	Council's Community Engagement	
	Policy Type:	Governance Process
	Number:	GP-D-2.6
	To be Reviewed:	Annually
	Approval Date:	May 13, 2024
	Motion Number:	24.C.153
	Revised Date(s):	

Policy Statement

Members of Council make decisions that represent the interests and values of the community. Community engagement assists Council in their decision-making process by bringing forward the voice of the community.

Council is committed to community engagement activities that are founded on the following guiding principles:

Accountable

Council believes in upholding commitments made to the public by demonstrating how processes and outcomes are consistent with approved plans for engagement.

Equitable

Diverse opportunities are provided to our community so that perspectives and ideas from all interested parties are considered in the decision-making process.

Transparent

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

Relational

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

The level of engagement (IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation) is determined by using the Community Engagement Strategy & Toolkit, which considers a number of criteria including the following:

- Level of complexity of the initiative or decision.
- Level of controversy.
- Level of impact to the community.
- Is Council open to input or do they have enough information to make the decision?
- Has Council committed to input?
- Is it a statutory requirement?
- Have all the key decisions already been made or is there opportunity for input?

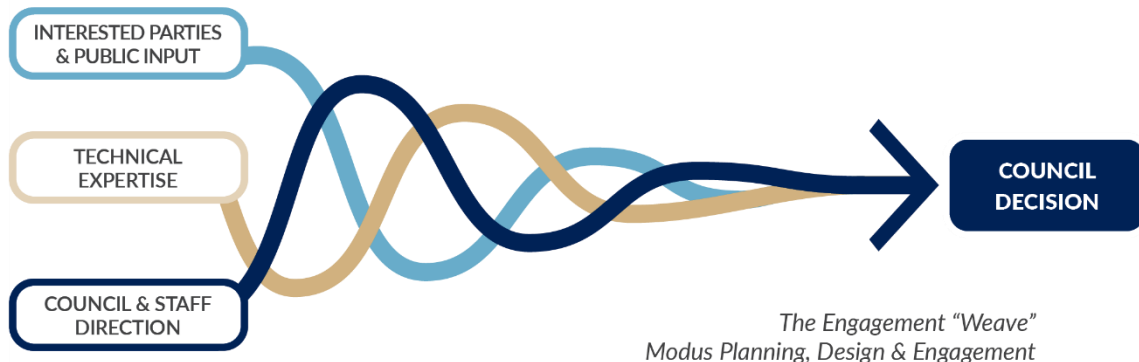
1. Role of Council

Council's role in community engagement is to solicit and consider input from each other, the community, information experts, administration, and other interested parties in their decision-making.

No single input, comment, or activity determines the outcome, and Council (as the elected decision-makers) ultimately reserve the right to decide. The engagement "weave" diagram shows how these different groups work together over time to ensure Council has the information they need to make an informed and balanced decision.

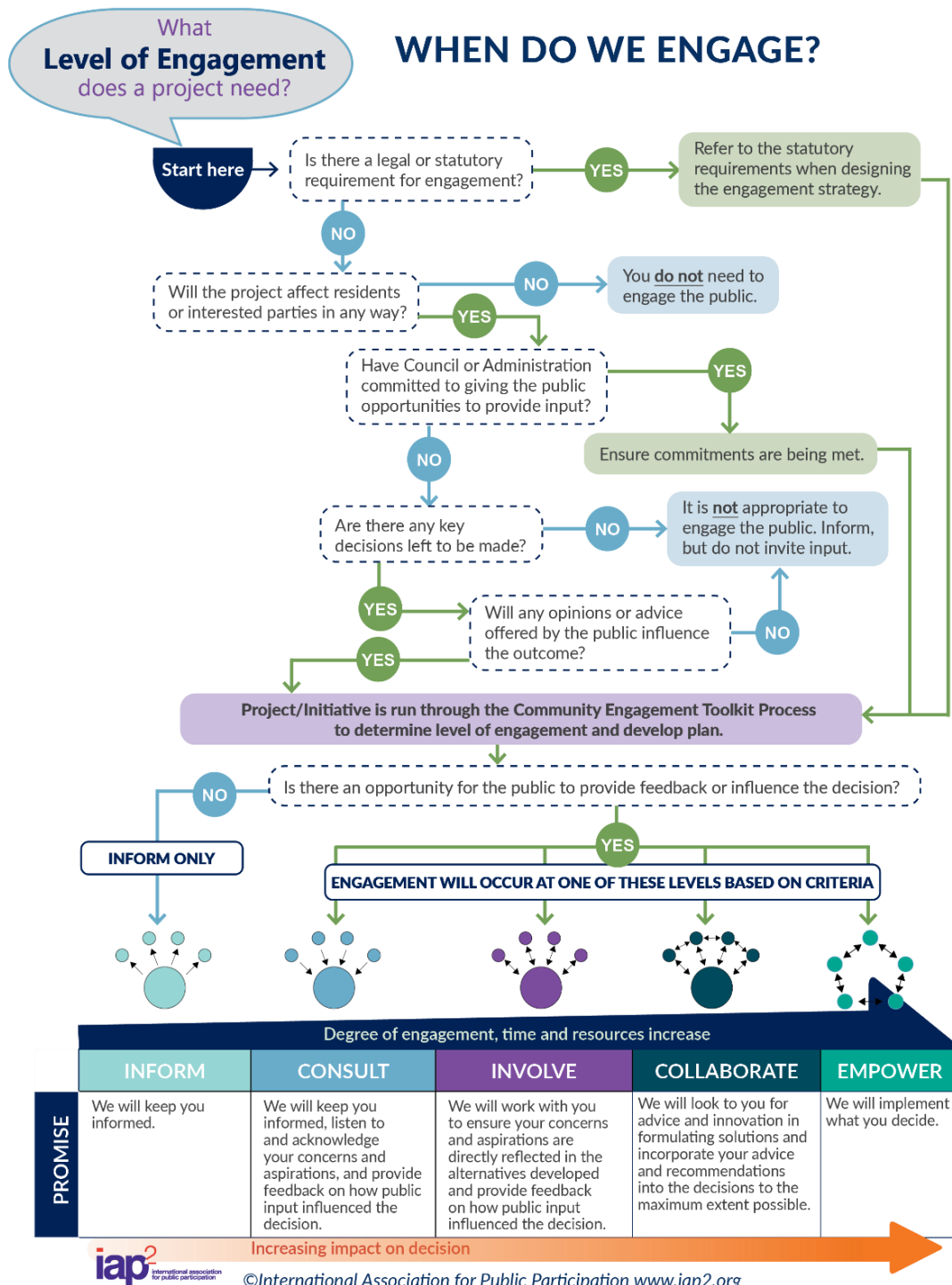
2. Council will:

- 2.1 Approve a Council Engagement Opportunities Plan annually, which will include a number of opportunities for Council to connect with the community;
- 2.2 Enable community engagement to encourage decision-making that reflects the diversity of its citizens and responds to the views of its citizens;
- 2.3 Represent citizens and connect with them to determine top priorities for engagement, such as service levels or policy implementation;



- 2.4 Help promote engagement initiatives and opportunities in order to facilitate a high rate of participation by a wide range of citizens;
- 2.5 Direct citizens to the established processes for garnering, monitoring, and compiling input;
- 2.6 Allow Administration to take the lead role in identifying best practices and methods for engaging the community on various issues;
- 2.7 Consider input gathered from citizens and interested parties when making decisions and clarify the rationale for decisions reached;
- 2.8 Allocate time and resources to support successful engagement efforts for both statutory and non-statutory requirements;
- 2.9 When applicable, listen and observe community engagement and processes;

- 2.10 Request information from the Chief Administrative Officer on the scope, realistic timelines, appropriate methods and resources required for community engagement, prior to directing Administration to undertake a community engagement activity on a specific issue or item; and
- 2.11 Acknowledge the role bias can play in decision-making, review information gathered through community engagement and balance it with intergovernmental, social and cultural, technical, financial, and environmental considerations when making decisions.



3. Definitions

Within the context of this Policy, the following means:

- 3.1. community - a group of people with shared interests or values or who share an environment and may refer to members or groups from the public or Town employees.
- 3.2. community engagement - a formal, defined, interactive process between the Town, the public and interested parties, designed to increase mutual understanding, gather information, exchange ideas, and/or solve problems with the goal of making more informed decisions and applies to initiatives undertaken by both staff and external consultants. The Town's Community Engagement Strategy & Toolkit/Framework will guide how to best engage interested parties, taking into consideration best practices from the International Association for Public Participation organization, the decision to be made and those involved. Other common terms that are often used interchangeably include public engagement, public participation, public involvement, consultation, and input. For consistency throughout our organization, the Town will use community engagement as the term to describe engaging the public in the decision-making process.
- 3.3. guiding principles - the Town's commitment to follow the objectives and goals of being Equitable, Transparent, Accountable, and Relational every time engagement with the public takes place.
- 3.4. interested parties - individuals or groups that may have an interest in, or are affected by, a decision made by the Town. Interested parties may include citizens, non-citizens, businesses, organizations, representatives, and/or Town employees, depending on the issue.
- 3.5. public - anyone (including groups and individuals) who may have an interest in a specific topic or issue under discussion. The public may, or may not, be directly impacted by a decision on the issue.
- 3.6. IAP2 Spectrum - a spectrum developed by the International Association for Public Participation, 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.

IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

