

### Baseline Engagement and Communication Project Summary

The Baseline Engagement and Communications Project was a project led by Administration in collaboration with communities, development industry and City Council from January 2018 through September 2019. This project established a predictable engagement and communications approach for planning and development projects across the planning continuum (from policy to land use amendments).

Through this project we learned from all stakeholders that there was a desire for:

- Creating a level of predictability for community outreach, without making things “cookie cutter” and ensuring we are customizing and tailoring our approach to address the unique needs and local context of communities and stakeholders.
- Defining roles and responsibilities connected to community outreach for all stakeholders involved in the process (The City, community and applicants).
- Creating a planning-specific outreach process and toolkit to guide best-practice outreach.

This project concluded in September 2019 with the launch of the [Community Outreach on Planning & Development toolkit](#). This toolkit provides resources for all involved in outreach processes connected to planning within the City of Calgary. This toolkit also outlines roles and responsibilities for all involved.

### What are the roles and responsibilities connected to Community Outreach?

Clarifying community outreach roles and responsibilities connected planning and development projects helps clarify who does what. Each role, shown below, includes a description and associated responsibilities.

Role	Description	Responsibilities
Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The lead is the initiator or proponent of the project and is the primary decision maker for the project leading up to a formal decision of approval/refusal by the designated City decision-making body.</li> <li>• The lead determines if/when community outreach will take place connected to their project and, if so, decides about what, with who, where, how, etc.</li> <li>• The lead pays for community outreach costs associated with their project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify people of the project and any opportunities to learn more or provide input.</li> <li>• Determine the negotiables and non-negotiables for the project and what is/isn't open for public input.</li> <li>• Communicate the constraints.</li> <li>• Clarify the scope of the conversation.</li> <li>• Provide clear, concise, transparent and accurate information.</li> <li>• Hold a respectful conversation.</li> <li>• Report back if/when collecting input.</li> <li>• Keep people in the loop and close the loop when decisions are made.</li> <li>• Provide City decision makers with a summary of the community outreach approach that was taken.</li> </ul>

Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The support assists in the outreach process by providing the lead, the connector and participants with information, tools and resources to improve understanding and aid in the overall success of the outreach process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share information about City goals and policies.</li> <li>Explain The City’s review and decision-making processes.</li> <li>Clarify community outreach roles and responsibilities.</li> <li>Create tools and resources for participants, connectors and leads to help them be successful in their outreach roles.</li> </ul>
Connector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The connector shares information and insights about a specific community or area to help increase understanding of the local context and to help inform community outreach plans for local planning and development projects.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where possible, share local information and insights to help build understanding and inform outreach plans.</li> <li>Where possible, help raise awareness of opportunities for people to get involved in local planning projects.</li> </ul>
Participant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The participant participates in the outreach process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek out information and be informed.</li> <li>Listen and participate respectfully.</li> <li>Respect the scope of conversation and project constraints.</li> <li>Provide appropriate feedback and remain open to different ideas.</li> </ul>
Decision maker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The decision maker is responsible for making the final decision to approve/refuse the local area plan or development application.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and consider proposed local area plan or development application.</li> <li>Review and consider the outreach strategy/rational/approach and any feedback that may have been collected.</li> <li>Approve/refuse the local area plan or development application.</li> </ul>

**What are the roles connected to outreach on the creation of new City policy plans?**

The people connected to a role might change depending on the project type. Different roles can apply to different people depending on the type of project (e.g. City initiated versus landowner/applicant initiated).

<b>Policy Plans</b>	
City Administration	Lead
Community Groups or Member-based Organizations	Connector & Participant
Community	Participant
Development Industry	Participant
City Council	Decision maker

## What are the minimum requirements for Community Outreach connected to Planning and Development?


The Municipal Government Act (MGA) is the law under which all Alberta municipalities are empowered to shape their communities. The MGA helps ensure citizens are provided with the opportunity to be involved in municipal decision-making processes, including minimum requirements public notification and opportunities for comment on planning matters.

Public participation mechanisms regulated under the MGA include:

- **Open Meetings:** Municipalities are required to hold all their council and committee meetings open to the public, with some exceptions.
- **Notices and the Right to Be Heard:** A citizen's right to receive notice of certain matters to be considered by a municipal council (e.g. statutory plan amendments, road closures, etc.).
- **Access to Information:** The public can request any information from their municipality.
- **Petitions:** Citizens can petition council to allow for a vote on an advertised bylaw or resolution, to create a new bylaw, or to amend or repeal an existing bylaw or resolution.

The City fulfills the minimum requirements through advertising, circulation and holding public hearings.

When it comes to outreach led by The City there is no one-size fits all approach outreach. Outreach can take shape in many forms and includes communications and/or engagement tactics. The City generally undertakes communications campaigns utilizing a variety of tactics to inform citizens of our work. The engagement approach and tactics utilized would be determined by; the project scope, timelines, stakeholder level of involvement, budget, decisions open for influence and the local context of a community. The [City Engage Policy](#) defines engagement as "Purposeful dialogue between The City and stakeholders to gather information to influence decision making." Engagement should only be undertaken when there are decisions open for input and the level of engagement can vary across stakeholder groups.

The  [Outreach Assessment tool](#), created as part of the Community Outreach toolkit, provides project guidance on high-level outreach considerations and is used by the City when scoping outreach needs for policy projects. City Engagement and Communications professionals would develop a strategy based on this assessment and the project scope and stakeholder involvement.

## What community outreach approach is undertaken connected to Local Area Plans?

The City developed a consistent and predictable engagement and communications framework that is being applied to the creation of all new multi-community local area plans. This framework, as shown in the graphic below, includes three phases of engagement and communications, where the tactics are customized to the local context of the communities involved. The following graphic illustrates the community outreach approach.

Graphic 1: Area Communities Local Growth Planning Project

