



What We Heard About... Public Engagement at the City of St. John's

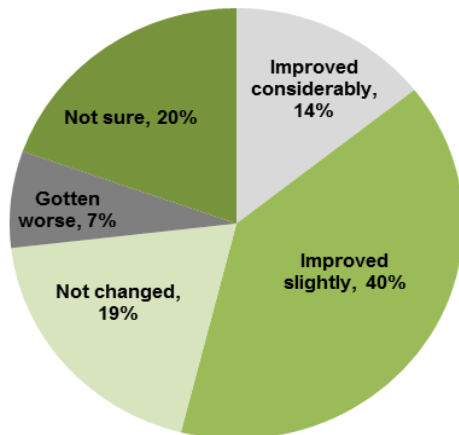
In 2014, the City of St. John's adopted an engagement policy which established a framework for how the City considers and uses public engagement to inform decision making. An evaluation of the engagement policy was undertaken in the summer of 2017 to identify gaps, opportunities, and challenges and to determine how they can be addressed. As part of the evaluation, an online survey solicited feedback from the public between July 13 and September 10, 2017. Six hundred and forty-one individuals responded to the survey. Survey participants were fairly evenly distributed across the City's five wards. This document provides a summary of results from the survey.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

When asked how important it was that the City of St. John's provide opportunities for public input and engagement, citizens overwhelmingly indicated that engagement was very important.

HAS THE CITY'S ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS IMPROVED SINCE THE ADOPTION OF THE ENGAGE POLICY?

Since 2014 has the City's engagement efforts...
Survey results (n=634)



OVERALL SATISFACTION OF PARTICIPANTS

Almost **70%** of survey respondents that had participated in a City engagement activity in the past three years, indicated that they were **satisfied with the activity overall**. Three quarters indicated that the purpose of gathering the input was clear, the scope of the overall project was clear, information on the topic was available prior to or during the event, and that the information provided had allowed them to participate in an informed manner.

POST ENGAGEMENT FOLLOW-UP

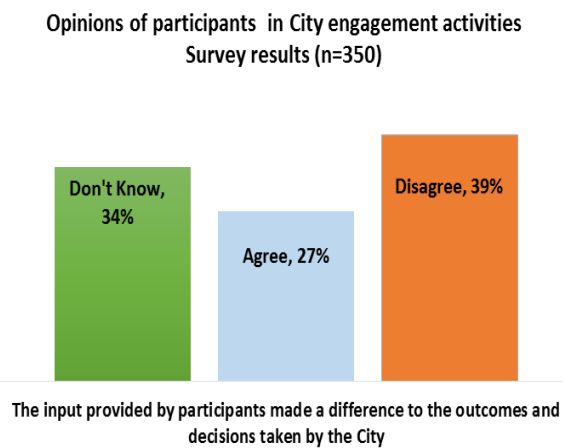
Timely follow-up after engagement lets citizens know about outcomes. Survey results indicate, however, that this follow-up may not always be reaching participants. Of those that had participated in an engagement activity:

- ⇒ **44%** responded that **information was not provided on what was heard** through the engagement process.
- ⇒ **54%** indicated that once the City's decision was made, they **did not receive information about the decision**.
- ⇒ **50%** indicated that **information was not provided about what the City's next steps** would be.

64%
of respondents to the online survey had shared input with the City in the past three years by participating in a public engagement activity.

ENGAGEMENT AND DECISION MAKING

One of the goals of public engagement is to inform City decision making. Survey respondents were uncertain if the input they provided made a difference to decisions taken by the City.



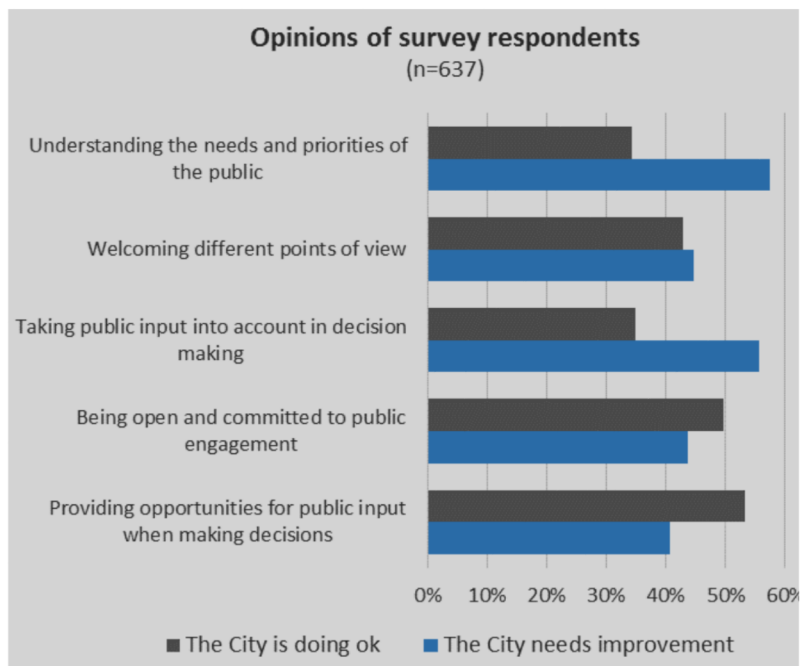
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TOP THREE WAYS TO ENCOURAGE CITIZENS TO PARTICIPATE IN PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

According to the survey, citizens would be more likely to provide input to inform City programs, services and decisions if:

1. They were ensured the input actually made a difference;
2. There were more opportunities for online participation;
3. There was increased communication/advertising about opportunities to get involved.

HOW IS THE CITY PERFORMING IN AREAS RELATED TO PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT?



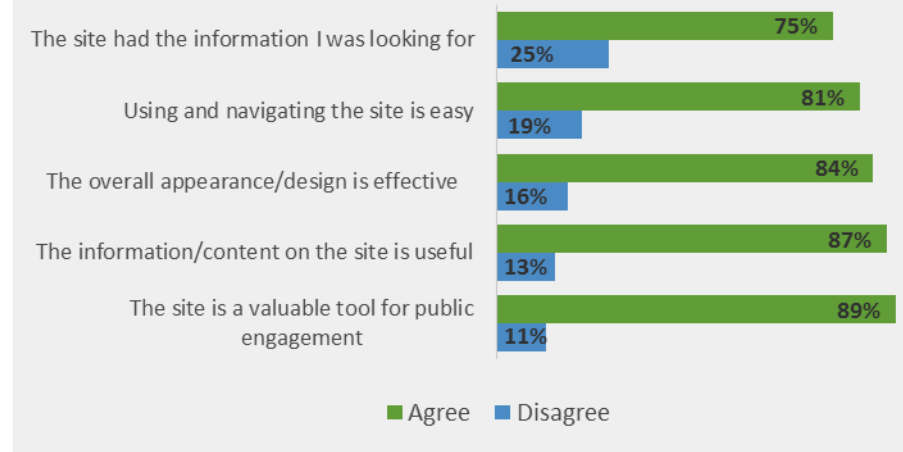
THE ONLINE ENGAGEMENT PORTAL

engagestjohns.ca

Sixty-six percent of survey respondents had visited the City's online engagement platform.¹ Visitors had very favourable views of the site, its design, content, and usability. Eighty-nine percent of visitors indicated that the site was a valuable tool for public engagement.

Opinions of visitors to engagestjohns.ca

Survey results (n=217)



¹ This number is likely higher than is true of the population in general as registered users of the site were emailed a survey invitation and therefore account for a larger portion of survey respondents.

ST. JOHN'S

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