



Lethbridge County Policy Handbook

EFFECTIVE: June 7, 2018

SECTION: 100 NO. 174 Page 1 of 3

APPROVED BY: County Council

SUBJECT: Public Participation

REVISED DATE:

POLICY STATEMENT

Lethbridge County is committed to undertaking public participation on major issues that affect citizens' lives and their County. The County believes that the decision-making process can be enhanced by engaging citizens and other stakeholder groups where appropriate. We are committed to allowing citizens to know how their views have been considered in the decision-making process.

POLICY GOALS

To provide transparent and inclusive public participation processes that are supported by factual information, are inclusive of the diversity of Lethbridge County and are within the County's ability to finance and resource.

Guiding Principles

The following principles will guide public participation activities conducted by Council;

Inclusiveness: The County will endeavour to involve and enable the participation of all interested parties across the full range of our diverse population.

Transparency: The County will endeavour to ensure decision processes, procedures and constraints are understood and followed. The purpose and limitations on public participation will be made clear. Respective roles and responsibilities will be clearly communicated. Feedback will be available on what stakeholders say and how their opinions were considered by decision makers.

Access: The County will ensure that accurate information is available to participants in a timely manner.

Respect: Public participation requires the mutual respect of all participants. The County will listen with an open mind and show consideration and value for other points of view – the public will do the same.

Honesty: In conducting public participation, the County will demonstrate our core value of accountability; we will tell the truth, follow through on commitments and act in a trustworthy manner.



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Public Participation Framework

Whenever the County undertakes a public participation process, the objective of the participation, the commitment for performance and the level of the framework will be clarified at the beginning of the process. Each level describes a type or depth of participation that may be appropriate to support the decision-making process.

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Objectives of the approach to Public Participation	To provide balanced and objective information to support understanding by the public	To obtain feedback on analysis, alternatives, issues and/or decisions	To work with the public to ensure that concerns and aspirations are understood and considered	To facilitate discussions between public parties to identify common ground for action and solutions	To place final decision making in the hands of the public
Lethbridge County Commitment	To inform the public	To listen to and consider the public's concerns	To work with the public to exchange information, ideas and concerns	To seek advice and innovations from amongst various public parties	To work with the public to implement decisions
Examples of types of circumstances that may fall into these categories	Repair or replacement of roads and bridges, Special projects, Annual Open House	Development of Inter-municipal Development Plans (IDPs), Capital project planning or designing	New park asset such as new playgrounds, Climate Change Adaptation Plan	Park development plans, haul route planning	Elections, Local Area Improvements
Participant's Responsibility	To become informed – listen, read, observe, ask	To provide feedback	To be open to other points of view and work with Council, staff and other members of the public	To put aside personal agendas and participate in discussions in a respectful manner	To work with Council and staff to implement decisions



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Commitment & Resources

The County, within its ability and capacity, will allocate adequate financial, human and technical resources for effective public participation. It will support citizens and stakeholder groups to participate effectively. This support will involve providing information about County processes, initiatives and policies.

Accountability and Evaluation

The County will be accountable for acting in accordance with this policy. Public participation processes will be periodically evaluated for consistency with the stated objectives and commitments. This policy will be periodically reviewed in accordance with the timelines established in the Municipal Government Act.