



Community Engagement Task Force Presentation to Committee of the Whole November 8, 2011



WHAT IS THE TASK FORCE?

A group of over 80 citizens and City staff seeking to improve community engagement with municipal government:

...inclusive and diverse, reflecting a broad range of Londoners across geography, age, race, gender, profession, interest and perspective.



WHAT IS THE TASK FORCE'S MANDATE?

...develop and recommend to Council a policy on community engagement.



WHY A POLICY?

- The public expects government to be more collaborative.
- People want to be involved in decision-making.
- People want more information in order to decide for themselves.
- Council acknowledged that the City could improve the way we engage with the public



WHY IS A POLICY IMPORTANT?

- Citizen engagement values the right of citizens to have an informed say in the decisions that affect their lives.
- A policy explicitly acknowledges that decisions are improved through citizen engagement
- A policy demonstrates a commitment to engagement across the full spectrum of City activities.



WORK-TO-DATE

- Review of current practices (May)
- Review of other cities/best practices (May)
- Draft policy developed including policy statement, definition, vision, mission (June)
- Public Engagement Process (October)
- Review draft policy with Council (November)



BEST PRACTICES

- A definition of engagement
- A set of principles to guide engagement efforts
- A description of the different ways of engaging
- Online calendar of events, meetings, and opportunities for input
- Tools and training for staff who carry out engagement efforts



HOW DO WE DEFINE “COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT”?

Community engagement is the process of meaningful dialogue and participation in forming decisions that affect the community and enhance quality of life.

The community engagement process is transparent, responsive, inclusive, and empowering, and is based on realistic expectations, mutual respect, and trust.



VISION

All Londoners working together for a better future.



MISSION

Effectively inform and educate citizens in a transparent and collaborative manner that offers greater participation in civic affairs.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Inform

- To provide detailed information and awareness to the public

Consult

- To obtain 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

Citizen Leadership

- To empower citizens to initiate and make final decisions



PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS

- Public and staff open houses
- Virtual Town Hall with the Mayor
- Online survey
- Kitchen conversations
- Focus groups



PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS





Captured at the
Open House...



IMPROVING ENGAGEMENT CAN:

- Increase citizen participation
- Increase understanding about how City Hall works
- Earlier identification of citizens' issues and concerns
- Better, more informed decisions
- Increased role for citizens in some decision-making processes



CHALLENGES AND IMPLICATIONS

- Building relationships
- Dedicating resources and time
- Managing expectations
- Changing perceptions and attitudes
- Fostering interest and motivation
- Maintaining momentum



NEXT STEPS

- Revise policy based on public and Council's feedback and input (November-December)
- Finalize Policy and Report to Council with recommendations about tools and strategies (Jan 31, 2012)
- Implementation (2012)



COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS?