

## TOWN OF HIGH PRAIRIE

<b>Policy Number</b> 70-2018	<b>Approval Date</b> April 24, 2018	<b>Resolution Number</b> 177/18
<b>Supersedes</b>	<b>Effective Date</b> April 24, 2018	<b>Legal Authority</b> Municipal Government Act Alberta Regulation 193/2017
<b>Amendments:</b>	<b>Amendment Date</b>	<b>Amendment Resolution Number</b>

**TITLE: Public Participation Policy**

**Policy Statement:**

Council and Administration recognize that quality public participation is a critical component of good governance and as such, adequate resources will be allocated and the appropriate level of public participation undertaken. The Town of High Prairie is committed to public participation activities that are founded on the following principles.

**Purpose:**

To provide direction to Council and Administration to involve stakeholders in providing input regarding decisions that affect the community.

**Shared Responsibility and Commitment:** Public participation leads to better decisions and is a shared responsibility of Council, Administration and the community.

**Transparent and Accountable:** The Town of High Prairie clearly and openly about public participation opportunities, its processes and provides factual and evidence-based information. It shares the outcomes of public participation, including how the information was used in the decision-making process and makes decisions in the best interest of the community as a whole.

**Inclusive and Accessible:** The Town of High Prairie endeavours to provide opportunities for public participation that take into account the diversity of needs, abilities and viewpoints of the members of the community.

**Appropriate and Responsive:** Public participation activities need to be appropriate to the stated goals, and reflective of the varied preferences and needs of community members for receiving and sharing information.

**Evaluation and Continual Improvement:** Public participation is a dynamic and evolving process that needs continual evaluation and adjustment to continuously improve and address the changing needs of the community.

## **Definitions**

“Town” means the municipality of High Prairie.

“Community” refers to the Town, residents, businesses, schools, religious institutions and all other institutions and agencies that make up High Prairie.

“Public Participation” means processes through which the Town provides opportunities for the community to have input into decision-making through public meetings, surveys, open houses, workshops, polling, resident advisory committees and other forms of engagement.

“Stakeholder” means an individual, organization or group that has an interest in an issue, will be or is likely to be affected by an issue, or has the ability to affect a decision or outcome.

“Statutory Requirement” means a requirement written into a law passed by the provincial or federal government.

“Non-Statutory Requirement” means a rule based on customs, precedents or court decisions.

## **Responsibilities**

1. Town Council shall:
  - a. Consider public input obtained through public participation activities as part of their decision-making process;
  - b. Promote public participation activities and provide, where appropriate, Council member representation;
  - c. Establish consistent practices, processes and timelines for statutory and non-statutory requirements for public participation.
  - d. Ensure appropriate resources are available to allow for the ongoing implementation of consistent, comprehensive and representative public participation programs and services;
  - e. Request for information from the Chief Administrative Officer on the scope, timing, appropriate methods and resources required for public participation, prior to directing Administration to undertake a public participation activity on a specific issue or item.

2. The Chief Administrative Officer shall:
  - a. Maintain public participation processes that:
    - i. Ensure a coordinated and standardized approach to public participation across the organization.
    - ii. When determining the appropriate level of public participation that the Town:
      - Provides opportunities for early and ongoing participation.
      - Aligns resources, types and methods of public participation with the impact of the decision to the community and/or key stakeholder groups.
      - Provides opportunities for ongoing engagement as well as for emerging issues.
  - b. Recommend to Council practices, processes and timelines for statutory and non-statutory requirements for public participation activities.
  - c. Develop all necessary processes and tools that support the implementation of this policy.
  - d. Communicate to Council and community, where appropriate, how public input was gathered and used in Administrative recommendations to Council.
  - e. Bring forward resourcing requirements to ensure public participation programs and services are run effectively and consistently.
  - f. Make recommendations to Council on the appropriate resources required for public participation, when Council directs public input on a specific issue or item.

### **Service Standards / Expectations**

1. The Town of High Prairie shall comply with all provincial and federal statutory requirements for public participation.
2. The Town of High Prairie shall offer public participation opportunities when;
  - a. Identifying Council priorities;
  - b. Formulating recommendations to Council regarding the proposed business plans and budgets.
  - c. Gathering community input following the presentation of proposed business plans and budgets.
  - d. Reviewing existing programs, services, and associated service levels;

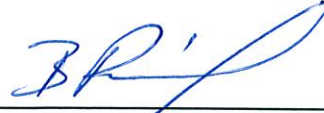
- e. Establish a new programs, services, and associated service levels;
  - f. Otherwise deemed necessary by Council of the Chief Administrative Officer.
3. The Town of High Prairie shall organize at least on statistically representative public participation activity, at least every two years, to obtain the community's overall perceptions of quality of life and satisfaction with programs and services.
  4. The Town of High Prairie shall have the appropriate allocation of resources and governance mechanisms to build organizational and community capacity for public participation through community outreach and educational activities.
  5. The Town of High Prairie shall effectively communicate to the community its public participation goals, objectives and processes, including how information will be used and how decisions are made.
  6. The Town of High Prairie will ensure the results of the public participation activities are publicly available, which includes posting on the Town's website.
  7. The Town of High Prairie shall, where possible, use various methods and techniques for public participation that meet the varied needs of the community whether it be demographic, physical, social or cultural.
  8. The Town of High Prairie shall evaluate and learn from the feedback received from the community, as well as continuously look for new and better processes and tools that address the changing needs of the community.
  9. The Policy shall be updated at a minimum, every four years or as required by Provincial legislation.

**Spectrum of Strategies and Promises:**

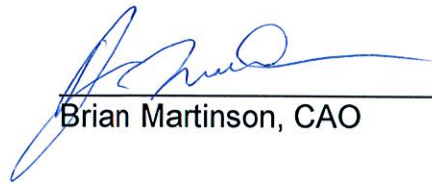
This policy includes a spectrum of five strategies and associated promises related reaching and involving citizens and other stakeholders, and external and internal stakeholder groups in specific engagement initiatives regarding planning, policy, and projects. Whenever the Town of High Prairie embarks on an engagement process, the purpose of the engagement and the “promise” will be clarified at the beginning of the process.

<b>The spectrum of Strategies and Promises is:</b>		
	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Promise</b>
<b>Inform:</b>	To provide information that will assist stakeholders in understanding issues, problems, alternatives and / or solutions	We will endeavour to provide information that is timely, accurate, balanced, objective, easily understood, and highly accessible. We will respond to questions for clarification
<b>Listen &amp; Learn:</b>	Both stakeholders and the Town listen to and learn about each other's views, plans, concerns, and expectations	We will listen to stakeholders and learn about their plans, views, issues, concerns and expectations
<b>Consult:</b>	Stakeholders feedback is obtained through consultation to analyze issues and build alternatives, and thereby make contributions to the decision making process. Consulting with stakeholders ensures issues and concerns are understood and considered.	We will consult with stakeholders to obtain feedback and ensure their input is considered and incorporated to the maximum extent possible. We undertake to advise how consultation affected the decisions and outcomes.
<b>Collaborate:</b>	Stakeholders are considered partners in the decision making process, including collaboration on analyzing issues, building alternatives, identifying a preferred solution, and making recommendations.	We will partner with stakeholders in a process that results in joint recommendations. We undertake to advise how collaboration affected decision making.
<b>Empower</b>	Aspects of the decision making process are delegated to stakeholders.	Where legislation permits, we will abide with the decisions make under delegated authority. Where legislation precludes making such a commitment in advance, we undertake to be guided by the outcome.

Approved by Council this 24<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2018

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'BP', written over a horizontal line.

Brian Panasiuk, Mayor

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Brian Martinson', written over a horizontal line.

Brian Martinson, CAO