



# TOWN OF SEDGEWICK

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT POLICY POLICY # 18-06

APPROVAL DATE: JUNE 14, 2018  
RESOLUTION NUMBER: 2018-06-112

---

### 1. Policy Purpose

- 1.1. The Town of Sedgewick Council and Administration recognize that municipal decisions have an impact on the public, and that decisions may be improved by engaging the public before a decision is made.
- 1.2. Council believes that there is a wide range of benefits and strong rationale for a consistent, standardized and meaningful Public Engagement Policy so as to:
  - 1.2.1. Provide fair and equitable opportunities for positive contributions from community members and stakeholders;
  - 1.2.2. Provide information to assist community members and stakeholders in understanding issues and opportunities;
  - 1.2.3. Increase credibility for decision-makers and provide a clearer rationale for decisions;
  - 1.2.4. Improve public expectations of an open and transparent government;
  - 1.2.5. Facilitate two-way conversation and foster respect for different perspectives;
  - 1.2.6. Develop a wider range of alternatives that could result in reduced project timelines and costs; and
  - 1.2.7. Result in a better-informed community, a greater sense of ownership in decision-making and more public satisfaction with municipal programs, services and long-term plans.

### 2. Definitions:

- 2.1. CAO means the Chief Administrative Officer, pursuant to the *Municipal Government Act*.
- 2.2. *Legislation* means the laws and regulations that govern the Town of Sedgewick.
- 2.3. *Public Engagement* is any process that involves the public, or anyone interested in or affected by an issue or opportunity, in contributing to a decision to be made by the municipality about that issue or opportunity.
- 2.4. *Stakeholders* means any citizen, group of citizens or customers with an interest in the welfare of Sedgewick.
- 2.5. *Town or Town of Sedgewick* means Council and/or Town Administration

### 3. Guidelines

- 3.1. The Town recognizes that there are varying levels of influence found within the public engagement participation processes. Depending on the level(s) selected, there is an increasing amount of public influence over the decision as follows:

<b>Inform</b>	Provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives and/or solutions.
<b>Consult</b>	Obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions
<b>Involve</b>	Work directly with the Public throughout the process to ensure that public issues and concerns are consistently understood and considered.
<b>Collaborate</b>	Partner with the Public on each of the aspects of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution
<b>Empower</b>	Place final decision-making in the hands of the public

- Source – IAP2, International Association for Public Participation

3.2. The following types of Public Engagement are utilized:

<b>Social Media</b>	<p><u>Facebook:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updates on community events &amp; articles of interest</li> <li>• Updates/announcements related to emergency situations such as water or natural gas interruptions, garbage collection, etc.</li> <li>• Updates on Council resolutions, including information about bylaws and policies</li> </ul>	<p>Monitored daily Updated as needed</p>
	<p><u>Website:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community events calendar</li> <li>• Update news feed on Town-related events and activities</li> <li>• Updates on Council resolutions including amended/new bylaws or policies</li> <li>• Council agendas, minutes, bylaws, financial reports, etc.</li> </ul>	<p>Monitored daily Updated as needed</p>
	<p><u>Twitter:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updates emerging trends or emergency town-related situations such as water interruptions</li> </ul>	<p>Updated as needed</p>
<b>Newsletter</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council highlights of previous meeting</li> <li>• Notices of new bylaws or policies</li> <li>• Notices of Public Meetings</li> <li>• Community group updates and schedules</li> <li>• Local Calendar of Events</li> </ul>	<p>Published monthly</p>
<b>Newspaper</b>	<p>Notices as required by the MGA and LAEA:</p>	<p>Available weekly</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land Use Bylaw Amendments</li> <li>• Mailing of annual assessment notices</li> <li>• Election or by-election notifications</li> </ul>	Used as required by legislation
<b>Public Meetings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Council meetings are public meetings</li> <li>• Land Use Bylaw Amendments – per the MGA</li> <li>• Bylaw Amendments</li> </ul>	<p>Monthly</p> <p>As Needed</p> <p>As needed-depends on the controversial nature and impact of the bylaw.</p> <p>For bylaws that are not time-sensitive, Council will not give all three readings at a single meeting</p>

**4. Responsibilities**

**4.1. Town Council shall:**

- 4.1.1. Approve by resolution, this policy and any amendments.
- 4.1.2. Consider the allocation of resources for successful implementation of this policy in the annual budget and ensure resources are adequate to facilitate staff’s role in conducting the appropriate process.
- 4.1.3. Recognize the benefits of public engagement and consider input obtained through public engagement activities.
- 4.1.4. Serve as an advocate for public engagement.
- 4.1.5. Be guided by the policy when determining the level of public engagement required prior to making a decision.

**4.2. Chief Administrative Officer shall:**

- 4.2.1. Ensure implementation of this policy and related procedures.
- 4.2.2. Recognize the benefits of public engagement.
- 4.2.3. Serve as an advocate for public engagement.
- 4.2.4. Evaluate the effectiveness of each public engagement event.
- 4.2.5. Provide guidance to Council, ensuring sufficient public engagement has occurred.
- 4.2.6. Recommend to Council necessary policy amendments.

- 4.3. All Employees shall:
  - 4.3.1. Understand and adhere to this policy
  - 4.3.2. Recognize the benefits of public engagement.
  - 4.3.3. Serve as advocates for public engagement.
  - 4.3.4. Obtain public engagement training as appropriate.

5. Principles

- 5.1. Town of Sedgewick Council and Employees agree and commit to the following six key principles of Public Engagement:

- 5.1.1. *Inclusive & Authentic* :

- 5.1.1.1. To the greatest extent possible, the Town will involve all stakeholders who are potentially affected by an issue, in a transparent and equitable manner and, to the greatest extent possible, be responsive to issues of equity and accommodation that may potentially impact involvement including language, gender, culture, race, disability and geography.
- 5.1.1.2. Each issue, need, project or program will be assessed to determine those issues that require consultation, and where in the process the public should become involved and the potential impact of the public on the decision. Public participation strategies shall be designed when the issue is identified, early in the process and be flexible enough to accommodate changing priorities or emerging issues.

- 5.1.2. *Sharing & Supportive:*

- 5.1.2.1. Involve stakeholders in the decision-making process where their input can impact the decision.

- 5.1.3. *Accountable & Committed:*

- 5.1.3.1. Set clear objectives and expectations for a public engagement initiative and actively listen to the input of citizens, community organizations and Advisory Committees.

- 5.1.4. *Meaningful & Responsive:*

- 5.1.4.1. Ensure consultation is meaningful and valid, with clear objectives and expectations with respect to the ability of the public to impact the decision.
- 5.1.4.2. Ensure consultation is conducted in a timely manner that is appropriate to the issue and level of public involvement.
- 5.1.4.3. Ensure participants receive appropriate feedback on the impact of their input; this is the key to making Public Engagement meaningful.

5.1.5. Continuously Improving:

5.1.5.1. Continually evaluate and measure the success of the Public Engagement Policy and public engagement participation initiatives that will form a fundamental part of ensuring public engagement is effective and relevant.

5.1.5.2. Evaluation mechanisms shall be undertaken for each public consultation initiative used.

5.1.6. Facilitating & Building Capacity for a Collaborative Community:

5.1.6.1. Strengthen links between the Town and the community on public engagement initiatives and build capacity in the community for public engagement on issues that affect them.

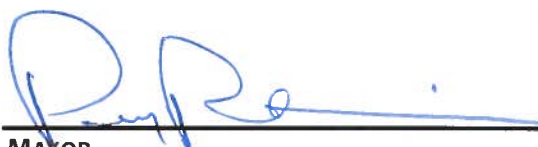
6. **Revision/Review History**

6.1. This policy shall be reviewed each December in the year of the General Municipal Election, pursuant to the *Local Authorities Election Act*, and

6.2. May be reviewed and amended on additional occasions as Council deems required.

TOWN OF SEDGEWICK

June 14, 2018  
\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
MAYOR

June 14, 2018  
\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER