

Summary of Engagement and Communication Activity

Introduction

A comprehensive engagement and communication plan was used to develop the proposed wording for the bylaw and the accompanying building exterior visual assessment document. The key elements of the plan are set out below.

Process

Engagement and communication activities were carried out throughout 2015 and into 2016. The initial phase involved face-to-face meetings with groups of external and internal stakeholders, conversations via email and through in-person, small-group discussions. Initially the idea of a bylaw was presented and general input was captured. Subsequent meetings asked for input on the draft bylaw and the building exterior visual assessment tool. Following the in-person sessions, contact with stakeholders continued through email correspondence to continue to gather input on specifics of the project.

In October 2015, the project was referred back to Administration for additional engagement. The purpose of the engagement process was refined to state “How can we craft a Building Maintenance Bylaw that meets The City’s objectives (enhancing public safety and awareness of the importance of regular building maintenance) and aligns with industry practices?”

Contact was made with community members involved in the provision of non-market housing, and a face-to-face meeting with this group was held in November 2015. At the same time, a stakeholder working group was formed to provide ongoing input to the project, and included two representatives for the non-market housing providers.

The stakeholder working group was comprised of representatives for a variety of interested groups, including residential and commercial building owners and property managers, and professionals involved in building science, services and technologies. A set of terms of reference for the group was established and agreed to by the participants.

Once established, the stakeholder working group members provided ongoing liaison with those they were representing by sending out requests for input based on questions developed by City staff and attending meetings where the input was shared. A series of four meetings was held between November 2015 and March 2016. An additional meeting was held in May 2016 to consider further changes to the proposed bylaw which were developed in order to respond to new concerns raised by a key stakeholder.

An engagement session for internal stakeholders was held in February 2016 and representatives from all City departments were invited. In particular, the participation of facility and asset managers responsible for monitoring and maintaining significant City-owned buildings was sought. Further internal communication has been provided through myCity postings.

All of the stakeholders, as well as the broader community, were able to stay informed about the progress of the project through regular updates on calgary.ca/buildingmaintenancebylaw and a subscription-based e-mail newsletter.

Stakeholders – external

- Alberta Association of Architects
- Alberta Building Envelope Council - South
- Alberta Roofing Contractors Association
- Association of Condominium Managers of Alberta
- Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta
- Boardwalk Rental Communities
- Building Owners & Managers Association
- Calgary Construction Association
- Calgary Hotel Association
- Calgary Residential Rental Association
- Canadian Condominium Institute
- Canadian Home Builders Association – Calgary Region
- Consulting Engineers of Alberta
- Non-market housing providers (14 different agencies)
- Real Estate Institute of Canada, Calgary chapter

Stakeholders – internal:

- Calgary Building Services
- Calgary Community Standards
- Calgary Emergency Management Agency
- Calgary Fire Department
- Calgary Housing
- Corporate Facility Planning & Management
- Infrastructure & Information Services
- Law
- Roads
- Transit
- Waste & Recycling Services
- Water Resources.

Engagement themes

In the first phase, the main themes stakeholders focused on included: scope of the bylaw; defining who would be qualified to carry out building exterior visual assessments; and timelines for visual assessments and reporting. Stakeholders also provided input on the content to be included in the building exterior visual assessment tool. Based on discussions with the stakeholders, provisions were included in the proposed bylaw to address these matters.

In October 2015, the Standing Policy Committee on Urban Development did not debate the bylaw presented to them at that time, but referred the matter back to Administration for further engagement with the stakeholders.

The second phase of community engagement focused on crafting a bylaw that would advance The City's objective of enhancing public safety while aligning as much as possible with industry practices. Matters discussed by the stakeholders included:

- Public safety rationale for the bylaw
- Who can complete a building exterior visual assessment? – Should there be a defined group of “qualified professionals” limited to engineers and architects, or a different description of necessary qualifications?
- Frequency of visual assessments
- How can this process fit with existing processes commonly used by building owners and managers to assess building condition
- How to evaluate and rank the level of potential safety concern for items visually assessed
- How much will a building exterior visual assessment cost and what does (or should) this represent as part of an overall maintenance budget

Results

Based on the input from stakeholders, some key changes were made from the previously proposed wording of the bylaw. Specifically:

- Required frequency of the building exterior visual assessment – changed from every four years to every five years
- Rules for who can carry out the visual assessment – modified to stipulate that the person conducting a visual assessment must have the appropriate education, knowledge, skills and experience to do so
- Requirement added for person to attach a statement of qualifications to the building exterior visual assessment
- Clarification that the requirements of the bylaw are for a visual assessment only, and that this work is not engineering practice.

The stakeholder working group was provided with an overview of the proposed changes and the responses were very positive overall.

The stakeholder working group members also participated in a short survey on their experience with the engagement process. The results indicate that the participants strongly felt that the process was a good use of their time, and that The City listened to their viewpoints and took them into account.