

Allowable Expenses for Engagement Activities

ISSUE

What are allowable expenses for engagement related activities for the City of Saskatoon?

BACKGROUND

City Council, at its meeting held on October 23, 2017, considered a report of its Governance and Priorities Committee approving additional allowable meeting expenses to City Council's Communications and Constituency Relations Policy (C01-027).

At its meeting, City Council resolved:

"that the Administration report back on the present use, eligibility, and consideration of these expenses in other engagement-related budgets such as those of Council and Advisory Committees, neighbourhood or city-wide engagements and issue-specific engagements; and that the report consider transportation, interpretation, childcare, and 1st voice support among other related engagement supports."

CURRENT STATUS

City Council, at its meeting held on July 29, 2019, approved the new Public Engagement Policy (C02-046) which came into effect on September 1, 2019. The new, modern framework for public engagement is strategic, focuses on outcomes, and brings consistency to how the City approaches public engagement across the organization. The policy applies to all City of Saskatoon Departments and Offices.

In addition, Administrative Procedures have been developed to guide the implementation of public engagement.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The new Public Engagement Policy C02-046 outlines the approach to public engagement and aligns with 7 guiding principles of which one is "Inclusivity". This principle ensures engagement processes are designed in a way that promote and allow for adequate community contributions while building relationships with a diverse group of stakeholders. An important consideration as it relates to inclusivity is to ensure engagement opportunities are designed in a way that are accessible for residents and stakeholders.

In order to achieve this principle, the Administrative Procedures include a process whereby when a project begins the team will identify the audience along with any risks including, but not limited to, accessibility barriers such as:

- Transportation
- Child care

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- Accessible and safe meeting spaces (i.e. location)
- Food
- Interpretation service

Once accessibility barriers are identified, appropriate mitigation options are identified as part of the engagement strategy and are incorporated into the corresponding work plan and project budget.

The costs attached to addressing accessibility barriers are both allowable and appropriate if the risk is real and has the ability to impact the principle of inclusivity. Furthermore, these costs are appropriate for any area where local governments interact with residents and stakeholders including governments, policy and program development and service responsiveness and efficiency.

IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial, legal, social or environmental implications resulting from this report. The costs associated to address accessibility barriers and ensure inclusivity are part of existing budgets.

NEXT STEPS

There are no further steps required.

Report Approval

Written &

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