



SUBJECT: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT	NO. GGA-34
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POLICY STATEMENT

The City of Kamloops recognizes that effective public engagement enables Council and staff to make better-informed decisions. By receiving diverse perspectives and potential solutions, the quality of decisions improves and subsequently, a higher standard of citizen service is provided.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide decision makers, City staff, residents, and other stakeholders with a consistent and genuine public engagement process that values input in decision making.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The City's engagement initiatives and strategies will reflect the following eight principles of engagement:

1. Careful Planning and Preparation

Through adequate and inclusive planning, the City will ensure that the design, organization, and process serve both a clearly-defined purpose and the needs of the participants.

2. Inclusion and Demographic Diversity

The City will equitably incorporate diverse people, voices, ideas, and information to lay the groundwork for quality outcomes and legitimacy. Geographic, technological, social, financial, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic factors will be considered in the design of the participatory process.

3. Collaboration and Shared Purpose

The City will support and encourage participants, government, community institutions, and others to work together to advance the common good.

4. Openness and Learning

The City will help all involved listen to each other, explore ideas unconstrained by predetermined outcomes, and learn and apply information in ways that generate new options. The City will also evaluate public engagement activities for effectiveness.



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5. Commitment and Accountability

All citizens, stakeholders, Council, and City Administration and staff share the responsibility for providing a high quality of life for this community. The City is a responsible steward of public funds and is accountable for wisely choosing the means and extent of engagement and holding itself and others accountable for achieving optimal performance.

6. Transparency and Trust

The City will be clear and open about the process and provide a public record of the organizers, sponsors, outcomes, and range of views and ideas expressed.

7. Impact and Action

The City will ensure each participatory effort has real potential to make a difference and that participants are aware of that potential. Adequate time will be allocated to engagement activities to ensure a level playing field of understanding exists to ground dialogue and decision making.

8. Sustained Engagement and Participatory Culture

The City will promote a culture of participation with programs and institutions that support ongoing quality public engagement.

PROCEDURES

A Public Engagement Handbook has been developed to support this policy. The handbook, available through the Business and Client Services Division, outlines procedures for developing public engagement plans and includes practical tools for implementation.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chief Administrative Officer is responsible for:

- Implementing this policy;
- Verifying the implementation of this policy and the procedures outlined in the Public Engagement Handbook; and
- Ensuring policy and procedures reviews occur.



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Directors are responsible for:

- Understanding and adhering to this policy and the procedures outlined in the handbook;
- Ensuring employees are aware of and implementing this policy and these procedures;
- Ensuring that public engagement is considered at the appropriate stage in any project or process and that the outcome is taken into account in advising Council;
- Ensuring adequate time and resources are dedicated to planning, coordinating, and conducting engagement processes, whether internal or external; and
- Ensuring staff participation in recommended training.

The Business and Client Services Division is responsible for:

- Ensuring implementation of this policy and the procedures outlined in the handbook;
- Ensuring that these policy and procedures are reviewed at a minimum every five years;
- Making recommendations to the Chief Administrative Officer regarding necessary policy and/or procedure amendments;
- Providing support for departmental public engagement; and
- Distributing the handbook and identifying necessary training and support opportunities to ensure successful implementation.

All City of Kamloops employees are responsible for:

- Understanding and adhering to this policy and the procedures outlined in the handbook; and
- Implementing the policy and procedures for every project in which public involvement is expected/warranted.