

Policy Title: Community Conversations Policy

Policy #: A-005

Date adopted by Council: September 21, 2021

1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Municipality of Jasper recognizes the role of meaningful resident engagement to help ensure that municipal services and programs remain responsive to changing community needs.

The Municipality of Jasper is committed to engaging residents in identifying and exploring needs impacting the community and developing locally driven solutions to address those needs, through regular, facilitated *Community Conversations*.

As an addition to other communication channels and processes, *Community Conversations* are intended to facilitate dialogue and information flow: between residents; from residents to the municipality; and from the municipality to residents.

2. PURPOSE

The Municipality of Jasper will, by adopting this policy:

- Establish role clarity for Council, Administration and Residents participating in *Community Conversations*,
- Set out a consistent format for *Community Conversations*,
- Identify areas of focus for *Community Conversations*;
- Describe who may participate in *Community Conversations*, and;
- Define the expected information flow between *Community Conversations* and the municipality.

3. RELATED INFORMATION

Membership

All residents of Jasper are welcome to participate in Community Conversations. Additionally, an individual representing an agency or organization that serves the community of Jasper is welcome to participate. This also includes anyone working on a time-limited project whose focus is on the community of Jasper. There is a short application process and individuals can apply and start participating at any time throughout the year.

Roles

Councillors appointed to Community Conversations are expected to attend and share information on current Council topics of discussion but should not represent themselves as expressing the opinion or position of Council unless speaking to an action approved by a majority of council members via motion. Appointed Councillors are NOT expected to report back to all of Council summarizing what was talked about at Community Conversations.

Administration is expected to support Community Conversations by seeking participants, engaging participants, facilitating the conversations, taking notes and ensuring a smooth flow of information from residents participating in Community Conversation through to Council and back.

Participants in Community Conversations are expected to have read and understood the Municipality's Community Conversations Policy and administrative procedures. They are not expected to facilitate, take notes or report directly to Council. Participants may choose to assist to facilitate conversations or break-out room style conversations. Participants are not prevented from presenting to Council representing themselves as individual residents of Jasper or representing a community group or external agency but

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should not represent themselves as expressing an opinion on behalf of other Community Conversations participants. Participants may determine via consensus what items to include in summary reports to council, or what response to provide to a matter referred to Community Conversations by council.

Areas of Focus

Community Conversations will be structured to support dialogue in the following focus areas:

- Social Wellbeing (by life-stage)
 - Early Childhood
 - School Age
 - Adults
 - Seniors
- Arts and Culture
- Recreation
- Environmental Responsibility

Format

Area of Focus	Length of Conversation	Frequency of Conversation	# per year
Early Childhood	1hr	Monthly	9 (excl. Jul, Aug, Dec)
School Age	1hr	Monthly	9 (excl. Jul, Aug, Dec)
Adults	1hr	Monthly	9 (excl. Jul, Aug, Dec)
Seniors	1hr	Monthly	9 (excl. Jul, Aug, Dec)
Arts and Culture	1hr	Monthly	9 (excl. Jul, Aug, Dec)
Recreation	1hr	Monthly	9 (excl. Jul, Aug, Dec)
Environmental Responsibility	1hr	Monthly	9 (excl. Jul, Aug, Dec)

Information Flow

Community Conversations to Council

Each community conversation focus area shall provide a report summarizing the trends and opportunities identified to Committee of the Whole a minimum of three times per year. Reports shall be presented by administration using standard municipal report processes.

Report to Council	For the period covering
December (first COTW)	September to November
April (first COTW)	January to March
July (first COTW)	April to June

Council to Community Conversations

Council may, via motion approved by a majority of council members at regular council or committee of the whole, choose to refer matters to a Community Conversation for feedback and community input.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

CAO

- Designate administrative resources, within approved budgets to support Community Conversations.

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- Approve any procedures related to the policy.

Council

- Budget appropriate resources to support Community Conversations.
- Ensure that a municipal councillor is appointed to participate on each *Community Conversation*.
- Receive information, recommendations from *Community Conversations'* participants.
- Establish by policy the areas of focus for *Community Conversations*.