

Policy Number:	CAS-012
Policy Name:	Public Engagement
Approved By:	Chief Administrative Officer
Approval Date:	January 23, 2023
Amendment Date:	
Department:	Corporate, Administrative and Strategic Initiatives

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

PURPOSE

The District of Oak Bay believes decision-making is improved by engaging the community and has made public engagement a priority. Citizens need to feel that their input is valued and that processes are standardized to ensure their feedback is received and considered in decision-making processes and reported out on. The District is committed to transparent public engagement processes that are supported by factual information, inclusivity and respect.

The District is committed to establishing clear expectations and respecting the needs of all stakeholders impacted by or involved in the decision-making. Public engagement means that the District, including Council and Staff, are consciously making efforts to:

- Operate in a transparent fashion
- Gather input from the community and stakeholders
- Utilize input in a meaningful way to enhance decision making

VALUES

It is important to ground commitments to public engagement that will inform decision-making at a local government level in core values. The International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Core Values are recognized globally.

These core values help establish clear expectations and strive to respect the needs of all stakeholders involved in the decision. The purpose of these core values is to help make better decisions which reflect the interests and concerns of potentially affected people and entities.

Core Values:

1. Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.
2. Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision.
3. Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers.

CAS-012 - Public Engagement

4. Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.
5. Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.
6. Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
7. Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SPECTRUM

	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 or alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
District of Oak Bay Promise	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.
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fact Sheets • Websites • 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"> • Advisory bodies • Consensus-building • Participatory decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen juries • Ballots • Delegated decision
Participant's Responsibility	To become informed	To provide feedback	To be open to other points of view and work with staff and other members of the public	To put aside personal agendas and participate in discussions	To work with staff to implement agreed upon decisions

COMMITMENT AND RESOURCES

Appropriate financial resources will form part of ongoing budget requests to Council seeking the funding required for financial, human and technical resources for effective public engagement under this policy and to meet legislative requirements.

The District may, depending on the issue, consider the cost-effectiveness in mediums used for communicating with the public. Certain legislative requirements may require the use of newspaper for legal ads.

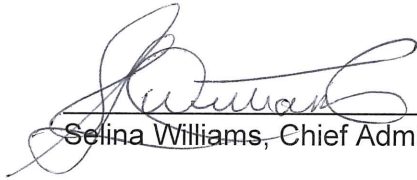
ACCOUNTABILITY AND EVALUATION

The District will be accountable for acting in accordance with this policy. Public engagement processes will be measured for consistency with the objective and commitment.

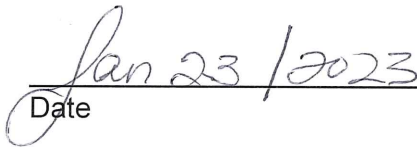
The District will report on the public participation activities that have been conducted on an annual basis.

PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

For detailed procedures and guidelines, this policy is supplemented by the District's *Public Engagement Framework and Toolkit*.



Selina Williams, Chief Administrative Officer



Date