

# Municipality of the District of St. Mary's

## Public Participation Program & Engagement Policy

---



### 1. Purpose

The purpose is to establish a policy to provide ample opportunity for public participation and notification and to ensure a proper engagement process to notify and consult with abutting municipalities for the adoption or amendment of planning documents as required by section 204 of the *Municipal Government Act (MGA)*. This policy will empower the public through early involvement in the planning process and will ensure that Council is advised of public input.

### 2. Authority

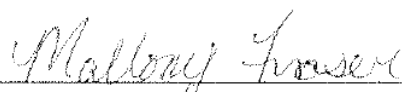
This policy derives its authority from section 204 of the *Municipal Government Act* of the Province of NS.

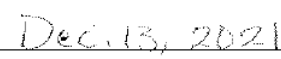
### 3. Policy

- 3.1 When preparing a new Municipal Planning Strategy or its implementing Land Use By-Law it shall be the policy of Council to hold a minimum of one informal public meeting and one formal public hearing to allow public input on the proposed documents or amendments thereto in accordance with the requirements of the *MGA*.
- 3.2 When preparing proposed amendments to an existing Municipal Planning Strategy or its implementing Land Use By-Law, it shall be the policy of Council to hold one or more public meetings to allow public input on the proposed amendments thereto to allow public input on the proposed changes in accordance with the *MGA*.
- 3.3 Notice of any public participation meeting(s) related to planning shall be published in a newspaper circulating in the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's and municipal social media with notices appearing a minimum of 14 days prior to the meeting. The notices shall state the time, date and place of the meeting and the hours during which any relevant documents pertaining to the adoption, review or amendment may be inspected by the public. Public hearing notices shall comply with the requirements laid out in section 206 of the *MGA*.
- 3.4 The purpose of the public meeting(s) shall be to provide an opportunity for the public to comment, make suggestions, discuss and receive information with respect to the adoption, review or amendments to the Municipal Planning Strategy and implementing Land Use By-Law which will be presented to the public by municipal representatives.
- 3.5 Members of the public may express their views, comments, and suggestions verbally or in writing, and all interested persons shall be given the opportunity to have their views and comments heard.



- 3.6 The public meeting(s) including the information to be presented shall be approved by Committee of the Whole and/or Council and the views, comments and concerns of the public as expressed at the public meeting(s) shall be considered by Committee of the Whole and/or Council prior to proceeding with adoption of the proposed new strategy or amendments.
- 3.7 Amendments to a Municipal Land Use By-Law only (not policy amendments) shall be in accordance with criteria for amending the Land Use By-Law found in the corresponding Municipal Planning Strategy and in accordance with requirements of the *MGA*.
- 3.8 As required by section 204A of the *MGA*, in the case where the adoption or amendment of a Municipal Planning Strategy is proposed, Council shall seek input from abutting municipalities to reduce land-use conflict and increase cooperative opportunities through the following engagement process:
- 3.8.1 Notify abutting municipalities of the proposed adoption or amendment to the Municipal Planning Strategy. The notice shall provide a timeline for a response to be received in order to be considered by Council.
- 3.8.2 Engagement topics with abutting municipalities will be specific to amendments that impact Statements of Provincial Interest (*as per the regulations made under Section 204A of the MGA*).
- 3.8.3 Comments and concerns of abutting municipalities will be considered by Council by Committee of the Whole and/or Council prior to proceeding with adoption of the proposed new strategy or amendments.
- 3.8.4 Ensure that this engagement is completed prior to the first notice for a public hearing.
- 3.8.5 As per section 206 (5) of the *MGA*, upon the publication of the first notice of the public hearing, the clerk shall send a copy of the notice to the clerk of every municipality the abuts an area affected by the proposed documents.

  
Municipal Clerk

  
Date