POLICY TITLE	Citizen Engagement
CATEGORY	Administration
POLICY NUMBER	A09 ADM 002
DEPARTMENT	Corporate Services
POLICY AUTHOR	City Clerk
POLICY TYPE	City Policy
APPROVED BY	Council
EFFECTIVE DATE	11/19/2019
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POLICY STATEMENT

The Corporation of the City of Cambridge, hereby referred to as "the City", is committed to meaningful engagement that is open, accessible, inclusive and responsive, and within the City's resources. City of Cambridge Council and City Administration recognize that decisions are improved by engaging citizens. Stronger healthy communities are created and maintained when citizens understand their role and value in making their community stronger, healthy and resilient. Through engaging citizens in a transparent and collaborative manner the City can promote greater participation in the community and the citizens of Cambridge have the right to participate in clear and transparent city processes in a timely, meaningful and appropriate way.

The City's goal is inclusive citizen engagement processes to ensure quality communication, citizen involvement and community participation across a variety of options - inform, consult, collaborate, citizen leadership.

PURPOSE

The policy provides strategic direction for how the City will inform, consult with and engage the public ensuring there is a range of opportunities for residents to be knowledgeable and involved.

DEFINITIONS

"Citizen engagement" is the process of working collaboratively with people to create a better community. It includes information sharing, consultation and active involvement in decisions that affect the community. The citizen engagement process shall be transparent, responsive inclusive and based on realistic expectations, mutual respect and trust.

AUTHORITY

This policy operates under Corporate authority.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all and citizens of Cambridge.

POLICY

1) Guiding Principles

City of Cambridge Council and City Administration have a responsibility to foster and support an environment where the following conditions for success are made possible and incorporated into all engagement efforts.

2) Mutual Respect and Inclusion

All participants will listen and respect different opinions, be flexible in how they interact and be open to considering diverse views and opinions.

Statement on Inclusiveness:

Citizen Engagement brings together people from different cultures and different backgrounds to explore their community. We strive to be inclusive in all of our activities.

We want to reflect the whole community without regard to their age, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion or belief, ethnicity or national origin and we undertake not to discriminate against them on any of those grounds.
We treat all people with respect and undertake not to discriminate against them on grounds of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion or belief, ethnicity or national origin. We value and celebrate diversity.

3) Accessibility

Information and communications will be timely and accessible and adhere to the City's policies and procedures with respect to same. Communications and information is delivered a variety of ways to include the future and current diverse needs of the community.

4) Shared Responsibility

Both the City and the citizens of Cambridge have a responsibility to recognize the value and importance of engagement and both will endeavour to meet their obligations.

5) Transparency

All processes will be open, understandable, transparent and inclusive. All participants will make the best effort to reach, involve and hear from all those who are directly and indirectly affected. The City will work with citizens to provide acess to open data for informed participation and decision making.

6) Expectations

At each level of engagement, all participants will understand their roles, responsibilities and authority and will understand that the interest of the community may be greater than the interest of individual citizens.

7) Responsiveness

All participants will listen and respond to concerns in a timely manner, ensuring that outcomes and next steps are communicated.

8) Citizens Engagement Framework

The City has developed a framework for communicating with and involving citizens in a variety of formats and levels of engagement. They include the following:

- Inform: To provide detailed information to the public and raise public awareness
- Consult: To obtain public feedback on alternatives and/or decisions in order to inform decision making
- Collaborate: To partner with stakeholders in all steps of the process, including the development of strategies and recommendations and the identification of preferred solutions
- Empower: To allow citizens to initiate and develop projects and make final decisions and/or implement the decisions (ie. Development of neighbourhood parks)

The responsibility of the City and the Community, as well as detailed tools and strategies are outlined within the Citizen Engagement Framework.

9) Evaluation Outcomes

The City of Cambridge is committed to ensuring that the Community Engagement Policy stays relevant and achieves its intended outcomes. To be

successful with the in the area of community engagement, the City strives for the following outcomes:

- Increased citizen participation in various municipal processes
- Increased civic pride
- Decreased barriers to participation
- Increased understanding about how City Hall operates
- Neighbourhood level influence reflects city-wide benefits and interests
- Better, more informed decisions
- Increased role in some decision-making processes for citizens
- Earlier identification of citizens' issues and concerns

POLICY COMMUNICATION

This Policy will be communicated to staff via distribution through the Corporate Leadership Team and Senior Management Team, as well as available on the City of Cambridge website.

RELATED PROCEDURES

There are no related procedures.

RELATED DOCUMENTS/LEGISLATION

Citizen Engagement Framework