



**City of Kingston
Information Report to Council
Report Number 20-030**

To:	Mayor and Members of Council
From:	Lanie Hurdle, Chief Administrative Officer
Resource Staff:	JC Kenny, Director of Communications and Customer Experience
Date of Meeting:	December 17, 2019
Subject:	Public Engagement Annual Update and Implementation Plan

Council Strategic Plan Alignment:

Theme: Policies & by-laws

Goal: See above

Executive Summary:

The Public Engagement Framework and the Public Engagement Charter were approved at Council on October 3, 2017. In addition to these two documents an implementation plan was provided for information purposes. A semi-annual status report to Council is part of the Public Engagement Implementation Plan. The existing implementation plan has been completed.

This report includes comments received through the public engagement evaluation and the ongoing comments received since October 3, 2017 when the Public Engagement Framework was approved at Council.

The comments received through the evaluation and over the past two years have informed and guided the development of the Public Engagement Implementation Plan 2020-2022. The intention of the implementation plan is to continue the momentum and develop a consistent approach to public engagement across the corporation and the community.

Recommendation:

This report is for information only.

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Authorizing Signatures:

Lanie Hurdle, Chief

Administrative Officer

Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:

Peter Huigenbos, Acting Commissioner, Community Services	Not required
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Brad Joyce, Acting Commissioner, Corporate Services	
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Jim Keech, President & CEO, Utilities Kingston	Not required
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Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer	
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Sheila Kidd, Commissioner, Transportation & Public Works	Not required
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Options/Discussion:

The Public Engagement Implementation Plan was provided to Council for information on October 3, 2017 with the Public Engagement Framework. All of the items outlined in the implementation plan are complete.

Highlights of public engagement across the Corporation from October 4, 2017 to November 27, 2019 include;

Collaboration and outreach

The community engagement network allows the City to share messages with groups and organizations that have existing connections. This network amplifies public engagement messages.

The internal engagement group meets quarterly to share best practices, lessons learned and opportunities. The message from the group is shared with those with whom they work with on a daily basis. This group brings consistency across the organization to public engagement.

Approximately 50 activity bags were distributed at engagement sessions during the pilot project.

Training and awareness

One-hundred and three employees have completed the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Foundations training. The IAP2 Foundations training includes planning and techniques for effective public participation. The IAP2 Decision Maker training has been delivered to Council and senior leaders.

The Communications and Public Engagement division continues to develop materials to raise awareness for specific projects as well as public engagement and Get Involved Kingston. Presentations have been delivered to groups and organizations about the Public Engagement Framework and Get Involved Kingston.

Communications

The pilot project for Get Involved Kingston was completed in July 2019. A three-year contract with the option to renew for two additional one-year periods was approved by Council. Get Involved Kingston has 7,381 activated participants as of November 26, 2019.

In early 2018 the Communications and Public engagement division began distributing a regular opt-in email newsletter to activated participants on Get Involved Kingston. The newsletter has expanded to include newly launched projects, current opportunities for online engagement and in-person engagement opportunities.

Notable achievements via the Get Involved Kingston platform include;

- 105,445 site visits

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- 153 in-person public engagement sessions
- 74 online projects using Get Involved Kingston
- 4 internal projects using Get Involved Kingston
- 69 online surveys
- 10,085 online survey responses
- 27 other projects using online engagement techniques.
 - 20 projects used the Question and Answer tool
 - 300 questions being answered
 - 26 projects used the Newsfeed tool
 - 3 projects used the Stories tool
 - 64 comments have been received
 - 9 projects used the Places tool
 - 202 comments have been received
 - 12 projects used the Ideas tool
 - 397 ideas have been received

Resources available to staff for engagement sessions through the division include: tablets, tablecloths, flip charts, banners and communication templates.

Status report

Communications and Public Engagement has provided semi-annual status reports to Council since 2017. Three reports were previously submitted. The implementation plan updates have also been included on the public engagement page on the website.

Overall evaluation

City staff tracked the comments received about the Public Engagement Framework, Implementation Plan and Get Involved Kingston during the overall evaluation. Comments received since October 3, 2017 have been tracked and updates have been considered and completed where appropriate. Comments were used in the development of the Public Engagement Implementation Plan 2020-2022.

Comments and feedback

Public Engagement Framework

- The majority of participants found the Public Engagement Framework easy to understand, thorough and relevant.

Get Involved Kingston

Below is a summary of the comments received;

- It is helpful to have all engagement items in one spot.

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- Information is easy to understand on the Get Involved Kingston site. Finding information quickly is the most important aspect when using Get Involved Kingston.
- Get Involved Kingston is ranked the most preferred way to share input with the City, followed by email and in person at a public meeting, open house or workshop.
- The timeline on the Get Involved Kingston project page is very helpful. Include it on the project webpages.

Overall experience with public engagement

Below is a summary of the comments received;

- Online is the preferred method of communication. This includes – email, website, social media, podcasts, webinars, videos, live-streaming. Email is the most preferred way to hear about engagement opportunities, followed by Get Involved Kingston email newsletter and City of Kingston website.
- Common barriers participants noted include lack of awareness about events and lack of confidence that input will be used. Understanding how their input will be used would encourage them to share their input with the City, followed by increasing opportunities to participate online and involving them earlier in the process.
- Reporting back after the consultation period has ended would encourage participants to share their input with the City. Knowing that a decision was made on a project is important. Outline how the input was used to make a decision.
- Keep participants updated on the project status.
- The calendar is helpful and could be expanded to include additional information and links.
- Keep things clear and simple. Don't have too much information to make it confusing. Avoid jargon and terms that are not understood.
- Be clear with options that seek input from residents. Participants need to know they will have an impact and will make a difference.
- Lead time on projects is important. The amount of lead time varies depending on the materials that need to be reviewed.
- Continue providing alternate options of raising awareness and offering alternate options of providing input. Videos are helpful as an introduction to projects.
- Continue to share information with various audiences to ensure all areas of the community are included. Not everyone in the community is on social media; some choose not to use technology. Print advertising is important to continue to use.
- Road signs are a great way to get the message out. Keep the content short.
- It would be helpful to let participants know what they should expect when they are attending a session. Some examples – Will people be able to speak at the session? Is there a presentation? Is there a formal procedure?

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- Provide more information and awareness about committee and council meeting procedures.
- Not all engagements have evaluations.
- Offer presentations to groups and organizations.
- A standard introduction for all sessions is one way to ensure a consistent delivery of public engagement across the corporation. Showcase residents who have been involved in projects in a video.
- Consultants are hired for various projects across the City. Ensure consultants are aware of the Public Engagement Framework for those planning and delivering public engagement on behalf of the City.
- There are multiple projects asking for input at the same time. Try to coordinate timelines.
- The available resources are great for employees to use.

The comments received through the overall evaluation and that have been received since October 3, 2017 have guided the Public Engagement Implementation Plan 2020-2022. The intention of the implementation plan is to continue the momentum of public engagement with minimal additional budget impact.

Existing Policy/By-Law:

Public Engagement Framework

Notice Provisions:

None

Accessibility Considerations:

None

Financial Considerations:

All financial considerations are included in the budget.

Contacts:

Debbi Miller, Manager, Communications & Public Engagement 613-546-4291 extension 1323

Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:

Lana Foulds, Director, Financial Services

Jeff Bumstead, Chief Information Officer, Information Systems & Technology

David Mignault, Manager, Organizational Development, HR & Org Development

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Exhibits Attached:

Exhibit A - City of Kingston's Public Engagement Implementation Plan 2020 - 2022



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2020-2022



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Introduction

Public Engagement was identified as a Council Priority in 2015. The Public Engagement Framework was developed in consultation with residents, Council and employees. The Public Engagement Framework was approved at Council on October 3, 2017. In September 2019, the City of Kingston accepted the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Canada Organization of the Year, 2019 award in recognition of the work in developing the Public Engagement Framework and the implementation plan.

The Public Engagement Framework is championed by the Communications and Public Engagement Division of the Communications and Customer Experience Department. All City departments have a responsibility to ensure the effective implementation and use of the Public Engagement Framework for new projects, policies and initiatives. Communications officers will work closely with project or program managers to assist and support departments in the development of an engagement plan that will be supported by a communication plan.

The intention of this Public Engagement Implementation Plan 2020-2022 is to keep the forward momentum going with a consistent approach to public engagement across the corporation and the community. The implementation objectives and priorities have been identified as follows;

- 1. Collaboration and outreach;**
- 2. Training and awareness;**
- 3. Communication and events;**
- 4. Resources; and**
- 5. Evaluations and status reports.**

1. Collaboration and outreach

The development and effective implementation of a consistent and standardized approach with increased public participation and collaboration are intended outcomes of the public engagement framework. The key actions outlined below will help the City continue to remove barriers, raise awareness, increase involvement and improve engagement for residents, council and City employees. This collaborative effort is intended to inform the recommendations and/or decisions for the City of Kingston.

1.1 COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Action item - Continue to raise awareness for the community engagement network to encourage more members of the community to participate.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Ongoing

Action item - Continue to provide presentations to groups and organizations about Public Engagement.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Ongoing

Action item - Develop a standard introduction that will be delivered at in-person public engagement sessions.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Ongoing

1.2 INTERNAL ENGAGEMENT GROUP

Action item - Review the employees that are part of the Internal Engagement Group and update if required.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Annual

Action item - Continue the Internal Engagement Group meetings on a quarterly basis with the existing terms of reference for the group.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Quarterly

Action item - Develop an email newsletter to be circulated following the internal engagement group meetings.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Quarterly

1.3 ACTIVITY BAGS

Action item - Activity bags to be continue to be available at public engagement sessions.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Ongoing

Action item - Update the bags on an annual basis.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Q4, Annually

2. Training and awareness

Training to hold public engagement sessions and being aware of the processes associated with the public engagement framework will help ensure City employees, council and residents have meaningful interactions. Training opportunities will be reviewed and updated as new opportunities, tools or techniques become available. The communications and customer experience department will work closely with human resources and organizational development department to identify new opportunities and make them available for City employees.

2.1 CITY EMPLOYEES, COUNCIL AND SENIOR LEADERS

Action item - Continue with IAP2, Planning and Techniques (Foundations) training for City employees.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Bi-Annual

Action item - Develop an eLearning module for all City of Kingston staff for awareness of the Public Engagement Framework and Get Involved Kingston.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Q1, 2020

Action item - Training to support City employees as they continue to build their capacity and skill set for delivering public engagement.

Department leading - Human Resources and Organization Development and Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - 2020 and ongoing

Action item - Develop an annual training schedule for Get Involved Kingston with Bang the Table for staff training. The training is part of the service agreement with Bang the Table.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Ongoing

Action item - Develop a public engagement community of practice for staff who have completed the IAP2 Foundations training. This includes ongoing connections for staff to learn from each other and build capacity.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Q1, 2021

Action item - International Association for Public Participation, Decision Maker training for Council and senior leaders.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - As needed

2.2 RESIDENTS

Action item - Review and refresh the awareness message for public engagement.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Ongoing

Action item - Develop videos where residents that have participated in a project can be included so they can share their message about being involved.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Ongoing

2.3 CONSULTANT

Action item - Update and maintain a roster of external facilitators.

Departments leading - Communications and Customer Experience and Finance.

Timing - Q4, 2020

Action item - Ensure consultants hired by the City of Kingston are consistently made aware of the Public Engagement Framework, Get Involved Kingston, reporting out expectations, accessibility standards for web content and communication process and techniques.

Departments leading - All departments

Timing - Q2, 2020

Action item - Develop options for standard language for public engagement that can be included in various procurement documents.

Departments leading - Communications and Customer Experience and Finance.

Timing - Q4, 2020

3. Communications and events

The communications strategy for public engagement includes various tactics to raise awareness of the public engagement framework and online public engagement platform. All projects, programs and initiatives will continue to be supported by individual communication plans developed by the communications officer supporting the department managing the project. The communications and customer experience department will continue to identify new paid advertising or earned media opportunities and execute these opportunities where appropriate.

3.1 COMMUNICATION

Action item - Continue to utilize various methods of communication for public engagement to raise awareness with all audiences.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Ongoing

Action item - Continue to raise awareness to grow the number of activated participants using Get Involved Kingston.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Ongoing

3.2 EVENTS

Action item - Develop a plan for a pilot project trade show style public engagement event/s to be coordinated together rather all sessions being than done as one off events.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Q1, 2020

Action item - Execute the pilot project plan and evaluate the success.

Department leading - Communications and customer experience

Timing - Q2/Q3, 2020

Action item – Evaluate the pilot project trade show style public engagement event/s. Report back to Council with a recommendation.

Department leading - Communications and customer experience

Timing - Q3, 2020

4. Resources

Additional resource materials for sessions are required to ensure a consistent experience for participants regardless of which department is conducting the public engagement session. The resource material list will be available on the KingNet public engagement page.

4.1 GET INVOLVED KINGSTON – ONLINE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PLATFORM

Action item – Review the best practices document on an annual basis and make updates as required.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Ongoing

Action item – Raise awareness for the internal use of Get Involved Kingston.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Ongoing

Action item – Ensure the budget for maintaining an online platform is included in the IS&T budget.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Annual

4.2 RESOURCES

Action item – Continue to review and update resources.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Ongoing

Action item – Review the available template resources and make updates when needed.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Annual

Action item – Review the facilities list and update as required.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Annual

Action item – Review accessible options for tools that can be used at public engagement sessions. Provide recommendations of the appropriate tools.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Q2, 2020

5. Evaluation And Status Report

5.1 EVALUATION

Action item - Review and continue to implement engagement status evaluations for City employees to use across the corporation. These will be collected and compiled by Communications and Public Engagement for reporting out to Council.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Q1, 2020 and Ongoing

Action item - Review and continue to implement internal project evaluations for City employees to use across the corporation. These will be collected and compiled in Communications and Public Engagement for reporting out.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Q1, 2020 and Ongoing

Action item - Review and continue to implement a consistent resident evaluation for use across the corporation. These will be collected and compiled in Communications and Public Engagement for reporting out.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Q1, 2020 and Ongoing

5.2 STATUS REPORT

Action item - Provide a public engagement status report to Council on an annual basis.

Department leading - Communications and Customer Experience

Timing - Q4, Annually

Appendix A

TERMS OF REFERENCE

CITY OF KINGSTON COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT NETWORK

Purpose

The City is committed to engaging residents on matters that affect their quality-of-life and their city. Public engagement encourages participation, action, personal responsibility and democracy. The goal is to facilitate more informed and inclusive municipal decision-making.

The City of Kingston has developed a public engagement framework to ensure a more consistent and standardized approach to public engagement.

Establishing a community engagement network consisting of a number of interested community groups, organizations or individuals was identified as an opportunity to have the community support in raising the awareness of the opportunities for public engagement being led by the City of Kingston.

Objective

The role of the community engagement network would be to share information with their groups, organizations or individuals to create greater awareness and participation in the City's public engagement opportunities.

Sharing information could include emailing members or posting information for members to see.

Composition

The network will consist of community groups, organizations or individuals sign up to participate as a part of the community engagement network.

The communications and customer experience department will maintain the contact information for the community engagement network.

The City will maintain a list of the organizations at CityofKingston.ca with links to the organizations' websites, where appropriate.

Elements

City-produced materials may be provided in various print or electronic formats. The various formats could differ based on the public engagement opportunity.

The members of the community engagement network may identify additional communication considerations relating to the information to be provided. City employees

will determine if it is feasible to provide the requested additional communication considerations based on the project budget, resource availability and time.

Community groups, organizations or individuals would submit the form below to the City of Kingston, communications and customer experience department at getinvolved@cityofkingston.ca.

The form will be available online at www.GetInvolved.CityofKingston.ca.

The group, organization or individuals will be asked to contact the City to update contact information.

City of Kingston community engagement network

Name of group, organization or individual	
Total members	
Type of group and/or organization	
Group and/or organization phone number	
Group and/or organization mailing address	
Group and/or organization email address	
Web address	
Main contact	
Title (ie. president, chair)	
Mailing address	
Phone number	
Email address	
Alternate contact	
Address	
Phone number	
Email address	
When does your executive turn-over?	
Additional notes or comments	

Appendix B

TERMS OF REFERENCE

CITY OF KINGSTON INTERNAL ENGAGEMENT GROUP

Purpose

This group will work collaboratively to ensure a more consistent and standardized approach to public engagement.

The internal engagement group will be made up of City employees from various departments that actively engage the public.

Objective

The internal engagement group will discuss issues, lessons learned, ideas for improvement, challenges being faced and opportunities to collaborate on.

The internal engagement group will share messages and information with their departments where appropriate or necessary. The individual group members will also be a resource for their departments to ensure a more consistent and standardized approach to public engagement.

Composition

The manager of communications and public engagement of the communications and customer experience department will lead this group. The group will consist of City employees from departments that regularly engage the public.

There may be additional employees involved in public engagement that may from time-to-time be invited to participate in a meeting.

City communications officers that support public engagement activities will attend the meetings when the projects they are working on have active public engagement.

It is recommended that key individuals from the following departments be established as the regular members of the internal engagement group:

Communications and public engagement; planning, building and licensing; transportation; city clerks; engineering; and recreation and leisure.

Elements

The manager of communications and public engagement will lead the internal engagement group, arrange meetings and ensure notes are maintained from meetings.

The internal engagement group will meet every two months. The meeting schedule will be established annually. Agendas will be shared in advance and minutes will be circulated following the meetings.