

Title: Public Engagement Policy

Policy No: 1025

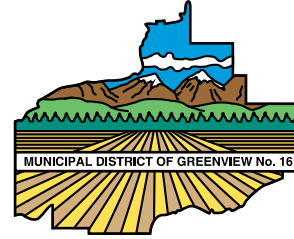
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1025

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Legal References:
Municipal Government Act, R.S.A., 2000, c.M-26, 216.1

Cross References:
Bylaw 1025 “Public Engagement”

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to formally acknowledge and emphasize the intrinsic value of public engagement in the governance and decision-making processes within the Municipal District of Greenview.

This policy aims to establish a robust framework that fosters meaningful and transparent engagement between Greenview and its stakeholders, ensuring that the voices of the public are heard and incorporated into decisions that directly affect them. By creating formal opportunities for engagement, Greenview seeks to enhance the quality and sustainability of its decisions, ensuring that they reflect the diverse perspectives and needs of the community.

Greenview is committed to providing clear, accessible information to the public, facilitating dialogue, and ensuring that public feedback is seriously considered in shaping outcomes.

1. DEFINITIONS

- 1.1. **CAO** means the Chief Administrative Officer of Greenview, or designate.
- 1.2. **Greenview** means the Municipal District of Greenview No.16.
- 1.3. **Public Engagement** means a collaborative process in which Greenview creates opportunities for the public to be involved in decision-making. It includes sharing information, gathering feedback, and working alongside stakeholders to shape decisions and policies.
- 1.4. **The Public** refers to any individual or group that may have an interest in a specific topic or issue being discussed. This includes those who may or may not be directly affected by the decision related to the issue or discussion at hand.
- 1.5. **Stakeholder** means any individual, group, organization, or entity that is affected by or has a vested interest in a decision or action taken by Greenview. Stakeholders may include but

are not limited to residents, non-residents, business owners, community organizations, government agencies, and municipal employees.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

2.1. Principles of Public Engagement

Greenview is committed to good governance by facilitating public engagement in municipal decision-making by the following principles:

- A) ~~Inclusiveness~~ **Collaboration**: Engaging a diverse range of stakeholders and ensuring that all voices ~~particularly marginalized or underrepresented groups~~ are heard and considered.
- B) **Transparency**: Ensuring stakeholders have access to the information they need to engage meaningfully, including clear timelines, objectives, and outcomes of the engagement process.
- C) ~~Responsiveness~~ **Acknowledgement**: ~~Encouraging public input that reflects stakeholder concerns, values, and needs, and responding to that input in the decision-making process.~~ **Being responsive to public input by addressing stakeholder concerns, values, and needs in the decision-making process.**
- D) **Accountability**: Demonstrating how public feedback has influenced the decisions made by Greenview.
- E) **Sustainability**: Promoting decisions that balance the interests of various stakeholders with long-term community welfare and sustainability objectives.

2.2. Scope of Policy

- A) This policy applies to all stakeholders, including residents, businesses, community organizations, and any other individuals or groups with an interest in or who may be affected by decisions of Greenview.
- B) The policy governs how public participation is to be conducted for any decision-making processes that impact the community directly or indirectly, with the aim of ensuring transparency, inclusivity, and meaningful engagement.
- C) ~~The policy does not apply to internal administrative decisions that do not have a direct or indirect impact on the public or for which public input is not required by law.~~ **The policy does not apply to internal administrative decisions that do not affect the public or require public input by law.**
- D) Furthermore, statutory public hearings and consultations required by specific legislation, such as the Municipal Government Act, will follow separate legally mandated processes, though this policy may be used as a guide to enhance those efforts.

3. PROCEDURE

3.1. Adoption of the IAP2 Framework

- A) Greenview has formally adopted the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) framework for public engagement, reflecting a commitment to transparent, inclusive, and meaningful public participation. This framework provides a structured approach to engaging stakeholders in a way that is proportional to the complexity and impact of the decision being made. By aligning with IAP2 principles, Greenview aims to foster trust and collaboration with its residents and stakeholders while ensuring the decision-making process is enriched by diverse perspectives.

3.2. Determining the level of Public Engagement

- A) The IAP2 framework will be employed by Greenview to assess and determine the most appropriate level of public involvement before any significant project or initiative is undertaken. These levels range from simply informing the public to empowering them to make decisions. The framework will help Greenview decide whether a project requires minimal engagement (such as providing information) or more intensive involvement (such as collaborative decision-making or empowerment).

IAP2 Framework

INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

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3.2. Tailoring Public Participation to Specific Needs

- A) ~~Not every issue or project requires the same level of public participation/engagement. In some cases, a higher degree of planning, engagement, and feedback is necessary to address complex or controversial issues topics. For simpler issues, sharing information with the public may suffice. Greenview’s Administration will assess each situation to determine the best approach, ensuring that the engagement level corresponds to both the needs of the municipality and the expectations of stakeholders.~~

3.2. Customizing Public Participation Initiatives

- A) ~~Greenview Administration will take steps to ensure that every public participation initiative is designed in a way that meets the requirements of both the organization and its stakeholders. This includes recognizing the nuances of each project and adjusting the engagement strategy accordingly.~~

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

Greenview Administration will follow a structured process to develop, execute, and evaluate public participation initiatives. This process includes several key steps designed to ensure the initiative is effective and responsive to public needs:

4.1. Evaluate the Purpose of Public Participation

- A) Clearly identify the purpose behind engaging the public. This step ensures that both the municipality and stakeholders understand why their impact is being sought and how it will be used to shape the outcome.

4.2. Define Objectives and Determine the Level of Engagement

- A) Based on the IAP2 framework, Administration will define specific objectives for the engagement process and determine whether the initiative will focus on informing, consulting, involving, collaborating, or empowering stakeholders. This level of engagement will be selected based on the scope of the project and its impact on the community.

4.3. Identify Stakeholders

- A) Administration will identify individuals, groups, or organizations that have a stake in the decision-making process. This includes both direct and indirect stakeholders who may be impacted by the outcome of the project.

4.4. Select the Scope, Size and Sample

- A) Determine the geographic and demographic scope of the engagement. Administration will identify whether participation should be open to all residents, aimed at specific groups, or involve a representative sample of stakeholders.

4.5. Review Time and Cost Factors

- A) Consider the timeframe and budget constraints for the public engagement process. Administration will ensure that the approach chosen is both cost-effective and timely, while also ensuring that stakeholders have adequate time to participate meaningfully.

4.6. Select Engagement Tools

- A) Based on the level of engagement and the needs of the stakeholders, Administration will select appropriate tools and methods for gathering input. Tools may include surveys, public meetings, workshops, online platforms, or focus groups, depending on the nature of the project.

4.7. Promote the Initiative

- A) Public participation opportunities will be promoted through Greenview's website, social media channels, local newspapers, and community notice boards and all available digital media platforms. Efforts will be made to reach a broad audience, ensuring transparency and encouraging widespread participation.

4.8. Implement the Initiative

- A) Once the planning phase is complete, the initiative will be implemented according to the public participation plan. Administration will ensure that all logistics, resources, and personnel are in place to facilitate a smooth engagement process.

4.9. Analyze Results

- A) After gathering input from stakeholders, Administration will analyze the results to identify common themes, concerns and suggestions. This analysis will help inform the decision-making process and will be summarized in a report for Council Review.

4.10. **Respond to Participants**

- A) Greenview Administration will ensure that all participants are informed about how their input was used in the decision-making process. This may include a formal response to stakeholders through a public report or communication on the municipality's website, ensuring transparency and accountability.

4.11. **Reporting and Evaluation**

- A) Following the completion of public participation initiatives, Administration will compile a comprehensive report detailing the engagement process, key findings, and how the input was incorporated into decision-making. This report will be presented to Council and made available to the public, ensuring ongoing transparency and building trust in the public participation process. Periodic evaluations of the engagement process will be conducted to assess effectiveness and identify areas for improvement.

5. ADMINISTRATION RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1. Developing Public Participation Plans

Administration is responsible for preparing comprehensive public participation plans that align with Greenview's strategic objectives and values. These plans should clearly outline the purpose of the engagement, the methods to be used (e.g., surveys, open houses, workshops), the target stakeholders, and the desired outcomes. Public participation plans must adhere to the principles of the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) framework, ensuring that the engagement methods align with the nature and scope of the decision being addressed.

5.2. Determining the Level of Engagement

Administration will assess each issue's complexity, stakeholder impact, and need for transparency to determine the appropriate level of engagement, based on the IAP2 spectrum. This could range from informing stakeholders about decisions to actively empowering them in the decision-making process. The chosen level of engagement will reflect the significance of the issue and the degree to which public input is necessary.

5.3. Incorporating Public Input into Decision-Making

Administration will collect and analyze feedback obtained through public engagement initiatives. This includes summarizing stakeholder input into comprehensive reports that highlight key themes, concerns, and suggestions. These reports will be used to inform decisions, ensuring that public concerns are addressed in balance with legislative, financial, and operational considerations.

5.4. Ensuring Transparency and Communication

Once decisions are made, Administration is responsible for transparently communicating the outcomes to the public. This includes detailing how public input influenced the decision, the rationale behind the final outcome, and any subsequent steps. Clear and timely communication will maintain accountability and foster trust, ensuring that stakeholders feel included and valued throughout the process.