



<b>Title: Public Participation</b>	<b>Policy: LE 006</b>
<b>Section: Legislative</b>	

**ACCOUNTABILITY TO VISION STATEMENT**

Flagstaff County recognizes that quality public participation is an essential component of good governance and is a shared responsibility of Council, Administration, and the community. The County will communicate clearly and openly about public participation opportunities and share the outcomes of public participation. We will inform the public how the information was used in the decision-making process and make decisions in the best interest of the community as a whole.

**POLICY STATEMENT**

In accordance with Section 216.1 of the Municipal Government Act, this Public Participation policy has been developed to recognize the value of public participation and create opportunities for meaningful public participation in decisions that directly impact the public. This Public Participation policy is in addition to and does not modify or replace the statutory public hearing requirements in the Municipal Government Act.

Council recognizes that good governance includes engaging Municipal Stakeholders in Public Participation by: 1) Creating opportunities for Municipal Stakeholders who are affected by a decision to influence the decision; 2) Promoting sustainable decisions by recognizing various Municipal Stakeholder interests; 3) Providing Municipal Stakeholders with the appropriate information and tools to engage in meaningful participation; and 4) Recognizing that although councillors are elected to consider and promote the welfare and interest of the Municipality as a whole and are generally required to vote on matters brought before Council, facilitating Public Participation for matters beyond those where public input is statutorily required can enrich the decision making process.

**DEFINITIONS**

1. "CAO" means the Chief Administrative Officer of the Municipality or their delegate.
2. "Municipal Stakeholders" means the residents of the Municipality, as well as other individuals, organizations or persons that may have an interest in, or are affected by, a decision made by the Municipality.
3. "Municipality" means Flagstaff County.
4. "Public Participation" includes a variety of non-statutory opportunities where Municipal Stakeholders receive information and/or provide input to the Municipality.
5. "Public Participation Plan" means a plan which identifies which Public Participation Tools are to be used to obtain public input in a particular circumstance.
6. "Public Participation Tools" means the tools that may be used, alone or in combination, to create Public Participation opportunities including, but not limited to:
  - a) in-person participation which may include at-the-counter interactions, door knocking, interviews, meetings, roundtables, town halls, open houses and workshops;
  - b) digital participation which may include online webinars, message boards/discussion forums, and online polls or surveys;
  - c) written participation which may include written submissions, email, and mail in surveys, polls, and workbooks; and
  - d) representative participation which may include being appointed to an advisory committee, ad hoc committee, or citizen board.

## **POLICY RESPONSIBILITIES**

### 1. Council Responsibilities

- a) review and approve Public Participation Plans developed by the CAO in accordance with this Policy and Schedule A - the Public Participation Plan Template, or as directed by Council;
- b) consider input obtained through Public Participation; and
- c) review this Policy to ensure it complies with all relevant legislation, municipal policies and the spirit and intent of Public Participation.
- d) ensure appropriate resources are available to solicit Public Participation in accordance with this policy;
- e) promote and support Public Participation;
- f) request and review information from the CAO on the scope, timing, appropriate methods and resources required for Public Participation prior to directing the development of a Public Participation Plan.

### 2. Administration Responsibilities

- a) in accordance with this policy or as directed by Council, develop Public Participation Plans, for Council approval;
- b) implement approved Public Participation Plans; and
- c) report the findings of the Public Participation to Council.
- d) consider timing, resources and engagement when developing and modifying Public Participation Plans;
- e) evaluate the effectiveness of the Public Participation Plan and the Public Participation Tools used in a particular circumstance;
- f) communicate to Council and the public, when appropriate, the effectiveness of a Public Participation Plan and the Public Participation Tools used;
- g) develop the necessary procedures to implement this policy;
- h) assess this policy and make recommendations to Council about the Public Participation and resourcing;

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES**

Utilizing the Spectrum of Participation (Schedule B), the CAO shall develop and implement a Public Participation Plan (Schedule A), which may consider the following circumstances:

1. When new programs or services are being established;
2. When existing programs and services are being reviewed;
3. When identifying council priorities;
4. When gathering input or formulating recommendations with respect to budget;
5. When gathering input or formulating recommendations with respect to the municipality's strategic plans or business plans;
6. When gathering input or formulating recommendations with respect to the municipality's capital plan and/or financial plan; or
7. As otherwise directed by Council.

## **POLICY EXPECTATIONS**

### 1. Legislative and Policy Implications

- a) All Public Participation will be undertaken in accordance with the Municipal Government Act, the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and any other applicable legislation.
- b) All Public Participation will be undertaken in accordance with all existing municipal policies.
- c) This policy shall be available for public inspection and may be posted to the Municipality's website.
- d) This policy will be reviewed at least once every three (3) years.

### 2. Public Participation Standards

- a) Public Participation will be conducted in a sustainable and inclusive manner having regard to different levels of accessibility.
- b) Public Participation activities will be conducted in a professional and respectful manner.
- c) Public Participation plans will consider early, ongoing and diverse opportunities to provide input.
- d) Municipal Stakeholders who participate in any manner of Public Participation are required to be respectful and constructive in their participation. Municipal Stakeholders who are disrespectful, inappropriate or offensive, as determined by Administration, may be excluded from Public Participation opportunities.
- e) The results of Public Participation will be made available to Council and Municipal Stakeholders in a timely manner in accordance with municipal policies.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLANS**

### 1. When so directed by this Policy or Council, the CAO shall develop a Public Participation Plan for approval by Council which may consider the following:

- a) The nature of the matter for which Public Participation is being sought;
- b) The impact of the matter on Municipal Stakeholders;
- c) The demographics of potential Municipal Stakeholders in respect of which Public Participation Tools to utilize, level of engagement and time for input;
- d) The timing of the decision and time required to gather input;
- e) What information is required, if any, to participate; and
- f) Available resources and reasonable costs.

### 2. Public Participation Plans will, at minimum, include the following:

- a) A communication plan to inform the public about the Public Participation plan and opportunities to provide input;
- b) Identification of which Public Participation Tools will be utilized;
- c) Timelines for participation;
- d) Information about how input will be used.

**REPORTING AND EVALUATION**

1. Information obtained in Public Participation will be reviewed by the CAO and a report shall be provided to Council.
2. The report shall include, at minimum, the following:
  - a) an overview of the Public Participation Plan and how it was developed;
  - b) an assessment of the effectiveness of the plan based on the level of engagement and the quality of input;
  - c) a summary of the input obtained; and
  - d) may include recommendations for future Public Participation Plans.
3. Reports shall be provided to Council for review.

<b>Council Approved:</b> May 25, 2022	<b>Resolution #:</b>
<b>Reference:</b> Municipal Government Act	<b>FC20220525.1006</b>

<b>Review Cycle:</b>	<b>Next Review Year:</b>
Every three (3) years	2025





# FLAGSTAFF COUNTY

## Public Participation Policy

### SCHEDULE A — Public Participation Plan TEMPLATE

#### Project Name:

#### Project description:

- Brief description of the nature of the issue for which public participation is being sought (new program/service; budget/capital planning; strategic plans).

#### Engagement purpose/objectives:

- What is the question to be asked or the decision sought?
- What decisions have been made that are not open to stakeholder input? Why?
- Have commitments been made to stakeholders about their involvement? If yes, identify.
- Identify objectives of engagement program.

#### Project background:

- Background information and circumstances that led to the project/issue and give context relevant to effective stakeholder engagement.
- Brief description of previous or related issues or decision that may have bearing on the project/issue.
- What is the sensitivity of the project – political, time, resources or stakeholders? High, medium or low?

#### Municipal stakeholders and impact

- Identify demographics of municipal stakeholders (external partners/agencies, internal stakeholders, any group(s) or residents) who are involved in or impacted by a decision or action and are invited to participate.
- The role of each stakeholder will/may differ, depending on the issue, initiative or project, and its impact.
- Identify the level of impact the project is expected to have on stakeholders (e.g. high, medium, low).

#### Spectrum of participation

- Clarify the scale and level of engagement anticipated (i.e. inform, consult, involve, collaborate or empower) at the various stages of the consultation process.

#### Timeframe/budget

- Describe the overall timeframe and milestones.
- Cost estimate for implementing the plan and process for receiving budget approval.

#### Evaluation

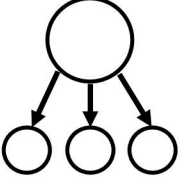
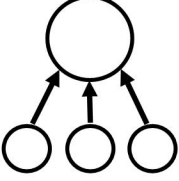
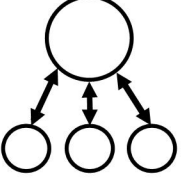
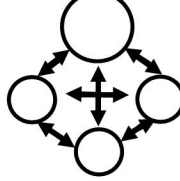
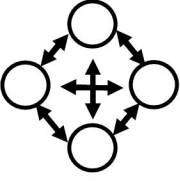
- Measurements of success:
  - Compliance with policy principles
  - Completed within approved budget and timeframe
  - Results used by decision-makers and stakeholders understand how input used
  - Level of stakeholder satisfaction with process and outcomes



# FLAGSTAFF COUNTY

## Public Participation Policy

### SCHEDULE B — Spectrum of Participation

Type of Engagement				
<b>Inform</b> 	<b>Consult</b> 	<b>Involve</b> 	<b>Collaborate</b> 	<b>Empower</b> 
Engagement Goal				
To provide stakeholders and the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives and/ solutions	To obtain stakeholder and public feedback on analysis, alternatives and or/ decisions	To obtain stakeholder and public feedback on analysis, alternatives and or/decisions	To obtain stakeholder and public feedback on analysis, alternatives and or/ decisions	To obtain stakeholder and public feedback on analysis, alternatives and or/decisions
Promises to Stakeholders				
We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how your input influenced the decision.	We will work together, seek your advice and innovation in formulating solutions and we will incorporate your advice and recommendations to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
Engagement Tools				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fact sheets</li> <li>• Websites</li> <li>• Open Houses</li> <li>• Media</li> <li>• Face-to-face meetings</li> <li>• Reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus groups</li> <li>• Surveys</li> <li>• Feedback forms</li> <li>• Online and personal comments</li> <li>• Public meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshops</li> <li>• Deliberate polling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Citizen Advisory Committees</li> <li>• Consensus-building</li> <li>• Participatory decision-making</li> <li>• Workshops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Citizen juries</li> <li>• Ballots</li> <li>• Plebiscites</li> <li>• Delegated decisions</li> </ul>