

# Public Participation and Communication

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Date Approved by Council: 08/10/2024

Resolution: 2024-10-08-14

Review Date: October 2027

Related Bylaw: N/A

Amendments:

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## **Policy Statement**

The Village of Arrowwood recognizes the importance of engaging and communicating with the public using various forms of media including but not limited to print media, electronic media, social media, municipal websites, general mail, email and posting public notices. The purpose is to inform the public and receive feedback which fosters participation in the municipal decision-making process.

## **DEFINITIONS**

**Advertising** – is paid space in the media to inform citizens of a service, program, event or to relay a message to comply with the requirements of the Municipal Government Act (MGA).

**Citizen** – is a person living within the municipality, being a landowner or renter.

**General Mail** – means mail delivered by Canada Post or a bonded courier.

**Media** – is a representative of the print (newspaper) and electronic media (radio and television).

**Social Media** – are platforms used to provide information to the public, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, email, municipal website, and newsletter.

**Stakeholder** – an individual, organization, or group that has an interest in an issue, will be, is, or is likely to be affected by an issue, or can affect a decision or an outcome.

## **GUIDELINES**

1. Information provided to the public regarding municipal policies, programs, services, and initiatives may be made available to the public using one or all the following:
  - a. Social media
  - b. Municipal newsletter
  - c. Email
  - d. General mail
  - e. The media
2. Public events such as an open house or press conference may be arranged by Council to communicate information regarding a major development, municipal services, and programs or to relay information affecting public health, safety, and essential services.
3. Social media communications may be used to provide general information to the public to facilitate citizen participation and increase the transparency of government.

4. Social media may be used to increase efficiencies in administration by providing a platform to distribute official notices, tender packages, and requests for proposals.
5. Media reporting shall be reviewed as often as possible to monitor and respond to current topics and trends, including those that may result in the need for action or response by the municipality.
6. Administration is authorized to advertise all information required by the MGA and those workshops, training sessions and public information meetings authorized by Council through budget initiatives.
7. Generally, the municipal spokesperson, when responding to the media, shall be the mayor.
8. Administration shall respond to the media only when providing a clarification or information contained in a Council directive, policy or municipal bylaw.

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

1. The Village will consider public participation opportunities when:
  - a. Identifying Council priorities
  - b. Formulating recommendations to the Council regarding the creation of strategic plans and budgets
  - c. Reviewing existing programs, services, and associated service levels
  - d. Establishing new programs and service levels
  - e. And otherwise deemed necessary by Council or the CAO
2. In addition to the public consultation process required by the MGA the municipality may:
  - a. Inform citizens and stakeholders about opportunities to participate in public consultations and citizen engagement processes using the municipal website, social media, print, and electronic media.
  - b. Inform the media of events where citizens and stakeholders are taking part in the public consultation and citizen engagement process.
  - c. Inform participants and citizens, in summary form, of the results of the public consultation.

**ADVERTISING**

1. The municipality will consider the most cost-effective method of advertising.
2. Public hearings requiring advertising in accordance with the MGA may also be advertised using the municipal website, social media, municipal newsletter, email, and general mail.
3. Information packages in printed form may be provided at the administration building during regular office hours.