Come in, we're open

THE CITY OF CALGARY DIGITAL STRATEGY

ISC: UNRESTRICTED

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Onward/ By 2036, Calgarians increase their use of communications technology to support sustainability.

THE CITY OF CALGARY

It seems the future is approaching faster and faster. New technologies pop up offering solutions to problems previously unknown. Our world is social, mobile and digital. Never have citizen expectations been so high.

Engagement conducted during the creation of the City of Calgary Digital Strategy revealed one common theme:

Be more open.

Our strategy is to create an open organization.

The City of Calgary's Digital Strategy will be achieved through a common, disciplined approach to the technologies, tools and processes enabling participation and access to services and information.

We know citizens and City staff are at their best when everyone works together.

The Digital Strategy takes a corporate-wide view and defines how we connect, communicate and engage with Calgarians, our colleagues and potential partners.

Our vision is to use innovation and engagement to enable secure anytime, anywhere, access to an **OPEN** government for today and tomorrow's citizen.

How are we open?

We are *open* for business because...

The City has already had success in delivering online services when applying for permits, booking tee times, and submitting 311 service requests. However, these efforts have been accomplished by meeting citizen demands rather than connecting to a larger strategic vision for all city services online. Break-throughs in technology such as cloud computing and mobile virtualization will enable the user experience to span across new devices and leverage identity management.

1.

We have accessible services.

1.1

We ensure all services will be available digitally first if possible.

"By 2036, all Calgarians have easy access to current forms of communications technology and resources." – imagineCalgary

1.2

We facilitate self service whenever possible.

"We need a single interface that makes sense from the citizen's viewpoint." – Digital Strategy Feedback Form.

1.3

We ensure service is available where users are.

- An emphasis on multiple channels and mobile.
- Strive to make services available when needed; not limited to standard hours of business.
- A focus on location based services.

"Mobile will become the hub for controlling connected products and will become the remote control through which people manage their everyday lives." – Forrester

1.4

We offer a reliable and consistent user experience.

- City-wide digital service standards.
- Consistent user interfaces across services.
- Easy, intuitive, user-friendly, human centred design of user interfaces is adopted.
- Unify treatment of customers' profile, data and settings.

"The more consistent the user experience around all City services the better participation you will get." – Digital Strategy Feedback Form.

1.5

We ensure everyone can access services.

- Services are compliant with World Wide Web Consortium Standards and the Web Accessibility Standards.
- Multilingual options are addressed.
- Services are available on customer's personal device when possible.
- Customer points of access throughout Calgary will be expanded.
- Non-digital options (e.g. phone, mail, in-person) are embraced in service design for those without the ability to access digitally.

"By 2036, all Calgarians have easy access to current forms of communications technology and resources." – imagineCalgary

Calgary is considered one of the best places to live in Canada and this distinction draws the attention of other municipalities who want to learn from our successes. Our City is always willing to open our doors to share our knowledge and resources with others. However, citizens believe that The City of Calgary has not been overly successful in reaching out to domestic and international organizations to improve services through technology. Better procurement processes, protecting the democratic process, supporting the technology sector, and improving internal collaboration were all suggestions to help The City foster meaningful and mutually beneficial partnerships.

2.

We pursue and build partnerships.

2.1

We're one organization working together.

- Managing information, data and services across lines of business in a cohesive manner that is open and accessible to all.

- Identify and remove internal barriers.

"The more people we collaborate with, the better the outcome and higher likelihood of buy-in from citizens." – Digital Strategy Feedback Form

2.2

Search for and embrace strategic partners with aligned goals.

- Communicate needs for tools or programs that others can provide.

- Partnerships can be with external products, not just organizations or companies.

"It can't all be done in-house. Partnerships and tapping into external expertise is essential." – Digital Strategy Feedback Form

2.3

We support a digital economy in Calgary.

- Opportunities to foster the digital industry and citizen digital businesses will be explored.

- Steps will be taken, as needed, to ensure competitive fairness.

"Encourage citizens to participate in solving digital problems – making it easy for technological start-ups to grow in the city." – Digital Strategy Feedback Form

We are an *open* government because ...

The City of Calgary has been providing information through the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and to academic intuitions, but only recently started releasing open data. A recent report indicates Calgary's efforts towards open data are declining compared to other Canadian municipalities. Citizens have said transparency is beneficial to them; however many have cited concerns around the reliability of data and whether The City can currently separate public information from data that would compromise the privacy rights of individuals. Providing better information, empowering citizens and improving government operations are some of the benefits citizens suggested for improving transparency at The City of Calgary.

3.

We are transparent.

3.1

We're open by default.

- Data belongs to citizens. If The City collects data it will go in the Public Catalogue.

- Only closed to protect privacy and to provide security. Information will be shared in a manner such that it will not impact the privacy of individuals. Privacy and security are not an after thought; they are part of the design.

- Provide information to citizens and local businesses that will contribute to their success and benefit the community.

- What and why information is collected, and how and when information is used or shared is communicated up front and followed, and education is provided if needed. Opt out options are provided where possible.

"Opaque government cannot be good for long. Transparency is essential." – Digital Strategy Feedback Form

3.2

We embrace open data.

- Data is provided as close to real time as possible.

- Information provided is in an accessible format, such as: with logical data architecture, machine readable and compatible across platforms.

- There is an appropriate legal framework in place for the data to be repurposed.

"One of the most powerful levers of government is to provide information." – Digital Strategy Feedback Form

3.3

We recognize the power of place.

- Where appropriate, data and information will be available in a geographic context.

- Services, communication and engagement will be delivered in a location aware manner.

"Maps with layers so that clients could add infrastructure to them and update as the need arises for events." – Digital Strategy Feedback Form

3.4

We know the outcomes for citizens we're striving to achieve and have a culture of measurement.

- Use City business metrics to measure and improve services.

- Provide meaningful measures and metrics to citizens on their use of City services where possible.

- Recognition is based on performance and, where appropriate, so is compensation.

"The public have the right to know the operations of their municipality and should not have difficulty finding information they require." – Digital Strategy Feedback Form

The choice to participate in government extends from the desire to build a strong sense of community and civic pride. Decision-making must be an inclusive process which does not discriminate and The City of Calgary must remove barriers to participation and respect those who choose to get involved. While The City has taken steps to increase public participation in government, citizens have suggested that many barriers still exist. Engagement that occurs too late in the decision-making process, lengthy time commitments and lack of expertise on issues are some the reasons well-intended engagement has negative outcomes.

4.

We provide and support platforms for citizens to participate.

4.1

We work with community groups and existing community projects.

- Citizens are welcomed as full team members in building and delivering services.

- Efforts are two-way with citizens and The City both holding responsibility for success.

"Increase the use of technology to meaningfully engage citizens in the decision making process." – Action Plan Engagement

4.2

We facilitate a meaningful, impactful role in the process and decisions of governance.

- Opportunities to provide feedback.

- Opportunities to make decisions.

- Provide education on the process and results.

- Plain language principles are adopted.

- Relevant engagement frameworks are considered.

"Citizens feel more involved in government if they know their views are taken into account." – Digital Strategy Feedback Form

We are *open*-minded because …

Often governments fear innovation because when experimenting with technology there is a cost to failure; however the greater risk is delaying progress, stalling the delivery of new services maintaining old regulatory processes and launching tools with outdated technology. The City must keep equal pace with innovations occurring in the private sector, such as the construction industry, to ensure that we can accommodate technological advancements through the regulatory process.

5.

We value innovation.

5.1

We analyze information for insights to improve efficiencies and effectiveness.

"Data reliability and data quality must exist in order to use it, analyze it and to draw conclusions from it. Updated data allows us to be current and accurate at analyzing emerging trends and issues." – From Citizen Feedback Form

5.2

We set an expectation of experimentation and iteration aimed at continuous improvement of service delivery.

- Encourage trials and pilot projects. Don't wait for something to be perfect; just try it.

- Create a safe environment for trials with higher risk tolerances and clearly defined expectations that exists separate from standard operations.

"311 was a major innovation – I think the City does attempt to innovate. It's follow through is always a problem, but the willingness to innovate and the willingness to try something different is definitely there." – Action Plan Engagement

5.3

We explore disruptive ideas and we challenge the status quo and assumptions.

- Be proactive in pursuing digital solutions.

- Allow for more than one approach to solve an issue to be tried at the same time.

"The structure of The City is set up to prevent true collaboration and partnerships." – Digital Strategy Feedback Form

5.4

We expect to "do more with less" and technology can help.

- Affordability, sustainability and being responsible with tax dollars are top of mind at all times.

"There is an attitude of getting ahead by following orders versus getting ahead by being competent, resourceful, innovative or responsive." – Digital Strategy Feedback Form

The Developing Digital Strategy

The First 120 Days – Strategic Analysis

Following Council approval to draft a Digital Strategy, the eGovernment Advisory Committee created the objectives of the Digital Strategy.

CURRENT STATE ASSESSMENT

We conducted internal and external research relating to both digital and e-government and discovered a variety of barriers and opportunities.

ENGAGEMENT

We spoke with digital thought leaders, citizens and staff to assess the ideas behind the strategy.

The Next 90 Days – Roadmap

And beyond …

Following the approval of the Digital Strategy objectives and budget, we will evaluate the capabilities and technologies to move forward.

CURRENT STATE ASSESSMENT

ENGAGEMENT

We will evaluate The City's digital maturity and also conduct a risk assessment.

The goals of the strategy will be shaped through identifying initiatives, prioritizing opportunities and establishing timelines.

And we are open to this Digital Strategy changing and evolving. The digital landscape is constantly shifting. In order to ensure responsiveness to these rapid changes, and increasing expectations of citizens and staff, there will need to be ongoing engagement and a willingness to adjust.

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