

<b>MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF ANNAPOLIS POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION MANUAL</b>		<b>POLICY 113</b>
<b>PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>Public Participation Policy</b>	

**1. GENERAL**

This policy is referred to as the “**Public Participation Policy**”.

**2. AUTHORITY FOR POLICY**

Section 190(c) of the *Municipal Government Act* states that the purpose of this part of the MGA is to establish a consultative process to ensure the right of the public to have access to information and to participate in the formulation of planning strategies and by-laws, including the right to be notified and heard before decisions are made pursuant to this Part.

Section 204 of the *Municipal Government Act* states that

(1) A council shall adopt, by policy, a public participation program concerning the preparation of planning documents.

(2) A council may adopt different public participation programs for different types of planning documents.

(3) The content of a public participation program is at the discretion of the council, but it shall identify opportunities and establish ways and means of seeking the opinions of the public concerning the proposed planning documents.

**3. DEFINITIONS**

Terms used in this policy shall have the same meaning as in the *Municipal Government Act*, or as their context applies according to a dictionary of the Canadian language, except as follows:

“public participation” means an opportunity afforded to members of the public who live or own property in Annapolis County to provide comments, feedback, input, suggestions, or recommendations, either in favour of or against, any proposed Municipal Planning Strategy or Land use Bylaw changes or amendments, including applications for a re-zoning or text amendment, and does not include a Public Hearing.

**4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS**

**a. Public Information Meetings**

Prior to any review of final drafts of Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) or Land Use Bylaw (LUB) amendments, re-zonings, or proposed new MPS or LUB full updates being reviewed by Planning Advisory Committee, the Municipality shall hold one or more public information meetings.

All public information meetings shall be advertised by the Municipal Clerk, with

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such notice(s) being placed in a newspaper circulating in the municipality with the first of any such notices appearing at least seven (7) days before the beginning of the public information program.

In addition to mandatory newspaper advertisements, the municipality may also publish notice of such public information meetings on its website, social media platforms, other locally available publications or sites, where the document relates to one specific area by unaddressed admail to that area, and where the planning documents relate to a county-wide document, on a local radio station.

At public information meetings, members of the public who are residents of Annapolis County, or who own property in Annapolis County, as welcome to make respectful comments and seek clarification on the documents from municipal staff or municipal consultants.

During public information sessions, those eligible to make comments are welcome to speak more than once after each person who wishes to speak has been provided an opportunity to speak once.

Public information meetings may be held at one or more geographic locations considering the geographic impact of the documents under consideration, and supplemental information meetings may be held on-line.

**b. Public Hearings**

The Municipality shall hold formal public hearings in all cases when required by the *Municipal Government Act* or other legislation.

All public hearings shall be chaired by the Warden, or their designate, and shall take place in the municipal office, or some other suitable location nearest to the municipal office that contains the required space for the meeting.

**5. MEETING RECOGNITION**

Written records of all meetings held as part of the public information process shall be kept by municipal staff.

Upon the completion of all public information meetings, staff or a municipal consultant shall provide a summary document to Planning Advisory Committee of the comments received that require a review for potential changes. This document shall include comments by municipal staff or the municipal consultant concerning whether the input is supported at least in part with any proposed changes noted, or if not supported, the reasons for.

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Planning Advisory Committee shall consider the revised draft of the proposed document(s) at their first meeting afterwards, and agree upon a final draft to take to a formal Public Hearing when required.

All approved meeting minutes, and records of the public information meetings shall be open to the public except as expressly prohibited by law, or not yet approved by the Planning Advisory Committee.

**6. PURPOSE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETINGS**

The purpose of Public Information Sessions shall be to provide information to members of the public about proposed changes to municipal planning documents and to seek feedback on the proposed changes prior to the final draft documents being forwarded to Planning Advisory Committee for review and the start of formal Public Hearings. Specifically, the public information meetings may:

- a. Review applications for re-zonings, text and bylaw amendments, and other planning matters that are required by law, allowing opportunities for the applicant to comment and explain their reasons for the application or proposal.
- b. Review draft Municipal Planning Strategies and Land Use Bylaws amendments being proposed by municipal staff or municipal consultants, while providing background information and context for the proposed changes.
- c. Review application and review processes, including required submission information and approval process going forward for planning changes.
- d. Document and record public feedback received during information meetings and forward the comments and staff responses to Planning Advisory Committee.

**10. REPEAL**

Policy AM-1.3.2 Public Participation Policy, adopted by Municipal Council of the County of Annapolis on July 19, 2022, is hereby repealed.

