

CITY OF SASKATOON COUNCIL POLICY

NUMBER
<i>C02-046</i>

POLICY TITLE <i>Public Engagement Policy</i>	ADOPTED BY <i>City Council</i>	EFFECTIVE DATE <i>September 1, 2019</i>
		REVISED
ORIGIN/AUTHORITY <i>Strategy and Transformation Administrative Report Item 10.6.1 – July 29, 2019</i>	CITY FILE NO. <i>CK. 372-0</i>	PAGE NUMBER <i>1 of 6</i>

POLICY STATEMENT

Local governments interact with residents and stakeholders in three main areas:

1. Governance: providing information and engaging on municipal decision-making and governance and seeking input on how the organization makes decisions and sets priorities to demonstrate accountability and transparency.
2. Policy & Program Development: providing information on existing policies and programs, and engage on current and new policies to demonstrate accountability and responsiveness.
3. Service Responsiveness & Efficiency: providing information and engaging on service delivery including specific programming effectiveness and responsiveness to better meet the needs of the public.

The City of Saskatoon recognizes that its policy, project, program, and service decisions are improved by engaging citizens and other stakeholder groups where appropriate. Where possible, the City commits to conducting transparent and inclusive public engagement activities and processes that help support City Council and Administration in their decision-making processes.

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to:
 - a) Establish a consistent, strategic, and outcomes-based approach to public engagement;
 - b) Facilitate public participation and input to decision-making through effective and efficient consultation, involvement, collaboration and empowerment processes; and

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- c) Ensure public engagement activities adhere to requirements with *The Cities Act*, *The Planning and Development Act*, Council Policy C01-021, Public Notice, and other applicable legislation, bylaws and policies.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy:

- 2.1 “City Manager” means the person appointed as the administrative head of the City of Saskatoon pursuant to section 84 of *The Cities Act*.
- 2.2 “Public Participation” is an umbrella term that describes the activities by which people’s concerns, needs, interests, and values are incorporated into decisions and actions on public matters and issues.
- 2.3 “Public Engagement” refers to a variety of formal and informal interactions ranging from information sharing to more active consultation through to collaboration in the decision-making processes.

3.0 SCOPE/EXCEPTIONS

3.1 Scope

This policy applies to all City of Saskatoon Departments and Offices.

This policy is subject to any specific provisions of *The Cities Act*, *The Planning and Development Act* or any other relevant federal and provincial legislation, or City Bylaw, which, in cases of conflict, shall override this policy.

3.2 Exceptions

Unless otherwise directed, this policy does not apply to Controlled Corporations wholly owned by the City of Saskatoon, the Board of Police Commissioners and the Saskatoon Public Library Board.

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4.0 ENGAGEMENT GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The City of Saskatoon's approach to public engagement will align with the following engagement guiding principles:

4.1 **Inclusivity**

Ensures engagement processes are designed in a way that promote and allow for adequate community contributions while building relationships with a diverse group of stakeholders.

4.2 **Early Involvement**

Stresses stakeholder involvement as early as possible to allow for, and encourage, active participation.

4.3 **Decision-Making**

Stresses that the engagement process must include an authentic opportunity to influence the decision.

4.4 **Transparency and Accountability**

Ensures the engagement process is well defined in terms of stakeholder input level of engagement and outcomes.

4.5 **Open and Timely Communication**

Highlights the importance of objective, timely and accurate information sharing.

4.6 **Relationship Building**

Stresses the importance of relationship building rooted in mutual trust and respect.

4.7 **Evaluation**

Ensures continuous improvement of the engagement process.

5.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 City Council shall:

5.1.1 Promote public engagement opportunities and encourage participation;

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- 5.1.2 Communicate positively to citizens, stakeholders, and media about the importance of such events and activities to the City;
 - 5.1.3 Respect the role of administration in designing, executing, and reporting on public engagement projects;
 - 5.1.4 Consider and review the findings of public engagement projects, as presented and summarized by Administration;
 - 5.1.5 Consider public engagement as an essential part of Council discussions and decision-making; and
 - 5.1.6 Support the increasing capacity of the organization in designing and executing useful, efficient, and innovative public participation activities over time.
- 5.2 The City Manager shall:
- 5.2.1 Implement the Public Engagement Policy by establishing goals, targets, initiatives, governance structures, and associated administrative policies, procedures, and practices, where applicable;
 - 5.2.2 Ensure an effective, appropriate and consistent approach to the process, specifically matching objectives of engagement with the methodology for achieving that engagement;
 - 5.2.3 Develop and implement a complete engagement strategy that includes a communications strategy, stakeholder identification, level of participation, evaluation process, engagement objectives, engagement goals, and the processes for achieving these goals and objectives;
 - 5.2.4 Follow the approved processes for development applications submitted to the City;
 - 5.2.5 Identify audiences to engage with, while thoughtfully considering the need to engage “harder-to-reach” audiences for some initiatives;

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5.2.6 Communicate and/or use the findings of the participation activities to assist in making policy, program, service or project recommendations to City Council or its Committees;

5.2.7 Identify any human or financial resources required to implement this policy; and

5.2.8 Propose amendments to this policy.

6.0 PROCEDURES

6.1 This policy delegates authority to the City Manager, or designate, to develop any necessary procedures or decision-making frameworks to ensure compliance with this policy.

7.0 REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS

7.1 This policy shall be reviewed five years after its enactment by City Council.

7.2 Notwithstanding subsection 7.1 and in accordance with subsection 5.2.7, the City Manager may propose amendments to this policy prior to the review date.

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RELATED REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

The Cities Act
The Planning and Development Act
Bylaw No. 8171, The Public Notice Policy Bylaw, 2003
Council Policy No. C01-021, Public Notice