

POLICY TITLE:

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT:

Council recognizes that public input is one of the many factors that needs to be considered when making decisions that will affect the community. This Public Participation Policy recognizes that municipal decisions can be enhanced by appropriately engaging stakeholders and is committed to accessible public participation processes and activities that are respectful, meaningful, accountable, and effective.

POLICY PURPOSE

To provide direction to Administration and Council on how to involve stakeholders in providing input into decisions that will affect the community. The purpose of this policy is to establish the foundation for the Town's reasons, guidelines, and procedures for conducting public participation.

EFFECTIVE DATE:

February 23, 2022, as per resolution no. 62-2022

DEFINITIONS:

- 1.1** In this policy:
- a) "Act" means the Municipal Government Act, RSA 2000, as amended.
 - b) "Council" means the duly elected municipal Council of the Town of Rainbow Lake.
 - c) "Municipal Stakeholders" means residents of the Town of Rainbow Lake, as well as individuals, organizations or persons that have an interest in, or are affected by, a decision of the Town.
 - d) "Public Participation or Public Engagement" includes a variety of both statutory and non-statutory opportunities where municipal stakeholders

receive information and/or provide input to the municipal decision-making process.

- e) "Public Participation Forms" means public engagement activities that occur in different forms and levels.
- f) "Public Participation Plan" means a plan which identifies which public participation tools are to be used to obtain public input in a particular circumstance.
- g) "Public Participation Tools" means the tools that may be used, alone or in combination, to create opportunities for public participation in the municipal decision-making process.
- h) "Town" means the corporation of the Town of Rainbow Lake

**POLICY
RESPONSIBILITIES**

Responsibilities

Council shall:

- 2.1 consider input obtained through Public Participation when making decisions;
- 2.2 Promote public engagement initiatives throughout the Town on an ongoing basis including, where necessary, providing Council representation as a means of demonstrating its commitment to Public Participation;
- 2.3 Review this Policy once per term to ensure the Policy is in the spirit and intent of Public Participation;
- 2.4 Ensure appropriate resources are available to solicit Public Participation in accordance with this Policy and promote and support Public Participation; and
- 2.5 Establish consistent practices, procedures, and timelines for statutory and non-statutory requirements for public participation, in accordance with the MGA and or the Town's Procedural Bylaw.

The CAO shall:

- 2.6 Ensure the Policy complies with all relevant legislation and municipal policies;

- 2.7 In accordance with this Policy or as directed by Council, seek Public Participation when appropriate;
- 2.8 Develop the necessary procedures to implement this Policy;
- 2.9 Make recommendations to Council regarding the resources required to undertake Public Participation and Organize public engagement activities in accordance with this policy, or the MGA, or an approved public participation plan, or as directed by Council.

The Public Shall

- 3.0 Seek out opportunities for public participation and provide meaningful feedback when encouraged;
- 3.1 Promote public participation processes with fellow residents and/or stakeholders; and
- 3.2 Ask questions deemed necessary during participation processes.

**POLICY
APPLICATION/
APPROACH**

The Town will offer public participation in the following situation:

- a) To inform a decision or action;
- b) To help identify community needs;
- c) When there is a risk of an initiative impacting the community; and
- d) When required by law, policy, or agreement

3.3 The Town will communicate to the community its public participation opportunities and processes through the following engagement tools:

- a) Newspaper Ads
- b) Newsletters
- c) Mail
- d) Council Meeting Minutes
- e) Media (Facebook, Website, Briefings and Press Releases)

3.4 Council may, undertake or direct Staff to undertake one or more different forms and levels of public participation on a specific subject, which may include but not limited to the following forms:

- 3.5 *Informative Participation* – where stakeholders are provided with information to inform and educate them about Council decisions or issues that, due to their routine or urgent nature or because of some legislative dictate, offers limited scope for public input.
- 3.6 *Consultative participation* – where inputs of stakeholders are collected to improve the quality and outcome of Council or administrative decisions.
- 3.7 *Direct/in-person participation* – which involves in-person, face-to-face interaction between municipal stakeholders and Council representatives and/or staff.
- 3.8 *Indirect/representative participation* – whereby municipal stakeholders convey their views, inputs or concerns to Council or staff through a representative.
- 3.9 *Digital participation* – whereby interaction between Council/Staff members and stakeholders occurs via a technological medium, such as telephone, online surveys, or a social media platform.
- 3.10 *Formal participation* – where public participation occurs in formal, organized settings, such as Council sessions.
- 3.11 *Informal participation* – where public participation occurs in informal contexts, such as community social events.

**POLICY
EXPECTATIONS**


Legislative and Policy Implications

4.0 All public participation plans and activities shall be conducted in accordance with:

- a) the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act;
- b) the Municipal Government Act for statutory participation;
- c) all existing municipal policies; and
- d) any other applicable legislation.

4.1 This policy shall be:

- a) Available for public inspection at the Town Office and posted to the Town of Rainbow Lake's website;
- b) reviewed and, where appropriate, updated at least once every four years.



Mayor



Chief Administrative Officer

NEXT REVIEW DATE: AUGUST 1, 2025