UPDATED STURGEON ANNEXATION PROJECT FAQS

February 2020

What is the role of the City in this annexation project?

The City is the applicant of the annexation application. It is not the decision-maker. It will make its application for an annexation decision to the Municipal Government Board (MGB).

What is the role of the Municipal Government Board (MGB) in this annexation project?

The MGB is the quasi-judicial body that reviews annexation applications for the Province of Alberta and makes recommendations to Minister of Municipal Affairs regarding decisions on annexation requests.

What is the negotiation process?

The period between when an applicant (i.e.: City of St. Albert) gives written notice of its intent to annex and when an annexation application is filed with the MGB is considered the 'negotiation process.' The City and the County may reach an annexation agreement during the 'negotiation process.'

What happens during the negotiation process?

The 'negotiation process' includes gathering all necessary information and documentation to support negotiations between the City and the County, and everything necessary to prepare the application to the MGB.

Can I have access to the negotiation process information and reports?

Applicants are not required to release confidential information during the negotiation process, nor prior to making an application to the MGB. Some of the information gathered during the negotiation process that influences the negotiations must remain confidential to retain the integrity of the negotiation process and to expedite an effective negotiated annexation agreement. The City will release all related information to the public through its annexation project website once the negotiation process is concluded.

What are the City's requirements for engagement with the public during the negotiation process?

As the applicant, the City has a responsibility to engage affected persons prior to submitting its formal application to the MGB. There is no minimum standard for engagement in the legislation or in the annexation application process.

To date the City has completed two rounds of open house sessions and has held one-on-one conversations with affected owners that requested interviews.

The City also informed affected agencies, such as Alberta Transportation, RCMP, Canada Post and local school boards.

The applicant must report to the MGB on its engagement activities undertaken and any views expressed during the activities.

After the MGB application is made, the City may continue to engage with affected persons and agencies, although it is not required to do so.

What is the Municipal Government Board (MGB) application process?

If the City and the County reach agreement, the applicant (i.e.: City of St. Albert) submits an application to the MGB. The applicant may file an application to the MGB once it has determined that negotiations are complete, even if the City and the County have not been able to reach agreement on all issues. The applicant can file an application with some or all of the issues contested between the parties.

How does the Municipal Government Board (MGB) involve the public and affected owners?

Upon receipt of the application, the MGB advertises the application and provides information on how affected persons may make representations to the MGB.

Affected persons may make written and/or in-person presentations to the MGB during the public hearing process. All information provided during the public hearing process is recorded and made part of the application and will inform the recommendations the MGB makes to the Minister of Municipal Affairs regarding a decision.

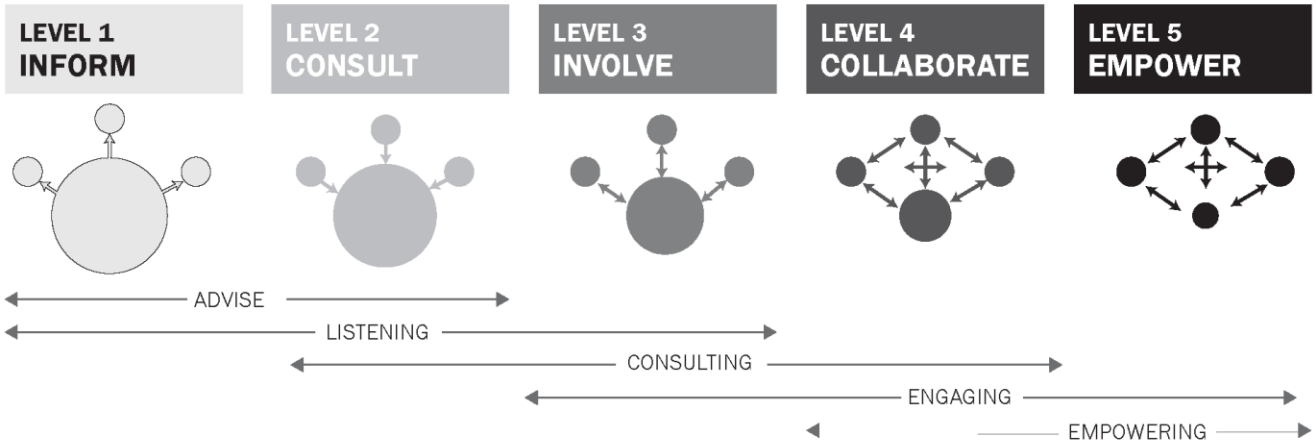
Can I be directly involved in decisions made by the Annexation Negotiating Committee?

The intent of the City's engagement efforts is to keep the public, affected owners and local authorities informed about the annexation progress, answer questions that may arise, and to gather feedback on certain topic areas as needed to support the annexation application and agreement, if one can be reached.

The public and affected owners are not directly involved in the annexation negotiation process. However, public and landowner feedback gathered at open house events, through questionnaires and through one-on-one conversations is brought to the Annexation Negotiating Committee as information, which could inform decision-making by the City and County.

Public engagement exists on a spectrum from ‘inform’ at one end to ‘empower’ on the other end. The City’s communication and engagement plan for the annexation project aligns best with the activities of Level 1 and Level 2, and falls at the left-hand end of the spectrum, as depicted here:

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SPECTRUM



	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE Requires Council approval	EMPOWER Rquires Council approval
PURPOSE	To provide the public/ stakeholders with objective information and advise them of issues/ initiatives.	To educate and collect public/stakeholder opinion to improve decisions.	To stimulate public/ stakeholder debate, clarify values & broaden the information base to improve decisions.	To deliberate and work with public/ stakeholders to improve the outcomes.	To delegate the authority for decision-making and implementation with the public/ stakeholders to improve community capacity.
PROMISE	We will make you aware of issues/ initiatives.	We will listen, acknowledge and report concerns and aspirations about presented alternatives, and explain to the decision-maker how public input influenced the recommendation.	We will work with public / stakeholders to ensure concerns are directly reflected in the alternatives developed, report the comments received and explain how the input contributed to recommendation(s).	We will actively involve you in developing alternatives and the recommendation.	We will implement what you decide.
REPORTING	Administration record of notification and recording of comments	Administration report to decision-maker with comments received from consultation	Administration feedback mechanism to public/ stakeholders and Administration report to decision-maker	Public/stakeholder participation in report/presentation to decision-maker	Delegate report directly to Council
DECISION MAKER	Administration/ Council	Administration/ Council	Council	Council	Council/Delegate

Source: International Association for Public Participation