

## Mackenzie County

<b>Title</b>	<b>Citizen Engagement Policy</b>	<b>Policy No:</b>	<b>ADM056</b>
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<b>Legislation Reference</b>	Municipal Government Act Sections 227-230
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### **Purpose**

Public input is essential to the municipal decision making process. The purpose of this policy is to identify the method, level and process of communication and citizen engagement required prior to making certain levels of decisions.

This Policy is in supplement to the legislative public engagement and advertising requirements that exist.

### **Policy Statement:**

Mackenzie County supports citizen engagement as a process for making better decisions that incorporate the interests and concerns of the general public and/or affected stakeholders. Mackenzie County is committed to creating an informed citizenry.

Through citizen engagement, Mackenzie County is committed to building trust by attempting to resolve conflict among opposing community interests in search of the best sustainable solutions.

### **Definitions:**

- a) "Citizen Advisory Committee" means a Council appointed Ad Hoc committee on which public members observe, advise and liaise on behalf of all citizens for consideration by Council and Administration. Committee terms of reference are to be developed as required for individual Council decisions.
- b) "Citizen Engagement" means the process of involving the public in decisions and initiatives that affect them, including policies, plans, strategies, programs and services.
- c) "Consensus Building" means an agreement reached by Council and all interested stakeholders when all parties agree that they can live with the

matter being proposed after every effort has been made to meet all relevant interests.

- d) “Delegated decision” means the assignment of decision making authority to public members.
- e) “Public” means the most general and inclusive term for participants of public processes in the municipal context. This term includes individuals, not-for-profit, community and corporate organizations.
- f) “Participatory decision making” means involving public members in the decision making process through shared leadership and the exchange of information, ideas and perceptions.

### **Principles & Guidelines**

Mackenzie County will follow the following principles:

1. Be proactive; anticipate community conflict before it happens.
2. Honour the public service commitment to engage with people and provide a real opportunity to influence the outcome.
3. Be accountable and transparent; be respectful and responsive to the public.
4. Ensure that proper planning for the engagement process takes place to avoid failures at public meetings.
5. Once the proper engagement and dialog takes place, if community conflict still exists, utilize direct democracy tools such as plebiscites as necessary

Mackenzie County will use the following guidelines:

1. Council will communicate and engage citizens to allow for input throughout the decision making process for events identified in this policy.
2. The event will determine the type and level of engagement. The events are listed in Schedule “A.”
3. If two types of engagement are identified in Schedule “A,” Council will determine the type required.
4. The process/tools of engagement that Council can select is listed in Schedule “B.”

5. Council will communicate to the public the final decision.

**Responsibilities:**

1. Administration will assess and identify when citizen engagement is necessary and which type of engagement should be used. When there is no legislative requirement for public consultation, administration will recommend to Council the level of engagement required as per this policy.
2. The Chief Administrative Officer or designate is responsible for ensuring that this policy is enforced.

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Resolution Number</b>
<b>Approved</b>	30-Sep-15	15-09-669
<b>Amended</b>		
<b>Amended</b>		

**SCHEDULE “A”**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Type of Engagement</b>
Council	Annual Budget	Inform or Consult
	Annual Report	Inform
	Strategic Plan	Consult
	Bylaw Review and Development	Inform or Consult
	Policy Review and Development	Inform or Consult
Planning and Development	New or Amended Municipal Development Plan, Area Structure Plans, Land Use Bylaw	Consult
	New or Amended Area Redevelopment Plans	Consult
	Planning Documents	Consult or Collaborate
	New or Amended Community Sustainability Plan	Collaborate
Protective Services	Change in Service Level for Fire Department or Bylaw Enforcement	Inform
	Municipal Emergency Plan	Inform
Operations	Public Works Affecting Adjacent Landowners	Inform
	Construction of Infrastructure	Inform
	Traffic Management and Studies	Consult
Community Services	Development of Trail, Park or Green Space	Consult or Collaborate
	Public Facility Development or Closure	Consult or Collaborate
	Facility or Master Plan	Collaborate

**SCHEDULE “B”**

<b>Type of Engagement</b>	<b>Inform</b>	<b>Consult</b>	<b>Collaborate</b>
<b>Goal</b>	Provide public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding decisions.	To obtain public feedback throughout the decision making process, listen and respond to concerns.	To partner with the public during the decision making process by obtaining direct advice and using it to implement a decision.
<b>Description</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision is routine and part of the operations</li> <li>• Disclosure is required by law</li> <li>• There is an urgent need to respond to the public</li> <li>• An employee is acting within their authority</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public notification and input is required by law</li> <li>• The decision is a known concern to other parties</li> <li>• The decision will affect the lifestyle or habits of citizens</li> <li>• There is perceived risk associated with the decision</li> <li>• Council or Administration requests public input prior to making a decision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing the decision making process</li> <li>• Incorporating recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible</li> <li>• Decision directly affects a large amount of the population</li> </ul>
<b>Process/Tools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newspaper</li> <li>• County Image</li> <li>• Website</li> <li>• Social Media</li> <li>• Radio</li> <li>• Letters</li> <li>• Flyers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey</li> <li>• Polls</li> <li>• Workshop</li> <li>• Open House</li> <li>• Public Hearing</li> <li>• Council Meeting</li> <li>• Delegation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Citizen Advisory Committee</li> <li>• Consensus Building</li> <li>• Participatory Decision Making</li> <li>• Delegated decisions</li> <li>• Plebiscite</li> </ul>