# Final Report

Engage! St. John's Task Force

October 2014

Prepared by the Office of Strategy and Engagement
(approved by Council on October 20, 2014)

ST. JOHN'S

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## Executive summary

Today's cities and other public organizations are incorporating public engagement into their way of doing business. Public engagement allows cities to work more collaboratively with their residents and establish processes for public input that help to inform the decision-making process. The City of St. John's created the Office of Strategy and Engagement (OSE) in 2013 to support the development of a corporate approach to its public engagement work. Based on its mandate, the OSE has undertaken a significant piece of work to determine how the City of John's can effectively incorporate public engagement into the city's culture.

Background information

Following the City's restructuring exercise in 2013, the Office of Strategy and Engagement was established. With a view to enhance client service and build effective corporate strategy, the OSE mandate includes the development of public engagement strategies. Since November 2013, the OSE has been working with the Co-Chair of the City's Standing Committee on Economic Development, Tourism and Public Engagement to help shape a framework for public engagement for the City. An internal review was first conducted to ascertain the current practice of public engagement within the city corporation and to identify areas for enhancement. The establishment of the Engage! St. John's Task Force in April 2014 brought together 25 organizational and citizen-at-large representatives to help shape the city's policy direction for public engagement and identify tools and techniques that could support an engaged city.

Review of other jurisdictions

One of the aspects of the internal review, which was further supported through the work of the Task Force, was a jurisdictional review of best practices in public engagement. As an emerging practice, public engagement is being used effectively to help shape policy and program decisions in a variety of municipalities and effectively supporting the decision-making process where appropriate.

Principles and policy

The Engage! St. John's Task Force was able to hone in on the municipalities that were working within effective public engagement frameworks and noted that they had guiding principles and policies that governed their work. Additionally, most of them were working within the values of the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) found in Appendix 7. As a result, the Task Force developed four key principles: Commitment; Accountability; Clear and Timely Communication; and Inclusiveness. These principles helped to shape the structure of the draft public engagement policy which captures everything from roles and responsibilities to the continuum of decision making to be followed (Appendix 8).

Key themes and recommendations

Five key themes emerged from the work of the Task Force. These themes were reflective of the comments heard through the internal review as well. This report notes the themes, captures the key discussions and observations that took place around the themes, and provides recommendations to

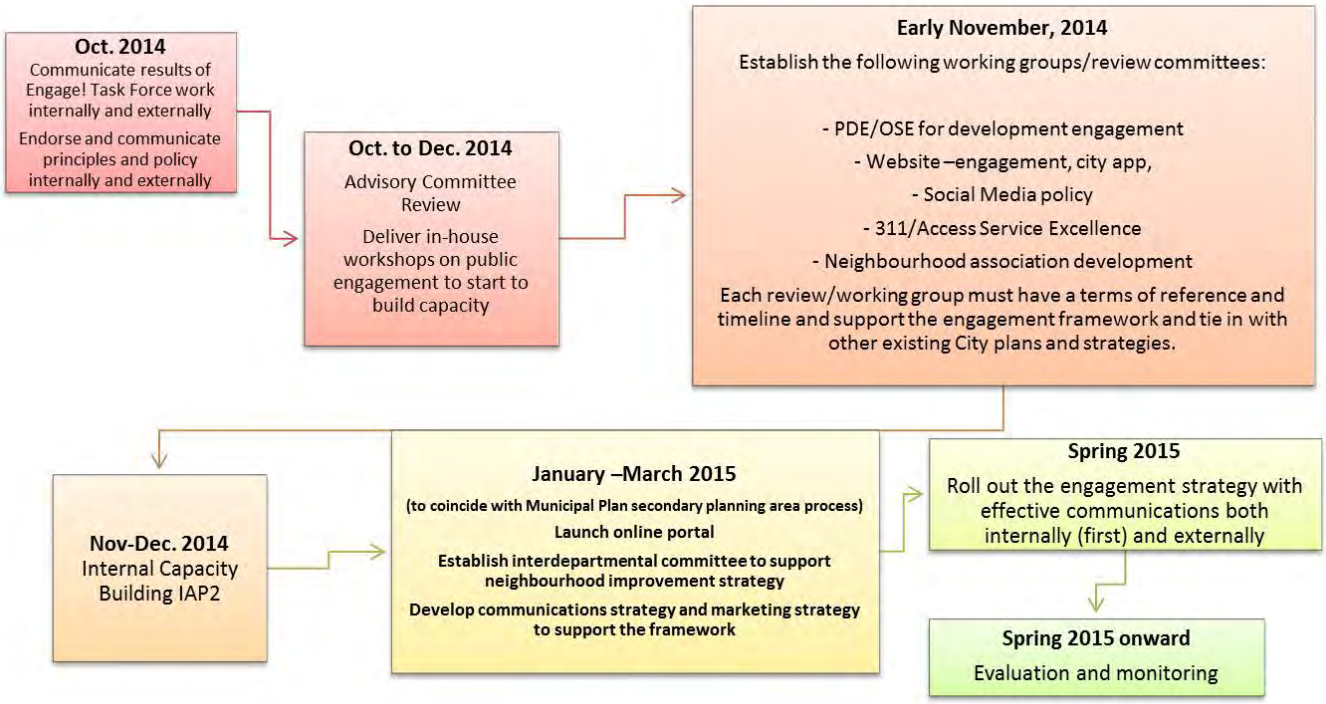
address the concerns noted. Some of these recommendations require further review or the establishment of internal working groups while others are “quick hits” that can be implemented right away. Many of the recommendations require budget considerations which have been noted where possible.

**Themes**

**Engagement around development – before, during and after**
**Effective online engagement – web, portals and social media**
**Increasing the effectiveness of existing city engagement tools**
**Building capacity for engagement in the community**
**Developing and demonstrating a culture of engagement**

## Proposed timeframe

Should Council accept this report and its recommendations, the following time frame for implementation is suggested. Once other City departments have an opportunity to review the report, the time frames may require modifications.



## Background information

Cities and public engagement

Today's democratic environments have increased pressures from their citizens to be more involved in decision-making processes and to be kept informed of decisions that will impact them. Additionally, research suggests that cities with effective public engagement processes develop plans, strategies, programs and policies that better meet the needs of their residents and key stakeholders which ultimately results in more satisfied residents and stakeholders.

Across the country, and around the world, more and more governments at all levels, and other public sector organizations, are turning to public engagement as a means of connecting to their citizens. Within the Newfoundland and Labrador context, both the Government of NL and Memorial University have created Offices of Public Engagement.

Public engagement is a term that can mean different things to different people and is often interchanged with public involvement, citizen engagement and public participation. While the accepted definition may vary among organizations, many are using some form of public engagement to create a two-way dialogue between themselves and their stakeholders that supports their decision-making process.

City of St. John's restructuring

In March 2013, the City of St. John's undertook a restructuring exercise as a service improvement initiative. The primary objectives of the restructuring were to realign the organization such that it could:

- identify and meet changing customer service expectations and improve service delivery;
- enable an increased focus on, and capacity to undertake, longer term strategic planning;
- identify and establish operational priorities and a related process to monitor progress towards achieving priorities; and
- undertake a review of, and propose revisions to, the Corporate Strategic Plan.

The restructuring resulted in the creation of the Office of Strategy & Engagement which has a focus on long-term strategic planning, citizen/stakeholder engagement and marketing and communications. On May 1, 2013, the new structure was announced through a news release stating that:

> "The new structure also includes the creation of a new Office of Strategy and Engagement reporting directly to the City Manager. In addition to leading the strategic planning process, an engagement framework will be developed to improve internal and external communications and enhance the level of public engagement on City issues."

Creating a framework

*Internal review*

On December 2, 2013, St. John's City Council approved a scoping document for the creation of a framework for public engagement within the City of St. John's which was recommended by the Economic Development, Tourism and Public Engagement Standing Committee on November 19, 2013. This document noted that the City's approach to public engagement must be "one that facilitates dialogue with the right people, using the right tools and at the right time on subject areas of mutual interest." It noted that "one size fits all" does not apply to public engagement. Instead, it must be guided by agreed upon principles and a continuum for decision making. This scoping document (Appendix 1) recommended the establishment of a task force as well as an internal review to help shape the appropriate approach.

Between November, 2013 and January, 2014, an internal review was carried out by the OSE. This involved a combination of one-on-one interviews with senior City staff and group discussions with managers across the organization. The purpose of these meetings was to ascertain the level of understanding and practice of current engagement activities as well as their current reach and effectiveness. While the internal review was being conducted, a review of other municipalities was also undertaken to identify emerging trends and best practices in public engagement that the City of St. John's could consider as part of its approach.[1] This presentation was shared with the Economic Development, Tourism and Public Engagement Standing Committee and tabled within the minutes at Council.

The internal findings demonstrated that new approaches to public engagement are needed and that staff are open to working within an agreed upon framework for public engagement. It was also clear that effective public engagement requires that staff be provided with the appropriate tools and training to better understand the public engagement process and how to effectively apply it. The Office of Strategy and Engagement has developed a "how to" conduct public engagement tool for staff which was tested with managers in early summer 2014 (Appendix 3). This tool will provide staff with a process they can follow to determine whether public engagement is required, the appropriate level of engagement, options to consider for engagement tools and activities and an engagement plan template. Additional recommendations for future training and development of staff to support public engagement are covered through this report as well.

*Task force*

Following the reviews noted above, the creation of the Engage! St. John's Task Force was recommended and approved unanimously by Council on February 24, 2014. It was the recommendation of the Office of Strategy and Engagement that a task force, comprised of a sample of the very stakeholders to be engaged, would add tremendous value to the development of a

[1] A power point presentation outlining the key findings of these reviews can be found in the Appendix 2.

framework. A variety of communications methods were used to invite applications to the task force and of the more than 70 individuals/groups who applied, 25 were selected by a committee of staff representing City departments, with support from the Co-Chair for the Economic Development, Tourism and Public Engagement Standing Committee who would become the chair of the Task Force. There were 15 organization/sectors represented and 10 citizen-at-large representatives, two from each ward. Terms of reference and membership for the task force can be found in Appendices 4 and 5.

The Engage! St. John's Task Force had a mandate to:

- review materials to better understand the public engagement process and best practices;
- develop a proposed public engagement policy document with guiding principles;
- identify effective engagement tools and approaches;
- present draft and final recommendations throughout the work to the Economic Development, Tourism and Public Engagement Standing Committee.

This report includes all aspects of the Task Force's work with recommendations that support the findings. This report is a first step in the creation of the City's new framework; there is still work to be done to develop a culture of engagement for the City and its citizens.

*Task force methodology*

Once task force members were selected they were invited to attend five meetings which were structured to achieve specific goals.

April 12, 2014

The first meeting provided participants with an opportunity to get to know one another, highlight why they had volunteered their time to participate, review the work that had already taken place as part of the internal review and to discuss public participation – what it is and is not -- and to start researching other municipalities to see how public engagement is being done.

May 3, 2014

The second meeting provided an opportunity to compare practices in public engagement from other municipalities, to look at what they had in common, and to determine if these best practices could be applicable to St. John's. This meeting also provided an opportunity to develop key themes which started to form the basis of principles and areas for further consideration. An update on the Task Force's work was prepared following this meeting and then shared with the Economic Development, Tourism and Public Engagement Standing Committee at their May 14, 2014 meeting (Appendix 6).

May 14, 2014
The third meeting provided Task Force members with an opportunity to identify 'must haves' for the public engagement principles and the structure of the principles document which was then drafted and shared for further refinement throughout the work.

May 20, 2014
The fourth meeting allowed for a discussion of the policy document and determination of the type of policy needed to support the principles. Participants helped to shape the structure and content of this document which was drafted and discussed throughout the work.

May 31, 2014
The final meeting provided an opportunity to delve into some key themes that had emerged over the course of the work and to generate ideas and suggestions that could address specific engagement activities. Recommendations follow from these discussions later in this document.

Community/Stakeholder small group discussions
Aside from the scheduled Task Force meetings, members were given a workbook to support small group discussions that would guide them as they conducted mini-engagement sessions with their organizations and communities. Several of the Task Force members arranged for sessions or gathered input electronically. Where relevant, input gathered from these sessions is reflected throughout this report. These reports have also been shared internally with relevant departments where appropriate.

*Municipalities reviewed*

- **Vancouver**
- **Kelowna**
- **Edmonton**
- **Calgary**
- **Guelph**
- **Burlington**
- **London**
- **Waterloo**
- **Winnipeg**
- **Sidney, B.C.**
- **Victoria**
- **Halifax**
- **Surrey**
- **Fort Saskatchewan**
- **Saskatoon**
- **Aberdeen, Scotland**

## Review of other jurisdictions

The Engage! St. John's Task Force worked in small groups at two meetings to review the public engagement initiatives of a variety of other municipalities across the country and one in Scotland. These towns and cities were at various stages of their public engagement process development – some had detailed policy documents and frameworks while others had tools and mechanisms for engagement but did not have policies. The municipalities reviewed are noted to the right.

When reviewing these municipalities, task force members were asked to look for potential best practices in public engagement and more specifically:

- the types of issues/ideas that were being addressed through public engagement tools;
- the results being achieved;

- any challenges being encountered in the use of public engagement;
- costs associated with it; and
- how stakeholders were being identified.

Additionally, Task Force members considered the best practices and their relevance to the City of St. John's. Key public engagement practices identified through the jurisdictional review noted for the City of St. John's for consideration included:

Partnerships

- The Task Force noted that some municipalities had established relationships with their universities specific to public engagement goals. It was believed that these relationships would lead to opportunities to tap into talent and knowledge within the university environment to find solutions to common problems – collaborative problem solving – as well as create opportunities to build public engagement capacity in the community.

Website and open communications

- Municipalities with perceived effective public engagement practices also had websites that were service/client oriented and information focused – designed with citizens in mind.
- Some municipalities also had "open" government policies that opened up information channels to enhance public trust and confidence.

Policy focused

- Municipalities doing public engagement tended to have engagement policies with clear purpose to guide their work. These policies identified their agreed upon continuum of engagement for decision making and considered such things as roles and responsibilities, principles, feedback loops, access, and evaluation.

Online portals

- Many municipalities reviewed were making effective use of online portals which provide unique opportunities to bring communities together to connect, share information and ideas, in a manner that cannot be achieved through social media or website. Online portals provide space for surveys, polls, idea generation and more with the added bonus of gathering demographic data on the users. This in turn helps to identify communications and engagement gaps. It was noted that portals should not replace in-person or other forms of engagement activity but be used to support them. Portals can be used for everything from one-off projects to larger visioning exercises. Reward systems can also be established through portals to incentivize participation.

A culture of engagement

- It was noted that many of the municipalities reviewed had made significant efforts to build a culture of engagement within their organizations as well as among the citizens and that staff were supported with tools to do their public engagement work.

Community capacity building

- The role of the "neighbourhood" as an engagement tool was noted. Neighbourhood-based engagement systems, i.e., associations and groups, were in place in several municipalities.
- Municipalities had community spaces for neighbourhoods to gather and dialogue.
- Municipalities had undertaken capacity building – within the community and within the City – to provide tools for people to better understand what public engagement is, how to do it, how to participate in it and its context in the decision-making process.

These identified public engagement practices were then used to help shape the conversation around principles and policy for the City of St. John's. Additionally, a number of key themes coming out of these discussions formed the basis for table discussions at the Engage! St. John's Task Force's final meeting held on May 31, 2014.

## Principles and Policy

As noted, it was the view of the Task Force members that effective public engagement is guided by agreed upon principles and a policy document. The process for developing guiding principles for the engagement framework involved a combination of reviewing other municipalities' principles, reviewing the International Association for Public Participation Core Values (Appendix 7) and having focused small group, as well as, full group discussions within the task force meetings. There were several iterations of these principles with the result being four key ones:

- Commitment
- Accountability
- Clear and Timely Communication
- Inclusiveness

These are fully explained within the policy document in Appendix 8.

Additionally, Task Force members concurred that a policy document was necessary for the City to ensure accountability for public engagement and that the guiding principles be incorporated into that document. The Engage! Policy document outlines definitions, roles and responsibilities, the continuum of decision-making, as well as the goals to be achieved.

## Key Themes and Recommendations

Following the discussions around best practices, principles and policy direction, and from the input generated from Task Force members' own engagement activities, there were a number of themes that emerged requiring further discussion. These themes connected to the Task Force's mandate around identification of the tools and techniques for public engagement that could be relevant for the City of St. John's. Five themes were explored. These are reflected here with recommendations to be considered.

**Theme 1**
**Engagement around development – before, during and after**

During the Task Force's work there was a lot of discussion around the engagement process for development within the City and a general lack of awareness and/or understanding of the process for development overall. The Task Force noted that engagement around development needed to happen in a more holistic manner and not be tied to projects only. Looking at the recommendations below, a systematic approach to development engagement would result in increased dialogue and information sharing and provide better support to the development process. It was the Task's Force perspective that the following ideas would improve the development engagement process:

<u>Prior to any development:</u>

- In keeping with the view that neighbourhoods are the building blocks of cities and that neighbourhood associations can support engagement activities between residents and the City, it was suggested that annual updates about development be prepared and shared within neighbourhoods. A communications strategy would further define the breadth and scope of this work. (Note: this could support secondary planning area development plans coming out of Envision, the municipal plan.)
- It was agreed that the notification period for development projects could start earlier in the process to allow residents and other stakeholders an opportunity to understand the project fully and how it fits within the plan for a planning area. While the public meeting is the standard method for sharing information, it was noted that the City could use of a variety of communications and engagement tools to get information out to the public in a timely manner. In today's environment we can no longer rely on website and newspaper as the primary means of communication. This approach misses too many potential stakeholders.
- The City should review the language used in notifications to enhance understanding. Notifications need to use plain language where possible– what does the proposed development mean to me, the resident? And how does the proposed project fit in the municipal plan?
- Consider using community bulletin boards and existing City facilities/programs to promote/share information about development– especially for upcoming meetings.
- Erect signage on proposed development sites with QR codes and links to more information about the project which could be found on the City's website or new web portal.
- Connect with neighbourhood associations for dialogue about upcoming projects as part of annual updates.
- Reconsider the existing notification radius and have a policy that can be adapted based on the size and scope of the project. The larger the project or impact, the bigger the radius.
- Work with developers to draft a development process checklist that includes a clearly defined expectation for engagement based on the City's framework and that supports the Municipal Plan and the Urban and Rural Planning Act requirements.
- Increase public awareness of how the development process works by developing a communication piece for the public around it.

- Clearly articulate before the project, the type of engagement (i.e. purpose) to be undertaken based on the continuum of decision making and how the input will be used.

During development:

- Host development roundtables which include the developer, Council, and residents which are outside of the scope of typical public meetings – these are meant to create dialogue and shared understanding.
- Address the perceived imbalance in public meetings and facilitate them in a more welcoming format by potentially using internal or hired trained facilitators and paying attention to room set up and process design.
- Stream meetings online for those who cannot attend and post videos and archive them for those who are interested.
- Solicit feedback on the various engagement activities undertaken to gauge success and make adjustments where required.
- Provide online public engagement opportunities for stakeholders such as portals and social media.
- Provide effective visuals at meetings and online to demonstrate the proposed developments.

After (overall)

- Task Force members felt that the input the City receives throughout the engagement process should be shared through a feedback loop online prior to the decision going to Council. This would be in keeping with the proposed engagement policy included in this report.
- The City should clearly demonstrate how the input will be used in the spirit of public participation values. This must apply to development projects as well as other program, service and policy initiatives.
- There is a need for ongoing communication between the City and its residents as it relates to development plans – communication should clearly articulate proposed plans, their impact on neighbourhood(s) and overall value to the City and residents.

<u>Recommendations:</u>

Envision, which has as one of its strategic objectives specific references to engagement related to development, was shared with residents in the summer and early fall 2014. It is recommended that a working group be established - comprised of staff from Planning, Development and Engineering and the Office of Strategy and Engagement to consider the discussion outlined above and determine how it could be incorporated into a development engagement process which is in keeping with the proposed engagement policy and meets the needs of the municipal plan objectives.

<u>Recommended immediate actions:</u>

In the meantime, it is recommended that all notifications for public meetings/hearings be promoted through social media as well as existing channels in a timely manner and that minutes or notes from these sessions be posted for public viewing following the meetings, potentially prior to the information being posted in the Council agenda for the meeting where the decision will be made.

**Theme 2**
**Effective online engagement: web, portals and social media**

Throughout the review of best practices it was repeatedly noted that cities with the most effective public engagement processes had well developed websites and online portals that clearly communicated how one could be engaged, provided multiple tools for engagement and demonstrated their feedback loop as part of the engagement process. Key points raised in the discussion are organized below.

Website

It is the Task Force's view that the City's existing website is not fully meeting the information needs of the users and is perceived to be difficult to navigate. Suggestions for improvement included:

- More focused content such as tabs that lead to specific requests. For example, an "I want to…" pull down menu
- A better search function
- An option to search/find info based on who is looking, i.e. young people/students, seniors, newcomers, if possible
- Up-to-date online calendars that are inclusive of all activities taking place in the City/organized by the City
- Live streaming of council meetings and archives for past meetings
- A mobile app (that connects all front-face citizen contact and allows for input)
- A separate page for engagement that links from the main page to include everything from the City's policy direction on engagement to tools for involvement and clear directions on the variety of ways to engage
- Interactive City maps where residents can look up what's happening in their ward/neighbourhood such as new developments/improvements including opportunities for engagement and events.
- Use real photos and videos from the City – not stock photos – in general have more appealing visuals.
- Have a community group directory accessible from the City's page.

Recommendation:

The City's Office of Strategy and Engagement work with Information Services and others across the organization to create a new front face for the existing website which would address some of the issues noted above and develop a page specific to engagement that sits on the main page and links to a variety of tools such as an online portal. This work will require a scoping document and require budget considerations for 2015.

Portal

There was agreement amongst Task Force members that an online portal can be a useful tool for two-way engagement if it is used effectively. It is important to note that a portal does not replace ACCESS

online or 311. A portal would provide an opportunity to conduct polls/surveys, generate comments/ideas for specific projects, post ideas and connect to the community through a message board, provide input using budget calculators, and promote social media apps, link to calendars.

Recommendation:
It is recommended that the City outline its portal requirements and issue a Request for Proposals. The portal would link from the proposed engagement page of the website and be managed by the Office of Strategy and Engagement with capacity/training provided by the successful company. Overtime, other departments could be trained in the use of the portal for their engagement work. While several companies have been reviewed, two companies are recommended for consideration: Mind Mixer and Granicus. Each of these companies is working with municipalities across the country to support their online engagement needs. Budget considerations would be in the $6,000 to $10,000 per year range. That being said, Mindmixer provides significant discounts when contracting over multiple years. For example, a five-year commitment yields a 48% discount on the cost of the tool.

Social Media
Members of the Task Force agreed that social media must be maximized for its potential as a two-way communications and engagement channel. That being said, to become effective, there must be monitoring and capacity to do this and it must be clear to residents what will happen to their input. It was the view of the Task Force that the City needs to build more capacity for social media use across the organization as an engagement tool within the continuum of decision-making.

Recommendation:
The Office of Strategy and Engagement will review its existing social media policy to determine how it can be used to achieve better engagement results and consider social media in all engagement strategies.

**Theme 3**
**Increasing the effectiveness of existing city engagement tools**

During Task Force meetings there were often questions and discussions around existing forms of engagement within the City of St. John's. Most often these discussions focused on the current state of the public meeting/hearing and its place in development (previously discussed) but there were also questions around entities such as the City's advisory committees and other communications tools.

Advisory committees
Part of the discussion within the Task Force focused on the ways in which the City currently engages with the public and how to increase the effectiveness of these methods. Many Task Force members were unaware of the City's advisory committees and the role they play and questioned how they fit within the current decision-making protocols as engagement tools. In fact, many felt that most of the advisory committees were rather low on the public engagement spectrum, their focus may be too narrow, and the terms of reference and appointment processes were unclear. It was suggested that the following points be taken into consideration:

- Make readily available details of the application process, who may apply and how people are selected.
- Clarify and communicate how the work of the committees feeds into the decision-making process – i.e. the continuum of engagement.
- Communicate publically the work of the committees (e.g. meeting minutes) to help clarify their role and effectiveness to the public.
- Consider additional committees, or broader citizen panels, which are open to all and encourage broader participation, to add value to the engagement framework.

Recommendation:
The City under take a detailed review of the role of advisory committees taking into consideration the Task Force's concerns and suggestions above. As part of this review, the option of a citizen panel should be explored as an alternative and/or support to engagement. It is important to note that during the internal review component of this work, staff also indicated their concerns about the existing structure and format of advisory committees. There is also a current Council Directive which supports this recommendation.

<u>311 and ACCESS Online</u>
It was the Task Force's perspective that 311 and Access online could benefit from a marketing campaign to better explain how they work. The question was asked: How can 311 better function as a "one-stop shopping" tool? The Task Force felt that 311 could play a role in engaging newcomers better. 311 operators are ambassadors for the City – they are the first point of contact for many and must represent the City accordingly regardless of the type of inquiry being received – service first. It was the perspective of the Task Force that 311 could enhance its service offerings.

Recommendation:
Set up a working group, in consultation with Community Services, to determine how to increase the "one-stop shopping" component of 311 and consider the implementation of a Service Excellence initiative that includes welcoming city/newcomer and engagement components.

<u>Existing mail outs</u>
Task Force members felt that existing "mail" coming from the City is not always clearly focused. The City needs better online tools and apps to connect with residents around programs and services and less reliance on paper.

Recommendation:
Develop a City app which links to online content. Several were noted throughout the best practice review which could be used as guides.

Public meetings

It was agreed that public meetings tend to happen in the context of development, are project specific and are often too late in the decision-making process. Discussions around how to improve the development process before and during the public meetings, and subsequent recommendations, have been captured in the Theme 1 section of this report.

Neighbourhood groups

Task Force members agreed that neighbourhood groups and associations can provide effective engagement connections and need to be better supported and listened to in the engagement context.

Recommendation:

Consider establishing neighbourhood associations/groups within the engagement framework with clearly defined terms of reference and tap into these groups as viable and reliable channels for effective two-way communication and engagement. Groups would require clear roles and responsibilities and be established to represent the whole of a neighbourhood. The City could support these groups with capacity building events and through information sharing activities such as annual forums. This should be considered in the context of the advisory committee review as well.

## Theme 4
## Building capacity for engagement in the community

One of the challenges discussed throughout the Task Force's work focused on how to build capacity within the community for effective public engagement. This was discussed in the context of internal and external capacity building. The Task Force noted that many municipalities had effective online tools and publications to explain the engagement process and their city's approach and posted their "How to conduct public engagement" manuals on their websites as well. These cities also exuded an engagement culture on their websites and in their communications materials. The following key points were noted for consideration by the City of St. John's:

- Citizens need to understand what public engagement means – the City needs to create and implement an "Engage 101" product and share this with residents.
- Community capacity building may be most effective at the community level through community-based organizations and neighbourhood associations and ambassadors.
- Public engagement needs to take on different forms depending on the demographics and other factors. Consider public engagement strategies for seniors, youth, nexters (19-35 year olds), persons with disabilities, etc… and consider all demographics and factors when deciding on engagement approaches for decisions that impact all.
- The City should think about establishing a Public Engagement Advisory Committee or Citizen Panel to support the establishment of the proposed framework – test ideas, provide feedback for the "before and after stages of engagement."
- The City should work to develop a helping/engaging culture – "how can we help?" The current complaints-based system does not support this culture.

- Partner with other organizations like post-secondary institutions, Office of Public Engagement with the Government of NL, to build capacity.
- People need to understand how the municipality functions – how decisions are made, how residents can play a role, role of Council, etc...
- The engagement feedback loop is essential in building capacity for engagement by creating trust in the community – people need to feel they are listened to and know what will happen with their input and why the decision is being made as it is.
- Task Force members questioned the role of advisory committees as engagement capacity builders. There are many people who want to be involved with the City who do not have an opportunity to do so because they have not been selected for a committee.

Recommendations:

- Connect capacity building to the other themes discussed particularly around the online engagement and existing engagement tools, i.e., website and community and neighbourhood groups.
- Develop Municipal Government 101 communications products which outline how decisions are made in the context of the decision-making engagement continuum. This could be an online tool and be made available to participants in engagement activities. Consider developing a municipal awareness campaign to support this initiative.
- Develop internal understanding and capacity by:
    - Inviting the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) to conduct two- to three-hour Decision-Makers courses with senior staff and Council.
    - Inviting IAP2 to deliver Foundations and Techniques in public participation course for Office of Strategy and Engagement staff and other key City staff.
    - Continuing to build capacity internally with the in-house “how to” tool. Offer mini workshops to staff and managers using real life cases to increase awareness, understanding and application of public engagement policy, principles and “how to.”

Timing is critical to these recommendations. The internal capacity piece must be completed to ensure a comfort level with the proposed policy and to help shape the engagement culture within the organization. It is recommended that the capacity building training for Decision Makers and key staff take place in November 2014 or early 2015. There are three companies in Canada that supply the IAP2 training, none of which are located in the Atlantic region. Proposals have been received from each company and a budget to be considered for this training would be between $20,000 and $30,000. This would include the Decision-Makers course as well as the five-day Foundations and Techniques course for 20 to 25 people (which would be broken down into a three-day product and a two-day product). The City can offset the cost per person by opening up seats to outside groups and other municipalities with an interest in public participation. It is recommended that a company be chosen based on their availability for dates that work for the City since there is limited price differential between the three.

**Theme 5**
**Developing and demonstrating a culture of engagement**

Throughout the work of the Task Force it was noted that there is cynicism within the community about the City's current engagement practice and some members wondered if this would impact the outcome of the Task Force's report and recommendations. Therefore, it was suggested that when a new framework is implemented it must be accompanied by an implementation strategy which supports it – one that helps to develop and demonstrate a culture of engagement. This will include effective evaluation strategies to determine what's working and where adjustments would need to be made.

Much of the discussion around this theme has already been captured in previous sections. However a couple of key points are worth noting.

- Stakeholders must be able to see that the input they provide is being taken seriously, know what will happen to that input, and how it will be used in the decision making process, before the decision is made. It is also worth noting here that the "feeling" of involvement is as important as the act of being involved. This includes such things as recognition for submissions rather than simple acknowledgements, the tone and approach to meetings, and regular updates on projects that have engagement components through a variety of channels.
- Council members are ambassadors for a City that operates within a culture of engagement, as outlined in the policy document, so they can "walk the talk."
- A communications strategy must accompany this framework and it must build relationships with media, and other partners who can be a part of the implementation of the framework.
- Consideration should be given to a grant program which allows for grassroots decision-making and incentives for participating in public engagement for neighbourhood improvement. This has been done effectively in other municipalities, i.e. London's Strengthening Neighbourhoods Strategy and the City of Fort Saskatchewan's Neighbourhood Incentive Program and should be considered in partnership with other City departments to support the municipal plan's goal for secondary planning in the 21 planning areas and the engagement framework overall.
- Additionally, consider providing small incentives/tokens for participating in online forums, etc... that can be redeemed for City programs and services. This could include such things as vouchers for Metro bus, swimming passes, etc… This demonstrates value for input.

Recommendations

- Develop evaluation methodology to support the new framework and provide updates on progress.
- Consider the establishment of a fund to support the Inclusiveness principle outlined in the policy. This would support such things as alternative formats for material, transportation support, onsite childcare and other access issues. This could be developed in partnership with community-based groups.

- Establish an interdepartmental committee which would connect the neighbourhood piece to the engagement process and consider the establishment of a neighbourhood improvement strategy similar to ones mentioned here and that supports the municipal plan's goals.
- Develop a comprehensive on-going communications strategy to support the City's new public engagement framework which highlights key deliverables and time lines.

## Conclusion

There are a number of recommendations within this report that require discussions with other City departments to determine how they could be implemented, to confirm recommended time frames and detail the appropriate next steps. That being said, this report does provide the basis for the development of a framework. With the adoption of the policy which includes clearly articulated principles and the commencement of the internal capacity piece, an engagement strategy for the City can be established.

# Appendices

Appendix 1

## Scoping Document -- A Framework for Public Engagement in the City of St. John's

The City of St. John's is interested in building a new approach to public engagement – *one that facilitates dialogue with the right people, using the right tools, at the right time* on subject areas of mutual interest.

"One size fits all" does not apply to public engagement. Instead, public engagement is a systemic process, guided by agreed upon principles, and a continuum of decision making. To achieve success, the City must apply an agreed upon engagement framework consistently and employees using the framework must have a shared understanding of how it is applied. Engagement impacts the whole of the organization and the entire organization must be involved in establishing and using the framework. As well, it must have built in to its application, a means by which to measure success and learn from mistakes. There is a role for everyone in public engagement, from front-line service to Mayor.

The ultimate **goals** of any effective public engagement program include:

- Improving/informing decision making and programming;
- Creating space for ALL citizens to feel involved and listened to;
- Sharing information and welcoming different points of view;
- Generating new ideas and solutions that can be owned by the City and/or stakeholders;
- Building trust;
- Understanding the needs and priorities of the community.

Achieving these goals through public engagement can help the City:

- save time and effort on the back end of projects;
- avoid delays;
- manage expectations;
- inform spending in program areas.
-

**Continuum of Engagement**

| **Sharing Information** | **Consultation**<br>**Involve - Collaborate** | | **Active Participation**<br>**Empower** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Public engagement Building Blocks* | | | | |
| Sharing information to build awareness | Testing ideas or concepts to build knowledge | Collaborating to build commitment | Sharing decision making to build ownership | Delegating decision making to build responsibility |
| *The purpose of this level of involvement is* | | | | |
| To present information to the public about issues that may affect them. | To provide information and receive feedback or comment | To involve stakeholders in the development of solutions | To partner with stakeholders in the development of recommendations | To give stakeholders the responsibility for making the decision. |

The Office of Strategy and Engagement is proposing that the City of St. John's develop a toolbox to guide the engagement process based on the continuum above. There are many best practices to draw from which will be explored.

Appendix 2

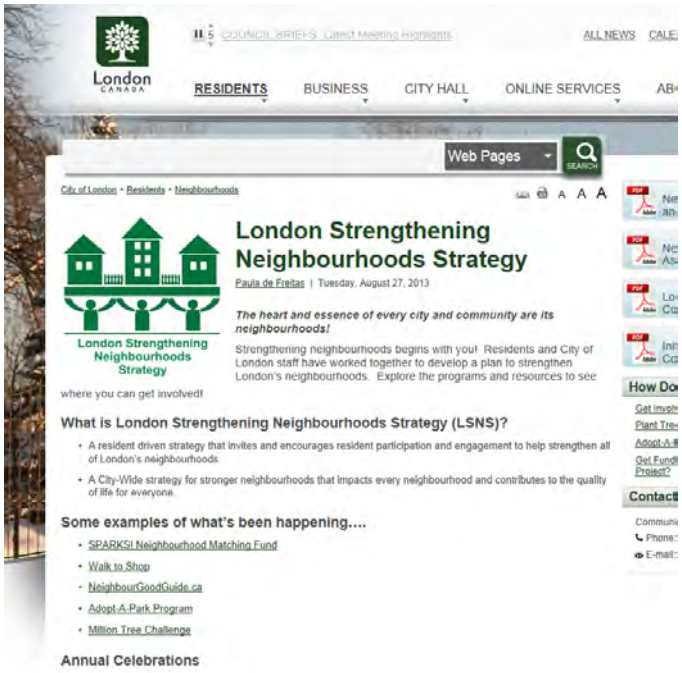
# Public Engagement – External & Internal Inventory

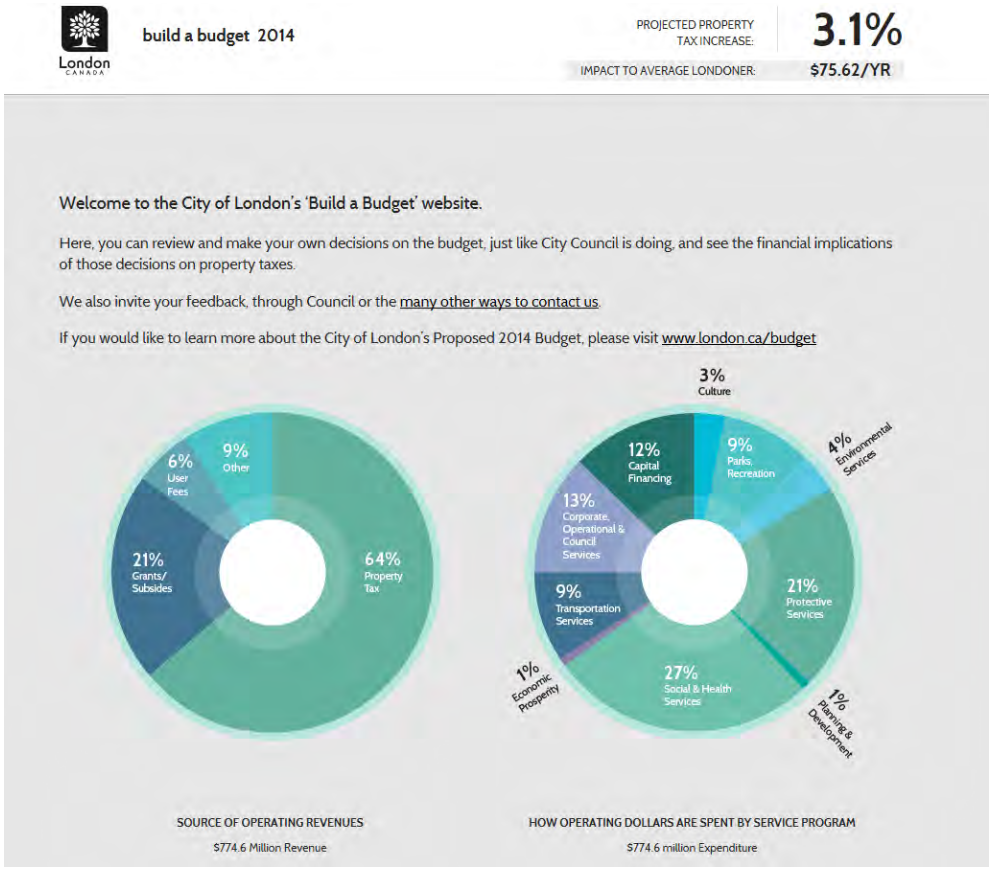
ST. JOHN'S

# External Inventory

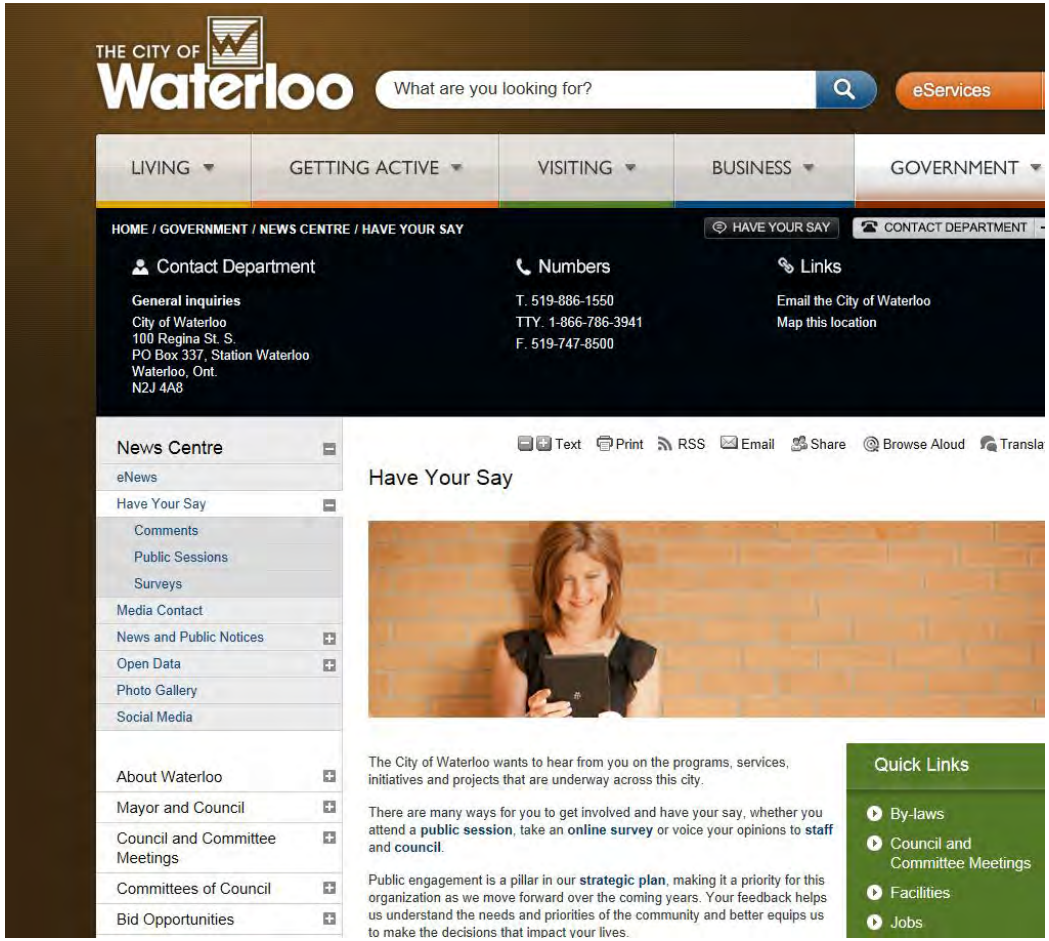
Cities to Watch

# London, Ontario

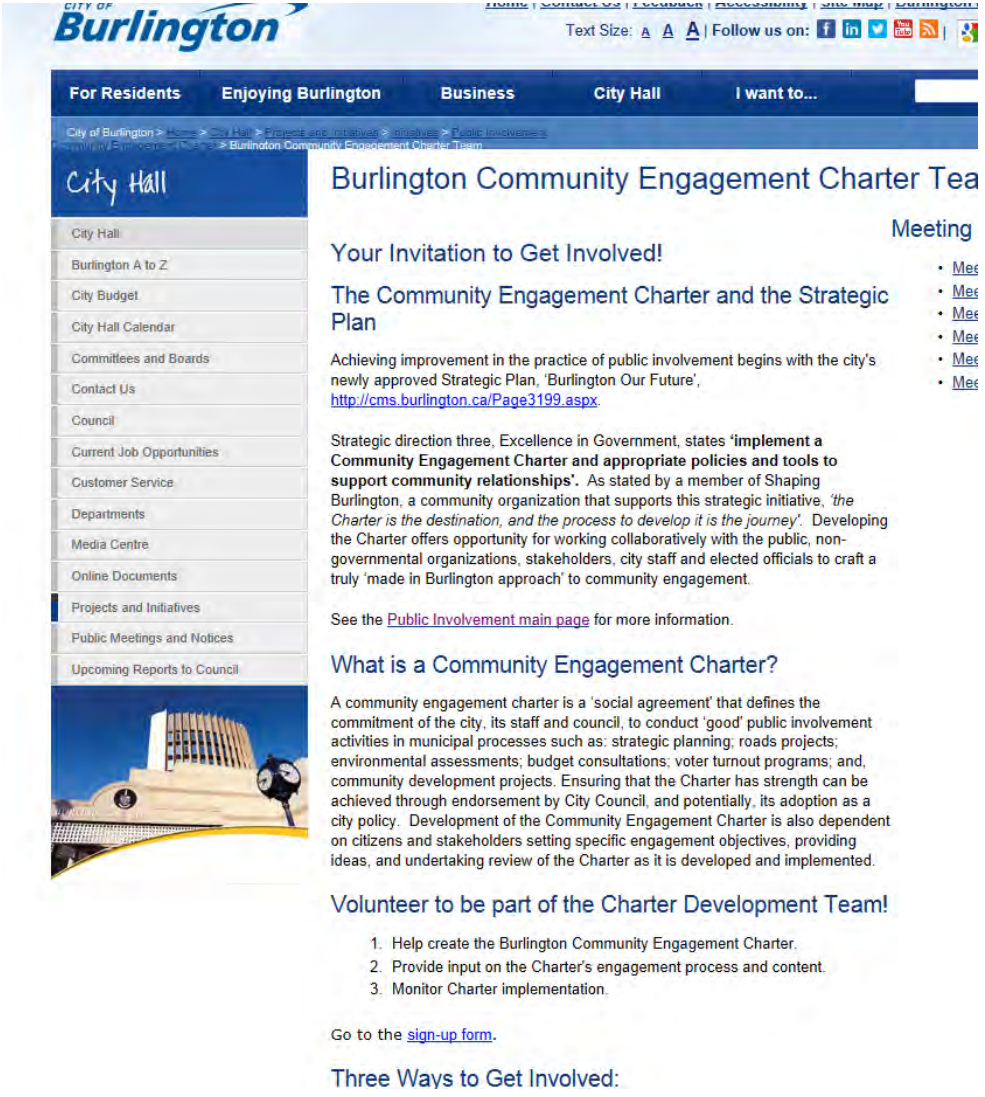


# Waterloo


THE CITY OF Waterloo
What are you looking for?
eServices
LIVING
GETTING ACTIVE
VISITING
BUSINESS
GOVERNMENT
HOME / GOVERNMENT / NEWS CENTRE / HAVE YOUR SAY
HAVE YOUR SAY
CONTACT DEPARTMENT
Contact Department
General inquiries
City of Waterloo
100 Regina St. S.
PO Box 337, Station Waterloo
Waterloo, Ont.
N2J 4A8
Numbers
T. 519-886-1550
TTY. 1-866-786-3941
F. 519-747-8500
Links
Email the City of Waterloo
Map this location
News Centre
eNews
Have Your Say
Comments
Public Sessions
Surveys
Media Contact
News and Public Notices
Open Data
Photo Gallery
Social Media
About Waterloo
Mayor and Council
Council and Committee Meetings
Committees of Council
Bid Opportunities
Text
Print
RSS
Email
Share
Browse Aloud
Transla
Have Your Say
The City of Waterloo wants to hear from you on the programs, services, initiatives and projects that are underway across this city.
There are many ways for you to get involved and have your say, whether you attend a public session, take an online survey or voice your opinions to staff and council.
Public engagement is a pillar in our strategic plan, making it a priority for this organization as we move forward over the coming years. Your feedback helps us understand the needs and priorities of the community and better equips us to make the decisions that impact your lives.
Quick Links
By-laws
Council and Committee Meetings
Facilities
Jobs

# Burlington



CITY OF Burlington

Text Size: A A A | Follow us on:

For Residents | Enjoying Burlington | Business | City Hall | I want to...

City of Burlington > Home > City Hall > Projects and Initiatives > Initiatives > Public Involvement > Burlington Community Engagement Charter Team

City Hall

- City Hall
- Burlington A to Z
- City Budget
- City Hall Calendar
- Committees and Boards
- Contact Us
- Council
- Current Job Opportunities
- Customer Service
- Departments
- Media Centre
- Online Documents
- Projects and Initiatives
- Public Meetings and Notices
- Upcoming Reports to Council

## Burlington Community Engagement Charter Tea

Meeting

- Mee
- Mee
- Mee
- Mee
- Mee
- Mee

### Your Invitation to Get Involved!

### The Community Engagement Charter and the Strategic Plan

Achieving improvement in the practice of public involvement begins with the city's newly approved Strategic Plan, 'Burlington Our Future', http://cms.burlington.ca/Page3199.aspx.

Strategic direction three, Excellence in Government, states **'implement a Community Engagement Charter and appropriate policies and tools to support community relationships'.** As stated by a member of Shaping Burlington, a community organization that supports this strategic initiative, *'the Charter is the destination, and the process to develop it is the journey'*. Developing the Charter offers opportunity for working collaboratively with the public, non-governmental organizations, stakeholders, city staff and elected officials to craft a truly 'made in Burlington approach' to community engagement.

See the Public Involvement main page for more information.

### What is a Community Engagement Charter?

A community engagement charter is a 'social agreement' that defines the commitment of the city, its staff and council, to conduct 'good' public involvement activities in municipal processes such as: strategic planning; roads projects; environmental assessments; budget consultations; voter turnout programs; and, community development projects. Ensuring that the Charter has strength can be achieved through endorsement by City Council, and potentially, its adoption as a city policy. Development of the Community Engagement Charter is also dependent on citizens and stakeholders setting specific engagement objectives, providing ideas, and undertaking review of the Charter as it is developed and implemented.

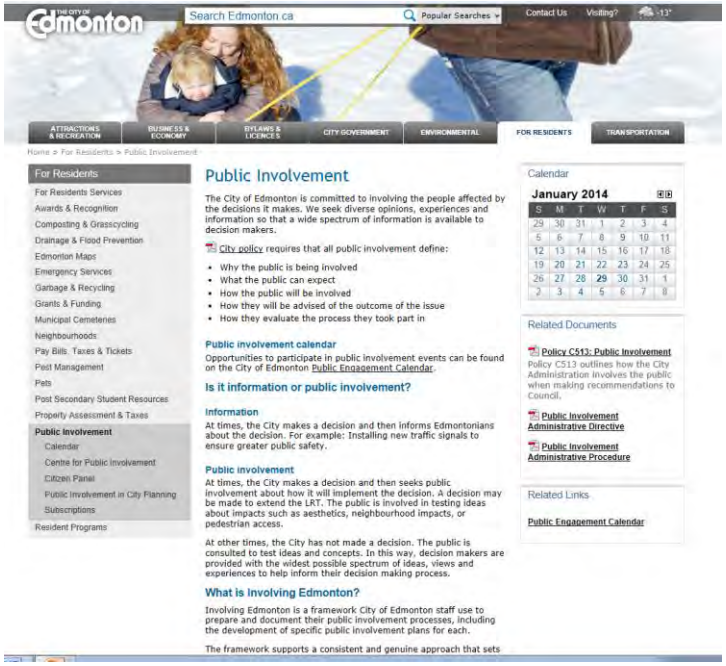
### Volunteer to be part of the Charter Development Team!

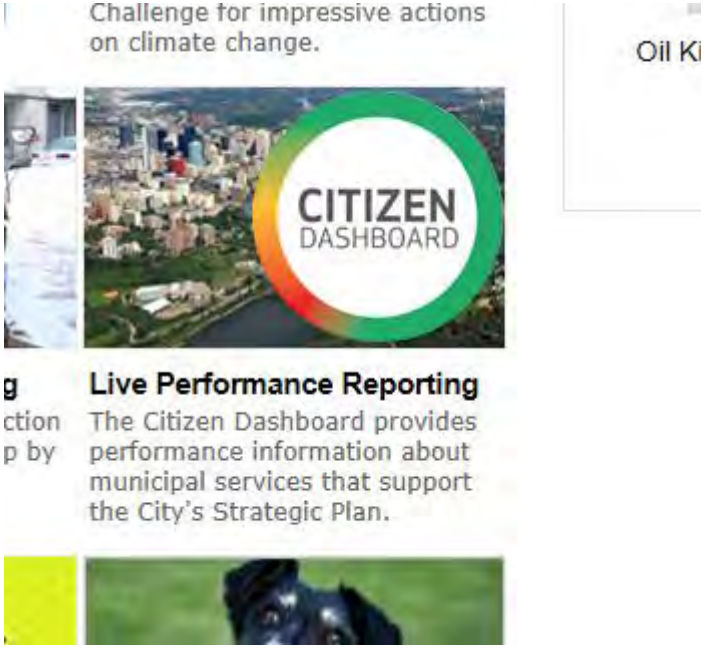
1. Help create the Burlington Community Engagement Charter.
2. Provide input on the Charter's engagement process and content.
3. Monitor Charter implementation.

Go to the sign-up form.

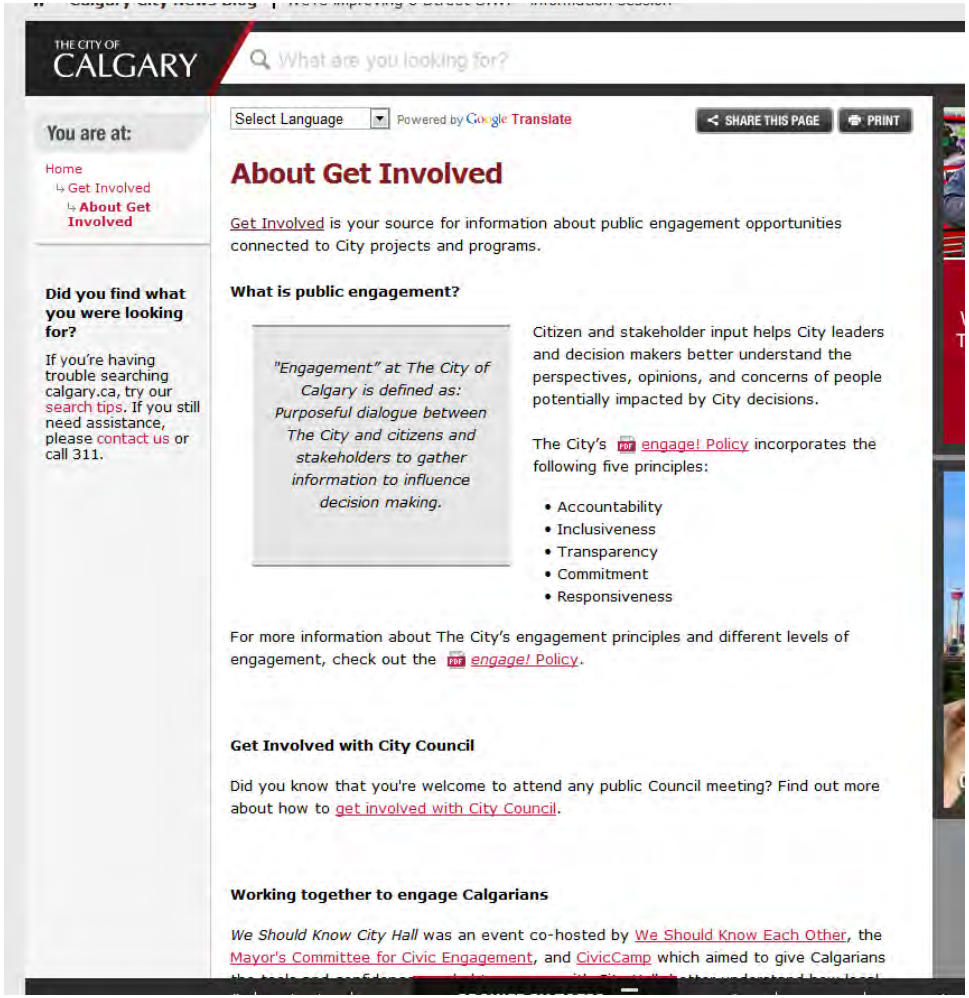
### Three Ways to Get Involved:

# Edmonton

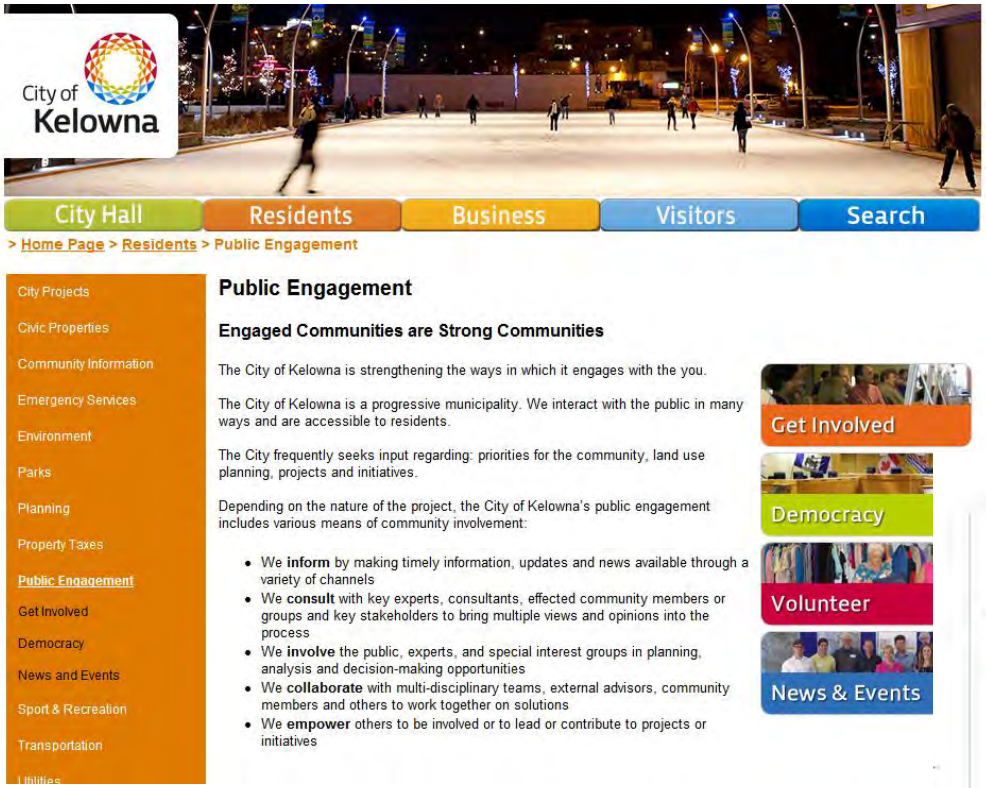

Search Edmonton.ca
Popular Searches
Contact Us
Visiting?
ATTRACTIONS & RECREATION
BUSINESS & ECONOMY
BYLAWS & LICENCES
CITY GOVERNMENT
ENVIRONMENTAL
FOR RESIDENTS
TRANSPORTATION
Home > For Residents > Public Involvement
For Residents
For Residents Services
Awards & Recognition
Composting & Grasscycling
Drainage & Flood Prevention
Edmonton Maps
Emergency Services
Garbage & Recycling
Grants & Funding
Municipal Cemeteries
Neighbourhoods
Pay Bills, Taxes & Tickets
Pest Management
Pets
Post Secondary Student Resources
Property Assessment & Taxes
Public Involvement
Calendar
Centre for Public Involvement
Citizen Panel
Public Involvement in City Planning
Subscriptions
Resident Programs
Public Involvement
The City of Edmonton is committed to involving the people affected by the decisions it makes. We seek diverse opinions, experiences and information so that a wide spectrum of information is available to decision makers.
City policy requires that all public involvement define:
Why the public is being involved
What the public can expect
How the public will be involved
How they will be advised of the outcome of the issue
How they evaluate the process they took part in
Public involvement calendar
Opportunities to participate in public involvement events can be found on the City of Edmonton Public Engagement Calendar.
Is it information or public involvement?
Information
At times, the City makes a decision and then informs Edmontonians about the decision. For example: Installing new traffic signals to ensure greater public safety.
Public involvement
At times, the City makes a decision and then seeks public involvement about how it will implement the decision. A decision may be made to extend the LRT. The public is involved in testing ideas about impacts such as aesthetics, neighbourhood impacts, or pedestrian access.
At other times, the City has not made a decision. The public is consulted to test ideas and concepts. In this way, decision makers are provided with the widest possible spectrum of ideas, views and experiences to help inform their decision making process.
What is Involving Edmonton?
Involving Edmonton is a framework City of Edmonton staff use to prepare and document their public involvement processes, including the development of specific public involvement plans for each.
The framework supports a consistent and genuine approach that sets
Calendar
January 2014
Related Documents
Policy C513: Public Involvement
Policy C513 outlines how the City Administration involves the public when making recommendations to Council.
Public Involvement Administrative Directive
Public Involvement Administrative Procedure
Related Links
Public Engagement Calendar


Challenge for impressive actions on climate change.
CITIZEN DASHBOARD
Live Performance Reporting
The Citizen Dashboard provides performance information about municipal services that support the City's Strategic Plan.

# Calgary

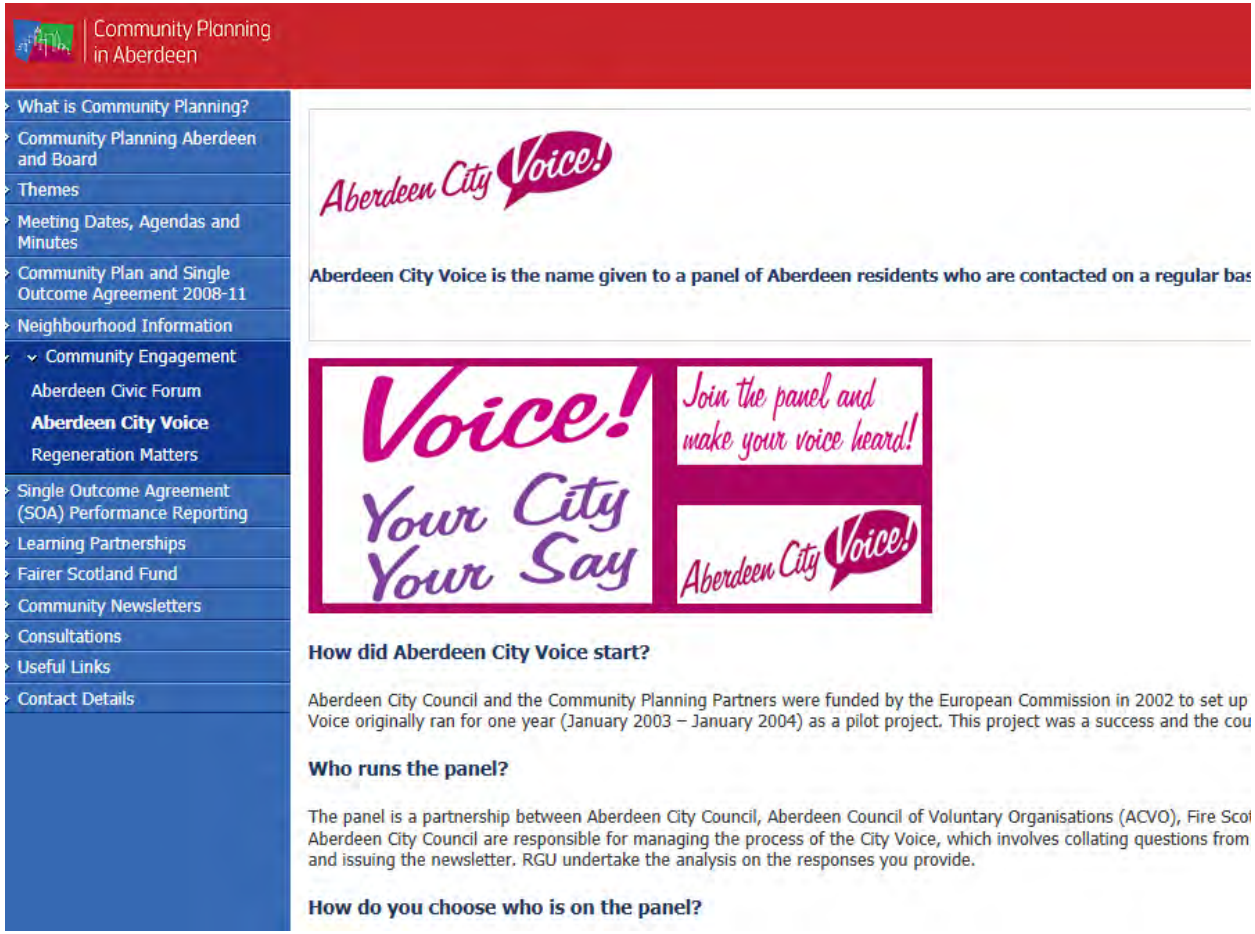

THE CITY OF CALGARY
What are you looking for?
You are at:
Home
Get Involved
About Get Involved
Select Language
Powered by Google Translate
SHARE THIS PAGE
PRINT
About Get Involved
Get Involved is your source for information about public engagement opportunities connected to City projects and programs.
What is public engagement?
"Engagement" at The City of Calgary is defined as: Purposeful dialogue between The City and citizens and stakeholders to gather information to influence decision making.
Citizen and stakeholder input helps City leaders and decision makers better understand the perspectives, opinions, and concerns of people potentially impacted by City decisions.
The City's engage! Policy incorporates the following five principles:
• Accountability
• Inclusiveness
• Transparency
• Commitment
• Responsiveness
For more information about The City's engagement principles and different levels of engagement, check out the engage! Policy.
Did you find what you were looking for?
If you're having trouble searching calgary.ca, try our search tips. If you still need assistance, please contact us or call 311.
Get Involved with City Council
Did you know that you're welcome to attend any public Council meeting? Find out more about how to get involved with City Council.
Working together to engage Calgarians
We Should Know City Hall was an event co-hosted by We Should Know Each Other, the Mayor's Committee for Civic Engagement, and CivicCamp which aimed to give Calgarians

# Kelowna


City of Kelowna
City Hall
Residents
Business
Visitors
Search
> Home Page > Residents > Public Engagement
City Projects
Civic Properties
Community Information
Emergency Services
Environment
Parks
Planning
Property Taxes
Public Engagement
Get Involved
Democracy
News and Events
Sport & Recreation
Transportation
Utilities
Public Engagement
Engaged Communities are Strong Communities
The City of Kelowna is strengthening the ways in which it engages with the you.
The City of Kelowna is a progressive municipality. We interact with the public in many ways and are accessible to residents.
The City frequently seeks input regarding: priorities for the community, land use planning, projects and initiatives.
Depending on the nature of the project, the City of Kelowna's public engagement includes various means of community involvement:
We inform by making timely information, updates and news available through a variety of channels
We consult with key experts, consultants, effected community members or groups and key stakeholders to bring multiple views and opinions into the process
We involve the public, experts, and special interest groups in planning, analysis and decision-making opportunities
We collaborate with multi-disciplinary teams, external advisors, community members and others to work together on solutions
We empower others to be involved or to lead or contribute to projects or initiatives
Get Involved
Democracy
Volunteer
News & Events

Satifaction with City services
6% not satisfied
23% very satisfied
71% somewhat satisfied
94%

# Aberdeen


Community Planning in Aberdeen
What is Community Planning?
Community Planning Aberdeen and Board
Themes
Meeting Dates, Agendas and Minutes
Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement 2008-11
Neighbourhood Information
Community Engagement
Aberdeen Civic Forum
Aberdeen City Voice
Regeneration Matters
Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) Performance Reporting
Learning Partnerships
Fairer Scotland Fund
Community Newsletters
Consultations
Useful Links
Contact Details
Aberdeen City Voice!
Aberdeen City Voice is the name given to a panel of Aberdeen residents who are contacted on a regular bas
Voice!
Your City Your Say
Join the panel and make your voice heard!
Aberdeen City Voice!
How did Aberdeen City Voice start?
Aberdeen City Council and the Community Planning Partners were funded by the European Commission in 2002 to set up
Voice originally ran for one year (January 2003 – January 2004) as a pilot project. This project was a success and the cou
Who runs the panel?
The panel is a partnership between Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations (ACVO), Fire Scot
Aberdeen City Council are responsible for managing the process of the City Voice, which involves collating questions from
and issuing the newsletter. RGU undertake the analysis on the responses you provide.
How do you choose who is on the panel?

# Similarities

- PE tied to strategic plans and strategies
- Multiple tools including online engagement tools
- Effective combinations of communications strategies and active engagement strategies
- Policies, frameworks, guidelines for PE
- Results – engaged cities

# Internal Inventory

What did we discover?

# The Research

- 28 interviews – City Manager, DCMs, directors, managers and other key internal resources
- Reviewed existing tools for engagement
  - E-updates - total of 5762 subscriptions
    - Majority of subscribers for downtown snow and street cleaning
  - Look and feel of e-bulletins are very text heavy right now and written using "city" terminology
  - ACCESS 311
  - Reviewed Information package for a capital works project
  - Public Notices – what and when and how?
  - Use of Social Media for engagement
  - Review of City in the news for the past year
  - Advisory Committees and other committees of Council

# General findings

- People are open to looking at ways to do things differently/better
- People need tools/support
- Opportunities exist for front-line service excellence across the organization
- Most engagement activities right now are tied to projects and are not connected to each other and broader 'vision' for the City
- Opportunities to enhance the City's story
- Departments have good sense of their stakeholders and have existing relationships with them

# What **staff** see as benefits of a PE framework

- The public has a better understanding of what we do and why we do it
- We have more effective public meetings
- We have more focused dialogue with stakeholders
- The City's story is better communicated
- There are fewer complaints- more satisfaction
- The City understands the public's needs
- The City can validate or test programs and services
- The City can pick up on issues/concerns/ideas in early stage and address them
- We improve coordination
- We build trust

# What will **our** engagement story be?

- Task Force  March – June 2014
  - Review of best practices
  - Determine which ones work for the City
  - Policy Development
  - Guiding Principles
  - Identification of effective tools and approaches
  - Report to Standing Committee
- Internal capacity building – February-June 2014
  - Develop tool kits for staff who engage
  - Provide engagement training to staff
  - Identify 3-6 projects from internal inventory for 2014 implementation (pilots)
- Develop engagement strategy with ongoing impact and long-term targets  Fall 2014

- Questions?

Appendix 3
"How to" tool for staff

# Planning and Implementing an Engagement Strategy – a 'How to' for Staff

*Whether engaging internally or externally, the process for determining whether to engage and the level of engagement is the same.*

| **STEP 1:**<br>**Understand the overall project/issue/concern/opportunity** | What will the project/issue/concern/opportunity entail? Are there decisions to be made? Who will be making them? What is the timeframe? Are there any historical factors or related decisions that you need to keep in mind?<br>**Defining the project scope upfront allows everyone involved to stay within a defined framework, work together toward common goals and ensure your objectives are met.** |
|---|---|

| **STEP 2:**<br><br>**Is Engagement Necessary?** | Is engagement necessary, appropriate, feasible within the timeframe? How will you know?<br><br>As you begin to develop your project plan, consider whether engaging stakeholders can improve/support the desired outcome(s). | • Is this a matter of delivering information? Generating ideas? Gathering information and views? Collaborating to make a decision? Delegating decision-making?<br>• Are you prepared to hear stakeholder views and what will you do with the input?<br>• Are you able to commit the necessary resources (time, money, etc.)?<br>• If there is no engagement, what is the implication?<br><br>**Review the Public Engagement Continuum on the back of this page.** |
|---|---|---|
| | **YES, we need to engage.** ⟶ Proceed with steps 3-9 | |
| | **NO, we do not need to engage.** ⟶ Are you sure? Contact the OS&E (Victoria Etchegary @ 576-8510) | |

| **Develop an Engagement Plan which includes the following: (Some of these steps will need to be considered together.)** | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **STEP 3** | **STEP 4** | **STEP 5** | **STEP 6** | **STEP 7** | **STEP 8** | **STEP 9** |
| **What is the purpose/objective(s) of your engagement activity?** | **What level of engagement is required?** | **With whom will you engage? (Identify Stakeholders)** | **Which engagement tools and techniques will you use?** | **Develop and implement your plan** | **Feedback and Reporting – Closing the loop** | **Evaluation –Was your engagement process effective?** |
| Why are you engaging?<br><br>What is the promise to the public? Be clear on the 'why'.<br><br><u>Possible engagement goals:</u><br>• Provide information*<br>• Learn about views, concerns, interests<br>• Inform stakeholders about plans and decisions<br>• Gather information<br>• Obtain feedback<br>• Seek guidance/direction<br>• Generate ideas<br>• Develop better solutions<br>• Make a decision | Understand the impact of the project/issue on the public, and select the appropriate level of engagement to match the situation<br><br>In general, the more complex the issue or project, the greater the need for engagement.<br><br>***See the Public Engagement Continuum on the back of this page, and "Assessing the Level of Public Impact" (p.3) to determine level and impact.*** | *Stakeholders:* those with an interest in or who may potentially be impacted directly or indirectly by the outcome.<br><br>Who are your internal and external stakeholders?<br><br>Once you have identified the potential stakeholders, you are better able to decide which engagement tools can be best used for your process. | Based on the level of engagement, what are the most appropriate tools and techniques?<br><br>Which tools and techniques will maximize participation? And help you achieve results?<br><br>What will be the most effective way(s) to reach out to stakeholders?<br><br>***See the Public Engagement Continuum on the back of this page for sample techniques.*** | This is where all the pieces come together.<br><u>Considerations:</u><br>• Do you have enough time?<br>• Resources – budget, personnel, etc.<br>• Roles and Responsibilities are clear<br>• Operational needs – venue, acoustics, audiovisual, exhibits, catering, etc. for events<br>• Marketing – how will you get people to know about the engagement and want to participate?<br>• Communications plan – call OS&E for help<br>• Follow your action plan for implementation. Conduct the engagement activities. | It is important to inform internal and external stakeholders of what you heard, outcomes, decisions, and next steps.<br><br>By closing the loop with stakeholders, they will know how their input has been considered and are more likely to participate in future engagement activities.<br><br>How will you do this? | How will you measure the effectiveness of your public engagement process?<br><br>Key questions:<br>• Did the process reach the right people and ask the right questions?<br>• Did participants feel they were listened to?<br>• Did the answers tell you what you needed to know, or identify new information?<br>• Did the process stay within the allocated time, budget, and resources?<br>• What was done well & what could be improved?<br>• What did you learn from the experience that could impact future engagement activities? |

**Public Engagement Continuum**

**INCREASING LEVELS OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

| | Sharing Information* | Consultation<br>Involve - Collaborate | | Active Participation<br>Empower | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Description** | Sharing information to build awareness | Testing ideas or concepts to build knowledge | Collaborating to build commitment | Sharing decision making to build ownership | Delegating decision making to build responsibility |
| **Purpose** | To present information to the public about issues that may affect them. | To provide information and receive feedback or comment | To involve stakeholders in the development of solutions | To partner with stakeholders in the development of recommendations | To give stakeholders the responsibility for making the decision. |
| **Sample Tools & Techniques** | o Fact sheets<br>o Open house<br>o Web site<br>o Newsletter<br>o Press release<br>o Advertising<br>o Infographics<br>o Videos | o Focus groups<br>o Surveys<br>o Public Meetings<br>o Field trips<br>o Open house<br>o Interviews<br>o Small group meetings<br>o Expert panels | o Workshops<br>o Deliberative polling<br>o Roundtables<br>o Small group processes - brainstorming | o Citizen advisory committee<br>o Consensus building<br>o Participatory decision making<br>o Task Force | o Ballots<br>o Citizen jury |
| **Examples** | o Advising stakeholders of a situation or proposal<br>o Informing on a decision or direction<br>o Providing advice on an issue<br><br>***Contact Marketing and Communications to discuss the most appropriate approach.*** | o Seeking comment on a proposal, action, or issue<br>o Seeking feedback on a service or facility<br>o Requiring a response but limited opportunity for dialogue | o Involving stakeholders in discussion and debate<br>o Involving stakeholders at different times in the planning process (e.g. keeping informed and enabling further comment) | o Establishing a structure for involvement in decision-making (e.g. committee)<br>o Enabling ongoing involvement and keeping informed.<br>o Allocating responsibility in achieving initiatives | o Establishing a process that allows the public to make an informed decision<br>o Placing the final decision-making in the hands of the public |
| **Current Examples – City of St. John's** | - Active Living Guide<br>- Garbage and Recycling Guide<br>- Telegram Ad | - After-School Program Survey<br>- Planning and Development Meetings | - Open Spaces Master Plan Ward Sessions<br>- Affordable Housing Forum | - Engage! Task Force<br>- Heritage Advisory Committee | - Arts Advisory Committee (Art Procurement Sub-Committee)<br>- Goulds Recreation Association |

## ENGAGEMENT READINESS CHECKLIST

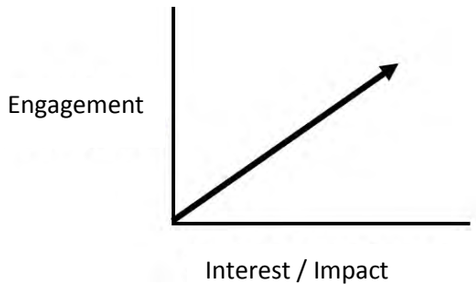
**The following checklist is designed to help you determine whether an engagement process will be effective. Before proceeding, you will want to ensure that you can answer 'yes' or 'somewhat' to as many questions as possible. You will need to decide which of these statements are relevant to your project/issue/concern/opportunity and which are not.**

| | No | Somewhat | Yes |
|---|---|---|---|
| The project/issue/concern/opportunity has been clearly defined. | | | |
| The questions to be asked or the decision sought from the public have been identified. | | | |
| There are decisions to be made that engagement can support. | | | |
| Stakeholders are identifiable and accessible, and there is an expectation that they'd be willing to participate. | | | |
| There is an internal commitment to meaningful engagement. | | | |
| You are prepared to hear stakeholder interests and positions. | | | |
| There is sufficient time to conduct an engagement process. | | | |
| There are sufficient internal resources (i.e. human, financial) to conduct an engagement process. | | | |
| The potential benefits of involving the stakeholders have been identified. | | | |
| The risks of conducting an engagement process have been identified. | | | |
| The risks of not conducting an engagement process have been identified. | | | |

## ASSESSING THE LEVEL OF PUBLIC IMPACT

**Here are some questions to consider when assessing the impact of your project/issue/concern/opportunity:**

- What is the anticipated level of conflict, controversy, opportunity or concern on this or related issues?
- How significant are the potential impacts to the public?
- How much do stakeholders care about this issue?
- What degree of involvement does the public appear to want?
- How significant are the potential benefits of involving the public?
- How serious are the potential consequences of not involving the public?
- What is the possibility that the media will become interested?
- What is the probable level of difficulty in solving the problem/addressing the issue?




*The higher the level of interest/impact, the higher the level of engagement that is required.*

Appendix 4

# Terms of Reference
# Engage! St. John's

ST. JOHN'S

**Terms of Reference**
**City of St. John's Public Engagement – Creation of Engage! St. John's Task Force**

On November 18, 2013, the City of St. John's Economic Development, Tourism and Public Engagement (EDTPE) Standing Committee endorsed the development of a framework for public engagement for the City. One aspect of the engagement process is the creation of a task force which will allow various stakeholders and the public at large to have an opportunity to help shape this framework.

## MANDATE

The mandate of the Task Force is to review work that has already been done in other jurisdictions – best practices – and to work with City officials on the development of a policy and guiding principles for public engagement for the City of St. John's. The Task Force will also suggest effective tools and approaches for public engagement.

## SCOPE

For the City of St. John's, "Public Engagement" is the process of facilitating dialogue with the right people, using the right tools at the right time on subjects of mutual interest. This tailored approach to engagement means that the City is looking to create relationships with its varied stakeholders and to work with those stakeholders throughout the engagement continuum from information sharing to active participation. The Task Force will consider all potential and existing engagement opportunities.

## LEADERSHIP

The Engage! St. Johns Task Force will be chaired by the City's Economic Development, Tourism and Public Engagement Standing Committee Co-Chair– Mr. Dave Lane, Councillor at Large. Once the Task Force membership is in place, the leadership structure may change to provide an opportunity for community leadership as well.

## PARTICIPATION ON THE TASK FORCE

The Engage! St. John's Task Force will be comprised of citizens-at-large as well as organizational stakeholders. Interested participants will be asked to submit an application.

### Criteria for participation

*Citizen-at-Large*

The Engage! St. John's Task Force will reflect the diversity of the community and include a range of citizens reflective of:

- geography (ward),
- age (youth, nexters, seniors),
- gender,
- ethnicity,
- persons with disabilities,
- number of years lived in the city,
- profession,
- interest.

Citizen-at-large members must have a desire to enhance engagement between the community and the City of St. John's and must be able to attend meetings as set out in the proposed timeline.

*Organizational Stakeholders*

The Engage! St. John's Task Force must also represent organizational stakeholders within the community from a variety of sectors. Groups and organizations that participate must be representative of their sector, e.g. arts, tourism, sports, business, community services, education, etc…. and liaise and engage with their sectors as part of the process.

**MEMBERSHIP**

Members will be recruited using a variety of communications channels. The Task Force shall not exceed 25 members.

A committee comprised of staff representatives from each department will review all of the applications against the membership criteria and make recommendations to a special meeting of Council where final decisions will be made.

**ROLE OF COUNCIL**

Council members will participate in the special meeting to make the final selection of task force members and will also be invited to attend all public engagement meetings as part of the task force's work as observers.

**ROLE OF STAFF**

Staff representatives from all departments will be invited to attend public engagement meetings and will be available to provide clarity or information on various engagement processes as they are discussed.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Members are expected to be open and candid in discussing items as a Task Force. For this reason, it is important to maintain confidentiality. Members must respect the privacy of other members and agree not to disclose information or views expressed by individuals during meetings. Information and deliberations should remain confidential until there is general agreement and consensus by the Committee to make them public. Communication on behalf of the Committee to the media or other outside parties should be through the Chair and only upon the consensus and agreement of the Committee.

**SUPPORT**

The task force will be supported by staff of the Office of Strategy and Engagement. The Manager of Strategic Development will be the primary contact for the Task Force.

**DURATION OF WORK**

The Engage! St. John's Task Force will begin its work in early spring, 2014 and finish its final report with recommendations in early summer, 2014. Task Force members may have the option to continue on future engagement committees/working groups later in the process.

**DUTIES and PROCESS:**

The Engage! St. John's Task Force will report to the Standing Committee on Economic Development, Tourism and Public Engagement. The Task Force shall be responsible for the following:

- Reviewing materials provided (gathered through extensive research about other jurisdictions) to better understand the public engagement process and identify agreed upon best practices, including policy directions,

- Developing a proposed public engagement policy document with guiding principles for engagement for the City of St. John's,
- Identifying effective engagement tools and approaches for consideration by the Standing Committee,
- Presenting draft and final recommendations throughout the work.

PROPOSED TIMELINE OF MEETINGS – subject to change based on the membership of the task force

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Meeting #1 | Early April | Step 1 | Half -day meeting | Facilitated meeting to share and discuss researched information – internal and external |
| Meeting # 2 | Mid April | Step 1 part 2 | Half-day meeting | Facilitated to finalize best practices relevant to St. John's |
| Meeting #3 | Late April | Step 2 | 2-hour evening meeting | Facilitated to develop a draft policy document |
| Meeting #4 | Early May | Step 2 part 2 | Breakfast meeting | Facilitated to determine draft guiding principles |
| Meeting #5 | Late May | Steps 3 & 4 | Full-day meeting | Facilitated to identify effective tools and approaches and develop the final report for the Standing Committee. |

Other meetings may be added following the first meeting if additional time is required to complete specific tasks or to present draft materials to the EDTPE Standing Committee.

**REMUNERATION**

Participation on the Task Force is voluntary and as such there is no remuneration paid to the Engage! St. John's Task Force members.

Contacts and Communication:

Council:
Dave Lane
Councillor at Large, Co-Chair, Economic Development, Tourism and Public Engagement Standing Committee and Chair, Engage! St. John's Task Force
dlane@stjohns.ca

Staff:
Victoria Etchegary
Manager, Strategic Development
Office of Strategy and Engagement
engage@stjohns.ca

Appendix 5

| Engage! St. John's Task Force Contact Information | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Contact Name** | **Ward or Organization** | | |
| Neil W Dawe | Atlantic Provinces Association of Landscape Architects | | |
| Michael Walsh | Canadian Federation of Students | | |
| Victoria Belbin | Canadian Home Builders' Association - Eastern Newfoundland | | |
| Kelly White | Coalition of Persons with Disabilities Newfoundland and Labrador | | |
| Penelope Rowe | Community Sector Council | | |
| Colleen Quigley | Dance NL | | |
| Chelsey Elizabeth Paterson | Model Citizens | | |
| Elizabeth Oliver | Georgestown Neighbourhood Association | | |
| Josh Smee | Happy City | | |
| Katherine Hann | Newfoundland and Labrador Historic Trust | | |
| Jeff Reardon | Reardon Properties | | |
| Esteban Rivera | Refugee Immigrant Advisory Council | | |
| Rhonda Tulk-Lane | St. John's Board of Trade | | |
| David Penner | St. John's Native Friendship Centre | | |
| Morgan Murray | The Harris Centre - Memorial University | | |
| Peter Wilton | Ward 1 | | |
| Melissa Mulrooney | Ward 1 | | |
| Lionel West | Ward 2 | | |
| Sharon Ho | Ward 2 | | |
| Dwight Hutchens | Ward 3 | | |
| Nancy Hollett | Ward 3 | | |
| Candice  Ennis-Williams | Ward 4 | | |
| Krista Vincent | Ward 4 | | |
| Andrea Kathleen Furlong | Ward 5 | | |
| Gina Evoy | Ward 5 | | |

| **City of St John's Contact Information** | | engage@stjohns.ca |
|---|---|---|
| Victoria Etchegary | 576-8510 | vetchegary@stjohns.ca |
| Dave Lane | 576-8243 | dlane@stjohns.ca |

Appendix 6

## Engage! St. John's Task Force Update

25 participants – 10 ward reps and 15 organizational/sector reps with a wide range of experiences, ages, skill sets

2 meetings to date (April 13 and May 3)

3 more meetings planned – May 14 (6 p.m.-8 p.m., Foran Room), May 20 (8:00 a.m.-9:00 a.m., Foran Room), May 31 (9:30 to 3:30, MUN, Junior Common Room)

What we have accomplished to date:

- learned about what public participation is and is not
- learned what the members bring to the table and how they can engage within their sectors/wards
- shared information already gathered through internal research and preliminary review of other jurisdictions
- reviewed best practices in public engagement (what's working well in other jurisdictions and why) and how it can be considered for the City of St. John's.

There is a shared understanding that significant achievements have been made in the area of public engagement and that we can learn from the failures and successes of others.

Municipalities reviewed include:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Vancouver | Kelowna | Calgary |
| Guelph | Burlington | London |
| Waterloo | Aberdeen, Scotland | Winnipeg |
| Sidney, B.C. | Surrey, B.C. | Saskatoon |
| Victoria | Fort Saskachewan | Edmonton |
| Halifax | | |

Emerging themes for engagement framework development

Based on the best practice review, the following high level themes were noted as being relevant for the City of St. John's. Task force members believe these must be considered for the development of larger framework:

- The framework should be policy driven and tied to vision, goals, evaluation – what are we doing and why are we doing it?
- We should look at multi-modal engagement tools based on user needs – considering access and inclusion.
- We should explore a range of methods to participate – online and interactive, in person, citizen panels, surveys, etc…- these should be easy to use.

- We should have clear and open communication – it must be obvious how to be involved and clear what happens when input is gathered – what do we do with it? There must be an effective feedback loop.
- Engagement should have a neighbourhood focus tied to a broader vision for the City/citizen entrepreneurship (this is real empowerment).
- We should look at having reward systems for getting involved – tokens for providing input that are relevant to the users.
- Partnerships are useful tools for engagement– we need win-win opportunities to solve problems and seek input. Examples include partnerships with the university on things such as city quality of life surveys.
- Leadership and learning must be considered– internal and external (councillors/staff and the public) to help build capacity in public engagement. Examples of learning opportunities to enhance knowledge of public engagement include:
    - Planning academies
    - handbooks
    - brochures on how to understand the planning process
    - guidelines for engagement for all
- Engagement involves everyone and roles and responsibilities must be clear.

<u>Next Steps</u>

- May 14 meeting- The task force will determine the principles for engagement the City of St. John's should consider for its framework.
- May 20 meeting – Explore policy directions and make recommendations for a policy document.
- May 31 meeting – Explore tools and topics for engagement to be considered in the context of the guidelines and policy which will help shape the engagement strategy.
- Ongoing -Task force members are using a community engagement tool developed by the Office of Strategy and Engagement to facilitate conversations with stakeholders about the city's current engagement practices and what we can do differently. Councillors are encouraged to attend any of these sessions.
- Currently on track to complete task force work by late June. A full report with recommendations will be prepared for Council's consideration in early summer.

# IAP2 Core Values of Public Participation

As an international leader in public participation, IAP2 has developed the "IAP2 Core Values for Public Participation" for use in the development and implementation of public participation processes. These core values were developed over a two year period with broad international input to identify those aspects of public participation which cross national, cultural, and religious boundaries. The purpose of these core values is to help make better decisions which reflect the interests and concerns of potentially affected people and entities.

## Core Values for the Practice of Public Participation

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 influence the decision.
3. Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including 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.

For more information, visit the IAP2 Web site at www.iap2.org.

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Appendix 8

Engage! Policy with principles

DRAFT

# City of St. John's Engage! Policy

Effective date XXXX

Contact Department: Office of Strategy and Engagement

## Background

The City of St. John's believes that public engagement is a process – one that facilitates dialogue with the right people, using the right tools, at the right time on subject areas of mutual interest. Additionally, public engagement allows the City to gather input that will be taken into consideration in decision-making processes.

## Purpose

The Engage! Policy outlines the City of St. John's framework for public engagement which includes goals, principles, roles and responsibilities and the continuum of engagement to be used.

## Procedure

The City of St. John's will apply the Engage! Policy to all activities and opportunities where information is shared and/or input is sought. This will include mandated and legislative processes.

## City of St. John's Public Engagement Goals:

- Improve/inform decision making and programming;
- Create space for everyone to feel involved and listened to;
- Share information effectively and welcome different points of view;
- Generate new ideas and solutions;
- Build trust;
- Understand the needs and priorities of the community.

## Definitions

The City of St. John's views public engagement as the process whereby the appropriate tools are used to deliver information and/or receive input from stakeholders to inform decision making.

Stakeholders: For the purposes of this policy, stakeholders refer to those citizens who are impacted by a decision directly or indirectly and may include: residents; community, business and other groups; partners; other levels of government.

DRAFT Principles:

The City of St. John's recognizes that engagement between the City and its citizens is an essential component of an effective municipal government. Additionally, it values a culture of trust and respect between City Hall and those with whom it interacts.

Using the core values set out by the International Association for Public Participation as the foundation, the City of St. John's Engagement Framework recognizes that there are key principles required to ensure successful public engagement.

The following principles will apply:

**Commitment** – The City of St. John's is committed to developing a culture of engagement and providing the appropriate resources to carry out effective engagement work. City projects and plans will incorporate appropriate engagement strategies that take into consideration how best to engage stakeholders in a manner that respects their time and their input.

**Accountability** - Engagement is built into the City's plans and strategies with the Mayor, Councilors and City Manager ultimately accountable for the development, implementation and evaluation of the engagement framework. Deputy City managers and Directors are responsible for the appropriate application of the framework using a continuum for engagement as a guide. The Office of Strategy and Engagement is responsible for the development and maintenance of the framework including building capacity internally and externally and developing tools and supports for processes.

**Clear and timely communication** –To ensure effective engagement processes, communication between stakeholders and the City must be accessible, timely, complete, accurate, free of jargon and make clear how stakeholders are being engaged and how the input will be used in the decision-making process. Throughout the engagement process, feedback will be provided in a timely manner on the results – what was heard and how it is being used -- and the next steps. Stakeholders will be able to see the engagement continuum in action.

**Inclusiveness** – The City of St. John's recognizes that stakeholders are varied. Therefore, the City will employ a variety of methods and tools to connect with those who will be directly and indirectly impacted thereby eliminating barriers to participation wherever possible.

Roles and Responsibilities

**Role of Council**

The Mayor and Councillors are *accountable f*or public engagement within the City of the St. John's and ensuring that the framework is being used. They are the ambassadors for public engagement.

**Role of Executives and Directors**

Senior staff within the organization are *responsible* for the effective implementation of the framework.

**Role of Staff**

All staff are to be *informed* about the City's Public Engagement Framework and *understand* how it is being applied to the City's work. The level of understanding will be different depending on the responsibilities of the staff. This role is supported with effective internal communications strategy and capacity building.

**Role of Stakeholders**

Stakeholders must *understand* the City's framework and how they can use it.

**Role of the Office of Strategy and Engagement**

The OSE is *responsible* for developing the framework and maintaining it through effective internal and external capacity building, evaluation and support.

Process

The strategies and methods used to guide the engagement process will be informed by the internationally accepted IAP2 Spectrum of Participation. The City of St. John's Toolkit for Engagement designed around this model will support staff in determining the level of engagement required and the most effective tools to use. The OSE will review the Toolkit on an annual basis as a "check -in" to see if adjustments are required.

Spectrum for engagement and purpose of engagement guide

| | Sharing Information | Consultation Involve - Collaborate | | Active Participation Empower | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Description** | Sharing information to build awareness | Testing ideas or concepts to build knowledge | Collaborating to build commitment | Sharing decision making to build ownership | Decision making is delegated to stakeholders to build responsibility |
| **Purpose** | To present information to the public about issues that may affect them. | To provide information and receive feedback or comment | To involve stakeholders in the development of solutions | To partner with stakeholders in the development of recommendations | To give stakeholders the responsibility for making the decision. |
| **Sample Tools & Techniques** | Fact sheets<br>Open house<br>Web site<br>Newsletter<br>Press release<br>Advertising | Focus groups<br>Surveys<br>Public Meetings<br>Field trips<br>Open house<br>Interviews<br>Small group meetings<br>Expert panels | Workshops<br>Deliberative polling<br>Roundtables<br>Small group processes - brainstorming | Citizen advisory committee<br>Consensus building<br>Participatory decision making<br>Task Force | Ballots<br>Citizen jury |
| **Examples** | Advising stakeholders of a situation or proposal<br>Informing on a decision or direction<br>Providing advice on an issue | Seeking comment on a proposal, action, or issue<br>Seeking feedback on a service or facility<br>Requiring a response but limited opportunity for dialogue | Involving stakeholders in discussion and debate<br>Involving stakeholders at different times in the planning process (e.g. keeping informed and enabling further comment) | Establishing a structure for involvement in decision-making (e.g. committee)<br>Enabling ongoing involvement and keeping informed.<br>Allocating responsibility in achieving initiatives | Establishing a process that allows the public to make an informed decision<br>Placing the final decision-making in the hands of the public |

The level of engagement increases based on the level of public interest/impact. The toolkit for staff supports this spectrum.