpose of the opportunity;
 - 4.13.3 The process that will be undertaken to engage the community, how the information obtained will be used, and how the resulting decisions will be made;
 - 4.13.4 The results of the public engagement.
- 4.14 The City shall evaluate public participation opportunities in an effort to continually engage members of the public in an effective way recognizing that community needs may change over time.
- 4.15 The City of Cold Lake CAO shall have the discretion to determine whether public participation opportunities have been sufficient or require additional measures to adequately engage the community.

Review of Policy

- 4.16 This policy shall be reviewed at least once every four (4) years, as is required by the *Public Participation Policy Regulation*, Alta Reg 193/2017

5.0 References

Public Participation Policy Regulation, Alta Reg 193/2017
Policy No. 105-AD-08, Citizen's Request for Service

6.0 Persons Affected

Members of the public

7.0 Revision/Review History

Reviewed July 9, 2024 – Motion No. CRM20240709.1010 by Councillor Bailey to accept policy following review with no revisions.

July 9, 2024

Date

July 22 2024

Date



Chief Administrative Officer

Mayor