

People, Innovation & Collaboration Services Report to
Executive Committee
2025 June 17

ISC: UNRESTRICTED
EC2025-0503

Strengthening Transparency - Improving Engagement with Calgarians

PURPOSE

This report provides Council a progress update on the third-party review of engagement at The City of Calgary, as outlined in Notice of Motion, Strengthening Transparency: Improving Engagement with Calgarians, EC2024-1130.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION

At the Regular Meeting of Council held 2024 October 29, Council directed Administration to contract an independent, third-party consultant accredited in public participation to:

- Conduct an analysis of The City's policy and approach to public participation and engagement through public feedback and validation in contrast to industry best practices (e.g., IAP2);
- Identify lessons learned and develop opportunities to improve public participation and engagement with Calgarians; and,

Administration report back with an update to City Council through Executive Committee no later than Q2 2025.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Executive Committee recommend that Council receive this report and attachments for the Corporate Record.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, 2025 JUNE 17:

That Council receive this report and attachments for the Corporate Record.

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER/GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS

General Manager of People, Innovation & Collaboration Services concurs with this report.

HIGHLIGHTS

In April 2025, Administration contracted third-party consultant, KPMG, to lead the review of engagement at The City of Calgary. Their review will:

- Assess The City of Calgary's approach to engagement and compare findings with leading practices across Canadian, U.S. and international municipalities.
- Gather perspectives on The City's engagement approach from Calgarians and interested parties.
- Recommend improvements to The City's engagement process.

KPMG has completed phases one and two of their four-phase review, including:

- Research and jurisdictional comparisons;
- Benchmark development; and
- Engagement with the Executive Leadership Team and Council.

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DISCUSSION

KPMG's analysis includes input from the Executive Leadership Team and Council along with jurisdictional reviews of public engagement practices across 13 municipalities. KPMG has defined 20 benchmarks for public engagement in a municipal context as a framework to assess Calgary's approach. Benchmarks will align to these four principles of public engagement:

1. Inclusion and Accessibility – equitable opportunities to influence decisions
2. Transparency and Communication – clearly defined processes
3. Accountability and Responsiveness – clearly conveying how engagement will inform decision-making
4. Capacity – resources, skills and systems to effectively conduct engagement

Further engagement with members of the public and interested parties will inform the recommendations. KPMG will begin phase three of their review over the summer with interested party engagement and data collection. The review will conclude with phase four comprised of the following:

- A full review of The City's approach to public engagement, including:
 - Public and interested party feedback and validation.
 - Industry best practices in engagement.
- Defined benchmarks to continuously improve public engagement practices at The City of Calgary; and,
- Recommendations for continuous improvement.

The final report, including recommendations, will be presented to Council through Executive Committee in Q1 2026.

EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public engagement was undertaken | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dialogue with interested parties was undertaken |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public/interested parties were informed | <input type="checkbox"/> Public communication or engagement was not required |

KPMG conducted interviews with the Executive Leadership Team and Members of Council. The communication and engagement with members of the public and select City employees will occur this summer.

IMPLICATIONS

Social

Clear and accessible opportunities to participate in this review support The City's commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging.

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Environmental

Not applicable.

Economic

Not applicable.

Service and Financial Implications

Existing operating funding - one-time

One-time operating funding was provided for this third-party review of The City's engagement process. There is no budget allocated at this time for implementation of recommendations.

RISK

Clear understanding of Calgarians' experiences with engagement at The City is critical to informing improvements. KPMG will offer in-person engagement sessions in each ward, online sessions and survey options to support equitable opportunity to provide input.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Attach 1 - Progress Update - Public Engagement Review
2. Attach 2 - Notice of Motion – Strengthening Transparency Improving Engagement with Calgarians (EC2024-1130)

Department Circulation

General Manager/Director	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
Jennifer McMurtry	Customer Service & Communications	Approve
Chris Arthurs	People, Innovation & Collaboration Services	Approve

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