

CORPORATE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

Policy Title:	Community Engagement Policy	Policy No:	GOV-008
Section:	Communications	Resolution:	2021-
Policy Lead:	Chief Administrative Officer	Effective Date:	
Application:	All Staff and Council	Last Review Date:	-
Approved by:	Council	Previous Resolution:	-

1.0 PURPOSE

The Municipality of East Ferris is committed to meaningful engagement that is open, accessible, inclusive, responsive, and respectable, and within the Municipality’s ability to finance and resource. All residents have the right to participate in clear and transparent public engagement processes in a timely, meaningful, appropriate, and respectable manner. The Municipality of East Ferris recognizes that decisions are improved by engaging citizens and believes that community engagement is a mutual responsibility of both the Municipality of East Ferris and the community members.

The purpose of this policy is to effectively inform, educate and engage citizens in a transparent and collaborative manner that promotes greater participation in municipal government. This policy outlines the Municipality’s commitment to inclusive community engagement processes to ensure quality communication, citizen involvement and community participation for a variety of purposes: inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

Community Engagement: Community engagement is the process of meaningful two-way dialogue and participation in forming decisions that affect the community. The community engagement process is transparent, responsive, inclusive, and empowering and is based on realistic expectations, mutual respect and trust.

3.0 APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to Members of Council, Municipal staff, and the public.

4.0 PRINCIPLES

In all engagement efforts, the Municipality of East Ferris will use the following guiding principles to foster and support meaningful communication.

Mutual Respect and Inclusion: Participants will listen and respect different opinions, be flexible in how they interact, and be open to considering alternatives.

Accessibility: Information and communications are easy to find, access and understand.

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Shared Responsibility: The Municipality and the community have responsibilities to fulfill in honouring the implementation of the *Community Engagement Policy* and both will endeavour to meet these responsibilities.

Transparency: All processes will be open, understandable, transparent, and inclusive. All participants will make the best effort to reach, involve and hear from all those who are directly and indirectly affected.

Realistic Expectations: At each level of engagement, all participants will understand their roles, responsibilities and authority and will understand that the interest of the community may be greater than the interest of individuals.

Responsiveness: Participants will listen and respond to concerns in a timely manner, ensuring that outcomes and next steps are communicated.

5.0 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENTS

5.1 Framework

There are a number of purposes for which Council and Administration may want to engage with the community to help inform a project or initiative. This policy identifies and defines a framework that includes a spectrum of five purposes for communicating and engaging with the community.

a) Inform

Purpose of this Type of Engagement: Provide detailed information and awareness to the public.

Municipality's Responsibility: Keep the public informed by providing timely, accurate and accessible information.

Community's Responsibility: Be attentive to information that is available and be informed by actively seeking out timely, accurate information.

Guideposts for Use of This Level of Engagement:

- Decision has already been made

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- Not looking for feedback
- Municipality has control to make the decision and implement it

b) Consult

Purpose of this Type of Engagement: Obtain public feedback on alternatives and/or decisions in order to inform decision making.

Municipality's Responsibility: Listen, acknowledge concerns, and seek to listen to diverse perspectives.

Community's Responsibility: Participate and share knowledge and views. Recognize that not all input may be reflected in the final decision.

Guideposts for Use of This Level of Engagement: The Municipality has control to make the decision and implement but wants some feedback before making a final decision.

c) Involve

Purpose of this Type of Engagement: Work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.

Municipality's Responsibility: Work with the public to ensure concerns, needs and aspirations are reflected in the alternatives developed and considered in the decision making process. Provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.

Community's Responsibility: Participate in the process and share knowledge and views. Provide input and receive direct feedback regarding how input influenced the decision.

Guideposts for Use of This Level of Engagement:

- The public is invited into the process, usually from the beginning, and is provided multiple if not ongoing opportunities for input as decision making progresses.
- Work directly with the public and consider their input throughout the decision making process.
- The Municipality is still the decision maker and there is no expectation of building consensus or providing the public with high level influence over the decision

d) Collaborate

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Purpose of this Type of Engagement: Partner with stakeholders in all steps of the process, including the development of strategies and recommendations and the identification of preferred solutions.

Municipality’s Responsibility: Facilitate a two way conversation which is collaborative and work with the public to address concerns and incorporate advice.

Community’s Responsibility: Provide advice and share knowledge. Cooperate to formulate solutions and recommendations.

Guideposts for Use of This Level of Engagement:

- The Municipality cannot make a decision and implement by itself
- Shared decision making with other partners

e) Empower

Purpose of this Type of Engagement: Citizens initiate and develop projects and/or make final decisions and/or implement the decisions.

Municipality’s Responsibility: Encourage and support citizens in identifying issues, developing priorities and implementing decisions. Support and accept citizen decisions.

Community’s Responsibility: Actively participate and encourage others to do so, taking ownership and responsibility regardless of outcome.

Guideposts for Use of This Level of Engagement:

- Citizens make the decision and may implement
- The Municipality may facilitate or support implementation

5.2 Methods

When the Municipality decides to engage with the public for a specific project or initiative, the following Spectrum of Public Participation, developed by the International Association for Public Participation, will be used as a guideline to determine the engagement method.

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IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation



Increasing Level of Public Impact 

	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.
Example techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fact sheets ▪ Web sites ▪ Open houses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public comment ▪ Focus groups ▪ Surveys ▪ Public meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Workshops ▪ Deliberative polling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Citizen advisory committees ▪ Consensus-building ▪ Participatory decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Citizen juries ▪ Ballots ▪ Delegated decision

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6.0 REVIEW

This *Community Engagement Policy* will be reviewed once per term of Council or as requested by the CAO or Council.

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