



Public Participation Policy Program
Planning and Heritage Advisory Committee
January 12, 2023

Background

- *Nova Scotia Engagement Programs Content Regulations* lists the mandatory contents of an engagement policy. These Regulations were enacted in December 2019 along with Minimum Planning Requirement Regulations
- Engagement Programs Content Regulations require Public Participation Program Policies to have content regarding:
 - engagement with abutting municipalities
 - how Council will consider any comments received from abutting municipalities
 - Statements of Provincial Interest



Background

- MGA requires each Municipality to have a “Public Participation Program Policy” (PPPP).
- Hantsport, West Hants and Windsor each had Public Participation Programs
- immediately following consolidation, the Region adopted a PPPP which reflects those of the earlier individual municipal units
- *Engagement Programs Content Regulations* added new topics which must be included in the PPPP



RECOMMENDED CHANGES

In order to meet the requirements the following changes are recommended:

- move the section regarding *“Comprehensive Review of Planning Documents”* to within *“Development Agreements and Amendments to Development Agreements; Adoption of Revised Planning Documents, Amendments To Planning Documents And Amendments To The Land-Use By-Law”*.

RECOMMENDED CHANGES

add the following material :

- a minimum distance for notification of neighbours of a site-specific amendment or a development agreement or amendment;
- a requirement that Council solicit comments from abutting municipalities on the proposed adoption of a Municipal Planning Strategy or an amendment related to the Statements of Provincial Interest;
- a limitation on when abutting municipalities need to be notified of the location of site-specific amendments;
- the method and timing of soliciting comments from abutting municipalities

ABUTTING MUNICIPAL UNITS



DRAFT PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROGRAM POLICY

1. PURPOSE

1.1 Section 204 of the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA) requires Council to adopt a public participation program before undertaking the preparation or amendment of development agreements or planning documents.

1.2 The *Engagement Programs Content Regulations* made under Section 204A of the MGA Act require the public participation program to contain specific content.

DRAFT PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROGRAM POLICY

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1 The terms used in this Policy have the same meaning as those found in the MGA.

3. ~~COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW of PLANNING DOCUMENTS~~

~~3.1 During any comprehensive review of any planning document, Council resolves to seek the views of the public and encourage public participation regarding by developing and implementing a public engagement plan to inform the public and receive comments from the public. The contents are at the discretion of Council but may involve committees, meetings, open houses, surveys, questionnaires, and publications.~~

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3.0 DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS and AMENDMENTS to DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS; ADOPTION OF REVISED PLANNING DOCUMENTS, AMENDMENTS to PLANNING DOCUMENTS and AMENDMENTS to the LAND-USE BY-LAW

3.1 Council resolves to seek the views of the public and encourage public participation regarding development agreements, amendments to development agreements, [and adoption of revised documents](#) or amendments to the West Hants, Hantsport and Windsor Planning Documents or Land Use By-laws by, at a minimum:

DRAFT PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROGRAM POLICY

- holding one or more public meetings, usually held prior to a Planning and Heritage Advisory Committee meeting, prior to First Reading of any proposed development agreement or amendment;
- advertising any public participation or information meeting regarding any proposed development agreement or site-specific amendment by: (1) placing a notice in a newspaper circulating in the local area and (2) notifying by mail the owners of all lots within 300' of the site of both the public information meeting and any public hearing. Within a Land Use By-law Council may specify a greater distance for notification.

Notices for public participation or information meetings shall be placed in the paper and sent to abutting property owners at least seven (7) days prior to any public participation or public information meeting. Notices for public hearings shall follow the MGA notification requirements.

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3.2 In addition, during any comprehensive review of any planning document, Council resolves to seek the views of the public and encourage public participation ~~regarding~~ by developing and implementing a public engagement plan to inform the public and receive comments from the public. The contents are at the discretion of Council but may involve committees, meetings, open houses, surveys, questionnaires, and publications.

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3.3 In accordance with the requirements of the MGA, where:

(a) a revised Municipal Planning Strategy is considered; or

(b) where an amendment to the Municipal Planning Strategy affects policy regarding:

- drinking water;
- flood risk areas;
- agricultural land;
- infrastructure; or
- housing,

Council shall seek input from all abutting municipalities; and

(c) where an amendment to the Municipal Planning Strategy is specific to land that lies within 2 km of an adjacent municipality, Council shall seek input from the abutting municipality.

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In each case, Council shall seek input by:

- notifying abutting municipalities of the proposal. The notice shall include the date by which a response must be received in order to be considered by Council;
- ensuring that there is sufficient opportunity for a response to be received so that it may be considered before First Reading of the proposal at Council.

3.4 In addition, in accordance with MGA 206 (5), when a notice of public hearing is published, the clerk shall send a copy of the notice to the clerk of every municipality that abuts an area affected by the proposal.

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4. GENERAL

- 4.1 Councillors shall receive no new information regarding a planning matter once a public hearing is complete.

- 4.2 Any fees related to any action required by the Public Participation Program Policy will be established by policy of Council.

5. REPEAL

- 5.1 The Public Participation Program Policy COPL-001.00, dated April 28, 2020, of West Hants Regional Municipality is hereby repealed.

PROCESS

Staff Review



Planning Advisory Committee Review and Recommendation

January 12, 2023



Seven (7) Day Notice to Council by email



Council Consideration and Decision

RECOMMENDATION

..... that PAC/HAC recommends that Council approve the Public Participation Program Policy in a manner substantively the same as attached as Appendix D to the January 12, 2023 report “Public Participation Program Policy Revisions” File # 22-36.



West Hants

