

**Citizen Engagement Plan Policy**  
**Policy No: 1020**

**Approval: Town Council**  
**Effective Date: February 23, 2011**



Supersedes Policy No: none

**Policy Statement:** The Town of Hardisty Council believes that it is Important to engage the citizens of the Town of Hardisty in the decisions that it makes. No other level of government makes as big a difference to you, your neighbourhood and your community as does your local Town of Hardisty government. To ensure that streets are cleaned, water is on tap, green spaces are maintained, and properties are protected, it takes a lot of behind the scenes work.

## 1. Definitions

- .1 Citizen – A resident of the Town of Hardisty
- .2 Public – The most general and inclusive term for participants of public process in the municipal context. This term includes individuals, not-for-profit, community and corporate organizations.
- .3 Involvement – The term used to cover the continuum of purposes or phases for engaging the public in municipal issues. The continuum includes sharing information, consultation to test ideas and collaborating to build solutions and active participation in decision making.
- .4 Engagement, Participation - The act of sharing in the activities of the Town.
- .5 Public Involvement – Will be used to represent the various methods of engaging the people of Hardisty in discussions about civic matters that affect them.

## 2. Responsibilities

All employees will be expected to take a strategic approach for every project in which public involvement is a consideration by using a Public Involvement Framework which includes:

***Standards of Practice:***

Those involved in designing and implementing public involvement processes will demonstrate the following standards of practice:

***Citizen Engagement:***

- Public involvement processes will be designed to involve the appropriate people at the appropriate time in the appropriate way through the completion and communication of a public involvement plan for all

- processes.
- The continuum of public involvement will be used to ensure involvement processes align with the scope, complexity, and outcomes of the decision being made.
  - A balance and range of public perspectives will be provided to decision makers for consideration in the decision process.
  - Processes will be appropriately resourced to ensure effective implementation.

***Respecting People:***

- The purpose and goal of the involvement will be identified at the outset of the process.
- Participants will know what is included in the discussion and what isn't, and what decisions will be made or have been made, and who will make the final decision.
- Timing, location, and format reflect considerations for effective participation.
- Where appropriate, outreach processes are used to include the public who need support to participate.

**3. Procedure**

**.1 Process**

- a. It starts with a good idea. This idea may come from the public, Mayor, members of Council or Town staff. That's the strength of democracy – everyone can be involved.

The idea is then explored by Town staff who:

- ❖ Research the subject
- ❖ Get input from different people and/or groups, and
- ❖ Look at options to make the idea work.

If the research shows that the idea can be accomplished and is in line with Council's vision then the idea becomes part of a report prepared by Town staff.

Town staff will then present all the information and provide recommendations in regards to the idea to Town Council for direction and/or a decision to proceed forward.

Town Council asks the five W's in regards to the idea. Who, What, Where and Why? Once they know the answer to these questions they make a decision.

Once a decision is made then Town staff are charged with implementing Council's decision in regards to the idea.

**.2 Accessible Involvement**

- a. *Information is accessible*: Information is always provided to the citizens in the simplest form possible – in plain language or understandable graphic formats.
- b. *Facilities are accessible*: Location and physical accessibility are always considered.
- c. *Information is readily available* so the public may participate in an informed discussion. Utilize multiple means of providing information. ie: internet, website, social media, newsletter, newspaper, flyers, mailers, information signs, bulletin boards, etc.

**.3 Citizen Involvement**

- a. *Sharing Information*: Council must share information to build awareness. Also Council may present information about issues that may affect citizens.
- b. *Consultation*: Council may test ideas or concepts to build knowledge. Collaborate with the citizens to build commitment. Provide information and receive feedback or comments. Council may choose to involve citizens in the development of solutions.
- c. *Active Participation*: Sharing decision making to build ownership. Delegating decision making to build responsibility. Partner with stakeholders in developing recommendations. This will give stakeholders the responsibility to make decisions.

**.4 Citizen Involvement Roadmap**

- a. *Understand* the overall project, item or issue.
- b. *Define* the purpose and outcomes of public involvement
- c. *Clarify* the public involvement commitment
- d. *Details* of the public involvement process need to be developed
- e. *Develop* the public involvement plan

**.5 Getting Involved**

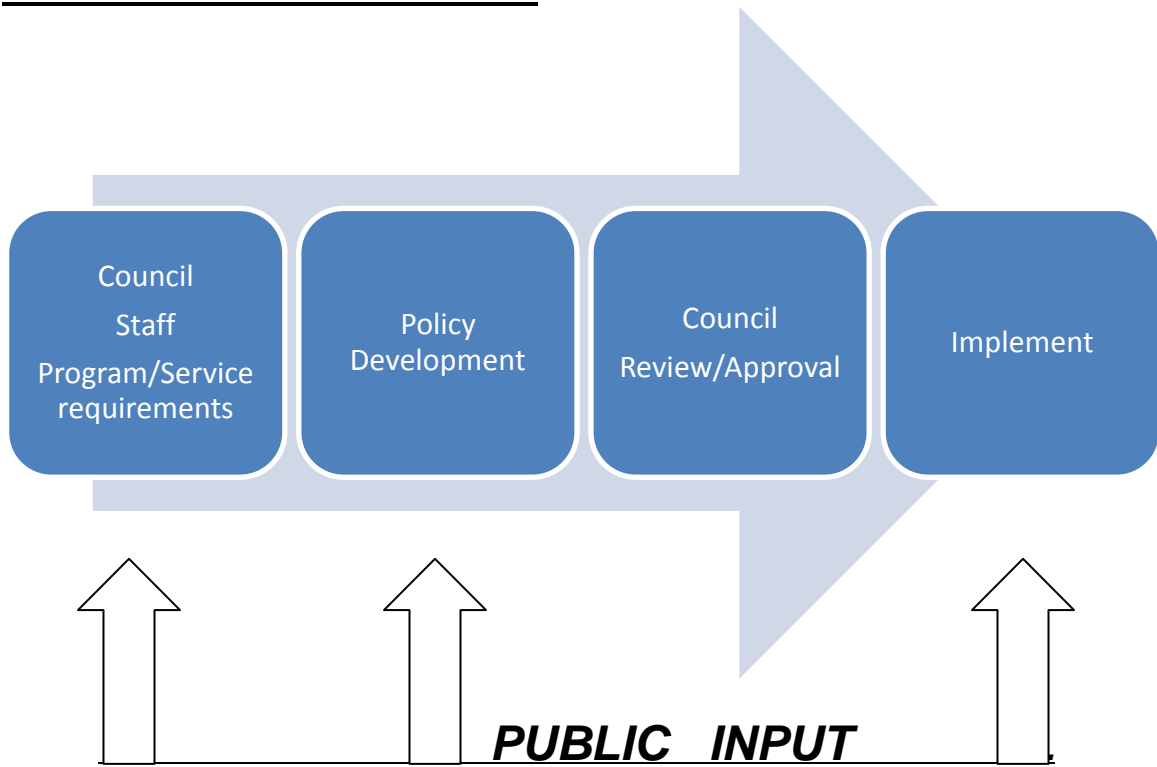
Input and involvement from residents is very important in building our Town. Hardisty Town Council encourages you as a citizen to participate in the affairs of the Town.

How can you make an impact on the Town’s decision-making process:

- Tell us your concerns and make suggestions
- Give us your feedback
- Attend public consultations
- Attend Council meetings (they are always open to the public)
- Contact your Councillor or Mayor
- Write a letter to Council
- Request to meet with Council as a delegation at a Council meeting
- Serve on a board or committee

*We encourage everyone to participate.  
Let’s continue to build our Town together.*

**DECISION MAKING PROCESS**



**.6 *The Plan***

The Town of Hardisty will endeavour to provide information to citizens via the use of the internet, Town website, Town newsletter, newspaper, mailers, bulletin boards, etc and where appropriate social media throughout each and every calendar year.

The Town of Hardisty will solicit input via the use of surveys, questionnaires, open houses, and where appropriate, social media.

The Town of Hardisty will annually have at least one open house to present the Strategic Plan and interim budget for discussion and input by the citizens. Council will consider feedback provided at the open house and utilize this information to modify, if Council so deems, and finalize the Strategic Plan and annual budget. Upon approval of the annual budget the Town shall provide the detailed budget on the Town website and a summary document shall be mailed to every citizen with their utility or taxation notification summarizing the annual approved budget.

The Town of Hardisty shall conduct at least once per year, a citizen satisfaction survey.

The Town of Hardisty shall produce an annual report that will be provided as a mailer in the Spring of the year. A citizen satisfaction survey will be provided with the annual report so that citizens can provide feedback on the annual report.