

CITY OF LEDUC  
**PUBLIC  
ENGAGEMENT  
FRAMEWORK**

2022

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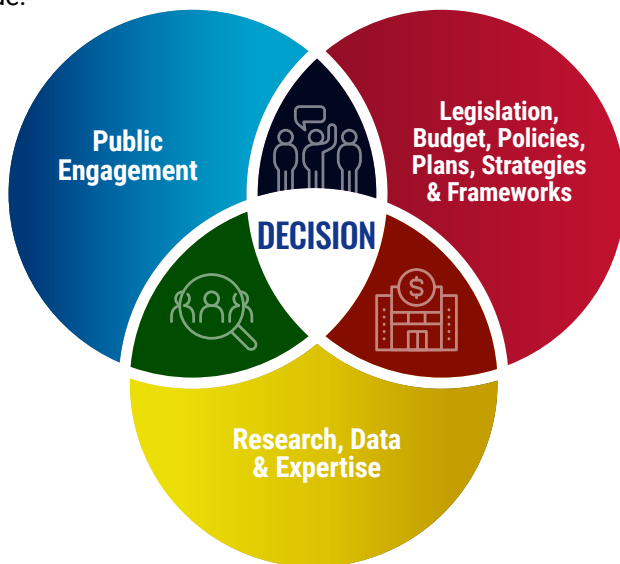
2022

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# INTRODUCTION

Public engagement is about when and how members of the public interact with the City of Leduc (City) to contribute to decisions made by the municipality. Members of the public include residents, non-residents, individuals and/or groups, including those with special interests, organizations, representatives and/or City staff, depending on the issue.<sup>1</sup>



In 2018 the City of Leduc approved a [Public Engagement Policy](#). It outlines when the City will engage with members of the public on issues and decisions, and guiding principles for how the City will engage.

To bridge the Policy with implementation, the City has established the City of Leduc Public Engagement Framework (Framework). The purpose is to create a consistent, intentional and transparent approach to public engagement that will help build public trust. The Framework guides Administration on when and how the City will invite members of the public to contribute to City decisions.

<sup>1</sup> City of Leduc Public Engagement Policy 11.00.29



The Public Engagement Framework is designed to support the following City of Leduc **CORE VALUES:**

**A Citizen Focus:**  
People have wisdom and ought to be engaged in the decisions that affect their lives.

**Transparency & Accountability:**  
Strong municipal leadership is open, honest and evidence based.

## Engaging or Informing

The City recognizes that engagement with members of the public plays a critical role in good governance and supports Council and Administrative decision-making. Engaging with members of the public involves inviting input on issues and decisions and, considering that input when making decisions. Engaging means that members of the public will have an opportunity to influence the decision to be made. The degree of influence is identified as part of planning for public engagement.

In accordance with the City's Public Engagement Policy, the City will offer public engagement opportunities when:

- required by legislation (i.e., provincial and federal statutory requirements);
- required to meet the expectations of grant funding agreements; and/or
- identifying Council priorities (i.e., strategic, budget and financial planning).

The City may offer Public Engagement opportunities when:

- establishing new programs, services or service levels;
- reviewing existing programs, services, and associated service levels;
- otherwise deemed necessary by Council or Administration; and/or
- when requested by the Stakeholders.

In cases where a decision has already been made, the focus becomes informing whereby the City shares information about the decision. Depending on the novelty of the information and its impact on citizens, it can be very important for communication with the public to include:

- information about the decision-maker;
- context about the decision;
- a description of how and why the decision was reached;
- information about next steps; and
- a commitment to provide more information as it comes available<sup>2</sup>.

Work to inform members of the public about a decision that is already made is supported by Communications and Marketing Services.

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from Alberta Municipalities and Rural Municipalities Association. Citizen Engagement Toolkit. (2015)



# PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

**Vision** We are a City where people have an opportunity to provide input on decisions that impact them, know their input is valued, and feel welcome and safe to share their ideas and perspectives.

## Principles

The following principles describe the foundational practices of the City's public engagement work:

1. **Impactful and meaningful:** The public is involved in decisions that directly impact them and input is considered by the City as part of the decision-making process.
2. **Inclusive and accessible:** Opportunities to participate in public engagement are accessible and welcome diverse ideas, perspectives and input.
3. **Transparent:** Public engagement opportunities are communicated clearly, openly and in a timely way.
4. **Well-planned and intentional:** Public engagement opportunities reflect careful planning and preparation that supports the engagement purpose.
5. **Accountable:** Public engagement is reported on and evaluated to support continuous improvement.

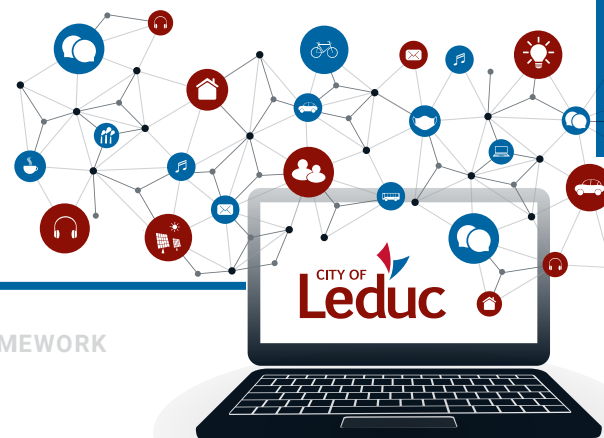
## Commitments and Expectations

To demonstrate the Framework Vision and Principles the City commits to:

- being clear about the purpose of the public engagement, how and when to participate, and the role and level of involvement of the public;
- sharing how input from public engagement will be used in the decision-making process;
- making information about public engagement topics accessible;
- allowing sufficient time and providing a variety of ways for participants to prepare for, and participate in, public engagement;
- creating a respectful and inclusive environment where members of the public feel safe and welcome; and
- reporting on what was heard during public engagement and how input was considered.

To support involvement in public engagement the City will create opportunities that invite participants to:





- contribute ideas, insights, knowledge and expertise in a respectful and productive way;
- seek to understand diverse perspectives;
- identify concerns and issues early and throughout the process;
- contribute to a positive and productive experience;
- demonstrate a willingness to listen and make space for others to participate; and
- be respectful of the engagement process and timeframes.



# Public Engagement Spectrum

The **City of Leduc Public Engagement Spectrum**<sup>3</sup> is designed to assist with selecting the level of engagement with the public’s involvement in a decision-making process. The Spectrum includes different levels of participation. Identification of the level depends on the goals, time-frame, resources and degree of concern in the decision to be made. The Spectrum also identifies the commitment being made to the public by the City at each level.

While each level of engagement identifies the degree of influence participants have on the decision to be made, sharing information is a foundational aspect of effective engagement and occurs across all levels of engagement with support from Communication and Marketing Services.

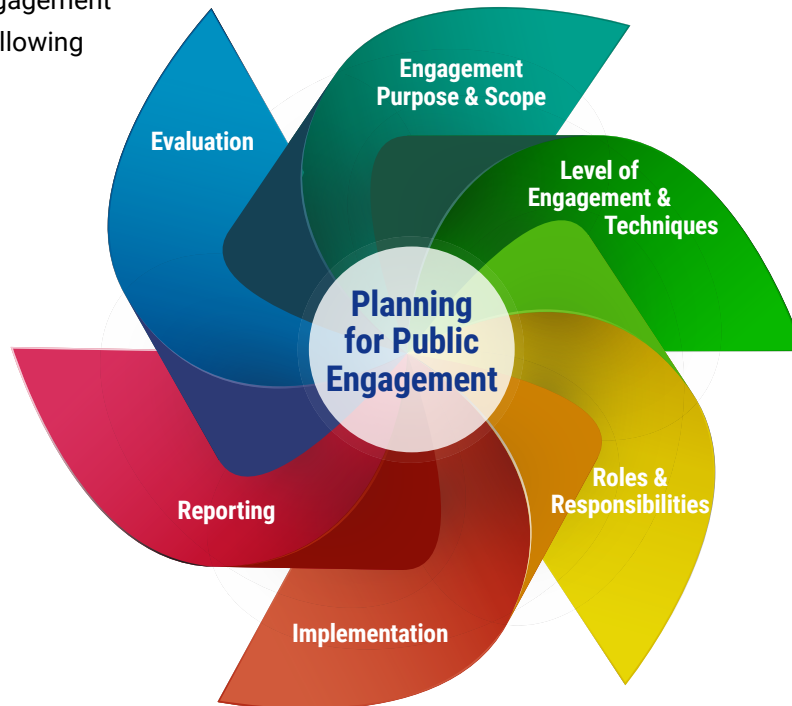
<i>Increasing level of influence on the decision</i>				
LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT	Consult 	Involve 	Collaborate 	Empower 
	Members of the public are invited to share feedback, input and advice	Members of the public are invited to explore, analyze and imagine new alternatives to help reach the best possible decision	Members of the public partner in a joint approach with decision makers to come up with, assess and prioritize solutions	Members of the public lead the process, make a decision and/or report back to decision-makers
<b>PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT GOAL</b>	To gather feedback, input and insight from members of the public	To work directly with members of the public on developing alternatives or solutions for consideration	To seek advice from members of the public to inform recommendations	To empower the public to make decisions or recommendations
<b>WHEN TO USE</b>	A decision that is either contentious or has the potential to impact members of the public	A decision that is challenging or complex and may involve value trade-offs	A complex decision in which members of the public have a high stake or vested interest in the decision	Members of the public see themselves as particularly invested in an outcome and are empowered to make a decision on behalf of the City and take action on the decision
<b>COMMITMENT TO THE PUBLIC</b>	The City will listen and consider input from the public as part of the decision-making process	The City will explore options with the public as part of the decision-making process	The City will consider the advice of and/or recommendations from the public as part of the decision-making process	The City will enable the public to make and implement a decision
<b>ENGAGEMENT TECHNIQUE EXAMPLES*</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey</li> <li>• Drop-in sessions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop</li> <li>• Focus Group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advisory Committee</li> <li>• Online Discussion Forum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Group</li> <li>• Plebiscite</li> </ul>
<i>Sharing information</i>				

<sup>3</sup> Adapted from: [IAP2 Spectrum of Engagement](#).

\*These engagement techniques serve as examples. Many different techniques can be applied during public engagement and may be customized to support desired outcomes.

# PLANNING FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Planning for public engagement usually includes the following elements:



## Engagement Purpose and Scope

Planning for meaningful and effective public engagement includes identifying how the engagement will support a project or help inform an issue or decision. To help articulate the purpose of the engagement, consider:

- why this work is important to the City;
- what issue(s) or decision(s) will the engagement help inform;
- what legislative requirements are there for public engagement; and
- what value will engagement offer to the decision-making process.

Planning for public engagement should also consider the scope of engagement required. To help identify the scope of work, consider:

- the decision points and timelines for making decisions, including any legal and/or legislative considerations;
- fiscal and human resource requirements to plan, implement, report on and evaluate the engagement;
- whether or not the level of engagement may change throughout the project;
- what other projects and/or decisions might align with or impact the engagement;
- who should be engaged; and
- who will make the decision(s) and when it will be made.

## Level of Engagement and Techniques

Members of the public will be invited to participate based on the level of engagement required to support the engagement purpose as described in the City of Leduc Public Engagement Spectrum. Participants may be engaged at different levels depending on the engagement purpose and scope.

Engagement techniques are the ways in which input is gathered such as surveys, workshops, focus groups or online discussion forums. Specific techniques will be selected based on the level of engagement and alignment with the engagement purpose and scope. Techniques will seek to maximize participation and reduce barriers. A combination of techniques can be applied to accommodate varying levels of engagement, participant needs and project decision points. Selected techniques also need to support the Public Engagement Framework Vision, Principles and Commitments.

### Implementation

Successful implementation of public engagement relies on careful preparation and planning that meets the engagement purpose and scope. Planning for public engagement includes identifying requirements to support implementation, such as:

- logistics (e.g., venue, invitations, catering, online tools, etc.);
- roles and responsibilities;
- issue and/or decision background material;
- input collection, management and storage;
- communication before, during and following the engagement; and
- risk assessment and mitigation strategies.

### Reporting

Reporting on engagement helps build trust and promote ongoing engagement<sup>4</sup>. Planning for public engagement includes identifying considerations to support reporting, such as:

- how the engagement and rationale for decision(s) will be summarized (e.g., What We Heard and/or What We Decided report)
- what information will be included (e.g., who was engaged, what was asked, what was heard, what was decided, etc.)
- who will prepare, review and distribute reporting; and
- how reporting will be made available in a timely manner following the engagement.

### Evaluation

Evaluating public engagement supports continuous learning, capacity building and closes the loop by measuring the effectiveness of the engagement. Planning for public engagement includes identifying the ways the engagement will be monitored to determine how well it:

- achieved the Public Engagement Framework Vision, Principles and Commitments;
- adhered to the engagement purpose and level of engagement;
- enabled participation and met participant expectations;
- applied engagement technique(s) to support the engagement purpose and scope; and
- influenced the decision(s).

<sup>4</sup> Adapted from Alberta Municipalities and Rural Municipalities Association. Citizen Engagement Toolkit. (2015)



## Functions and Responsibilities

Public engagement often involves the functions and responsibilities noted in the table below<sup>5</sup>. To be as effective as possible, most public engagement initiatives will require cross-functional teams comprised of the department of primary interest, Communications and Marketing Services and other departments potentially impacted or involved in the outcome. Collaboration, coordination and regular communication across various departments is required to meet the City’s vision for public engagement.

FUNCTION <sup>6</sup>	RESPONSIBILITIES
<b>Decision-making</b> <i>(e.g., City Council or Executive)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider public input obtained through public engagement projects, while balancing public interest, regulatory obligations, and other considerations, as part of the decision-making process.</li> <li>Encourage efforts to promote engagement and to communicate progress or results of the project.</li> </ul>
<b>Project Sponsorship</b> <i>(e.g., Department of primary interest)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide strategic oversight of the project, including clarifying the decision-making process.</li> <li>Communicate with decision-makers on progress.</li> </ul>
<b>Project Management</b> <i>(e.g., Department of primary interest)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish public engagement planning and oversee the engagement process.</li> <li>Track progress and adjust engagement planning and implementation, as required.</li> <li>Ensure that sufficient time is provided to support engagement and communication efforts, in alignment with scope of the project.</li> <li>Establish an evaluation process for the engagement.</li> <li>Determine resources to support the project (internal and/or external).</li> <li>Coordinate with other functional areas to meet project deliverables and outcomes.</li> </ul>
<b>Subject Matter Expertise (SME)</b> <i>(e.g., Department of primary interest)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide technical understanding of the project or items related to the issue(s) or decision(s).</li> </ul>
<b>Communications</b> <i>(e.g., Communications and Marketing Services)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with other functional areas to develop and distribute information necessary to support engagement opportunities.</li> </ul>
<b>Facilitation</b> <i>(e.g., Department of primary interest)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organize and facilitate engagement in a neutral manner to ensure participants are well positioned to effectively participate.</li> <li>Encourage interaction and open conversations.</li> </ul>
<b>Recording</b> <i>(e.g., Department of primary interest)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Record input, decisions and/or deliverables during engagement.</li> <li>Store and retain input as required in accordance with City policies and other legislative requirements.</li> </ul>
<b>Reporting</b> <i>(e.g., Department of primary interest)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and analyze input.</li> <li>Prepare reports and/or summaries to be shared with participants and decision-makers.</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluating</b> <i>(e.g., Department of primary interest)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate engagement to support continuous improvement.</li> </ul>

<sup>5</sup> Adapted from Alberta Municipalities and Rural Municipalities Association. Citizen Engagement Toolkit. (2015)

<sup>6</sup> Additional Council and Administrative responsibilities related to Public Engagement are outlined in the Public Engagement Policy 11.00:29

# City of Leduc Public Engagement Framework

