

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP (Strategic Area A)

Expand, Diversify & Facilitate Community Involvement and Leadership in Public Engagement by Fostering Connection Points & Sharing Influence

Realizing effective public engagement in Edmonton includes defining consistent points of contact for engagement within the City (City liaisons) and building community capacity to connect with the City (Community connectors and/or Community ambassadors); it includes identifying the tools and contacts that will help the City expand who it connects with and identifying and coordinating engagement efforts/activities with the community to avoid community 'engagement fatigue'.

Improving public engagement in Edmonton also means acknowledging and optimizing existing relationships with the EFCL and member leagues.

Attaining effective public engagement in Edmonton includes developing tools and processes that genuinely share the ability to influence and shape our City and ensuring that everyone understands that sharing influence also means sharing responsibility.

WORKING GROUP

Community Co- Chair: Kirsten Goa

City Co-Chair: John Simmons

Lead Branch Manager: Lyall Brenneis

Members: Jodine Chase, Anne Harvey, Bev Zubot, Kevin Cooper, Dawit Issac, Frances Ann Ross, Howaida Hassan, Katie Hayes, Kyra Brown, Cheryl Clieff, Milena Laban, Marleen Kankkunen, Ian Smith

The following strategies and tactics were provided through over 30 workshops and other outreach events and through internal City of Edmonton public engagement reviews and by experts in the field of public engagement and City of Edmonton staff. Many of the following apply to more than one Strategic Area of Focus.

Framework/Structure Continued:

Specify priorities for public involvement by creating departmental guidelines to support engagement

- Role clarity – appropriate skill sets for activity
- Hire a cadre of staff who will specialize and support public involvement throughout the Branches
- Add engagement skills to job description & performance expectations Review
- and update job descriptions and ensure that duties in public involvement are assessed as part of performance

Policy

- Open City “Buy-in” of all departments
- Management support/approval
- Develop and communicate a charter of roles, rights and responsibilities for planning
- Ensure clear accountability as defined in the City of Edmonton’s Administrative Procedure A1448
- Clear on roles (CL, City, developer, citizen, Council)

One City approach
Ensure that one or more staff members are available within the department to provide leadership on how public input will

- Leaders accept terms of engagement
- Clarity of purpose
- Be clear why engaging public
- Set expectations of influence
- Accountability = for and from everyone
- Rules of engagement
- Transparency of what was said
- Accountability for process
- Accountability and feedback systems and channels
- Facilitate accountability by giving participants decisions and or by giving decision-makers chances to respond
- Develop a clear PE Policy
- Build and prototype policy with citizens
- Revise City’s current public engagement policy based on public feedback
- Revised City of Edmonton PE policies and practices
- Policy should not always dictate – allow action
- Clear direction from Administration, stating specifically

Increase budget for engagement activities

Enough staff and other resources to do the work

Utilize the right people to engage

OTHER

- Political leadership
- Involvement of decision makers
- Allocate resources to identify and remove systemic barriers to participation
- Engage City staff
- Create opportunities to disseminate examples of closing the loop to administrators and staff in other City of Edmonton departments.
- Make it clear that engagement is a cross-sector priority (government, NGO, community)
- Communicate the broader context and reasons why people might want to participate, going beyond the specific policy decision to the bigger picture
- Use opportunities such as post-election City Council orientation sessions to ensure information is shared regarding key public involvement events

LEARNING & TRAINING (Strategic Area D)

Improve Public Engagement Knowledge & Capacity through Learning, Leadership Development, Skill Building & Training (City and citizen)

In order to achieve effective public engagement in Edmonton citizens and City of Edmonton staff need to be provided with opportunities to think about what excellence in public engagement looks like and opportunities to develop skills that will enable them to create effective public engagement.

Learning is found in traditional training offerings and through sharing information and stories of what has worked and what has not worked. Sharing of information and learning should occur in ways that are broadly accessible and that empower citizens, civil society and City staff. Learning, training, leadership development and skill building includes exploring a range of opportunities for citizens, civil society and City staff to share ideas and learn new skills.

WORKING GROUP

Community Co -Chair: Dave Trautman

City Co-Chair: Jane Purvis

Lead Branch Manager: Peter Ohm

Members: Masood Makarechian, Oluseyi Taiwo Fazoranti, Gord Stewart, Joleen Mazurat, Adriana Prato, Zane Hamm, Rhea Oliver, Carrie Malloy, Davey Sleno

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Community Learning

- Training and assistance needs to be provided to League executive members
- Citizen responsibility for education and involvement
- Educate on public engagement and importance to public
- Public education on how PE works
- Establish Civic Education programs such as Citizens Academies
- Develop PE learning opportunities for citizens
- Offer learning opportunities to citizens
- Provide more educational opportunities & be more transparent - @how the City works, services, ways to participate (formal & informal) Increase civic literacy and civic education through such methods as citizen academies
- Develop learning tools/resources to support sustained citizen understanding & involvement in PE
- Build capacity for learning to support participation

- Build capacity of citizens & City staff to engage effectively
- Educated public (as part of the process)

Facilitation/Mediation Skills

- Effective facilitation
- Skilled mediator/facilitator
- Expand pool of trained facilitators proactively (not project based)
- Strong neutral facilitation

Staff Learning

- Staff training & skills to do engagement
- City set Staff up for success
- Create training/mentorship program for staff on public consultation
- Create a public involvement learning plan for each department
- Develop a department campaign to educate and train staff in the principles and practices of public involvement
- This can include formal training on public consultation, “mock” consultations and shadowing/observing
- Consider sending delegates to the annual meeting of IAP2, to share

learning and accomplishments from the previous year

- Provide intercultural training to all City staff and managers.
- Offer leadership training to project managers to support excellence in public engagement
- Build capacity of citizens & City staff to engage effectively
- Create learning opportunities, a system-wide learning plan, and a learning culture

Events/Networking

- ‘Ted Talk’ seminars on issues – EFCL, City leg, Section
- Establish a community of practice (COP) with the purpose of collegially sharing experience and knowledge in public involvement

OTHER

- Support organizational learning
- Support training in public involvement for engineering/planning/ other students
- Learning through post project engagement

TOOLS, TECHNIQUES & PRACTICES (Strategic Area E)

Expand & Diversify Public Engagement Tools & Techniques. Pilot Innovative Public Engagement Processes

Effective public engagement requires:

- ❖ City staff and citizens to utilize a broad and innovative range of public engagement tools, tactics and techniques beyond the standard Open House.
- ❖ Development and testing of new ways to engage with citizens – including bringing the community to the table and beginning before any plans have been created; and
- ❖ Developing ideas and effective engagement processes through a cycle of research, gathering evidence, and testing new ways to engage.

There is a need to review project/initiative guidelines and procedures to enable effective public engagement (some considerations are: longer lead times for engagement, feasibility of sunset clauses for some planning projects, better project hand-off/project team composition, and break silos to enhance coordination and allow integrated delivery)

In order to expand our capacity to deliver in-depth and innovative projects, the City must pursue new approaches for projects in the strategy and concept phases (when it's difficult to attract people), and deeper participation by using tools like deliberative democracy and participatory budgeting. The City should also consider developing procedures to enable or encourage use of representative sample methods such as citizen juries or panels.

It is also important that we review and update the existing Public Involvement Plan template to consider how to:

- ❖ Add flexibility to respond to conditions and unforeseen events;
- ❖ Incorporate community input, review, and approval of the plans;
- ❖ Add clarity to how we define scope, goals, stakeholders/participants;
- ❖ Encourage the use of a broader range of engagement tools, and the practice of talking to participants more often and earlier in processes.

WORKING GROUP

Community Co-Chair: Cheryl Whiskeyjack

City Co-Chair: Michelle Chalifoux

Lead Branch Manager: Jason Meliefste

Members: Anika Muhammad, Natalie Lazurko, Nathan Stelmach, Bill Deipeveen, Catherine Kloczkowski, Cory Segin, Emily Ball, Fiona Cavanagh, Julia Burrill, Yvonne Chen, Colleen Weremczuk, Deanne Patsula, Kathryn Lennon, Svetlana Pavlenko, Terry Godwaldt, Marco Melfi, Howard Lawrence, Carla Stolte.

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Communication - Process

- Develop effective communication processes
- Standardized communication protocols
- Clear communication of process
- Sufficient background information
- Mechanism for communicating decisions and justification
- Utilize / implement a variety of community platforms to communicate effectively to reduce barriers

Communication – Tools/Techniques

- Kill jargon - use graphics
- Use graphics to support complex processes
- Visual Communications Initiative (collaboration with technical staff and graphic artists)
- Use plain language
- Develop & use plain language
- Use and promote the Project Stage Indicator for Public Involvement
- Way-finding: Develop an input continuum to

- support awareness and feedback
- Develop a system for clear, consistent and transparent communication about public engagement
- *Open data portal
- *City dashboard
- *Free flow of information
- Online portal to share comprehensive up-to-date information on projects and policies
- Communication with Community Leagues

Communication – Timing/Reporting

- Communication back. After
- Adopt the widely acknowledged best practice of analyzing what citizens contributed, how this did or did not influence decision-making and policy, and the reasons
- As staff and contractors to report on how citizen contributions from public involvement activities were used, why or why not
- Feedback along the way – know what is happening with input
- Reporting back to community
- Close the loop with staff

- Timeliness of feedback
- Someone responsible for follow up
- Timely, two-way communication
- Timely communication (too early too late)
- Keep community informed

Engagement Process - Attitude

- Treat citizens as partners, not customers
- Start with relationships (trust, respect) (roles, responsibility)
- Process of mutual respect
- Recognize community expertise and local knowledge
- Encourage both progressive and conservative visions
- Authentic engagement
- Collaborative vs. the adversarial process that exists

Engagement Process – Involve community early

- Coordinate “startup” meeting with the community
- Early involvement of public
- Consult early, consult often (at various stages)
- Early engagement

- Develop and test new, creative and innovative means to engage citizens in the strategy and concept phases

Engagement Process –

Collaborate with

community

- City, communities agree on how to engage
- Agreement on purpose
- Involve people in setting terms, frame of PE
- Engage Citizens with design of process
- Stakeholders involved in process design
- Involve citizens in the visionary elements of the City of Edmonton's planning
- Collaboratively determine PE approach - Start at the beginning of planning
- Meaningful participation – ability to influence
- Real opportunity to impact decisions
- No preconceived plans
- Outcomes not pre-determined
- City create conditions to exercise their (citizens) right to meaningful participation
- Early collaboration before decisions are made

- No pre-determined answer/solution
- Early engagement with cocktail napkin level concepts
- Timing – involve people from the beginning
- Timing – have conversation before decision is made
- Invite new ideas, new info, and wisdom of the community
- Proposals rather than pre-determined decisions
- Utilize a two-way process

Expand Community

Involvement (Inclusion)

- Projects are led by an inclusive committee
- Create demographic data resources and a geo-spatial map for the purpose of identifying networks of citizens who are least likely to participate in a public involvement initiative
- Be ambitious about inclusion
- Increase the capacity of staff to appreciate, understand and address systemic barriers to participation.
- Greater effort to reach the unengaged
- Capture oral cultures - unique manner of collecting data/info
- Minimize barriers to participation

- Accessibility – other languages, closed caption
- Make it easy to attend meetings – transport, babysitting
- Increased chances to participate
- Understanding audience needs (literacy, communication styles)
- Make engagement accessible (food, childcare, various times, transportation)
- Remove barriers (food, babysitting, time of day)
- Improve safety
- Going out to the community
- Activities for youth
- Create a safe space free of racism, inclusive of shy or unconfident people
- Must be comfortable (needs met) before have extra energy to engage
- Create a safe space without isolating voices
- Need to get down where people are in their environment
- Anticipating barriers and remove them
- Go to where the people are
- Create a welcoming environment
- Design with diversity/intercultural lens

- Silent, negative voices must be included
- Provide incentives
- Know your audience/community
- Inclusion through multiple methods
- Identify and pursue unknown stakeholders
- Default = all processes resourced to level the playing field (e.g. child care)
- Go to the people. Not just service providers

Engagement Process – Plan carefully

- Clear vision and purpose for engagement
- Clearly identified goals
- Defined goals and targets
- Define decision making process
- Clarify scope
- Guidelines on how much is enough
- Involve people over time; cycles of involvement Road map – engagement occurs along the way Continue
- engagement during implementation
- Provide opportunity for education and context-setting
- Manage expectations for outcome and process
- Have a transparent decision making process

- Multiple methods of engagement
- Maximize opportunity for participation
- Accountability – how will/was info be used?
- Strategic pre-planning is vital
- Manage expectations
- Have City people with knowledge & authority to rethink & reconsider as part of PE process

Engagement Process – Planning Tools

- Update Involving Edmonton
- Review the current Public Involvement Plan (PIP) to include an additional set of lines identifying stakeholders informed or consulted, and justifying the potential coverage of affected citizens
- Develop a procedure for determining when and how to use citizen juries, citizen panels, or other representative sample methods of involving the public
- Develop a public involvement process for reviewing new capital projects (to stimulate new roles for citizens in shaping the project) Routinize the best practice of returning to the public to clarify or confirm staff

understanding of citizen contributions.

Engagement Process – Sufficient time/resources

- Patience – effective PE takes time
- Process is ongoing
- Sufficient time to engage

Engagement Tools

- Use right engagement tools for situation
- Wide variety of engagement (not just social media)
- Develop a digital engagement strategy
- Create & maintain a citizens’ app
- Common framework
- Strong neutral facilitation
- Create a citizen panel for clear communication

Engagement Techniques

- Intercept engagement where people are/have time – “we come to you”
- Find out where citizens are already assembled (online, face-to-face) and tap into those settings
- Create more welcoming places to engage
- Having city “experts” at the table Use diverse engagement tools and techniques
- Assemble people in new settings and in ways that make further assembly and

- reassemble more likely
- Time for discussion, conversations, sharing
- Allow active participation
- Listen vs. inform
- Provide an atmosphere for genuine listening and structured engagement/ feedback
- Active listening
- Provide more opportunities for in-depth participation (e.g. Citizen Panels)
- Multiple channels – workshops, social media, online
- Multiple ways of providing feedback
- Encourage staff to use alternate or additional and complementary approaches to open houses (to reach diverse perspectives).
- Encourage a wider range of public involvement approaches and tools
- Identify projects that would benefit from a designated staff or team to remain with those projects over the entire project lifecycle.
- Use different method to engage
- Utilize two-way dialogue
- Constructive dialogue

- Permit City staff to take off their City-hat off

OTHER

- Process that delivers public confidence in decision-making
- Discussion between public, stakeholders, City
- Commitment to this process from everyone (City, stakeholders, citizen, applicant, general public, developers, partners)
- Apply principles of stakeholder collaboration (a balanced approach/process) to encourage changes in bureaucratic processes
- Educated public (as part of the process)
- Consider accommodation for impacted communities and individuals when pursuing the public good
- Communicate with all appropriately