

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AT THE CITY OF EDMONTON
SHARE YOUR VOICE SHAPE OUR CITY

Edmonton

THE COUNCIL INITIATIVE ON PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

**PHASES 1 AND 2
FINAL REPORT**



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[Audit of Public Involvement, City Auditor](#)

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[Council Initiative on Public Engagement Phase 2 Interim Update Report](#)

[Council Initiative Working Group Reports](#)

[New Public Engagement Practice Report](#)

INTRODUCTION

Through a collaborative and consensus based process that involved City Council, Administration and Edmontonians, the Council Initiative on Public Engagement (the Initiative) has defined and set the stage for innovative and inclusive public engagement practice for years to come.

*This report chronicles the activities of the Initiative, which took place from the spring of 2014 to the spring of 2017. It describes the **background** for why the Initiative was started; the process for how the Initiative was carried out; what the **Phase 1 findings** were, which answers what needs to be improved in how the City carries out public engagement; and finally, the **Phase 2 Findings**, which provides a path forward for public engagement at the City of Edmonton.*

This report is a collaborative effort of the various partners who participated in the Initiative. Effort has been made to preserve the voices of the individual participants in this report.

MESSAGE FROM THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS

When the Council Initiative on Public Engagement began in earnest in 2014, many people — Councillors, City staff and Edmontonians — were not satisfied with how public engagement was being done by the City of Edmonton. Before we could collaboratively design strategies and solutions for improving public engagement in our City, we first needed to do some work repairing relationships and rebuilding trust. So, the project team designed a process that would provide everyone with the space and time to explore some fundamental questions about public engagement together and learn about one another. At the same time, City leadership — the Mayor, City Councillors, Executive Leadership Team and Civil Society leaders — sent a strong message that they would encourage efforts to improve public engagement and support innovation to do things differently and better.

The conclusion of this phase of the Initiative heralds a significant turning point for the City of Edmonton in the way it engages Edmontonians to help shape our city. We have embarked on a tremendous journey for envisioning and implementing a pivotal cultural shift within the city in our approach to public engagement. And we have realized some monumental successes in seeing the evidence of that transformation already.

The collaborative efforts of community members and City staff in co-creating a renewed framework for engagement will help lay the foundation for better policies and practices that will guide Edmonton well into the future. Our work will position the City of Edmonton as a beacon of engagement innovation and excellence across the country.

Today, we are advancing the practice of public engagement because of the generous contributions, thoughtful thinking, and countless hours given by members of the Advisory Committee and five Working Groups. Many of these individuals first joined the Initiative during the early community conversations in 2014 and stayed through all the heavy lifting into 2017. Others recognized an opportunity to lend their expertise and time at certain points along the way. We appreciate all of these contributions.

We also want to acknowledge that the foundation for the Initiative's work was built on more than 1,000 individual voices from across our city. Both City staff and community members joined more than 40 initial conversations about public engagement and more contributed online. These are the voices of meaningful public engagement, which have been the catalysts and guideposts for all of the Initiative's work. Thank you.

Rob Klatchuk



Administration Co-Chair

Kirsten Goa



Public Co-Chair

MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND WORKING GROUPS

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WHY THE COUNCIL INITIATIVE ON PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT?

Public Engagement is complex work. It's also important work; it's the primary way that the City of Edmonton works with the public to understand, examine, and make decisions.

Following the 2013 Civic Election, City Council and Administration identified a need to review the City of Edmonton's approach to public engagement. Many Edmontonians, stakeholders, Councillors, and members of City Administration observed that the City faced a number of challenges and opportunities in public engagement, including responding to evolving citizen expectations, supporting growth, ensuring consistent and quality processes, and capitalizing on opportunities for innovation.

BACKGROUND

In the mid 2000s, the City of Edmonton identified the need to improve and clarify its approach to public involvement in a time of rapid growth and development. In November 2005, City Council approved City Policy and Procedure C513 – Public Involvement. This policy and related procedure were recognized at the time as leading edge practice in North America.

Policy C513 was implemented via a Public Involvement Framework called Involving Edmonton, which consisted of Core Commitments and Standards of Practice, a Continuum of Public Involvement, the Public Involvement Roadmap, and a Public Involvement Plan (PIP) template. Updated in 2008, this is still the Public Involvement planning approach that all City staff are expected to use.

In late 2012, Executive Leadership Team (ELT) approved the Corporate Approach to Public Engagement (CAPE), which resulted in a revamped Office of Public Engagement, and in early 2014, ELT designated public engagement as one of the City's top three priority initiatives. At the same time, City

Council also established an initiative on Public Engagement. Subsequently, the two initiatives were combined under the Council Initiative on Public Engagement.

In May 2014, the City Auditor completed an [Audit of Public involvement](#). It identified areas for improvement and potentially the need to review C513 to address misaligned expectations between City Council, Administration and the public.

In early 2014, the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues (EFCL) also began a review of civic engagement as part of developing its next strategic plan, and the Transportation Services Department initiated a review of its public involvement approach. The need for the City to lead a comprehensive review of, and improvement effort for, public engagement was clear, and the Council Initiative on Public Engagement would lead and guide that conversation.

WHY THE COUNCIL INITIATIVE ON PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT?

As an elected representative, a key responsibility is to understand what Edmontonians value and help make decisions on behalf of our community. One of the common themes I heard leading into the 2013 election is that we need to do a better job of earning the trust of Edmontonians and providing opportunities for them to better contribute to our decisions. As a Councillor, my job is to know what Edmontonians value and help make decisions on behalf of our community.

Councillor Andrew Knack, Sponsor of the Council Initiative on Public Engagement

DESIRED OUTCOMES

The Council Initiative on Public Engagement was established with the hope of achieving four main outcomes.

- Identify challenges and opportunities in public engagement and establish the culture, principles and approaches to foster continuous improvement for how the City conducts public engagement,
- Provide more and better opportunities for Edmontonians to engage with their city government to continue building a great city.
- Increase citizen satisfaction that their insights, knowledge and opinions are considered by City Council and Administration in their decision making processes.
- Identify and leverage opportunities to increase the capacity of civil society through community building as it relates to public engagement.

OVERALL PROCESS

Building confidence in public engagement begins with a shared understanding of what public engagement is and what needs to happen for it to work best. In a collaborative and consensus based process, the Council Initiative on Public Engagement reached out to thousands of Edmontonians – City staff and the public – to do just that, by asking them to tell us what good public engagement looks like.

The Initiative was designed using a phased approach for “engaging on engagement” with City Council, Administration and the public. It was given a broad mandate to examine public engagement practices at the City, while also implementing immediate improvements to public engagement practice where possible. The initiative recognized that making lasting change to public engagement must be part of a larger organizational change at the City. However, a focus on internal change must be balanced by an effort to understand, engage, and enable the city's broader civil society. Good public engagement requires increasing both the capacity of the City and the community to engage.

No new funding was required for the Initiative. Funding was gathered from the existing budgets of City branches that undertake significant public engagement activities. This was spent on hosting, materials and consulting costs. City staff time and the time and efforts of community volunteers (over 8,000 hours in total) made up the bulk of the resources expended.

PHASE 1 PROCESS FALL 2014 TO SUMMER 2015

It was clear when we started that, to be successful, we needed Council, community and City staff all involved, telling us and each other what makes for good public engagement. It was equally clear that we would need all three parties working together to help renew our City's approach to public engagement ensuring that we can once again be at the forefront in the practise of good public engagement.

Councillor Ben Henderson, Sponsor of the Council Initiative on Public Engagement

MANDATE

At the beginning of Phase 1, the Initiative was challenged by its sponsors to “begin at the beginning” so a process was designed to kick-start a dialogue about public engagement that was focused on one very important question: **What does good public engagement look like?**

To examine this question fully, four more detailed question areas were developed to facilitate the discussion:

- What do we mean when we say “public engagement”? Why do we carry out public engagement in the first place? What are the benefits and underlying principles of engagement?
- If we agree that public engagement is important, what are the key elements of good public engagement? If we do it extremely well, what would that look and feel like in a city like Edmonton?
- How can we all work together to create effective solutions and action plans? How will we grow and sustain meaningful, successful relationships and processes?
- What is the role of the broader civil society as a key partner with the City in public engagement? How do we empower our most committed and engaged leaders to help us change, and how do we grow and develop new and emerging leaders?

METHODOLOGY

The Initiative took a wide ranging approach to fulfilling its mandate. The methodologies used by the initiative included:

WORKSHOPS WITH STAFF AND THE PUBLIC 40 collaborative, consensus-based workshops were attended by more than 1,000 City staff and members of the public to discuss the key questions above. All of the input provided was captured and themed.

DISCUSSION GUIDE Input was received in response to an online and paper Discussion Guide. The Guide included the same questions that were discussed at the workshops and was organized in the same way.

CAPPING WORKSHOP Volunteers representing the participants in the previous workshops came together to discuss and synthesize the results of all of the previous work. This involved sifting through, organizing, and theming thousands of pieces of individual input provided at the workshops and via the Discussion Guide. The result was a shared voice answering why we do public engagement and what the elements of effective public engagement are. The outcome was a powerful representation of collective wisdom.

PHASE 1 PROCESS

FALL 2014 TO SUMMER 2015

WORKSHOP WITH CITY COUNCIL AND ELT

A workshop was held with City Council and the Executive Leadership Team (ELT). This unique opportunity for Council and ELT to dialogue together was facilitated using the exact same process used for the public and staff workshops. The results were then added to the results from the Capping Workshop to create a shared voice.

BUILDING ON THE MOMENTUM EVENT A half-day event was held at the Shaw Conference Centre. All participants in the Initiative so far were invited to attend. The intent was threefold: to communicate to participants the results that had been achieved so far, to provide an opportunity for networking and to celebrate coming together to discuss and improve public engagement. The results were presented by a community volunteer who had attended one of the initial workshops.

ADDITIONAL WORKSHOPS After the completion of the workshops, the Discussion Guide, and the Building on the Momentum event, it became clear that more time and focused effort was needed to have conversations with a greater diversity of Edmontonians. Therefore, a series of workshops with indigenous and multicultural groups were held. In addition to the focus questions, these groups were also asked about the best ways to engage them and what they saw as the obstacles to and strategies for achieving effective public engagement.

OBSTACLES WORKSHOP A smaller group of leaders, staff and Edmontonians met to review and discuss all the input gathered so far and chart a course forward. They were focused on answering the question: If we now know what good public engagement looks like, what is standing in the way of us achieving it?

STRATEGIES WORKSHOP The Obstacles Workshop met again to review and discuss strategies to overcome the obstacles they had identified. They were focused on the questions: if these are the obstacles to effective public engagement, what can we do to address them? And what are the strategic areas of focus that Phase 2 of the Initiative should focus its work on?

Phase 1 activities resulted in the participation of a wide range of City leaders, elected officials, staff, community leaders, and other Edmontonians. Combined, participants contributed nearly 1,400 hours of time and provided invaluable input and ideas. Phase 1 started to build a shared understanding of public engagement and began to develop consensus around where the Initiative would need to focus its efforts in Phase 2.

PHASE 2 PROCESS FALL 2015 TO SPRING 2017

Phase 1 of the Initiative was about developing a shared understanding of what good public engagement looks like. Phase 2 took this information and through a collaborative, consensus-based approach developed strategies and solutions for bringing good public engagement to life.

Councillor Michael Walters, Sponsor of the Council Initiative on Public Engagement

MANDATE

Building on the results of Phase 1, Phase 2 of the Council Initiative on Public Engagement focused on building solutions in five strategic areas:

- 1) vision, policy and framework;
- 2) tools, techniques and practices;
- 3) community leadership;
- 4) learning and training; and
- 5) evaluation, reporting and recognition.

Therefore, a process to lead and carry out this work was developed, based on a collaborative approach of the City and community working together as partners.

METHODOLOGY

ADVISORY COMMITTEE The Advisory Committee was designed to create accountability and leadership for public engagement between City Council, Administration and community. The Committee included the three Council sponsors – Ben Henderson, Andrew Knack and Michael Walters – as liaison members. It was made up of six Branch Managers and five members of the public, with a Branch Manager and a public member sharing leadership duties as Co-Chairs.

The departments that have a high concentration of public engagement activities were asked to designate one Branch Manager to be part of the Committee. The Communication and Engagement department provided a Branch Manager to act as Co-Chair. Public members were selected based on obtaining a wide representation of the Edmonton community, drawn from a pool of participants who expressed interest during Phase 1.

Meetings of the Advisory Committee were held monthly. It supported the development of a vision and principles for public engagement and oversaw the creation and implementation of Working Groups to carry out the Phase 2 work. The Advisory Committee reviewed and approved the Working Groups' action plans and key deliverables, and provided other oversight and guidance as needed.

PHASE 2 PROCESS

FALL 2015 TO SPRING 2017

WORKING GROUPS The Working Groups were designed to carry out the work of developing solutions in the five strategic areas identified by the Strategies Workshop. Part way through the work, the Tools, Techniques and Practices Working Group spun out a Task Force on Communications for Public Engagement. It was felt the topic was too large and complex to be a subproject of the Working Group and also that members should have communications expertise.

Working Group members were drawn from a pool of potential members made up of those who expressed interest in being members during Phase 1 of the Initiative and from suggestions by the Advisory Committee members. Each group was led by two Co-Chairs – an Administrative lead and a public member. In order to provide support and continuity from the initial work of the Advisory Committee and access organizational support from the City, each Working Group was assigned one of the Branch Managers on the Advisory Committee as a sponsor and one of the public members of the Advisory Committee as a Co-Chair.

For its first task, each Working Group reviewed and confirmed its mandate and terms of reference, and developed working norms to guide their activities. Second, each group identified priorities and developed action plans and budgets to achieve them.

Working Groups scheduled the number and length of meetings as they saw fit. On average, each Working Group held approximately 10 meetings over a 16 month period. The meetings ranged in length from two hours to full days. Many Working Groups also held smaller group meetings, pursued

individual work, undertook research activities, engaged with stakeholders and the public, and carried out testing and pilot projects. In addition, three All Working Group Assemblies were held that brought together all Working Group members to enhance awareness, build shared understanding, and align and support activities. Working Group Chairs also met monthly to coordinate activities and share learnings.

In total, almost 100 people – City staff and members of the public – participated in the Working Groups. Collectively, they spent hundreds of hours on their work. The Office of Public Engagement provided administrative, logistical and technical support for both the Working Groups and Advisory Committee.

INFORMATION SESSIONS In February 2017 information sessions about the new Policy, Procedure and Framework were held internally with City staff and externally with the general public. The objective of these sessions was to communicate the City's proposed revised approach to public engagement to staff and the public in advance of City Council's discussion and vote on the Policy.

Periodic updates on the work of the Initiative were provided to both City Council and ELT throughout the duration of the Initiative. Two reports concerning the Initiative's activities and progress were also produced: the [Council Initiative on Public Engagement Phase 1 Final Report](#) (September 2015) and the [Council Initiative on Public Engagement Phase 2 Interim Update Report](#) (November 2016).

PHASE 1 FINDINGS

Phase 1 of the Initiative engaged City staff and members of the public in a conversation about public engagement. Four main questions emerged: What are the key themes for the public and staff about public engagement? Why is public engagement important? What are the elements of effective public engagement? And, what are the obstacles to effective public engagement? In answering these questions, the Initiative identified five focus areas for consideration in Phase 2. Throughout Phase 1 it became clear there were underlying concerns about the broadness of definitions and the misalignment of expectations.

KEY THEMES ABOUT PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

A BETTER WAY FORWARD BEGINS WITH CLARITY ABOUT PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT We need to build a shared understanding of where we're going, what we expect from the people who lead, support, and participate in public engagement, and what we want to achieve and measure.

CITY COUNCIL, CITY STAFF AND EDMONTONIANS VALUE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT We believe public engagement is a key ingredient for building relationships, communities, and our city.

PEOPLE SEE OPPORTUNITIES TO DO THINGS BETTER We want to see public engagement shift from engagement opportunities offered to members of our community to opportunities that are considered, developed and offered with members of our community.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IS ABOUT TRUST AND RESPECT Meaningful and effective public engagement is about trust that is built through relationships. It works best with a mindset that respects the public's genuine stake in the work of government and acknowledges that public wisdom should be listened to and acknowledged as part of the process of government.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROMOTES TRANSPARENCY AND STRENGTHENS ACCOUNTABILITY The process of effective public engagement — open, two-way conversations — provides opportunities for City staff and community to share their thoughts, ideas and concerns. It demonstrates the City of Edmonton's openness, transparency and accountability and ensures that there is well-informed debate and dialogue about City of Edmonton projects, programs and services.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT STRENGTHENS BOTH GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY Public engagement builds community and staff capacity for leadership, communication, listening and working in partnership. It maximizes the flow of knowledge and learning between the City of Edmonton and Edmontonians, which builds awareness and understanding.

PHASE 1 FINDINGS

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT MAKES DECISIONS BETTER

Effective public engagement generates unforeseen outcomes and stimulates creativity and innovation. Fresh perspectives, challenging questions, lateral insights — all can help to sharpen thinking, release creativity and unlock new collaborations and resources.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUPPORTS OUR DEMOCRATIC IDEALS

We live in a democracy where we elect a Mayor and Councillors to make decisions on our behalf. However, there are many times when elected officials want our input, seek our solutions, or believe it is in the best interest of everyone for the community to lead decision making.

WHY PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IS IMPORTANT

Participants identified three main reasons why public engagement is important:

DECISION MAKING There was broad consensus that effective public engagement leads to better decisions, and decisions that are more trusted and credible. There was also broad consensus that good public engagement supports increased citizen influence in municipal decision making.

COMMUNITY AND DEMOCRACY There was broad consensus that effective public engagement builds strong communities with a greater sense of connection, belonging, and ownership. It also improves citizens' understanding of issues, builds citizen confidence and strengthens our democracy.

CITY BUILDING There was broad consensus that good public engagement plays a major role in building a great city. Good public engagement creates efficient, realistic plans and improves project outcomes. It also fosters innovation and civic pride. The City has the potential to engage with more Edmontonians through the use of more appropriate and effective tools.

THE ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Participants identified three main elements of effective public engagement:

INCLUSION There was broad consensus that effective public engagement is inclusive. It allows everyone to be included and is representative and accessible. Inclusion also means engaging early and longer in order to allow for citizen influence, effective two-way listening, building respect and trust for each other, being transparent, being welcoming and encouraging teamwork.

PROCESS There was broad consensus that effective public engagement includes open, fair and democratic processes. These processes must be adaptable, responsive, transparent, thorough, and show commitment. They must also be based on clear public involvement plans supported by adequate resources.

COMMUNICATION There was broad consensus that effective public engagement includes communication that is clear, frequent and informed. Effective communication uses diverse tools and methods to ensure the results of public engagement activities are transparent, which supports accountability for how decisions are made.

PHASE 1 FINDINGS

OBSTACLES TO EFFECTIVE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Participants were asked, if this is what good public engagement looks like, what is standing in the way of us achieving it? The following obstacles were identified:

- Mutual distrust stifles opportunities for authentic participation and engagement.
- Holding tight to established practices inhibits both flexibility and creative processes to meet the changing expectations of engagement.
- The tension between individual (local) and community (city) interests can restrict decisions.
- Inconsistent or poorly executed processes limit effective “win-win” opportunities and inconsistent processes (when and how to engage) create distrust and discourage participation.
- Gaps in understanding the complexity of stakeholder groups and how to involve them inhibits inclusiveness.
- Unmet basic needs (safety, poverty, resources) can limit people making public engagement a priority.
- Vulnerability of both of citizens and the City leads to fear and attempts to control, which blocks authentic participation and real connection.
- Consultation fatigue from many projects saps energy and effectiveness of both City staff and the public.
- Nontransparent or poorly communicated content and process leads to information gaps, which block authentic relationships.
- Competing priorities, such as busy lives, project timelines and resource allocations prevent effective participation.
- Ineffective communication, both content and delivery, creates misunderstanding and gaps.
- Bureaucratic processes that are difficult to understand and not open to change, can stifle meaningful and creative participation.
- Unsafe or unwelcoming places and processes inhibits active engagement.

AREAS OF FOCUS FOR PHASE 2

Five areas of focus emerged in Phase 1 that were expected to serve as the foundations for Phases 2 of the Initiative. Participants also identified a long list of potential strategies in each area, which were provided to the Phase 2 Working Groups as the starting point for their action planning.

VISION, POLICY AND FRAMEWORK Create organizational foundations that support, inspire and guide effective public engagement as One City and Open City.

TOOLS, TECHNIQUES AND PRACTICES Expand and diversify public engagement tools and techniques, and pilot innovative public engagement processes.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP — Expand, diversify and facilitate community involvement and leadership in public engagement by fostering connection points and sharing influence.

LEARNING AND TRAINING Improve public engagement knowledge and capacity through learning, leadership development, skill building, and training (City and citizen).

EVALUATION, REPORTING AND RECOGNITION Create a culture of excellence and accountability for public engagement through improved transparency, measurement, and celebration.

PHASE 1 FINDINGS

BROAD DEFINITIONS AND MISALIGNED EXPECTATIONS

Consistent concerns emerged throughout Phase 1 about the broadness of definitions and the misalignment of expectations. Unfortunately, the City's current definition of public engagement, although very broad and inclusive, does not provide guidance to making expectations more clear. Similarly, the Continuum of Public Involvement, which forms part of the City's Public Involvement Policy, although based in recognized public involvement theory, does not describe the City's activities specifically enough to be helpful. Its catch-all categories of "information sharing", "consultation", and "active participation" are too general to ensure alignment of expectations between Edmontonians, City Council, and City staff.

In reality, the City engages with Edmontonians in several ways, each with their assumed expectations from both planners and participants. If it is unclear to one or both parties what type of engagement is expected or actually being done, which can result in misaligned expectations, which can then lead to frustration, distrust, and disillusionment.

Misaligned expectations undermine trust in the public engagement process, especially when there are different expectations around why people are being asked to participate, what will be done with their input, and how their input will influence decision making. In particular, it became clear that "information sharing" should not be considered part

of the public engagement continuum but should instead be a standard activity underlying all of the public engagement the City does.

In general, participants often believe the process or activity they are engaged in is "higher" up the continuum than does the City, regardless of where it should be for that particular process or activity. The term "consult" as commonly used can mean "research", "clarify", "receive", "collaborate", or even "share", but each of these has a very different expectation for how people will be asked to participate, if and how their input will be gathered, and if and how their input will influence decision making.

For many participants, a good first step to realigning expectations around would be more clarity about what type of engagement is being done for each specific process or activity so expectations are unambiguous. This would go a long way to building trust. It would also provide a solid foundation for determining what the appropriate level of engagement should be in various circumstances, of which there will be varying perspectives and viewpoints, resulting in healthy and robust debate about the role of public engagement in our municipal democracy.

PHASE 2 FINDINGS

In Phase 2 the Council Initiative became focused on identifying solutions in five areas of public engagement:

- 1) vision, policy and framework;*
- 2) tools, techniques and practices;*
- 3) community leadership;*
- 4) learning and training; and*
- 5) evaluation, reporting and recognition.*

The starting point for the work in each of these areas was the potential strategies that were brainstormed at the conclusion of Phase 1. The findings from all of the work in Phase 2 – integrating the findings from all five Working Groups – can be divided into the following nine themes:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. ENHANCE FOUNDATIONS | 4. BUILD CAPACITY | 7. REPORT RESULTS |
| 2. TAKE A TEAM APPROACH | 5. COMMUNICATE BETTER | 8. RECOGNIZE IMPROVEMENTS |
| 3. BUILD PRACTICE | 6. EVALUATE OUTCOMES | 9. MONITOR PROGRESS |

The findings for each Working Group can be found in the individual [Council Initiative Working Group Reports](#) submitted by each Working Group.

1. ENHANCE FOUNDATIONS

Building meaningful and effective public engagement starts long before particular topics or issues are top of mind or a decision is on the horizon. It starts with establishing the foundational elements that make it possible. During Phase 1 of the Council Initiative on Public Engagement, five of these elements that need to be in place to support and enable good public engagement were identified. Not surprisingly, they align with the Working Groups that were established for Phase 2.

POLICY, PROCEDURE AND FRAMEWORK Develop, deliver and communicate public engagement processes and activities and align expectations and accountabilities through a revised City of Edmonton Policy, Procedure and Framework co-created by City Council, Administration and community.

LEARNING AND TRAINING Develop and enhance public engagement understanding, attitudes, skills and capacity of decisions makers, City staff and the public through a thoughtful and purposeful approach to learning and training.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP Increase community voice in public engagement by strengthening relationships with community leaders and facilitating leadership development in civil society.

COMMUNICATIONS Develop and deliver a consistent and plain language approach to communications for public engagement before, during and after public engagement processes and activities.

EVALUATION AND RECOGNITION Evaluate the effectiveness of public engagement to spur innovation and continuous improvement. Inspire and motivate good public engagement by recognizing excellent processes and staff and community accomplishments.

PHASE 2 FINDINGS

Good public engagement doesn't happen in isolation of other City activities and accountabilities. On the contrary, we need to ensure that the City's approaches to building relationships, communicating, providing learning opportunities, and more are in place to support public engagement.

Cory Segin, Administration Co-Chair, Vision, Policy and Framework Working Group

2. TAKE A TEAM APPROACH

City staff and community members discussed how to ensure that community remains an integral and ongoing partner in public engagement and explored the expertise required to transition to and sustain an inclusive, relationships-focused culture of engagement. They identified the need for an integrated, team approach. The team requires the following pieces:

DECISION MAKERS These are executive members of Administration and City Council who have the ultimate decision making authority within the decision making process and are the overall sponsors for public engagement. They use the input gathered through public engagement processes and activities as part of their decision making. Therefore, they should understand the role of the public and their input in public engagement in order to properly align expectations and activities with outcomes.

PROGRAM OR PROJECT MANAGER AND STAFF

The project manager has the delegated accountability, authority, and responsibility to achieve the project's objectives. They are responsible for management, administration, content, communication, public engagement, reporting, review, and approvals. The project manager will often be supported by other staff who bring particular expertise, skills or resources to the table.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ADVISOR The public engagement advisor is a City staff member within the Engagement Branch who has the responsibility, authority and accountability to provide advice to project managers on their public engagement processes and activities. They will support the

planning, design, delivery, reporting, and evaluation of public engagement activities. For large, city-shaping projects they may take the lead.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT COORDINATOR (OR SIMILAR POSITION)

This person is a City staff member with the responsibility to support and help build community readiness and capacity for public engagement, build and sustain relationships with community members and community leaders, and support the project manager to achieve diverse and inclusive community participation in public engagement processes and activities.

COMMUNICATIONS ADVISOR The communications advisor provides communications advice, planning, and tactical delivery in support of public engagement. This advisor may also develop broader strategic communications plans that could involve coordination with and support from the Marketing Branch.

COMMUNITY LEADERS AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

The public should play an important role in planning and implementing public engagement. They are critical for providing the right external context and checking City assumptions. Public engagement that is informed by and sometimes planned with or jointly created by the public can often be better public engagement. Also, increasing awareness of the City's public engagement approach and activities respects the relationship the City has with all of its diverse citizens, builds trust and provides a good starting point for better engagement.

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How can we know if we're delivering good public engagement unless everyone involved has a clear picture of what it is? Our Definition, Vision, Guiding Principles, Goals, and Outcomes provide that picture. They were created as a partnership between the City and community, bringing everyone to the same starting line for our journey to do better together.

Mack Male, *Public Co-Chair, Vision, Policy and Framework Working Group*

The Council Initiative on Public Engagement inspired confidence because it is a partnership and a collaboration between our City and our community. These are community-building actions that require collaboration to sustain them.

Kyra Brown, *Public Co-Chair, Community Leadership Working Group*

3. BUILD PRACTICE

Effective public engagement ensures that decision makers have the opportunity to hear and consider information from, and the perspectives of, the public as part of their decision making process. This can give decision makers more confidence in their decisions and generate more public credibility and support for those decisions.

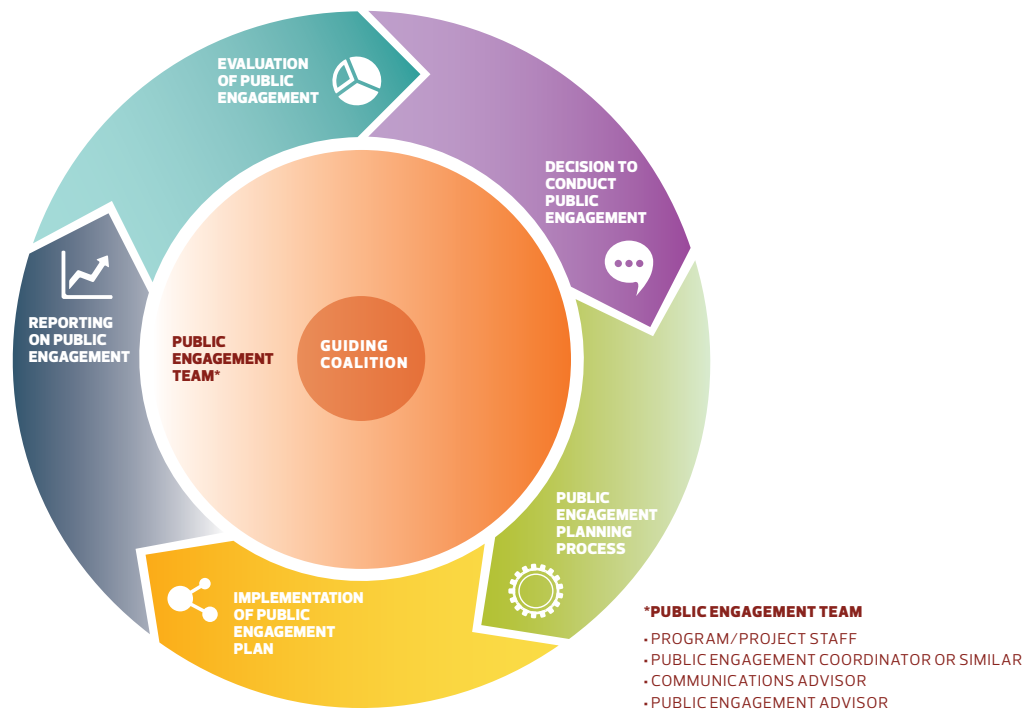
Furthermore, societal expectations about government and the public's role are evolving. Citizens are increasingly making their voices heard about how they want their governments to operate and serve them. It is less and less possible for public institutions to offer their services on their own terms. Public engagement helps to rebalance power between citizens and government. It does this by creating opportunities for participation and building and sustaining relationships built on dialogue, partnership and co-creation, rather than seeing citizens as consumers of programs and services.

Given evolving expectations and the nature of the City's work to make decisions on behalf of Edmontonians, it raises many questions about the practice of public engagement:

- When is public engagement needed and appropriate?
- What should effective public engagement look like?
- How will decisions about public engagement be made?
- How will public engagement processes and activities be planned and delivered?
- How do the people who provided input know what input was provided, how it was analyzed and considered, and what the final decision was?
- How do we know public engagement is having a positive effect on decision making and is meaningful for both City staff and participants?

The Council Initiative pieced together the important factors of enhancing foundations and taking a team approach with an examination of the practice of public engagement to develop a systemic approach to how the City can approach public engagement:

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Three important aspects of this approach are deciding when to engage, doing proactive public engagement planning, and carrying out the plan. The other three aspects — reporting, evaluation and the Guiding Coalition — are discussed later in this section of the Report.

DECIDING TO ENGAGE The first step in practicing public engagement is deciding whether or not to engage. Conducting public engagement takes time, energy, and resources, making it important for both City staff and members of the community to be clear on when public engagement is appropriate. Public engagement is intended to contribute to decisions, making it important to be clear on what is being decided and who is responsible for the decision. Prior to the Council Initiative on Public Engagement, the City’s ‘triggers’ for when to undertake public engagement were often inconsistent and the important, intentional conversations about when and how to engage often did not occur. There was no clear process, with requests from City Council, staff and community; choices made by Project Managers; and legislated requirements to proceed with public

engagement all having the potential to initiate public engagement.. There were no set criteria to frame the decision to conduct public engagement, or determine who should make the decision.

It became apparent that decision makers, staff and community all want a better understanding of why and how public engagement is initiated and who makes the decision to engage or not engage.

PLANNING TO ENGAGE Prior to the Council Initiative on Public Engagement, public engagement was broadly defined and spanned from informing the public all the way to empowering the public to make decisions. There was a Public Involvement Policy and Framework and a planning workbook — Involving Edmonton, to guide the planning of public engagement. This tool asks many of the right questions about public engagement, but in practice became largely a tool for planning specific engagement processes and activities by using various tips and tools contained within. There was little advisory support to help project teams employ the guide. Also, a survey of City staff who were using the workbook indicated that improvements could be

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Both City Council and Administration are making decisions everyday. The practice of public engagement is the way we ensure that people have input into many of those decisions. Therefore, this practice needs to be meaningful and done well.

Michelle Chalifoux, *Administration Co-Chair, Tools, Techniques and Practices Working Group*

made. Furthermore, although Involving Edmonton is available to members of the community on the City's website, it was designed primarily for use by City staff.

The Initiative found that the public views public engagement as a two-way interaction between the City and the public that enables input to be gathered through conversations, which then contributes to decision making. The City "informing" the public about decisions, although an important communications activity, was not considered public engagement.

It also became clear that with the number of considerations and choices that must be accounted for in the practice of public engagement, the City requires both a means to resolve the most important and foundational questions about public engagement and a simple yet comprehensive public engagement planning tool to direct the delivery of processes and activities. The planning process needs to be intentional and consistent for everyone involved. It must involve decision makers as needed. It must be flexible enough to respond to unexpected events. It must be accessible and useable by both City staff and community. It must be easy to use. And it must provide a way for planners to understand the broader context for public engagement and the engagement activities already underway in the City.

DELIVERING ENGAGEMENT With the decision to proceed with public engagement made and the plan in place, it's time to deliver. The tools chosen to solicit and collect input and how the tools are used set the tone for public engagement. Ongoing choices about these tools and techniques are important factors in determining if public engagement is meaningful, effective and viewed positively by staff and participants.

Prior to the Council Initiative on Public Engagement, City staff relied primarily on their own knowledge and experience to choose and implement public engagement tools and techniques. This resulted in a "go with what you know" approach rather than using established best practices or trying to innovate. It also left City staff feeling unsure if they made the best choices to meet the needs and expectations of the public. In addition, there was a greater focus on the process of public engagement (i.e., offering the opportunities) than the results of public engagement (i.e., ensuring the opportunities were effective at gathering the input required to contribute to decisions).

It became apparent that both City staff and community wanted greater assurance that public engagement planning, tools and techniques are in line with the needs and expectations of decision makers and participants, support the decision making process and contribute to clarity, accessibility and inclusiveness.

PHASE 2 FINDINGS

4. BUILD CAPACITY

Public engagement is all about people. Effective public engagement depends on participants knowing their roles and how to fulfill them. These roles can include building relationships, leading public engagement planning and delivery, and participating in public engagement processes and activities.

LEARNING AND TRAINING Learning and training are important to improving public engagement as they equip people that are participating in the system with the skills, knowledge and personal practices to continually improve the quality of engagement. Learning and training are how the City helps people – decision makers, staff and community – to understand their roles and support them as they contribute, to the best of their abilities, to the planning, deliver, reporting and evaluation of public engagement.

At its core, building skills and competencies enables the public and staff to come to the table better-equipped to work together in collaboration. Further, it builds a joint agenda for development

and moving forward together, which in turn fosters understanding and trust. Lastly, learning and training fosters a culture of learning, reflection and action.

Through the Council Initiative on Public Engagement, it became apparent that everyone who plays a role in public engagement needs to better understand the behaviours that support effective public engagement and how to develop them. An acknowledgment of this need for a deeper and broader understanding of learning needs, including self-assessment, asset-based approaches, and expanding beyond course-based learning, led to the examination of a more innovative, competency-based approach that applies to both residents and City staff in their engagement efforts, regardless of role. The competency-based approach describes the knowledge, skills, attitudes and personal practices that support effective engagement, as well as how the different roles in engagement (planning, delivering, decision making, evaluating, and participating) draw on those competencies.

Planning helps to bring clarity and purpose to public engagement. It's extremely complex work and not everything can go to plan; however, the chance of success only increases with good planning. The good news is that we can access the wisdom and experience of people who have walked this path before us, and we have their knowledge and best practices to build on.

Matt Bouchard, *Public Co-Chair, Tools, Techniques, and Practices Working Group*

It's important to remember that good public engagement is a practice, and every practice is a learning process. The Council Initiative has been a wonderful journey to put in place the key elements that we, as a city, need to learn and practice to get better at public engagement.

Jane Purvis, *Administration Co-Chair, Learning and Training Working Group*

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It also became clear that enabling collaboration with the public (or community partners) is a key part of improving public engagement and building this capacity through learning and training has a key role to play. It is fairly easy to identify ways for City staff to identify learning needs and access training opportunities. However, for the public, it is far more difficult to identify where the opportunities exist, how to access them, where to locate them and who to target them towards. Wherever possible, it is hoped the City can commit to giving the public opportunities to develop better engagement skills and attitudes. Furthermore, any opportunities for the public to share in the learning alongside members of City staff can only help open up channels of communication and understanding, which are the bedrock of healthy relationships.

The City's learning and training approach for public engagement also needs to be built on a realistic understanding of who and why people are accessing learning and training and what knowledge, skills, and experiences they are bringing with them. This understanding, combined with a competency based approach, must be used to develop a comprehensive learning and training plan that identifies the most appropriate learning and training strategies and how to deliver them.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP Community leaders are individuals or groups connected formally or informally with the City, who listen and collaborate in order to build trust and capacity for meaningful collective action. They are people who build community by sharing their knowledge, passion and time to make their communities and the city a better place overall.

There are leaders at work throughout our city. They are the people who know our communities and our needs. They are the people working on our behalf to build relationships, share ideas, and make a difference to and for the people around them. They can be members of our community leagues, representatives of non-government organizations, or individuals who step forward to share their knowledge, passion, and time to make our city a better place. They are our community leaders.

The benefits are clear. Public engagement results in better decisions and more effective implementation – people support and champion the change they help to create. The democratic foundation of public engagement depends on diverse community leaders being able to engage the strength of the community towards shared goals in inclusive environments where people of all backgrounds, experiences, and demographics feel welcome, safe, effective, and valued for their participation.

Effective public engagement depends on reaching out to many different people, groups, and communities in our city. It depends on knowing where communities exist, making connections, and gathering people together. It depends on knowing how to effectively communicate with, build trust within, and create safe, welcoming, and inclusive spaces for people to come together and share perceptions, feedback, and ideas. It depends on having the right people working together to take action in or with communities.

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Community leadership is an asset. With the right invitation, support, resources, and encouragement, community leaders can be a tremendous asset in supporting public engagement. They can help make connections between different populations. Through these connections, they can lead, support, and nourish discussions that honour diversity, help to discover shared values and common ground, and, ultimately, build community. They can do this by:

- Providing advice on how to reach out and connect with people in communities;
- Identifying barriers to participation and solutions;
- Building relationships with, and invite input from, people within and across communities;
- Sharing their rich knowledge, networks, and experience with others;
- Representing or advocating on behalf of communities; and
- Ensuring that many voices representing many perspectives are at the table to contribute to decision making and support actions that build our city.

Ultimately, community leaders can help ensure that our public engagement approaches, practices, and results work in favour of democracy and stronger communities with a sense of pride and shared commitment to a common direction. Through their involvement, community leaders can become effective champions; they can help to support and take actions resulting from public engagement, especially when they've had an active role in contributing or leading a decision. This means stronger partnerships to plan, deliver and support public engagement.

To build capacity for community leadership, the City needs to:

- Ensure staff have the tools and resources to develop meaningful and lasting relationships with community and build the capacity of community leaders.
 - Develop a Community Inventory and Mapping Tool,
 - Define public engagement coordinator role or similar position,
 - Develop a guide or map of all the community facing roles and functions in the City.
- Ensure staff support and understand how to make the most of community leaders strengths.
- Ensure that Public Engagement Coordinators (or similar role) are included in the public engagement planning process, and
- Ensure that public engagement community and engagement tools and techniques are inclusive and accessible.
- Provide opportunities and resources to enhance the role of community leaders in public engagement process and activities.
 - Ensure that both City provided and community-based resources for public engagement are promoted and accessible, and
 - Ensure that learning and training based on needed public engagement competencies are developed and offered with community leaders in mind.

PHASE 2 FINDINGS

We know that we can't separate communications from public engagement. Effective communications is the foundation for public engagement. Without good awareness, information and learning, there is little chance that public engagement will be effective and meaningful.

*Kerry Bezzano, Communications Advisor and
Member of the Communications Task Force*

5. COMMUNICATE BETTER

Public engagement depends on people understanding both the City's approach to public engagement and what opportunities are available to them. It requires people to have enough information and understanding of the decision at hand to participate effectively. It demands that they know how they can influence a decision and what is being asked of them. To build awareness, trust, support and community, it requires that people know how public information was used in the decision making process and what decision was made. All of this takes communication.

Through the Council Initiative on Public Engagement, it became apparent that communications must underlie all elements of good public engagement. This means that communications and public engagement professionals must work together to support decision makers, project teams and the public to plan and deliver public engagement.

It also became clear that although project management, public engagement and communications are mutually dependent, they are distinct and require different types of expertise and resources. Decision makers and project teams also indicated they need more and better communications support to deliver timely, consistent and effective communications for public

engagement. Improved communications before, during, and after public engagement opportunities will also lead to higher levels of participation and better outcomes.

THE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PARTICIPANT

EXPERIENCE The Initiative found that from the perspective of Councillors, staff and the public there was no consistent, intentional approach to communicating a shared participant experience for public engagement processes and activities. This resulted in differing expectations and awareness and information gaps. A more coordinated strategy could lead to shared expectations, better awareness, improved learning and an overall improved public engagement experience.

COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS FOR PUBLIC

ENGAGEMENT Much like a renewed approach and tools for public engagement were identified as needed, better support for public engagement communications was also identified as a need. The five areas of research and planning, promoting, implementing, reporting and evaluation for communications all require attention.

PHASE 2 FINDINGS

6. EVALUATE OUTCOMES

Although usually the last item to be discussed, effective evaluation is a consideration at the front end of public engagement planning and every step of the way through delivery and wrap-up. Evaluation starts with a shared understanding of the high level pieces of vision, principles, goals and outcomes, and moves to the development of performance measures, metrics and targets. It is a consideration in public engagement planning and implementation. Evaluation is best done using a cascading approach that evaluates individual activities, larger processes, bigger organizational units, and the organization as a whole. It measures culture, effectiveness, efficiency and influence on decision making through outputs, outcomes and impacts.

Prior to the Council Initiative on Public Engagement, there was no common understanding of public engagement evaluation across the organization and an inconsistent to non-existent approach to evaluating public engagement processes and activities. Assessing how the organization as a whole was doing regarding public engagement was difficult if not impossible. The most common evaluation tool used was participant surveys to measure satisfaction with specific public engagement activities. This tool is valuable but should not be the only way to evaluate public engagement.

It became apparent that the City's effort to improve public engagement is dependent on having an accurate understanding of what is working well and what needs to be done better. Both the City and community will benefit from a consistent, rigorous

approach to evaluation that provides clear direction on what to measure, when to measure it, how to measure it, and how to use the results.

The Council Initiative also pointed to the need for evaluation at the activity, project and corporate levels, and it identified a need to better understand the fiscal implications of public engagement, with an emphasis on understanding the City's return on investment (ROI) in public engagement.

MEASURES Public engagement evaluation measures the City's progress to achieving its public engagement outcomes, which are organized under goals. 37 potential measures have been identified, with at least one under each outcome area. These measures could be phased in over several years.

Culture of public engagement

Public engagement results are strategic assets

- % of participants that agree their input was captured
- % of results shared internally with staff and externally with participants within the prescribed time period after the engagement activity (requires a prescribed time period that may differ by type of engagement activity)
- % of participants, City leadership and City staff who agree the results of the engagement activity were considered in the recommendations
- % of projects that reference results from other projects
- % of Council reports that have the public engagement section filled out

Public engagement takes a lot of time, energy, and investment. Our role at the City is to make a difference in the lives of Edmontonians. I want to know that my public engagement work is having a positive impact and where I can do better.

Madeline Baldwin, Administration Member, Tools, Evaluation, Reporting and Recognition Working Group

PHASE 2 FINDINGS

Aware of the value of public engagement and motivated to participate

- % of Edmontonians that agree their awareness of public engagement has increased
- % increase in Edmontonians participating in engagement activities
- % of participants and City staff who agree they will collaborate or participate in the future

Opportunities for ongoing, continuous dialogue

- Edmontonians Assessment: Connected to community (Corporate outcome measure on “connected to community”)
- Number of different channels used to facilitate dialogue beyond specific engagement projects or initiatives (channels may include 311, community focused staff, etc.)
- Future measure related to the quality of relationships between community focused staff and the community

Public engagement displays mutual respect and benefit

Staff and public feel safe, respected and heard

- % of participants that agree they felt respected
- % of participants that agree they felt heard
- % of City staff that agree they felt respected
- % of City staff that agree they felt safe
- % of participants that agree they felt safe
- % of City staff that agree their messages were received

Aspires to collaborate with and empower the public to enable better decisions.

- % of projects that use “collaborate” (spectrum)
- % of projects that use “empower” (spectrum)

Public Engagement is inclusive and accessible

Process provides meaningful engagement opportunities for those most affected by and interested

- % of those in the engagement plan identified as most affected and interested by the decision that were engaged

Accepting of a diverse range of views

- % of participants that agree they could express views freely
- % of participants and City staff that agree a wide range of views on the topic were expressed.

Barriers are not an impediment to participation

- % of participants that agree the supports were available to participate
- % of Edmontonians that agree they participate in public engagement

Public engagement processes are effective

Process is well designed and planned

- % of City staff that agree the activity achieved its stated objectives
- % of projects that have a documented public engagement plan (will require a storage location or do an assessment for all projects and the % of the ones that the assessment said to do public engagement, actually have an engagement plan.)
- % of City staff that agree the approach or strategy was appropriate (assessment at end of project)

Process is transparent so the public understands when, how and to what extent they will be engaged

- % of participants that agree the purpose of the activity was clearly explained
- % of participants that agree they had enough information to contribute to the topic being discussed
- % of participants that agree they understand how the input from the engagement activity will be used

Process uses open, two-way communication

- % of City staff that agree the project plan included clearly described strategies for communicating with participants

Public engagement activities are well managed and efficient

Use resources efficiently

- Cost per project
- Cost per participant
- Return On Investment (ROI) Analysis

PHASE 2 FINDINGS

Coordinated across the organization

- % of public engagement plans (activities) that are registered, evaluated, and approved. Branches received the support they required for the activity
- % of PE activities in the shared calendar

A NOTE ON RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI) In order to analyze the ROI of public engagement process and activities, all the inputs, outputs and outcomes need to be documented and carefully analyzed, and a clear link established between appropriately segmented costs and directly attributable benefits. Full blown ROI analysis can be complex and costly to administer, but in the future the City may look at various approaches to better understand the costs and benefits of public engagement activities. Below are some examples of what could be measured as the costs and benefits of public engagement:

Direct inputs (monetizable costs) – hosting meetings, phone or online surveys, staff time to plan and deliver processes and activities, training, consultants, travel, advertising and marketing, tool development, final reports, evaluation, or participant costs such as transportation, incentives, etc.

Indirect inputs (non-monetizable costs) – volunteer hours, participant time to attend, or some staff or internal marketing costs.

Direct outputs or outcomes (monetizable benefits)

– avoidance of delay or cancellation of the project and the loss of all time and resources spent to date, avoidance of advertising or marketing costs to explain what is happening after the fact, avoidance of possible legal costs, reduced time and resources spent on complaints, improved service outcomes (health, crime, etc.), access to new funding, or increase in volunteer hours.

Indirect outputs or outcomes (non-monetizable benefits) – avoidance of risks such as reputational damage, loss of project control, stressful conflict, improved relationships with public, new intelligence and information gathered, or increased public awareness.

7. REPORT RESULTS

The Council Initiative on Public Engagement told us that Edmontonians want to know how their input is used in decision making, what the final decision is, and the rationale for making it. Reporting is how the City communicates to decision-makers, participants, staff and the public about what was learned, the input collected, how it was analyzed, and what it means. In order to be credible and build trust, this reporting must be accurate, transparent, timely and detailed enough not to water down important themes and perspectives.

I think it's only natural that we want to know how our thoughts, ideas, and contributions fit into the big picture. Nobody likes to sit through a story and miss the ending.

Gary Redmond, *Public Co-Chair, Evaluation, Reporting, and Recognition Working Group*

Our journey through the Council Initiative has pointed to the power and importance of recognition in public engagement. Public engagement is about people. It depends on people. It focuses on people. It delivers for people.

Charlene Butler, *Public Member, Evaluation, Reporting and Recognition Working Group*

PHASE 2 FINDINGS

8. RECOGNIZE IMPROVEMENTS

Public engagement depends on people being willing, inspired, and motivated to participate. Effective public engagement is built on an engagement culture, where people value, support, and want to offer their time to take advantage of opportunities to contribute to decision making. It is also about continuous improvement, finding new and innovative ways to do better, and creating space to make mistakes and learn from them. Recognition is important because it is one aspect of encouraging people to be part of public engagement. It also enables the sharing of stories and successes that are worth celebrating, and acknowledging all of the hard work and dedication that goes into public engagement.

Through the Council Initiative, it became apparent that recognition for public engagement needs to hold a higher status within and outside the organization, to help advance the practice of public engagement forward. Though genuine, spontaneous, personal recognition has an important place in supporting public engagement, it also needs to be supplemented by more formal approaches to recognition, for both City staff and members of the community.

Also, the City was found to be inconsistent in how it uses incentives or honorariums for participating in public engagement activities. The underlying philosophy should not be to pay for or reward participation but to remove barriers to participation so there is equitable access for all. The means for doing this may well be to pay for or reimburse the costs for things like transportation, child care, refreshments, etc. or to offer a standard honorarium to deserving participants who can then choose how best to defer their participation expenses. The latter approach is also much easier to administer.

9. MONITOR PROGRESS

The Council Initiative on Public Engagement has been a transformative, collaboration between City Council, Administration and community. The journey has done much to rebuild trust and strengthen relationships. The involvement of Councillors, City staff and members of the community has brought new perspectives to the table and begun to role model a more collaborative approach to how the City does its business. The Initiative has also provided the foundation for tangible solutions and a clear road map for improving public engagement.

The time, commitment, investment and success of the Initiative suggests that it, or something like it, may have a further role to play as the City's public engagement improvement efforts persist. Therefore, thought should be given to how this partnership can continue with the mandate to help monitor the City's progress in achieving the public engagement goals, outcomes and milestones it has set for itself as the result of this Initiative.

The Initiative was designed using a phased approach for "engaging on engagement" with City Council, Administration and the Public. It was given a broad mandate to examine public engagement practices at the City, while also striving to implement immediate improvement efforts. The Initiative recognized that making lasting change to public engagement must be part of a larger organizational change effort, and that a focus on internal change must be balanced by an effort to understand, engage, and enable the city's broader civil society.

The work of the Council Initiative on Public Engagement should not end now. It wasn't about writing a report that will collect dust on a shelf somewhere. It's about changing reality on the ground for people. The City needs to make things happen and tell us how it's going. Even better, community should continue to be at the table.

Masood Makarechian, *Public Member, Advisory Committee*

CONCLUSION

This report marks the end of a long journey and the beginning of a new one. The findings of the Council Initiative on Public Engagement described in these pages provide a path forward for public engagement at the City of Edmonton.

It is now up to City Council and Administration, in collaboration with community, to set a new course for public engagement through better practice. The details of this new course can be found in the New Public Engagement Practice Report.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AT THE CITY OF EDMONTON
SHARE YOUR VOICE SHAPE OUR CITY

**THE COUNCIL
INITIATIVE
ON PUBLIC
ENGAGEMENT**

PHASES 1 AND 2
FINAL REPORT



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