



Town of Parker Community Engagement Framework

Welcome to the Town of Parker’s Community Engagement Framework. This framework has been developed to demonstrate and articulate the Town’s current and ongoing commitment to engaging the community in a meaningful and effective way.

The Parker Town Council and staff identified the need to ensure meaningful public involvement that respects the contribution of our residents and businesses as a strategic priority. Effective community engagement not only provides Town Council with an opportunity to strengthen its relationship with the people of Parker, but provides for sound investment in better decision making by ensuring decision makers are informed of community needs and aspirations. We take great care in listening to our community to determine the necessary changes and improvements to keep Parker *Your Kind of Place*.

Overall, our framework aims to develop a consistent approach to community engagement, providing guidance on when and how to undertake engagement activities and what steps and processes should be considered. It outlines our goals and guiding principles for community engagement to ensure consistent and active participation in the planning, implementation and evaluation of our programs and services.

We encourage input from staff, members of the community we serve and our partners to help us to further refine our Community Engagement Strategy. To tell us what you think, email us at LetsTalkParker@parkeronline.org.

The purpose of the Community Engagement Framework is to:

- **Be proactive.** Initiate communications and dialogue with the community to maximize resident engagement. Ensure Town staff has a clear understanding of and a commitment to engaging with the community in a meaningful and effective way.
- **Provide frequent and diverse opportunities for public education and engagement.** Provide a variety of creative, convenient and cost-effective ways for the public to access educational information, become involved, and have real opportunities to engage and provide feedback. Provide a consistent and coordinated approach to community engagement for staff to guide the selection of the most appropriate method and level of engagement.
- **Go where the people are.** Place a priority on increasing public engagement by taking advantage of opportunities to meet the public where they are. Utilize online communication and engagement techniques to maximize participation and enhance traditional, in-person engagement methods and processes.
- **Be collaborative.** Facilitate communication partnerships to create synergy and save taxpayer dollars. Improve the relationship and level of trust between the community and the Town by ensuring the community is informed about and involved in Town decisions.
- **Encourage the open exchange of ideas.** Invite conversations with the public, encourage idea sharing and find common ground. Strengthen community connectedness by creating

opportunities for the community to get involved and provide feedback regarding matters that are important to them.

- **Increase community awareness, interest and participation** in Town projects and initiatives taking place in our community. Ensure community feedback is heard, respected and taken into account in Town decision-making processes.
- **Enhance community trust.** Enhance the relationship and level of trust between the Town and the community, as well as ensure the community is informed about and involved in Town decisions, and information received through community engagement efforts is reported back to the community.
- **Provide Transparency.** Ensure that Town business is conducted in an open and transparent manner.

The Town will work closely with the community to improve engagement and participation in Council decisions. Through robust public engagement, we encourage Parker residents to become more involved and take an active role in shaping the future of our community. The Town knows that meeting the minimum requirements of public notification and engagement is not sufficient for making informed recommendations in the public interest.

Viewed as a “living document,” the Town’s Community Engagement Framework will evolve and change over time. We encourage input from staff, members of the community we serve and our partners to help us continue to enhance and refine this important tool.

Our Core Values for Public Participation

The Town of Parker recognizes and follows the best practices for public participation developed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2).

Best Practices & Core Values

1. Public participation is *based* on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.
2. Public participation *includes* the promise that the public’s contribution will actively contribute to and inform Town Council’s decision making.
3. Public participation *promotes* sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including community members and decision makers.
4. Public participation *seeks out and facilitates* the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.
5. Public participation *seeks input* from participants in designing how they participate.
6. Public participation *provides* participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
7. Public participation *communicates* to participants how their input affected the decision.

In all interaction with the community, the Town of Parker will also employ its Core Values of:

- Teamwork
- Quality Service
- Integrity
- Innovation

Who We Engage:

The Town of Parker seeks to communicate with and engage our diverse stakeholders. This includes any person, group or organization that has an interest in, concern about or may be directly affected by the Town's actions, objectives and policies.

Town of Parker Demographics:

Population: 52,000 (49.76% male; 50.24% female)

Median Age: 35

College Degree: 62.65%

Homeowners: 76.86%; Renters: 23.14%

Average Household Income: \$110,534 (62% higher than state; 87% higher than nation)

Why We Engage

What Community Engagement Means

The purpose of community engagement is to gather diverse community perspectives and present them to the decision makers to make an informed decision. It means that the Town of Parker talks to our community before making big decisions. It means that if you have concerns or ideas about how to improve the quality of life and services in the Town of Parker, we want to hear and discuss them. We know that those who live, work and play in Parker have valid and valuable opinions about our great community.

What Community Engagement *Does Not Mean*

What community engagement does not mean is that everyone will always agree on decisions that are made within the Town of Parker. Parker is made up of a diverse population with very different interests and approaches. The Town will listen to all of the different opinions and, where possible, incorporate them into the decision-making process in a fair and balanced way.

Benefits of Community Engagement

Community Engagement provides a valuable link between Town Council, Town staff and the community. It offers a range of benefits, including, but not limited to:

- Improving Town Council's decision-making process by taking into account a greater range of perspectives, experiences and knowledge
- Ensuring that diverse voices have a place at the table
- Creating a shared purpose
- Encouraging greater community participation
- Creating a more connected and informed community
- Reducing the level of misconception or misinformation on Town issues
- Identifying and addressing existing and potential concerns
- Empowering participants to take ownership of programs and initiatives
- Ensuring commitment and greater ownership of the final decision by the community

When We Engage:

The Town of Parker is committed to engaging the community in the following situations:

- To inform a decision or action through community input
- To help identify community needs and aspirations
- When the community has raised or expressed an interest or concern
- When there is a high-risk matter impacting the community

- When required by resolution, law, policy or agreement

In the engagement planning process, consideration is given to the complexity of the decision and the optimal time needed for people to respond. While the Town's Municipal Code sets out minimum requirements for public notification and feedback, each engagement process is considered on its individual basis and merit.

To ensure a successful outreach process, careful consideration is given to the appropriate tools and timing for the project or decision. While community engagement will not replace the final power of the decision makers, it is invaluable in the way it enhances Town Council's capacity to make well-informed decisions on behalf of the community.

How We Engage:

This Community Engagement Framework has been developed to demonstrate and articulate that the Town of Parker follows the continuum of participation designed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2). The spectrum helps us match the engagement objective with the related participation approach. Matching the approach to the objective helps ensure that Town staff meets the community's engagement expectations.

The IAP2 spectrum illustrates that there are different levels of participation, depending on the public participation goals, commitments made to the public, time frames and resources. The five levels in the spectrum are: Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate and Empower. As you move down the spectrum, the impact to the public increases.

IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum

IAP2'S PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SPECTRUM



The IAP2 Federation has developed the Spectrum to help groups define the public's role in any public participation process. The IAP2 Spectrum is quickly becoming an international standard.

		INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION				
		INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL		To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
	PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

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Measuring Our Success

The Town of Parker will measure the success of our community engagement activities and efforts. We want to ensure that those who have participated in our engagement activities feel that their contribution was valued and utilized during the process. By measuring our performance, we can continuously find ways to improve our approach and ensure that we stay accountable and transparent to our community.

In order to assist with the monitoring and review of the framework, the Town will take the following actions:

- The Town will continually monitor, review and update our Community Engagement Framework to ensure relevance and increase effectiveness. We will seek community feedback to assist us in this process.
- We will close the loop on our community engagement processes by communicating process outcomes, including considerations and recommendations made by Town Council and the impact of community input, back to our residents.
- The Town will maintain a robust, online community engagement database that records the engagement activities of participants. We will regularly run and review reports to measure our success in engaging our stakeholders, and adjust our program accordingly to enhance engagement.
- Town staff will also be encouraged to evaluate the effectiveness of their individual or departmental engagement activities and efforts and make adjustments accordingly.

Feedback to the Framework

We encourage community feedback regarding the development and review of our community engagement strategy. Feedback can be emailed to LetsTalkParker@parkeronline.org or give us a call at 303.841.0353. Visit www.LetsTalkParker.org to learn more. We're listening!

Footnote: Portions of this policy were adapted with permission from the City of Niagara Falls.