

Request for Decision

Community Engagement Review

Presented To:	Community Services Committee
Presented:	Monday, Dec 02, 2013
Report Date	Wednesday, Nov 20, 2013
Type:	Presentations

Recommendation

WHEREAS City Council has supported various methods of community engagement to provide citizens with opportunities to become involved in the decision making process, and;

WHEREAS City Council has accepted the principles of the Public Participation Spectrum to encourage civic engagement, and;

WHEREAS it is critical that the community engagement processes employed by the City of Greater Sudbury compliment Council's priorities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City of Greater Sudbury review the current methods of community engagement including the type of committees, advisory panels and task forces and report back to Council in the spring with options for consideration.

Signed By

Report Prepared By

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Digitally Signed Nov 20, 13

Division Review

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Recommended by the Department

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Background

Community engagement is a process to involve and empower the community and stakeholders in the exchange of information and opinions on decisions, policies, plans, and strategies; and to partner and consult with the community and stakeholders in the decision making process. Community engagement speaks to how a community comes together through various venues to build a collective vision and identity, and to contribute to the decision-making process of City Council.

Since amalgamation, several reports have been prepared for Council regarding community engagement:

- Mayor's Task Force on Community Involvement & Volunteerism, June 2001
- Supporting the Community Action Network Infrastructure, September 2002
- Healthy Community Strategy, June 2005

- CGS Human Services Strategy 2015, June 2005
- Constellation City, January 2007
- Civic Participation Experience Report, May 2007
- Public Participation Policy, May 2008
- Community Action Networks – Terms of Engagement, June 2008

All CGS departments have met and had an opportunity to provide input regarding the current community engagement process and will continue to be involved throughout the review.

A variety of community engagement approaches utilizing various techniques are used for different issues. The key is that the community engagement process be applied consistently. Examples of community engagement include: public consultation, community fairs, advisory panels, task forces, focus groups, open houses, community action networks (CANs), neighbourhood associations, and participatory budget processes.

Purpose

The City of Greater Sudbury currently has 26 advisory panels which sunset with the term of City Council in 2014. In addition, the Community Development Department liaise with 16 CANs and many other panels and task forces. In preparation for the next term of Council, a community engagement review is being undertaken. Feedback will be collected through surveys to all members of committees, advisory panels, and Community Action Networks, as well as the community in regards to community engagement within the City of Greater Sudbury. A report will be prepared and presented to the Community Services committee in the spring of 2014.

Next Steps

The broad consultative processes including advisory panels, CANs and community consultations have seen a maturity in the nature of information brought forward to Council. The Public Participation Spectrum is a tool identified in the Public Participation Policy (Appendix 1) which will continue to evolve and encourage broader community involvement.

In the interest of continual improvement with respect to community engagement, a review of the types and methods of engagement as they currently exist will be undertaken. As well, the Public Participation Policy will also be reviewed so that it can continue to reflect the evolution of community engagement in the City of Greater Sudbury.

Public Participation Policy

Background

The City of Greater Sudbury recognizes that political decision-making is most effective when it includes public input from an active, engaged and educated public. The City of Greater Sudbury has been proactive in involving citizens in community decision-making: participatory budget processes, various planning and development initiatives, the Healthy Community Cabinet, numerous Advisory Committees and Panels as well as neighbourhood level involvement through the Community Action Networks (CANs). A policy will formalize and guide future citizen engagement activities across the corporation toward standardized, consistent and sustainable civic engagement for all citizens.

Purpose

The Public Participation Policy is intended to provide a framework for the City of Greater Sudbury to engage its citizens in local decision-making. One of the main goals of this policy is to ensure that civic engagement activities are given consideration throughout the corporation as well as ensure that citizens can initiate civic engagement activities through a number of available entry points. This policy recognizes, unless otherwise stated by law or regulations, that it is the responsibility of the City of Greater Sudbury (Council and Administration) to assess opportunities for public engagement.

Policy Statement

The City of Greater Sudbury (Council and Administration) recognizes that decisions are improved by engaging citizens and diverse stakeholder groups where appropriate and are committed to upholding engagement processes that are inclusive, transparent and standardized within the Corporation's ability to finance and resource them.

The City of Greater Sudbury assigns high priority to the factors impacting the challenge of civic engagement, specifically the diverse needs and backgrounds of citizens and the large geographic spread of citizens across communities.

The City of Greater Sudbury will work to build capacity within the Corporation, equipping staff and Council with the tools necessary to play a vital role in fostering a greater sense of belonging among all citizens within the community.

Recognizing the value of ongoing input from citizens and diverse stakeholder groups throughout the community, the City of Greater Sudbury commits to work closely with these groups through various venues to ensure the policy remains relevant and successful.

Guiding Principles

A growing consensus concerning what Greater Sudburians value has evolved over time and is reflected in the City of Greater Sudbury Official Plan, the Healthy Community By-Law implemented by City Council in 2001 and more recently the healthy Community Charter in 2007. In keeping with this, the Charter embraces civic engagement and social capital as one of its four main priority areas forming an integral part of the overall Healthy Community strategy.

Principles of Healthy Communities:

- Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well being
- Social, environmental and economic factors are important determinants of human health and are inter-related
- People cannot achieve their fullest potential unless they are able to take control of those things which determine their well-being
- All sectors of the community are inter-related and share their knowledge, expertise and perspectives, working together to create a healthy community.

*Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition, 2004

Core Values

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) offers the following core values of public participation to help guide the application of this policy.

1. The public should have a say in decisions about actions that affect their lives.
2. Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decisions.
3. The public participation process communicates the interests and meets the process needs of participants.
4. The public participation process actively seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected.
5. The public participation process involves participants in defining how they participate.
6. The public participation process provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.

*International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)

Public Participation Spectrum

Different issues require different levels of public engagement. The following Public Participation Spectrum can be used as a guideline for action. The Public Participation Spectrum is a tool to assist with the planning of specific civic engagement activities. The pillars of this spectrum are; **inform**, **consult**, **involve**, **collaborate**, and **empower**, providing a mechanism to clarify complex issues, and to ensure that decision-making processes are transparent.

IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum

Developed by the International Association for Public Participation

INCREASING LEVEL OF PUBLIC IMPACT

INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
Public Participation Goal: To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	Public Participation Goal: To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	Public Participation Goal: To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	Public Participation Goal: To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	Public Participation Goal: To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
Promise to The Public: We will keep you informed.	Promise to The Public: We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	Promise to The Public: We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	Promise to The Public: We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	Promise to The Public: We will implement what you decide.
Example Techniques to Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fact sheets • Web sites • Open houses 	Example Techniques to Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public comment • Focus groups • Surveys • Public meetings 	Example Techniques to Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Deliberate polling 	Example Techniques to Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen Advisory Committees • Consensus-building 	Example Techniques to Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen juries • Ballots • Delegated decisions