

# **CORPORATE ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## **Public Engagement**

### **Purpose**

To provide a framework to ensure a consistent approach for public engagement in National Capital Commission (NCC) activities in order to make better decisions situation in a constructive, open and transparent process and ensure the National Capital remains reflective of all Canadians.

### **Policy Statements**

1. In addition to cases where there is a legal duty to consult, members of the public shall be informed or consulted on NCC plans and projects in the public domain that will have a lasting impact on their quality of life or their routine use of NCC lands and when there is an opportunity to influence decisions about said plans or projects.
2. The level of engagement and stated objectives are evaluated from the Initiation Phase of NCC projects, and determined on the basis of prescribed standards (see public engagement diagram in Appendix A-1 and duty to consult in Appendix A-2).
3. NCC projects requiring consultation are at a flexible stage whereby the final decision takes public concerns and interests into account.
4. Any informational or consultative activity involving members of the Canadian public, whether they live in Canada's Capital Region or not, shall be conducted in a transparent, proactive and inclusive manner, as early as possible, and at key stages in the Development Phase of the project.
5. Public engagement activities shall be accessible, conducted within reasonable time frames and promoted in accordance with various clients. Information and tools for determining public opinion shall be relevant, comprehensive and promote the productive involvement of a wide range of people.
6. The NCC shall inform the public of the outcomes of its public engagement activities, answer questions and explain its reasons for supporting or rejecting feedback or ideas submitted by the public by producing public engagement reports.
7. Public engagement activities shall respect the key principles for establishing sustainable and constructive dialogue (see principles and their definitions, Appendix A-3).
8. With regards to the Plan for Canada's Capital (PCC) and other master plans, the NCC shall set up ongoing public advisory committees to assist in the plans Development and Implementation Phases.

### **Authorities**

Executive Management Committee

- APPROVES the Public Engagement Policy.

Vice-President, Human Resources and Information Management Branch

- RECOMMENDS the approval of the Public Engagement Policy.
- APPROVES procedures for implementing the Public Engagement Policy.

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### Responsibilities

Director, Public Affairs and Information Management

- DEVELOPS and IMPLEMENTS policies and procedures for public engagement.
- ENSURES compliance with policies and procedures for public engagement.
- ENSURES policies and procedures for public engagement are comprehensive, up-to-date and available in both official languages.
- PROMOTES the key principles for establishing sustainable dialogue, a philosophy of public engagement and public engagement activity results throughout the organization.
- ADVISES the project manager on the level of engagement, objectives, methods, and target members of the public for public engagement activities.
- ASSISTS the project manager in developing public engagement processes and APPROVES said processes.
- CONSULTS, as needed and in conjunction with the project manager, members of the Executive Management Committee on proposed public engagement activities and the material presented in this context.
- REVIEWS material presented and distributed in the context of public engagement activities to ensure that it is placed in the right context, the language is accessible and understandable; the process is clearly laid out and ENSURES this material is available in both official languages.
- PROMOTES and organizes public engagement activities in conjunction with the project manager.
- ENSURES relevant information on public engagement projects and processes is available to the public within a reasonable timeframe.
- PREPARES public engagement reports as needed, or APPROVES the reports of consultants, in conjunction with project managers.
- ENSURES public engagement activity participants receive the related reports in a timely fashion and that the reports are made public via the NCC Web site.
- ACTS as primary liaison between the NCC and the general public or interest groups, in the context of public engagement activities

Project Manager

- EVALUATES the public engagement activity needs set out in the Statement of Requirements (SOR).
- CONSULTS the Director, Public Affairs and Information Management to determine public engagement activity needs in a timely fashion.
- DEVELOPS content to be presented at various public engagement activity stages, in both official languages where applicable, in conjunction with the Director, Public Affairs and Information Management.
- ALLOCATES sufficient financial resources for the public engagement activities, in conjunction with the Director, Public Affairs and Information Management
- ENSURES public engagement activity outcomes are taken into consideration in decision-making and in general,

### Reference Materials

Communications Policy of the Government of Canada

NCC Policy on Client Services

NCC Policy on Public Opinion Research

NCC Policy on the NCC Project Management Process

NCC Policy on Official Languages

NCC Policy on the Site Development Planning Framework

Canadian Environmental Assessment Act

International Association for Public Participation

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### Procedures

#### A. Public Engagement Activity Planning

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|---|---|
| Project Manager   | 1. IDENTIFIES the potential need to inform or consult members of the public of an NCC project from the initial stage, as set out in the project management process.         |
|   | 2. CONSULTS the Director, Public Affairs and Information Management on the need for a public engagement activity.   |
| Director, Public Affairs and Information Management Project Manager | 3. DEVELOPS a detailed public engagement process that includes the degree of public engagement, objectives, methods, participants, time frame, promotional plan and budget. |
|   | 4. DEVELOPS content for public engagement activities in consultation with the Director, Public Affairs and Information Management.  |

#### B. Communicating and Promoting Public Engagement Activities

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|---|--|
| Director, Public Affairs and Information Management | 1. COORDINATES promotion and communication activities in conjunction with the Project Manager, the Communications Director, the Marketing Coordinator and Creative Services.   |
|   | 2. APPROVES the content of communication and promotional tools for public engagement activities.   |
|   | 3. NOTIFIES interested members of the public at least ten (10) days before the start of an activity.   |
|   | 4. POSTS on the NCC Web site, where applicable, documents about the public information or consultation activity on or before the day the activities are announced.   |
| Director, Communications                            | 5. DEVELOPS and IMPLEMENTS, where applicable, a plan, the material and the meetings needed to promote the public engagement activity through the media, and prepares key messages in support of the people involved. |
|   | 6. ACTS as media liaison and appoints a project spokesperson.  |
| Coordinator, Marketing and Creative Services        | 7. DEVELOPS and IMPLEMENTS, where applicable, a plan and the material needed to advertise the public engagement activity through newspapers, the radio and/or the NCC Web site.                                      |
| Coordinator, Intergovernmental Relations            | 8. INFORMS elected representatives when public engagement activities will be held.   |

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### **C. Organizing Public Engagement Meetings**

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|---|---|
| Director, Public Affairs and Information Management | 1. COORDINATES public meetings in conjunction with the project manager, while keeping ease of access and universal access in mind.                        |
|   | 2. EXPLAINS production services requirements and seeks the approval of the Capital Experience, Communications and Marketing (CECM) Branch Vice-President. |
|   | 3. APPROVES requests concerning technical and logistical requirements, including interpretation or Webcasting, where applicable.                          |
| Coordinator, Production Services, CECM              | 4. IMPLEMENTS production services requests.   |
| Coordinator, Public Consultations                   | 5. COORDINATES registrations and client relations with participants.  |
|   | 6. RECORDS all questions and comments.  |

### **D. Public Engagement Activity Follow-Up and Evaluation**

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|---|--|
| Coordinator, Public Consultations                                       | 1. UPDATES the participant database with participant information collected during the meeting.   |
| Director, Public Affairs and Information management and Project Manager | 2. COORDINATES the necessary follow-up actions and the writing of the report, which should include all written and verbal comments and responses from the meeting. |
|   | 3. REVIEWS and APPROVES the report.  |
| Project Manager   | 4. ANALYZES and CONSIDERS the feedback and ideas from members of the public and integrates them into decisions where possible.                                     |
|   | 5. EXPLAINS the reasons for supporting or rejecting the feedback or ideas from members of the public.  |
|   | 6. INITIATES the translation of the report.  |
|   | 7. ENTERS the final report and distribution list into the general folder.  |

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Coordinator, Public  
Consultations

8. DISTRIBUTES the final report to participants.
9. POSTS the final version of the public engagement report on the NCC Web site.
10. ENTERS the public engagement report or meeting minutes into the NCC Corporate Information Inventory System.

### **Definitions**

#### **Public Engagement**

The term "public engagement" refers to informational, consultative and collaborative activities that serve to inform members of the public of the possible impact of a project on their lives and/or to improve the decision-making process for the project in question.

#### **Public**

Refers to a broad range of stakeholders or groups, including but not limited to: public agencies, municipalities, special interest groups, businesses, associations, colleges or universities and residents of the National Capital Region or of Canada as a whole.


#### **All NCC Projects**

The principles of public engagement shall apply to all NCC projects, including those managed by consultants on the NCC's behalf as well as those where the NCC is working in collaboration with partners.

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APPENDIX A Table: Conceptual Model of Various Degrees of Public Engagement <sup>1</sup>



INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
<b>Goal</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Goal</b>
Provide the public with balanced and objective information to facilitate understanding	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions	Work directly with the public to ensure issues are consistently considered	Work with the public at every stage, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution	Give the public an opportunity to make the final decision
<b>Method</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Method</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Information leaflets distributed door-to-door</li> <li>➤ Information on the Web site</li> <li>➤ Community information sessions</li> <li>➤ Speaker's bureau</li> <li>➤ On-site signage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Open house</li> <li>➤ Public presentations</li> <li>➤ Questionnaires</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Consultation sessions with dialogue</li> <li>➤ Workshops</li> <li>➤ Round tables – Focus groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Citizen advisory committees</li> <li>➤ Long-term processes with the same stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Jury</li> <li>➤ Vote</li> </ul>
<b>Examples</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Activities affecting traffic or generating noise</li> <li>➤ NCC infrastructure projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Meeting to discuss new section of recreational trail</li> <li>➤ New use for heritage building</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Ad hoc committees for long-term plans and strategies (i.e. environmental strategy, LeBreton Flats, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Public advisory committee for each master plan + PCC</li> <li>➤ Board of directors advisory committees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ External jury to choose a commemoration</li> </ul>

Consult

1- IAP 2: International Association for Public Participation

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# CORPORATE ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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### APPENDIX A-2

#### **Duty to consult under the following Conditions:**

##### **Legal Duty to Consult:**

*Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*, amendment to a regulation made pursuant to the *National Capital Act*, amendment to the Plan for Canada's Capital, or amendment to a master, area or zone plan.

##### **Internal Need to Consult:**

Development plans and projects that affect the long-term use of NCC lands.

Plans and projects that affect the long-term recreational, functional or cultural uses of NCC properties.

### APPENDIX A-3

#### **Key Principles Established by Public Engagement Specialists:**

##### **Transparency**

Effective consultation and participation must be based on transparency, trust, integrity and mutual respect which will help ensure the credibility and fairness of all participants' views and the transparency of both the goal and the process.

##### **Honesty**

Public consultation and participation outcomes shall not be predetermined. Consultations shall not be used to communicate decisions already taken, unless the purpose of the consultation is to inform the public of a project.

##### **Meaningfulness**

Consultations shall be meaningful and goals and expectations shall be clear regarding the public's ability to influence decisions.

##### **Inclusiveness**

Wherever possible, consultations shall involve all participants who can contribute to or are affected by their results (i.e. individuals, associations, interest groups, etc.).

##### **Clarity**

Consultation participants (staff and public) must have clear mandates. They should have influence over the outcome and the actions agreed upon. It should also be clearly defined when a session is intended for information rather than consultation (often at the beginning or end of the process).

##### **Mutual Respect**

Effective consultation is a cooperative endeavour that entails shared responsibility and commitment. A solid mutual understanding of the issues, objectives, goals and expectations of all parties is vital and all constraints must be made clear at the outset.

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### **Clear Timeframe**

Participants must have a realistic idea of how much time consultation and participation activities are likely to take and plan for this when designing the process.

### **Accessibility**

All participants shall have access to relevant and clear information, within a reasonable time, and endeavour to share this information.

### **Universally Accessible**

The venues where public engagement activities are held shall be universally accessible and content/material prepared and presented should be designed to address a wide range of clients, including those people who are mobility, vision or hearing-impaired.

### **Mutual Understanding**

While effective consultation and participation does not always end in agreement, they should lead to a better understanding of each other's positions.

### **Accountability**

To be effective, consultation and participation require an "operational follow-through". Participants are entitled to know what will be done with the views they express and the information they provide. They should also be kept informed of the impact their ideas and involvement ultimately have on government decision-making.

### **Consistency**

The preferred consultation approach shall be developed in a fair and equitable manner, from project to project and from one community of interest to another. It must be understood that each project has its own unique characteristics.