

VULCAN COUNTY POLICY NO. 12-1005	Public Participation Policy
Effective: July 18, 2018	
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Review Date: March 2022	



Public Participation Policy

PURPOSE

Vulcan County is dedicated to creating opportunities for stakeholders to engage in decisions that directly impact the public. The County believes that the decision making process can be enhanced by engaging residents and stakeholders where appropriate and every effort will be made to ensure the public's views are considered.

1. DEFINITIONS

- a. **“Administration”**: Vulcan County staff as directed by the Chief Administrative Officer;
- b. **“CAO”**: Chief Administrative Officer as appointed by Vulcan County Council;
- c. **“Council”**: The elected official Council of Vulcan County, in the Province of Alberta;
- d. **“County”**: Vulcan County, in the Province of Alberta;
- e. **“County website”**: Vulcan County’s official website
- f. **“Engagement”**: Public participation tools used to gather input from the public;
- g. **“Land Use Bylaw”**: Vulcan County’s current Land Use Bylaw
- h. **“MGA”**: Municipal Government Act, Revised Statutes of Alberta, Chapter M-26, as amended;
- i. **“Newspaper Ad”**: Advertising in the Vulcan Advocate
- j. **“Public”**: Anyone (including groups and individuals) who may have an interest in a specific topic or issue under discussion. The public may, or may not, be directly affected by a decision on the issue;
- k. **“Social Media”**: Social media accounts in Vulcan County’s name as per Social Media Policy
- l. **“Stakeholder”**: An individual or group who has a specific interest or is impacted by a topic or issue. Stakeholders may include residents, non-residents, groups, organizations or individuals.

2. GOALS

- a. **Transparent and Accountable**: That the County communicates clearly and openly about public participation opportunities and processes.
- b. **Appropriate and Responsive**: Public participation activities need to be appropriate to the stated goals and reflective of the varied preferences and needs of the public for receiving and sharing information.
- c. **Evaluation and Continued Improvement**: Public participation is an evolving process that needs continual evaluation and adjustments to continuously improve and address the changing needs of the community.

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- d. **Shared Responsibility and Commitment:** Public participation leads to better decision and is a shared responsibility of Council, Administration and the public.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. Vulcan County Council shall:
- i. Consider public and stakeholder input obtained through public participation activities through their decision-making process;
 - ii. Promote public participation activities and provide, where appropriate, Council member representation;
- b. Chief Administrative Officer shall:
- i. Be responsible for evaluating and monitoring this policy;
 - ii. Ensure a coordinated and standardized approach to public participation across the organization;
 - iii. Develop all necessary processes and tools that support the implementation of this policy;
 - iv. Make recommendations to Council on the appropriate resources required for public participation, when Council directs public input on a specific issue or item.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

- a. When the County undertakes a public participation process, the following will be clarified at the beginning of the process:
- i. The objective clearly identified
 - ii. Timeline for input submission
 - iii. Ensure that public and stakeholder input will be reviewed during the decision-making process
- b. Vulcan County will commit to the following:
- i. To inform the public
 - ii. To listen and consider the public's concerns
 - iii. To work with the public to exchange information, ideas, and concerns
 - iv. To seek advice from various stakeholders
- c. The table below outlines the *minimum* public engagement requirements for County plans and process.

SUMMARY OF MINIMUM PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Category/ Department	Type of Application	Form of Engagement	Notification Requirements and Distances
Council	Annual Budget	Notify or request input	Newspaper ad County website/social media Local advertising boards
	Financial Plans	Notify or request input	Newspaper ad County website/social media
	Disposal of Municipal Reserve	Request input	Per MGA Newspaper ad Public Hearing
	Elections	Notify or request input	Newspaper ad County website/social media Local advertising boards
	Various	Request input	Question Period at Council meetings as per Vulcan County's Procedural Bylaw
Planning & Development	New Intermunicipal Development Plan, Municipal Development Plans, or Land Use Bylaws	Request input	Per Land Use Bylaw and MGA Open House Public Hearing Newspaper ad County website/social media Letters to referral agencies
	Development Permit	Request input	Per MGA Letters to adjacent landowners Email to referral agencies
	New Areas Structure Plans	Request input	Open House Newspaper ad County website/social media
	Subdivision Application	Request input	Per MGA Letters to adjacent landowners Email to referral agencies
	Development Permit for major development or Direct Control District Permit	Request input	Per Land Use Bylaw and MGA Newspaper ad Letters to landowners
	Road Closure	Request input	Per MGA Public Hearing Email to referral agencies Newspaper ad Letter to adjacent landowners

Category/ Department	Type of Application	Form of Engagement	Notification Requirements and Distances
Protective Services	Changes in service level from fire departments or bylaw enforcement	Notify or request input	Per MGA Newspaper ad County website/social media
Public Works/ Operations	Haul route planning	Notify or request input	Newspaper ad County website/social media

5. POLICY EXEPCTATIONS

- a. All public participation will be undertaken in accordance with the *Municipal Government Act*, the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, and any other applicable legislation.
- b. This policy shall be reviewed at least once every four (4) years.