



Policy 56/2018

Policy Title: **Public Participation**

Date Adopted: **June 20, 2018**

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 to create opportunities for meaningful public participation in decisions that directly impact the public

This Public Participation Policy is in addition to and does not replace the statutory public hearing requirements as set out in the Municipal Government Act.

Policy Statement: **A. General Policy Principles**

Bentley Town 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. promotion of sustainable decisions by recognizing various municipal stakeholder interests,
3. providing municipal stakeholders with the appropriate information to engage in participation
4. recognizing that although councilors are elected to consider and promote the welfare and interest of the Town of Bentley 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.

B. Definitions

1. "CAO" means the Chief Administrative Officer of the Town of Bentley or their delegate.
2. "Municipal Stakeholders" means the residents of the Town of Bentley, 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. "Public Participation" means a variety of non-statutory opportunities where municipal stakeholders receive information and/or provide input to the Municipality
4. "Public Participation Plan" 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, open houses, round-tables, workshops
 - b) digital participation which may include online polls or surveys
 - c) written participation which may include written submissions, email and mail-in surveys, polls.
 - d) representative participation which may include municipal stakeholders being appointed to an advisory committee or ad hoc committee.

C. Policy Responsibilities

1. Council shall:
 - a) Review and approve Public Participation Plans developed by the CAO in accordance with this policy or as directed by Council.
 - b) Consider input obtained through public participation
 - c) Periodically 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 meet the intent of this policy.
2. The CAO shall:
 - a) In accordance with this policy or as directed by Council, develop public participation plans, for Council approval
 - b) Implement approved public participation plans
 - c) Report the findings of the public participation to Council

D. Public Participation Opportunities

1. The CAO shall develop and implement a public participation plan in the following circumstances:

- a) When new programs or services are being established
- b) When existing programs and services are being reviewed
- c) When gathering input or formulating recommendations with respect to the Town's strategic plans or business plans
- d) As otherwise directed by Council

E. 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) Public participation will be undertaken in accordance with existing municipal policies
- c) This policy shall be available for public inspection and will be posted to the Town's website
- d) This policy will be reviewed at least once every four years.

2. Public Participation Standards

- a) Public participation activities will be conducted in a professional and respectful manner
- b) 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.
- c) The results of public participation will be made available to Council and municipal stakeholders in a timely manner in accordance with municipal policies.


3. Public Participation Plans

- a) Public participation plans will include the following:
 - i) The nature of the matter for which public participation is being sought
 - ii) Timelines for participation
 - iii) Information available and means of accessing information for public participation
 - iv) Opportunities for the public to provide input

F. Reporting

1. Information obtained in public participation will be reviewed by the CAO and a report shall be provided to Council.
2. The report will include:
 - i) An overview of the public participation plan
 - ii) A summary of the input obtained to assist Council with their decision making process

Policy No. 56/2018 shall come into effect on the date of passing.


Mayor Greg Rathjen


CAO Elizabeth Smart