



VILLAGE OF BERWYN

June 2018

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION POLICY

PURPOSE:

To establish guidelines to facilitate communication to the public that is coordinated and consistent as well as open and responsive.

POLICY:

It is the policy of Village of Berwyn to:

Inform citizens about the Village's policies, programs, services and initiatives through communication that is timely, accurate and consistent. All residents of the Village will be invited to at least two annual open forum meetings per fiscal year.

Consult and inform stakeholders when establishing or developing priorities, policies, programs and services.

Ensure the Village is visible and responsive to the citizens it serves.

Anticipate the needs of the community, Council and Administration for timely and relevant information.

Engage in a proactive communications program that uses a variety of formats to accommodate diverse needs and that reflects the diversity of the community.

Definitions:

Advertising: paid space in media that informs citizens of a service, program, or event or to relay a single message.

Citizen: person living within the Village; landowners and residents

Consultation: to seek advice or information. This may, where warranted, involve a formal consultation process designed to seek the views of citizens and community stakeholders or the public at large, including collecting and analyzing public input and feedback.

Crisis: a situation or major issue, present or future that may disrupt service or impact public trust in the Village.

Emergency: an unusual situation that requires prompt action to limit damage to persons, property or the environment.



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Definitions continued:

Media: representatives of the print and electronic media.

Media Advisory: a notice to the media to announce an upcoming media event such as a news conference, a special meeting of Village Council, or a photo opportunity.

Media Release: a factual written summary of information issued to the media for the purpose of making a statement or announcement.

Ratepayer: a person within the Village who pays taxes. This term will be replaced by 'Citizen'.

Stakeholder: any individual, group of individuals, elected representative or organization with a specific stake or interest in the outcome of a decision.

Guidelines – Informing Citizens

Information on the Village's policies, programs, services and initiatives should be generally available to the public in a variety of formats, subject to the available resources.

Crisis Communications

In a crisis, coordinated communication must be used to maintain or restore confidence. The affected department must advise the CAO's office as soon as they identify an event or situation occurring in or affecting their department that may attract widespread interest to the media. A response including designating a spokesperson will be developed and provided to the media. This is determined by the Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP).

Contacting Council is one of the primary functions of the Village's response to major emergencies according to the Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP).

Emergency Communications

Village of Berwyn has a detailed communications protocol for emergencies in an Emergency Media communications plan or Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP).

Public Events & Announcements

Public events are arranged to communicate about major developments or to release information that is new and important to municipal services, programs and initiatives and especially to public health, safety and essential services.



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Internet & Social Media Communication

The internet and other electronic communication (email, social media) are important tools which allow 24-hour access to information and support two-way communication. The use of the internet and social media allows the Village of Berwyn to:

- Monitor and respond to current topics and emerging issues quickly.
- Open up local government to encourage citizen participation and support a strong civic culture.
- Increase transparency of government.
- Listen to residents and stakeholders to enable us to improve Village services, programs and practices.
- Provide a venue in which we can celebrate the community by publicizing events and sharing stories, videos and photos.
- Increase Village administration effectiveness by distributing official notices and tender packages through social media streams.

The Village does not link to any third-party websites unless approved by the Chief Administrative Officer or their designate.

Public Consultations

Open and effective communication is the key to successful public consultations. Effective public consultations must:

- Inform citizens and stakeholders about opportunities to participate in public consultation and citizen engagement processes (such as surveys, open houses and committees). This may be done through the Village's website, letters of invitation, posted notices, advertising, social media, and other formats that may be used by departments within the administration office.
- Inform participants, in summary form, of the results of the public consultation and outcomes.



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Advertising

The Village purchases advertising for a variety of reasons. Common advertisements include employment ads, development permits, programs and services, and Community Events.

- The Village will consider the most cost effective method of advertising in every case.
- Some advertisements (e.g. Public Hearings) have strict requirements according to the *Municipal Government Act* as to where and when they must be placed.
- Advertisements will be placed on the Village webpage, in the local newspaper (Mile Zero News), on the local radio stations, and the Village's newsletter, or a combination of any or all of the aforementioned.

Spokesperson

A media spokesperson is to be chosen based on the nature and requirements of the information to be provided.

Typically, the Mayor or the Chief Administrative Officer are the Village's chief spokespersons, explaining policies, priorities and decisions to the public. The Deputy Mayor may serve as media spokesperson in the place of the Mayor if he/she is unavailable.

In the case of emergencies, when answers are needed immediately, and the chief spokesperson is unavailable, a designated CAO may serve as the designated spokesperson.

On occasion, when the story is highly specialized and requires a department head to speak, the CAO will coordinate with Department head to do so.

Staffs other than those mentioned above should not give media interviews. All media inquiries should be directed to the Chief Administrative Officer or his/her designate.

Communication in Case of Water/Disrupted Services

In the event of a water outage that cannot be resolved within two hours of initial identification, Council will first be notified by Administration. All Village residents will then be notified of the outage regardless of the affected area(s) via an official notice on the Village's webpage (northern sunrise.net) and on the social media platforms used by the Village, as well as through announcements on local radio stations. Updates on the situation may be issued if and when



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available. Once the situation has been resolved, Council will be notified and another official notice will be issued to inform residents. This is specified in the Utility Policy

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Notification to Adjacent Landowners – Development Permits

In the event of an application for development permits, the Development Authority, may, at their discretion request Administration to provide notification beyond what is currently required of the Village under the *Municipal Government Act*, Section 692, (4) (c).

Notification to Adjacent Landowners – Changes to Statutory Plans

In the event of an application for changes to statutory plans, Council may, at their discretion request Administration to provide notification beyond what is currently required of the Village under the *Municipal Government Act*, Section 692, (4) (c).

Mayor

Chief Administrative Officer