

## **eGovernment Committee Progress Report December 2013**

This report outlines the progress of the eGovernment Strategy Advisory Committee (hereafter eGovernment Committee). The progress has been broken down into the following sections:

- Background Information – History about the formation of the eGovernment Committee, the membership and engagement with Administration.
- Work Completed – An overview of what the Committee has accomplished at the time of this progress report.
- Work Underway – The eGovernment Committee is making progress on the development of strategic actions for eGovernment in Calgary. A snapshot of some of the strategy work underway is provided.
- Plans and Expected Deliverables – The plans for what is next for the eGovernment Committee.

### **Background Information**

Seven citizen members were appointed to the eGovernment Committee by Council in October 2012 for a two year term.

- Applications were received and reviewed by City Council
- Members were appointed at the annual Organizational Meeting in October 2012

The composition of the eGovernment Committee is currently four citizens in the role of community organizations member and three citizens in the role of technical or communications member.

### **Changes in Membership**

One citizen in the role of technical or communications resigned before attending the first meeting in January 2013.

- The vacant position was filled May 27, 2013
- The newest citizen to join the Committee fills one of the roles of Community Organization member

## **Administration Representatives**

Staff from Information Technology and Customer Service & Communications business units act as resources to the Committee.

- Chief Information Technology Officer
- Director of Customer Service and Communications
- Manager of Web Program
- Program Manager of eGovernment
- Public Engagement Specialist

## **eGovernment Committee Meetings**

Most of the engagement between the eGovernment Committee and Administration takes place in-person in a meeting setting.

- Meetings are held four times per year - quarterly
- 2-2 ½ hour duration
- Chair and Vice-chair: Committee members take turns in the role of chair and vice-chair

An online collaboration website is being used to host discussions, share files and post information between meetings.

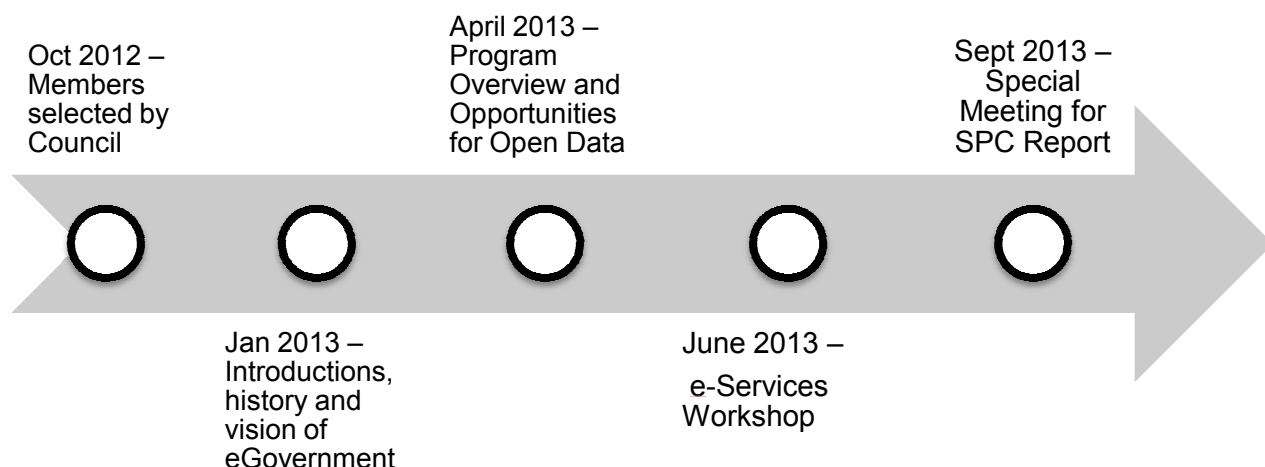
## **Support for the Committee**

Administration provides the following support to the eGovernment Committee:

- Provide staff with access to information to gain an understanding of eGovernment at The City
- Seek opportunities for influence and advice for projects currently under-way
- Write the SPC report and steward through the necessary workflow and approvals
- Support tasks including meeting logistics, draft agendas and minutes
- Provide a solution to collaborate between meetings

## Work Completed

The following represents the work completed by the eGovernment Committee on a timeline.



Some of the key highlights from the work completed to date include the review of the current eGovernment Program (2012-2014) and the framework developed to take the eGovernment Committee from a theme to specific strategic actions.

### Review of the eGovernment Program (2012-2014)

The overview of the eGovernment Program (2012-2014) took place over several engagements with the eGovernment Committee. Background information about the current eGovernment Program was sent to eGovernment Committee members prior to their initial meeting in January 2013. At the next two meetings, presentations were delivered to complete the overview of the current eGovernment Program (2012-2014).

When an opportunity is identified, the eGovernment Committee is asked to provide guidance and/or input for projects during their implementation.

May 2013	Invitation to review and provide feedback on the draft model for enhancements to the City's Get Involved Portal
August 2013	Invitation to participate in the testing of City Talk
September 2013	Invitation to provide input on the Open Data survey prepared as part of the launch of the new and improved Open Data Catalogue

## Strategy Advisory Framework

The purpose of the Strategy Advisory Framework is to guide the eGovernment Committee to:

### Primary

- Identify strategic actions and recommendations for the eGovernment Digital Strategy: 2015-2018

### Secondary

- Be ready to seize opportunities to provide advice for projects under-way
  - e.g. Invited to participate in the beta release of City Talk
  - e.g. Invited to provide feedback on the design of an Online Engagement portal

The design of the framework used by the eGovernment Committee is based on the following guidelines:

- Provide traceability of the eGovernment Committee's input
- Identify gaps between the existing eGovernment strategy and the five major themes
- Balance the input from the eGovernment Committee with existing City projects, initiatives and policies

At the eGovernment Committee's initial meeting, five major themes were identified at the core of eGovernment in Calgary:

1. Transparency and Open Data
2. e-Services – Citizen-centric design and access
3. Engagement and Participatory Governance
4. City Workplace (Culture, Measures and Performance)
5. Partnerships

The strategy advisory framework is used to elaborate each theme into a set of strategic actions that will form the basis for the eGovernment Digital Strategy: 2015-2018. Information shared by City staff invited to the engagements can result in opportunities for the eGovernment Committee to become involved in current projects related to eGovernment.

## Work Underway – Developing Strategic Actions (2015-2018)

At the time of this report, strategic actions for two themes were developed during meetings with employees. As a result of these meetings, the eGovernment Committee recognized the value of having Administration build upon their ideas to ensure the strategic actions are realistic.

The following is a snapshot of how the eGovernment Committee is progressing through the themes and the early development of strategic actions.

## **Transparency and Open Data**

The City is demonstrating a shift to participate in a more open, transparent and inclusive engagement process. Administration policies are being developed and updated in support of this trend. Both the Plain Language and the amended engage! policies are two examples of this movement. Citizens can participate in engagement sessions that will affect budget decisions.

Providing the public easy and free access to data about The City's operations is one way to earn the trust of Calgarians. The City's Open Data Catalogue is a web site created for The City's operations to publish their data to Calgarians. The data is published in such a way anyone can download or view the information from the "click of a button". Barriers such as money or restrictive terms of use need to be addressed to fully realize the benefits of opening City data.

The Open Data Catalogue is one demonstration by The City of their willingness to be transparent and open. Allowing the public to use City data and re-purpose it to publish a paper, build an App, analyze to write a business plan or research a new commercial opportunity is allowing Calgarians to become involved and create a benefit for Calgary. There needs to be an understanding about what Calgarians want to know about their government to help them participate to their fullest potential.

Seeing information about operations with The City on a map can help Calgarians understand what is happening and where it is happening. Helping Citizens understand the operational activities using visualization tools is another demonstration of The City's willingness to be transparent.

In June 2013, Canada signed the G8 Open Data Charter of Principles. The charter sets an expectation and direction for government to adopt principles for greater transparency. Canada has committed to developing a national action plan. In the mean-time, the loss of the Federal Census long-form questionnaire data and the gaps in representation is a concern for decision-making at all levels of government.

Having access to information from other levels of government and providing Calgary's information under the principles of Open Data will have an impact beyond Calgary. Improving the representation of Calgarians in decisions made by the province or federal government could be a great benefit to The City.

## **e-Services – Citizen-centric Design and Access**

Delivering a service online is not the practice of taking a service currently delivered using a traditional channel (e.g. telephone, over-the-counter) and pushing the service online. Recognizing online delivery of services has different factors and behaviours to consider, taking a traditional service and offering the service online requires re-thinking of its purpose.

It should be assumed the average citizen does not have any knowledge of how the City operates and the terminology used within The City departments. Can Calgarians successfully get what they need on their own without intervention by employees? Understanding the barriers for citizens and what impacts their satisfaction is vital to designing a service that will be used frequently and meets the needs of Calgarians. The knowledge collected about the barriers and

what impacts their satisfaction must be shared across departments to ensure interactions with The City are as consistent as possible.

Involving Calgarians early in the projects to participate in the design can benefit The City by avoiding low usage and re-work. A longer-term benefit is demonstrating to Calgarians their input matters and they should continue to support The City and participate in future engagements. Calgarians benefit by having access to services at the quality they expect, when they need it and where they need it.

Collecting knowledge of citizen expectations should continue after the service is first put into use. Feedback provided by Calgarians can be reviewed and adjustments considered as an ongoing engagement with Calgarians. The engagement should be a continuous feedback loop. The citizen's feedback needs to be visible to the public and in a forum where Calgarians can respond to each other's comments and build upon suggestions for improvement.

Consider within a single day, Calgarians may interact with The City for numerous services. A citizen might choose to phone 311 to initiate a particular service request and the next, use the 311 Mobile App. If the service is not implemented consistently on both the telephone and the 311 Mobile App, there could be doubts and some questions about the quality of the service.

Also consider the citizen who goes online to pay for another month of reserved parking at their C-train station and then registers their pet. Compartmentalizing of services must be done from the citizen perspective and not limited to the department offering the service. In this example, the citizen paying for these two different services should have the option to pay for them both without having to navigate to two different web pages to initiate and pay for the services. As more services are transitioned online, there will be opportunities to bundle services.

The City is starting to shift their thinking to bring City services to where Calgarians are at. This applies to online service delivery as well as traditional delivery methods. Bringing The City's e-services to Calgarians where they are at could involve providing services or ways to connect to services through their Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn profiles.

Consider the citizen who prefers to conduct searches in the community and ask questions, getting help from their fellow citizens and not interact directly with The City. If their search finds Calgarians comments and reviews are positive, then the citizen is ready to interact with The City. These Calgarians would prefer to interact with The City in a public forum to add their voice to the reviews and comments for the next person seeking the same information or service.

To this point, consider the 311 Mobile App released earlier this year. The eGovernment Committee suggests many people have downloaded the 311 App and likely not submitted a single report. Calgarians are monitoring what has been reported in their area and/or a customer service request of a specific type. This information provides great education for Calgarians on what The City is doing and provides a platform for citizens to connect with each other as part of the 311 Calgary Tweets feature. The tweets become part of the discussion Calgarians are having about Calgary.

## **Engagement and Participatory Governance**

For the benefits of citizen participation in decision-making to be fully realized, the degree of participation needs to have a recognized value in Calgary. Citizens will need to see what is happening with their input and how their input will be used to impact Calgary. There needs to be a way to acknowledge and recognize the participation and contributions of Calgarians publically.

Technology can be used to create an environment allowing participants to interact without having to face each other to discuss their ideas, when and where it is convenient for them. Technology allows for scaling of engagement in a way traditional means can't. Traditional engagement (e.g. meetings or town halls) is a limited resource – only so much can be done.

## **Partnerships**

During the flood event, desire for citizen participation in the response was unprecedented. Calgary.ca crashed and the response to continue communications was impressive. There was a huge spike in demand for social media during the flood. Mobile access to services and information became the expectation as many lost access to the internet using their personal desktops. Displace citizens, volunteers and City workers relied on mobile devices they could easily take with them.

There was an absence of a shared platform for civic engagement. Cleanup and volunteer efforts would have benefited from a platform to organize and communicate with Calgarians (e.g. YYCHelps, YYC Flood Relief and Volunteer Calgary). Working together to assist Calgarians and clean-up was not easy with so many different web sites and social media channels to follow.

The demand for essential public services during the flood put tremendous strain on public service resources. Having both the mindset and technology in place to co-create services, Calgarians desperate to help could have been tapped to deliver services traditionally offered by The City during the crisis and transition to recovery.

An example of this during the flood would be Google's 2013 Alberta Flooding map. This map included information from Calgary.ca to inform the public about the status of roads, parking, electrical, maintenance crews, weather, traffic and police. Google provided links to websites including The City of Calgary and The City of Calgary 311 App (for Android Phones).

## Plans and Expected Deliverables

The following represents the work planned by the eGovernment Committee on a timeline.

