	Community Engagement Phase I	
	Policy Type:	Council-Management-Delegation
	Number:	CMD-R-4.6
	To be Reviewed:	Once per term
	Approval Date:	October 23, 2023
	Motion Number:	23.C.332
	Revised Date(s):	

In accordance with the *Municipal Government Act (MGA)*, this Policy recognizes the value of community engagement and creates opportunities for meaningful engagement in decisions that directly impact the public.


The Chief Administrative Officer as Council's sole employee will ensure that the Town of Okotoks (Town):

- Will provide community engagement opportunities that are open and transparent;
- Will give appropriate consideration to the public's input gathered in community engagement processes;
- Is committed to working together with the public to continuously improve its community engagement processes;
- Will involve the public and stakeholders in community engagement to lead to better, more informed decisions;
- Will ensure the public and stakeholders' right to be engaged in decisions that affect them;
- Will ensure the public and stakeholders are encouraged to meaningfully engage so their voices strengthen decisions and their involvement helps build a stronger community; and
- Will ensure the public and stakeholders are encouraged to increase their understanding and knowledge about local issues as well as their role in the Town's decision-making processes so they can participate meaningfully.

Definitions:

Community engagement means a formal, defined, interactive process between the Town, the public and stakeholders, designed to increase mutual understanding, gather information, exchange ideas, and/or solve problems with the goal of making more informed decisions. This applies to community engagement undertaken by both staff and external consultants.

Engaging the public means that the Town will follow best practices from the IAP2 organization on how to best engage stakeholders, based on the decision to be made and those involved. Any community engagement plan will be created using the IAP2 guiding principals and spectrum and the Town's Community Engagement Strategy & Toolkit/Framework to assist in guiding the level of participation (i.e. engagement) that best fits the needs of the situation.

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IAP2 Spectrum means a chart developed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), which includes inform, consult, involve, collaborate, and empower levels of engagement. IAP2's Spectrum was designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public's role in any community engagement process.

Public means anyone (including groups and individuals) who may have an interest in a specific topic or issue under discussion.

Stakeholders means the residents of the Town, as well as other individuals, organizations or persons that may have an interest in, and are affected by a decision made by the Municipality. Stakeholders may include residents, non-residents, groups, organizations, individuals, representatives and/or Town employees, depending on the issue.

Guiding Principles of Community Engagement:

Accountable

The Town believes in upholding commitments made to the public by demonstrating how processes and outcomes are consistent with the approved plans for engagement. The Town is a learning organization. By monitoring and evaluating community engagement processes and outcomes, the Town is able to learn from experiences, track progress, and continually improve.

Equitable

Equitable opportunities are provided to ensure diverse people, perspectives, and ideas are heard, and that decision makers consider all input varieties in making decisions.

Transparent

Clear, timely, and complete information is provided to ensure community engagement processes and decisions are shared and understood.

Relational

The Town values the people we are engaging with and puts them in the center of our processes, relationships, understanding, and trust.