



POLICY MANUAL

Legal References: MGA 216.1	Policy Department: Administration
Cross References:	Policy Number: A15
Adoption Date: June 25, 2018 Revision Date:	Policy Title: Public Participation Policy <hr/> Review Date: June 2021

POLICY PURPOSE

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.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Town of Wembley recognizes public participation as an essential component in a responsible, transparent and well-informed decision-making process.

The Town of Wembley may use discretion and take into account any practical concerns such as confidentiality, budget and personnel resources in the application of this policy.

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GENERAL POLICY PRINCIPLES

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.

DEFINITION

“CAO” means the chief administrative officer of the Municipality or their delegate.

“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.

“Municipality” means the Town of Wembley.

“Public Participation” includes a variety of non-statutory opportunities where Municipal Stakeholders receive information and/or provide input to the Municipality.

“Public Participation Plan” means a plan which identifies which Public Participation Tools to be used to obtain public input in a particular circumstance.

“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, meetings, round-tables, town hall meetings, open houses and workshops;
- (b) written participation which may include written submissions, email, and mail-in surveys, 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) Council shall:

- i. review and approve Public Participation Plans developed by the CAO in accordance with this Policy or as directed by Council;
- ii. consider input obtained through Public Participation; and
- iii. review this Policy to ensure the Policy complies with all relevant legislation, municipal policies and the spirit and intent of Public Participation.

2) Administration Responsibilities

(a) CAO shall:

- i. in accordance with this Policy or as directed by Council, develop Public Participation Plans, for Council approval;
- ii. implement approved Public Participation Plans; and
- iii. report the findings of the Public Participation to Council.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES

The Town of Wembley's decision-making process shall be separated into two distinct classes:

Informative Decisions and Consultative Decisions.

Informative Decisions will be those that will require the Town to inform the public of the decision made.

Informative Decisions shall include, but are not limited to:

- a) Decisions that are accepted as routine and part of the town's normal operations.
- b) Decision where an authority is acting within their authority.
- c) Decisions where a response is required immediately.
- d) Decision that are dictated by law or legislation.
- e) Decisions that have substantial effect only on those who have already agreed to be affected through some form of contact.

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Any one of the following methods may be used to inform the public of informative decisions:

- a) Council meeting minutes
- b) Town of Wembley Website
- c) Mailed Letters
- d) Local newspaper
- e) Any other method deemed sufficient

Consultative Decisions will be those that may require the town to solicit public participation.

Consultative Decision may include, but are not limited to:

- a) Public notification and participation as required by law.
- b) Decisions where council or administration request public participation.

Consultative decisions may use the following methods to facilitate public participation:

- a) Public Hearings
- b) Open Houses
- c) In person meetings
- d) Surveys
- e) Council delegations
- f) Consideration of written submissions

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLANS

Public Participation Plans will, at minimum, include the following:

- i. a communication plan to inform the public about the Public Participation plan and opportunities to provide input;
- ii. identification of which Public Participation Tools will be utilized;
- iii. timelines for participation;
- iv. information
- v. the location of information required, if any, to inform the specific Public Participation.

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POLICY EXPECTATIONS

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 four years.

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) 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.