



POLICY # AD 027

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT POLICY

DEPARTMENT: ADMINISTRATION

APPROVAL DATE:	June 26, 2018 (2018-06-29)
REVISION DATE (s):	
REVIEW DATE (s):	

POLICY STATEMENT

The County of Vermilion River recognizes that decisions are improved by engaging citizens and diverse stakeholder groups, where appropriate, to provide Council and Administration with the best possible information to support decision making.

Recognizing the value of ongoing input from citizens and diverse stakeholder groups throughout the community, the County of Vermilion River strives to work closely through various practices of communication to ensure that engagement remains relevant, successful, and upholds the public's interest.

PURPOSE

Ensuring the County of Vermilion River achieves a consistent, effective and efficient public participation process that also adheres to the public engagement requirements under the *Municipal Government Act* and other applicable legislation.

DEFINITIONS

Public Engagement means: Any process under the attached schedule 'A' that aims at gathering input from residents and stakeholders regarding issues of public interest.



Public means: Residents, landowners and other stakeholders within the County of Vermilion River who have an interest in or are affected by a County outcome or decision.

POLICY

Core Values

- 1) Shared responsibility – creating a viable and sustainable community is a shared responsibility between the County of Vermilion River, residents, landowners and other stakeholders located within the County.
- 2) Public participation - includes meaningful engagement practices that support community values, perspectives and experiences that foster stronger relationships between the County and its residents.
- 3) Proactive, timely and transparent – initiating conversation, seeking input, and providing feedback to the public on the information gathered and how it shaped the decisions by the County.
- 4) Consistent and accessible – utilizing clear and simple methods to carry out meaningful conversations to ensure people feel heard and know their input is valued.
- 5) Innovative and continuously improving – use of best practices, tools and tactics based on recognized approaches to public participation and evaluation of processes.

The Continuum of Public Engagement

- 1) The County will engage the public by applying the most suitable method among those described in schedule 'A'.

The County has adopted the Public Participation Spectrum set out in Schedule 'A'. The Spectrum represents degrees of public involvement and shows that different levels of participation are appropriate depending on the scope, time frames, resources, and levels of complexity of a project.

- 2) The County will continue to inform its residents and notify the public of matters requiring public participation.
- 3) Schedule 'A' will be used to determine the degree of public engagement required.



Schedule A

Public Participation Spectrum

Inform				
Provides the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding problems, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions. Examples include advertising, website, fact sheets, brochures etc.				
Input	Listen & Learn	Collaborate	Empower	
Obtain feedback from citizens and stakeholders to test ideas or concepts, clarify issues, and identify possible solutions	Create opportunities for County staff, Council, citizens and stakeholders to enter into a dialogue together to explore each other's' perspectives, goals, plans, concerns, expectations and possible solutions.	Partner with citizens and stakeholders in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives, recommendations and preferred solutions.	Delegate some or all aspects of decision making to citizens and stakeholders.	
IMPLEMENTATION	Provide ways and opportunities to collect input from the public with the assurance that their input will be considered in the decision-making process.	Provide ways and opportunities to engage the public in "conversations" with assurance that their ideas, concerns, and aspirations will be reflected in the alternatives developed.	Provide ways and opportunities for the public to contribute directly through advice, developing solutions and alternatives, and making recommendations regarding decisions or outcomes.	Provide opportunities to the public to make decisions with assurances that they will be implemented.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Comment One-way feedback tools such as polls and surveys (print, phone, or electronic), workbooks and comment cards Public meetings and open houses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshops Focus groups One-on-one and small group conversations Discussion boards and blogs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citizen Advisory Committees Consensus-Building Working groups Steering Committees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Authorized Committees Voting Citizen Juries
EXAMPLES				