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AOHVA – Observations on the Public Participation Process and Collaboration Approach that is Currently Being Used by the Land Use Framework

1.0 Participation in Land Use Planning

Over the past several years the Alberta Off Highway Vehicle Association has been an active participant with respect to the Land Use Framework. Plan's have been developed or are in the process of being developed with sub-regional plans such as Biodiversity Management Plans, Linear Footprint Management Plans, and Recreation Management Plans. All of these have been addressed through Public Participation Processes.

If we look at Public Participation Processes there are generally five approaches (International Association for Public Participation - IAP2) that are based on increasing the level of public input and impact in decision making:

1.1 Inform

The objective is to provide participants with balanced and objective information to assist in understanding the problem, alternatives and/or solutions.

The promise to participants is to keep them informed

1.2 Consult

The objective is to obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decision.

The promise to participants is to keep them informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how participation influenced the decision.

1.3 Involve

The objective is to work directly with participants throughout the process to ensure issues and concerns are consistently understood and considered.

The promise is to work with participants to ensure concerns and issues are directly reflected in the alternative solutions that are developed and provide feedback on how participant's input influenced the decision.

1.4 Collaborate

The objective is to create partnerships in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternative solutions and the identification of the preferred solution.

The promise is to look for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate advice and recommendations into decisions to the maximum extent possible.

1.5 Empower (Highest Level)

The objective is to place final decision making in the hands of the participants.

The promise is to implement what participants decide.

Observation:

The AOHVA has asked several times for details of the overall Planning Process. There have been statements made by various GoA representatives throughout the process referencing collaboration; it is still unclear whether cooperation, coordination or collaboration is what the Government of Alberta is seeking.

The focus to date has been on the Informing and Consulting stages however the impression of the AOHVA is that it is a token approach as discussion has been limited on topics. Information has been gathered but no report provided to the meeting participants on the outcomes.

The facilitation teams have been trained in an ICA Associates Planning Process called the Technology of Participation. It is a good process if done to completion but placing cards on a wall without sorting into themes is a meaningless exercise. Themes should have been developed during the process, not in a report weeks or months later as interpretation is left to the writer.

2.0 Collaboration within the Land Use Framework Planning Process

Collaboration is a term that has been mentioned throughout the planning process and in discussions between AOHVA and representatives from the Government of Alberta.

The AOHVA needs to be certain that the collaborative approach and funding solutions they are working towards is not in fact an approach to cooperation or coordination. The following tables identify key components and differences amongst cooperation, coordination and collaboration.

(Table adapted from Collaboration: What Makes It Work (Mattessich et al., 2001, p. 61) and the works of M. Blank, S. Kagan, A. Melaville, and K. Ray.)

Cooperation	Coordination	Collaboration
Vision and Relationships		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basis for cooperation is usually between individuals but may be mandated by a third party; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual relationships are supported by the organizations they represent; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment of the organizations and their leaders is fully behind their representatives;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational missions goals are not taken into account; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missions and goals of the individual organizations are reviewed for compatibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common, new mission and goals are created;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction is on an as needed basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction is usually around one specific project or task of definable length. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One or more projects are undertaken for longer term results

Cooperation	Coordination	Collaboration
Structure, Responsibilities & Communication		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationships are informal; each organization functions separately; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizations involved take on needed roles, but function relatively independently of each other; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New organizational structure and/or clearly defined and interrelated roles that constitute a formal division of labor are created;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No joint planning is required; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some project specific planning is required; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More comprehensive planning is required that includes developing joint strategies and measuring success in terms of impact on the needs of those served;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information is conveyed as needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication roles are established and definite channels are created for interaction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beyond communication roles and channels for interaction, many 'levels' of communication are created, as clear information is a keystone of success.

Cooperation	Coordination	Collaboration
Authority & Accountability		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority rests solely with individual organizations; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority rests with the individual organizations but there is coordination among participants; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New organizational structure and/or clearly defined and interrelated roles that constitute a formal division of labor are created;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership is unilateral and control is central; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some sharing of leadership and control; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More comprehensive planning is required that includes developing joint strategies and measuring success in terms of impact on the needs of those served;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All authority and accountability rests with the individual organization that acts independently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is more shared risk, but most of the authority and accountability falls to individual organizations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beyond communication roles and channels for interaction, many 'levels' of communication are created, as clear information is a keystone of success.

Cooperation	Coordination	Collaboration
Resources and Rewards		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources are separate, serving the individual organizations' needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources are acknowledged and can be made available to others for a specific project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources are pooled or jointly secured for a longer-term effort.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rewards are mutually acknowledged. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizations share in the products; more is accomplished jointly than could have been individually.

Observation:

The AOHVA is committed to working in a collaborative approach to addressing concerns and solutions with the Land Use Framework Planning Process. With the aforementioned chart the AOHVA has outlined three processes, cooperation/coordination/collaboration when it comes to levels of involvement.

The AOHVA believes it is important to confirm that all participants understand a collaborative approach if that is really what the GoA is seeking. New participants enter the process with perhaps no orientation on the process or what the expectations are.

The AOHVA has attended a number of meetings where other ENGO organizational representatives stand up at public meetings and state their position that no motorized trails will be allowed on public land as long as they are involved.

The AOHVA has asked for the GoA to look at what has and has not worked in the past government initiated processes to obtain historical insight (Ghost Access Management Plan and Eagle Point Blue Rapids Park Council).

A recent video developed by the Oldman Watershed Council with the Minister gives the impression that OWC is the only voice for issues within the Oldman Watershed in the South Saskatchewan region. This is not a collaborative approach. The OWC states they are independent, however with the majority of their funding coming from government this brings into question independency.

An Advisory Board was recently established for the Castle Parks Management Plan.

- How was this Advisory Board selected?
- The AOHVA is the recognized voice as the Provincial OHV stakeholder so why were they not contacted?
- The AOHVA has all of the past knowledge on the Castle Area going back to 1992 so how is this not valuable to an Advisory Board?
- What will the process be in selecting representation for the Recreation Management Plan for the Porcupine Hills/ Livingstone area?

The AOHVA wishes to be involved in all advisory boards etc. involving OHV issues, as there are provincial wide concerns. We see a seat at the Board for both the Provincial Federation and local clubs.

Summary Statement

A plan is of little use without a means of putting it into place. In fact, implementation is an essential part of the planning process. AOHVA believes successful implementation requires a new service delivery structure and true collaboration. AOHVA is committed to being part of this structure and collaborative approach.