

Policy Title: Community Conversations Policy

Policy #: A-105

Date adopted by Council: February 21, 2023



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 registration process and individuals can register and start participating at any time throughout the year.

Roles

Councillors appointed to Community Conversations, or their alternates, are expected to attend and share information on current Council topics of discussion, and are invited to participate fully in any conversation they may attend, 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 may report back to all of Council summarizing what was talked about at Community as they deem appropriate. Administration will present a report to Council twice per year summarizing what was identified, what action was taken and what opportunities exist for further action. Council may then choose to direct administration to investigate any opportunity(ies) identified and present more detail and recommendations to council for consideration. It is Council's role to determine which (if any) items from the Community Conversations Report - that fall outside of existing capacity, scope, authority, and budget - to direct administration to spend additional time on.

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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 Community Conversations through to Council and back. Administration may attend or send staff to Community Conversations as subject matter experts from time to time or as requested. When relevant opportunities identified are aligned with council's strategic priorities and fall within administration's capacity, scope, authority and budget administration may incorporate the input received at Community Conversations into their work. When opportunities fall outside of administration's existing capacity, scope, authority or budget, administration will not take any action and the items will be listed in the Community Conversations report for Council's consideration.

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 should not represent themselves as expressing an opinion on behalf of other Community Conversations participants. Participants will be given the opportunity to review reports to council.

Areas of Focus

Community Conversations are structured around life-stage to support dialogue in the following focus areas:

- Early Childhood
- School Age
- Adults
- Seniors

Format

Area of Focus	Frequency of Conversation	# per year
Early Childhood	Monthly	9 (excl. Jul, Aug, Dec)
School Age	Monthly	9 (excl. Jul, Aug, Dec)
Adults	Monthly	9 (excl. Jul, Aug, Dec)
Seniors	Monthly	9 (excl. Jul, Aug, Dec)

Information Flow

Community Conversations to Council

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

Report to Council	For the period covering
June (first COTW)	January to May
December (first COTW)	Annual Report

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4. RESPONSIBILITIES

CAO

- Designate administrative resources, within approved budgets to support Community Conversations.
- 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 Community Conversations reports for information,
- Direct administration to take action and generate recommendations on any items in the Community Conversations report that council deems relevant to advancement of its strategic priorities.
- Establish by policy the areas of focus for *Community Conversations*.