



Policy Title	Date:	Resolution No.
Public Engagement Policy	May 22/18	1558/18

Policy Statement:

The Summer Village of Birchcliff recognizes that decisions, of direct or significant impact on the public, are improved when citizens and other stakeholder groups, participate, and engage in the process. The Summer Village of Birchcliff commits to transparent and inclusive decision-making processes that are responsive, accountable and practical.

Purpose:

To establish the foundation for the Summer Village of Birchcliff’s public engagement/participation procedures, and to ensure the associated public participation tools are in place, and reviewed annually, as a means of improving the quality of municipal decisions, increasing the role of public input in municipal governance, and generating public knowledge to support the Summer Village of Birchcliff’s long-term visions.

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

Definitions:

- a) Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) is the Chief Administrative Officer appointed by Bylaw for the Summer Village of Birchcliff.
- b) Communications Officer: The person, designated by the Chief Administrative Officer, to oversee the communication functions of the municipality, including public engagement activities.
- c) Employee: is a person who is filling a position for the Summer Village of Birchcliff. This includes Full Time, Casual, Probationary, Temporary, Part Time and Volunteers.
- d) Employer: is the Summer Village of Birchcliff.
- e) Manager/Immediate Supervisor: is the person accountable to the Chief Administrative Officer who is designated to supervise employees.
- f) Participation: means engagement, and includes a variety of non-statutory opportunities where the public/stakeholders received information and/or provides input to the municipality.
- g) Public: Any individual or group who may have an interest in a topic or issue of the Summer Village of Birchcliff. Topics or issues of the Summer Village of Birchcliff may or may not directly impact the public.
- h) Spectrum of Engagement: Identifies engagement approaches defined by the International Association of Public Participation. Five different degrees of public involvement are identified: Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate and Empower.



- i) Stakeholder: Any individual or group who is impacted or has a specific interest in topic or issue of the Summer Village of Birchcliff. Stakeholders may include residents, non-residents, groups, organizations and/or Summer Village staff.
- j) Summer Village: is the municipal government of Birchcliff.

Responsibilities:

- a) Council:
 - i. Approve and adopt policy;
 - ii. Consider and approve any Public Participation Plans that identifies an “Empower” level of engagement.
- b) Chief Administrative Officer:
 - i. Approve procedures;
 - ii. Administer the policy and procedures, ensuring the Policy applies to all aspects of municipal planning, policy making and project initiatives, community development, internal relations, customer service, mandated public participation processes, and volunteer participation;
 - iii. Advise Divisions in the correct application of the policy and procedures;
 - iv. Approve amendments to the procedures;
 - v. Serve as an advocate for public engagement;
 - vi. Ensure the policy and procedures are accessible to the public for inspection.
- c) Supervisors:
 - i. Ensure that all Division employees adhere to the policy;
 - ii. Review, and sign off on Participation assessments;
 - iii. Administer the policy within the Division;
 - iv. Recommend changes in policy and procedures;
 - v. Ensure appropriate participation plans are implemented;
 - vi. Evaluate and measure the effectiveness of public participation plans;
 - vii. Assist the Director in ensuring adherence to this policy;
 - viii. Budget accordingly for policy requirements;
 - ix. Complete participation assessments.
- d) Communications Officer:
 - i. Signs off on participation assessments and public participation plans;
 - ii. Coordinates/assists with activities identified in the public engagement plans;
 - iii. Assists with the review and evaluation of the public participation activities.

Public Participation Standards:

To encourage public participation, the Summer Village of Birchcliff is committed to:



- a) Providing timely and accessible information to the public;
- b) Evaluating engagement processes, measuring the outcomes, and communicating the results to the public;
- c) Providing two-way communication opportunities in a fair and respectful open process, which includes clarification of the roles, responsibilities, and procedures to all parties involved.
- d) Continuously improving the ways in which the Summer Village of Birchcliff engages in the public, and remaining current with public engagement best practices;
- e) Making every reasonable effort to reach, involve, and hear from the public.

Public Participation Management:

- a) The Summer Village of Birchcliff continues to adhere to the requirements and expectations for petitions, public meetings, public hearings, and public participation, as identified within the Alberta Municipal Government Act.
- b) The Summer Village of Birchcliff commits to considering public participation needs during the “project plan” making, and budget making processes.
- c) Public participation needs are also considered during the development of bylaws, or mayor bylaw amendments, and where public participation activities are not mandated through other municipal policy or law, and where any project, service, or initiative substantially impacts members of the public.
- d) The Summer Village of Birchcliff maintains a public participation toolkit for which municipal staff must apply when undertaking any of the aforementioned activities.
- e) The Summer Village staff will coordinate the management of design, planning, implementation and evaluation of public participation activities with the Communications Department.
- f) The Summer Village of Birchcliff commits to a final assessment of the success of all participation activities.

Approach to Determining Level of Public Participation

The Summer Village of Birchcliff’s Strategic Plan is developed by Council, and reviewed annually. The Strategic Plan determines a vision for the Summer Village, which includes:

- Informed citizens that are active contributors to the growth and development of our progressive community.

The Strategic Plan also identifies guiding principles for which to govern by:

- Transparency
- Fiscal responsibility
- Public engagement
- Informed decision making
- Continuous improvement
- Collaborative interaction



Seeking information, becoming informed, providing meaningful and respectful input, and becoming involved in municipal processes is essential in development of our community. Permanent opportunities to keep up to date with the Summer Village information and to provide input exist.

The Summer Village of Birchcliff utilizes to the five stages of engagement as identified by the *International Association for Public Participation's Spectrum of Public Participation*. These five stages of engagement identify the variety of approaches the public may engage with the municipality, are determined during the initial public participation design and planning management processes. Each stage is inclusive of stages prior.



Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
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GOALS

Provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist in the understanding, alternatives, opportunities, and/or solutions to a particular subject matter.	Obtain Public feedback on analysis alternatives, and/or decisions.	Works directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	Partner with the Public in each aspect of the decisions including the development of alternatives and identification of the preferred outcome.	Place final and whole decision-making responsibility in the hands of the public.
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OUR PROMISE

Provide timely accessible information to keep the public informed.	Keep the Public informed, while we listed, acknowledge, and update the public on how their input has influenced an outcome.	Work with the public to ensure the public concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the outcome.	Look to the public for advice and innovation in formulating an outcome or decision to incorporate the public's advice and recommendations into that outcome to the maximum extent possible, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the outcome.	Implement what the public determines, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the outcome.
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EXAMPLES

(may or may not include, but not limited to)

- *FACT SHEET
- *WEBSITE
- *SOCIAL MEDIA
- *OPEN HOUSES
- *ADVERTISING
- *PRINT MATERIAL

- *PUBLIC COMMENT
- *FOCUS GROUPS
- *SURVEYS
- *PUBLIC HEARINGS
- *ONLINE FEEDBACK
- *DOT-MOCRACY

- *WORKSHOPS
- *DELIVERATIVE POLLS
- *VOLUNTEERING
- *CLUB ATTENDANCE

- *CITIZEN COMMITTEE
- *CONSENSUS BUILDING
- *PARTICIPATORY DECISION MAKING
- *CHARENTTES

- *SPECIALIZED CITIZEN COMMITTEE
- *BALLOTS
- *DELEGATED DECISION MAKING
- *COMMUNITY SPIRIT GRANT PROGRAM
- *COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

Attachment A: Internal toolkit for the design, planning, implementation, and evaluation of public participation activities.

Attachment B: Project Plan template



Public Participation Evaluation to be Completed by Administration Staff

<p>TO BE COMPLETED BY STAFF</p>	<p>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY Describe the project, participation process, outcomes, target audiences, and overview of results.</p>	
<p>TO BE COMPLETED BY STAFF</p>	<p>Background Provide an overview of the issues or decision to be made.</p>	
<p>TO BE COMPLETED BY WORKING GROUP</p>	<p>Engagement Process Describe the number and range of participants, the quality of participation, techniques and tools (in-person and digital), used in the process.</p>	
<p>TO BE COMPLETED BY WORKING GROUP</p>	<p>Findings Provide an overview of the results for each participation technique and tool applied. This should be a summary of the quantitative and qualitative data collected during the process.</p>	
<p>TO BE COMPLETED BY STAFF AFTER PROGRAM</p>	<p>Results and Recommendation Provide an analysis of the findings and results.</p>	
	<p>Appendices Share any available data collected.</p>	<p>Senior Manager: _____ Communications Officer: _____</p>



PROJECT: _____

**Public Expectation Assessment
to be completed by Administration Staff**

Assessment Questions	Very Low	Low	Moderate	High	Very High
What is the legally required level of public participation?					
To what extent do staff believe that the public could help improve the outcome of the issue or opportunity?					
What level do staff perceive public interest in the issue or opportunity?					
What is the potential for public to influence the decision-making process?					
What level of media interest do you anticipate?					
What is the likelihood that decision-makers will give full consideration to public input?					
What levels of resources are likely to be available to support public participation?					
What is the anticipated level for political controversy?					
Count the number of checks in each column.					
Multiply the number of checks by the weight.	X1	X2	X3	X4	X5
Enter column score.					
Add total of all five column scores.					
Divide total score by the number of questions. (/8)					
Average score:					

Very Low to Low (1-2): Work with key members of the public and special interest groups to identify a comprehensive *information* program to satisfy public concerns.

Low to Moderate (2-3): Public participation is probably a good idea. Consider how the *consult* level will work with the issues and interests of the public.

Moderate to High (3-4): Consider participation at least at the *consult* level and probably the *involve* level.

High to Very High (4-5): Evaluate how public issues and interests and internal considerations can best be accommodated at the *involve* level or even more to the *collaborate* or *empower* levels.

Senior Manager: _____

Communications Officer: _____



PROJECT: _____ **Participation Level Selection to be Completed by Council**

Scope	1	2	3	4	5
Have a size or complexity that can be considered significant?					
Potentially impact a significant number of members of the public?					
Potentially impact people located in a number of different areas within the municipality?					
Affect a wide range of the public?					
Complexity					
Considered unique and/or challenging?					
Require a number of stages and/or components?					
See members of the public have a strong and differing opinions for the project or issue/opportunity?					
Concern					
Connected to any significant past issue or poor relationships with members of the public?					
Create or increase any health or safety risk?					
Result in an unfair advantage (for example: create “winners”)?					
Be an emotional or moral “hot button”?					
Resulted in tension or controversy in past engagements?					
Impact taxes or fees collected by the municipality?					
Impact					
Decrease property values or increase taxation levels or fees?					
Create undesirable aesthetic changes (view, odour, noise, etc.)?					
Interfere with daily lifestyle and habitual patterns of people (loss of access, congestion, restriction of activity, etc.)?					
Interfere with rights or entitlements for certain community members (existing or perceived)?					
Count the number of checks in each column.					
Multiply the number of checks by the weight.	X1	X2	X3	X4	X5
Enter column score.					
Add total of all five column scores.					
Divide by 17 to determine the average score.					
Average score:					
Inform Score: 1.0 – 1.9	Consult Score: 2.0 – 2.9	Involve Score: 3.0 – 3.9	Collaborate Score: 4.0-5.0	Empower Score: Generally above 4.0 and required to obtain approval from Council	

Senior Manager: _____

Communications Officer: _____

Work with the Communications Department to determine a Public Participation Communications Plan, and to determine the specific activities the Summer Village will take to implement the Public Participation Plan.



Public Participation Plan

PROJECT NAME:

PROJECT MANAGER/LEAD DEPARTMENT:

OTHER PARTNERS (if applicable):

DECISION-MAKER(S):

PARTICIPATION PLAN BUDGET:

To be completed
after evaluations
returned.

Project Timeline: <i>Description of phases and date for Decision to be made.</i>	
Participation Outcomes: <i>Identify S.M.A.R.T. outcomes/objectives</i>	

Internal Target Participants	External Target Participants

Inform <input type="checkbox"/>	Consult <input type="checkbox"/>	Involve <input type="checkbox"/>	Collaborate <input type="checkbox"/>	Empower <input type="checkbox"/>
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Techniques and Tools for Internal Participants	Techniques and Tools for External Participants

COMMUNICATION PLAN

Target Audience	Key Messages	Timelines	Communication Tools

DATA MANAGEMENT

Describe how public input will be recorded/managed and integrated into the planning process.

Identify tools related to the level of engagement and target participants. These could include tools and activities that you will have identified with the Communications Department during the development of your Public Participation Communication Plan.

Senior Manager: _____

Communications Officer: _____