



Administration's Considerations based on the What We Heard report

The Planning & Development department is constantly reviewing its engagement and communications efforts, internally with staff and externally with citizens and customers. While progress is always being made, PD is committed to continuous improvement on engagement and communications. During the COVID pandemic, there’s an opportunity to gain perspective and re-evaluate these efforts, considering in-person events are not possible at this time and are unknown for the future.

Using the themes that arose from the “Stakeholder Panel Discussion on COVID-19 Impacts and Remote Engagement” on May 6 (refer to full What We Heard report, Attachment 2), we have summarized the engagement and citizen outreach efforts already underway and outlined initial considerations on how we may adapt our work during the COVID pandemic, and ultimately, improve our efforts moving forward.

While the stakeholder discussion on May 6 is an important input in developing the initial responses below, we have also considered inputs from previous engagement, such as the Baseline Engagement project and the local area planning projects. We have also considered research and polling conducted at the National and local level, desktop research into best practices, and reviewed the work underway from other municipalities across North America.

The chart below identifies each What We Heard report ‘Theme’, provides an overview of current engagement work underway and outlines initial suggestions on adapting during the COVID pandemic, which can improve efforts over the long term. The initial considerations for how we adapt will be part of an ongoing conversation with stakeholders.

Theme: Engagement options and barriers	
ADAPTING PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT DURING THE COVID PANDEMIC & BEYOND	BACKGROUND ON CURRENT EFFORTS ALREADY UNDERWAY AND EXAMPLES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure robust evaluation of online engagement processes, to ensure continuous improvement and to address gaps.• Use online and digital tools to collect demographic data, which will demonstrate with whom we are engaging and whom we have overlooked. It can highlight citizen responsiveness and how citizens are reaching the engagement event; for example, social media, web or search engine.• Use digital data to create a more inclusive engagement process, assess gaps and inform the messaging to engage with more citizens.• Created the Engagement During COVID-19 Pandemic Crisis Response information sheet to help project teams navigate public engagement.	<p>Overall</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The City routinely provides both in-person and online public engagement throughout a project to ensure we reach a diverse group of citizens with a variety of tools.• The Engage team provides a broad range of tools to collect citizen feedback though The City Engage website - feedback forms, feedback walls, discussion forums, map-based commenting, story and idea gathering, question and answers, quick polls, etc. - that provide an online space for meaningful engagement to take place.• 311 is currently used as a public engagement tool for people who have limited access to technology. Through 311, citizens can also request The City accommodate accessibility needs; for example: interpreters, sign language, etc.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">Examining best practices, results, and perspectives of public engagement during a pandemic with other municipalities, local consultants, Hill & Knowlton, Leger, etc.:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Leger COVID -19 SurveysHill + Knowlton COVID-19 InsightsResearching online meeting tools that will allow us to host virtual meetings.Continue conversations with established Local Area Planning Working Groups to assess the ability to participate online in a meaningful way.Explore and test virtual meeting tools with the established Local Area Planning Working Groups, which will cover challenges, opportunities, and solutions to online engagement.	
Project example: <i>Local Area Plans</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide online and in-person engagement tools and techniques.Use methods that consider depth of discussion, time commitment, and location.Schedule various engage events on weekdays, weekends, daytime, and evenings.Focus on grassroots engagement with more pop-up events.Include Working Groups, where citizens participate in both in-person workshops and online forums to provide feedback throughout the project.Include a feedback loop for participants to tell us how or if they are able to continue engagement online or if we need to tweak or change the approach.Examples: North Hill Communities Local Area Plan, Heritage Communities Local Area Plan, Westbrook Communities Local Area Plan	
Theme: Inclusive engagement & Increasing participation and diversity	
ADAPTING PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT DURING THE COVID PANDEMIC & BEYOND	BACKGROUND ON CURRENT EFFORTS ALREADY UNDERWAY AND EXAMPLES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Explore additional grassroots tactics, such as Conversation Kindlers, which specifically focus on reaching hard-to-reach groups such as youth, low-income, new Canadians, etc. and making it more appealing to participate.Improve our communications with better use of plain language, relating it to citizens' interest and priorities.Use more inclusive materials - visual and storytelling - to help get more people involved. Examples: online Guidebook Library Installation, video and online opportunities, translate project materials, when need is identified<ul style="list-style-type: none">translate the Guidebook 101 presentation to “top-three” languagesEngage with people who are hard to reach and/or people who can advocate on their behalf on how we can remove barriers and what opportunities exist:<ul style="list-style-type: none">use open discussion forums and other methods customized for specific stakeholder groups - translated surveys, hand copy feedback out in the community, phone conversations.partner with Calgary Neighbourhoods for their connections to cultural groups and community-based organizations.Explore child care offerings for in-person engagement sessions like workshops.Investigate opportunities for engagement with University of Calgary and other post-secondary institutions.	<p>Overall</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The Engage Resource Unit uses an Inclusive Engagement Guide, which addresses barriers related to culture, language, age, resources, ability, gender and sexuality.The City developed a Multicultural Strategy for Communications & Engagement to ensure The City identifies and bridges gaps in diversity and inclusion so we can provide better services, strategies, engagement opportunities, and communication. The City routinely translates materials, based on demographics needs.The City is increasing grassroots approaches to engagement by meeting citizens where they gather within the community at various times, to provide the opportunity for more citizens to participate (i.e. pop-up events)Partnership with ActionDignity and the Calgary Public Library for city-wide planning initiatives.Leverage internal City partners - Community Social Workers, Neighbourhood Partnership Coordinators, Affordable Housing - to share engagement opportunities. <p>Project example: <i>Local Area Plans</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Targeting youth within the engagement process with more intentional communications throughout the respective local area plan process:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Reaching out to schools and youth groups for engagement.child-friendly activities at events to make them more family-friendly.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grow relationship with Action Dignity and adapt outreach methods to reach more multi-cultural groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ “Calling All Kids” campaign, asking for drawings of “What makes your community great”.• Offered translation or interpretation services when language need is identified.
Theme: Public engagement process & Level of involvement	
ADAPTING PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT DURING THE COVID PANDEMIC & BEYOND	BACKGROUND ON CURRENT EFFORTS ALREADY UNDERWAY AND EXAMPLES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Connect with citizens and stakeholders on a broad level to get ideas about where and how outreach could be done differently within planning projects.• Meet with targeted stakeholder groups such as Federation of Calgary Communities, Inner City Coalition, and others, to discuss and share the Local Area Plan engagement and communications framework.• Reschedule Local Area Planning session with the Federation of Calgary Communities (session was cancelled due to COVID-19).• Continue working with key stakeholders - Community Associations, Business Improvement Areas, Calgary Neighbourhoods - to discuss communications and engagement before local area planning projects begin.• Promote the Community Outreach on Planning and Development Toolkit to community members and community-based groups.• Increase understanding of the role and limitations of public participation in decision-making processes among key stakeholders and interest groups:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ use storytelling and/or visuals to help attract more people to participate.◦ explore ways to summarize and show the link between what was asked, what was heard, and what was considered/used.◦ share the engagement spectrum level (i.e. listen & learn) at the beginning of projects and/or phases to be more transparent and define what that means for the project.• Improve What We Did reports (i.e. how was feedback considered and used or if it couldn't be used, explain why - if not, why not) by increasing transparency and using plain language.• Create both detailed and high-level reports so people can have the choice for an at-a-glance or an in-depth review.• Explore new methods, both online and in-person, to report back to stakeholders.	<p>Overall</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Guided by The City's Engage Policy, project teams can collect and consider feedback and input from citizens, among other considerations - City policies, landowner rights, technical feasibility, cost, economic viability - before making a decision.• The City follows its Engage Policy and Engage Framework to ensure accountability, inclusiveness, transparency, commitment and responsiveness.• The Community Outreach on Planning and Development Toolkit aims to increase citizen and stakeholder awareness of roles and responsibilities, levels of involvement and outreach principles, which are related across PD's Planning Continuum.• The City typically involves affected citizens in the engagement process to ensure the engage tactics are reflective of the local context.• We report back to citizens on a regular basis within planning projects. Examples: EAGCS: What We Heard/Did Report, Heritage Conservation project summary, Next20: What We Heard Report, online survey <p>Project example: Local Area Plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prior to project launch, meet with targeted stakeholders (Community Associations, Business Improvement Areas, Calgary Neighbourhoods) to collect input on the project boundary and inform the engagement and communications plan.• Explain the role of engagement and outline key engagement process considerations:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Have included information for “<i>Who can get involved</i>” “<i>How public input will be used</i>” & “<i>Engagement Process</i>” on all Local Area Plan pages.◦ The North Hill Communities project took a multi-phased approach to engagement, gathering feedback within each phase to inform the next phase. We demonstrated how feedback was considered in project decisions, reported back on what wasn't used, and how it informed the final plan: Sample report:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seek feedback from stakeholders on the reporting process during active projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Final Engagement Summary and How did we get here?
Theme: Knowledge sharing	
ADAPTING PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT DURING THE COVID PANDEMIC & BEYOND	BACKGROUND ON CURRENT EFFORTS ALREADY UNDERWAY AND EXAMPLES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create an online “Idea Exchange” forum on the Engage portal to enable people to discuss ideas connected Planning & Development engagement. For example, questions could include: “How can we make planning outreach more inclusive?” “What planning topics do students/youth care about and how do they want to get involved?”• Demonstrate where each project fits in the Next Generation Planning System and better explain the connections between them.• Be conscious of the audience’s priorities so the content aligns with the audience’s interests and priorities.• Develop stronger connections with community organizations to share information and encourage people to get involved - reconsider the Planning Liaison pilot and expanding Planners in Public Spaces more broadly.• Create or use visuals to supplement complex content for planning projects and programs to show the benefit to residents and taxpayers. Examples: Guidebook 101 video, update Off-Site Levy Bylaw video, Established Area Growth and Change Strategy and create a handout with visuals to explain property tax uplift• Consider use of existing resources from external subject matter experts• Use illustrations and storytelling to explain the importance to planning Calgary’s future and the importance for citizens to help shape their city: call-to-action.• Better connect our MDP/ CTP goals with each project and program to explain why the project is important in the short and long term.• Continue to improve and add tools/ resources to the Community Outreach on Planning and Development Toolkit including the Community Involvement Toolkit and Applicant Outreach Toolkit sections.	<p>Overall</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Next Generation Planning System is undergoing a calgary.ca update so information on projects and programs are more intuitively connected and aligned, to help build resources and to support promotion and education for citizens and customers. Sample of current information and resources: Planning & Transportation Mythbusters, Guidebook for Great Communities, Local Area Planning in Calgary and Evolving Communities - video• Developed a <i>Community & Citizen Involvement</i> course that is delivered through Partners in Planning with the Federation of Calgary Communities (FCC).• Ongoing dialogue with Community Associations, FCC, BILD and other stakeholders to share information, build capacity and transfer knowledge.• Developed a Community Outreach on Planning and Development Toolkit with information about outreach levels and principles, roles and responsibilities. <p>Project example: Local Area Plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• During the project's first phase, education on the importance of city-building and growth & redevelopment in communities is a key focus.• Project team and citizens build mutual understanding by starting engagement with a focus on understanding of the area, learning about challenges/opportunities, etc.• Ensure that other relevant planning project teams can participate so there's an understanding on how they work together.• ‘Communication Toolkits’ are shared with Community Associations, Councillors and Neighbourhood Partnership Coordinators before each phase so community leaders can communicate to residents about the projects and opportunities to get involved.

Theme: City building & Working together	
ADAPTING PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT DURING THE COVID PANDEMIC & BEYOND	BACKGROUND ON CURRENT EFFORTS ALREADY UNDERWAY AND EXAMPLES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue discussion with representatives from key stakeholder groups (including those at the SPC on the Planning & Urban Development Committee) about public participation challenges and opportunities.• Carry out Development Map improvements to enhance circulation and commenting process connected to City application reviews.• Connect regularly with citizens and customers to gain a better understanding of stakeholder sentiment and considerations for the City Planning & Policy Work Plan.• Revise and share updated City Planning & Policy Work Plan through Committee/Council to ensure awareness of updated timelines, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.• Continue Next Generation Planning System refresh on calgary.ca so information on projects and programs are connected and aligned, to help build resources and improve promotion and education for citizens and customers.• Use visuals and storytelling to articulate how the policies being developed are connected with the land use and development applications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City Planning & Policy Work Plan is publicly shared through Council and Council Committees to increase awareness and demonstrate transparency.• The Next20 project is in its final phase of engagement, prior to being presented to Council for consideration.• Updating Next Generation Planning System key messages and visuals to explain the connection between the various projects and programs.• Westbrook Communities and Heritage Communities are mid-way through their respective project and engagement processes• West Elbow Communities and Riley Communities local area plans are in their early stages and will require re-launch in fall 2020.