

Approval date: November 5, 2019

Resolution No.: 469/2019

**Subject: Community Engagement**

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to articulate Council's commitment to engage with the community in key decisions and the development of policy, and to provide direction to staff on how to carry out a meaningful and trusted community engagement process.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to the design and execution of community engagement programs and activities conducted by the City of Penticton that are not regulated by provincial legislation.

## **Policy**

The City of Penticton recognizes that the involvement of citizens in making decisions and setting City policy is fundamental to good governance and that their participation improves the decisions by hearing all perspectives, identifying issues early and building understanding of the problem or opportunity. The following guiding principles and policy statements describe the approach to be followed by the City of Penticton in delivering its community engagement program.

### ***Community engagement is guided by best practices***

1. The City of Penticton recognizes the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) as the international standard for effective community engagement. The City's community engagement activities are guided by the IAP2 Public Participation Pillars including the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation, the IAP2 Core Values, and the IAP2 Code of Ethics. (For information, see [www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org).)

### ***Community engagement is decision-oriented***

2. Engagement must lead to tangible outcomes or decisions which are defined clearly, accurately, and early in the process. The City of Penticton does not undertake community engagement if the public cannot influence the decision or if there is no tangible outcome or decision to be made.

### ***Community engagement is based on the level of public impact***

3. The City of Penticton considers the potential level of public impact or interest in the decision or policy to determine the need for community engagement and the level of public involvement before initiating the work. In accordance with the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation, the level of engagement increases with the level of impact to citizens.

### ***Community engagement is planned and measured***

4. All community engagement activities are supported by a plan that clearly identifies the decision, goals, and desired outcomes of the public's participation. The City of Penticton demonstrates that results and outcomes of the engagement processes are consistent with the approved plans for engagement.

### ***Community engagement is open, transparent and balanced***

5. The City of Penticton ensures the public has the information necessary to participate meaningfully in the engagement activities. The City aims to provide information that is timely, complete, balanced and easy to understand. It includes the advantages and disadvantages of the initiative as well as the financial implications and funding sources where appropriate.

### ***Community engagement is inclusive and respectful***

6. The City of Penticton works to reach, involve and hear from a representative demographic of the population and takes steps to reduce physical, social, and cultural barriers to participation. Citizens are engaged early in the decision-making process, have a variety of opportunities to be involved, and have sufficient time to review information.

### ***Community engagement is a shared responsibility***

7. Council, staff and citizens have a responsibility to participate openly, honestly, respectfully, and constructively. At each level of engagement, all participants understand their roles, responsibilities and authority and recognize that the interest of the community may be greater than the interest of individuals.

### ***Community engagement is collaborative***

8. The City of Penticton's engagement processes create opportunities for citizens, staff, and Council to talk to and learn from each other. The process allows for discussion of values, principles, choices, and trade-offs in search of common ground. Council and staff take advantage of the opportunities provided by the engagement program to hear the different perspectives of citizens.

### ***Community engagement is accountable***

9. Staff will share the complete findings of the engagement program with Council and the public and report how the results were reflected in their recommendation. The results of the community engagement program are one of several factors considered by Council when they make decisions.



***Community engagement is resourced effectively***

10. The City of Penticton aims to provide a professional level of quality in its engagement activities. Staff are trained in community engagement and employ best practice tools and templates to ensure consistent and effective planning, implementation and evaluation of the program and services. The City of Penticton leverages internal resources and tools and takes advantage of City-owned venues to minimize costs while still meeting the goals for public involvement. When required, external resources are recruited and managed by Community Engagement staff.

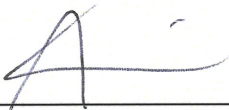
***Community engagement is continuously improving***

11. The City of Penticton recognizes that community engagement is dynamic and regularly evaluates the program and continuously improves the strategies and techniques to increase participation and improve effectiveness.

**Definitions**

Community Engagement - defined as any process that involve the public in problem-solving or decision-making and that uses public input to make better decisions. It promotes sustainable decisions by providing participants with the information they need to be involved in a meaningful way, and it communicates to participants how their input affects the decision. The practice of public participation might involve public meetings, surveys, open houses, workshops, advisory committees and other forms of direct involvement with the public.

Certified Correct



---

Angie Collison, Corporate Officer