

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AT THE CITY OF EDMONTON
SHARE YOUR VOICE SHAPE OUR CITY

Edmonton

THE COUNCIL INITIATIVE ON PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

NEW PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT
PRACTICE AND
IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP
FINAL REPORT



A woman with dark hair, wearing a black top and a colorful patterned vest, is speaking into a microphone. She is seated at a white table with other people. In the background, there is a yellow wall and a person in a red shirt. The scene is a public engagement event.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

OUR PROMISE

This is our city.

We value your input on how we maintain, grow and build Edmonton.

We believe engagement leads to better decision making.

We are committed to reaching out to our diverse communities in thoughtful and meaningful ways.

We want to understand your perspectives and build trusting relationships with you.

We will show you how you help influence City decisions.

Share your voice with us and shape our city.

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INTRODUCTION

The findings of the Council Initiative on Public Engagement (the Initiative), which can be found in the The Council Initiative on Public Engagement Report, provides a path forward for public engagement at the City of Edmonton.

This report sets a new course for public engagement through leading practice. It describes how this course aligns with the City's strategic direction, a new Public Engagement Policy, Public Engagement Procedure and Public Engagement Framework, and an Implementation Roadmap for Public Engagement.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

The Council Initiative on Public Engagement – its process, outcomes and next steps – are part of the City's overall strategic plan, the Way Ahead, and its commitment to open government through the Open City Initiative.

SUPPORTING THE CITY VISION The Way Ahead is a visioning document that lays out Council's goals for change. It forms the foundation for the work of the City and guides us in our continued commitment to enhance quality of life for Edmontonians. The Way Ahead was established by City Council in 2008. It was updated in 2011 and 2014 and is being renewed again in 2017.

The 30-year, citizen-built City vision in The Way Ahead is a creative description of Edmonton's future in 2040. Six 10-year strategic goals describe the areas where Council believes significant change is required to achieve this vision. Public engagement will play a critical role in achieving these goals and their objectives.

EDMONTON AS AN OPEN CITY Through the Open City Initiative, Edmonton is aspiring to fulfill its role as a preeminent global city: innovative, inclusive and engaged. Building such a city takes foresight, planning and active participation by its citizens. A great city is an open city. An open city creates opportunity for diverse input and participation, inviting citizens to play a larger role in shaping their

community and enabling social and economic growth.

Open City is grounded in a set of basic principles – transparency, participation, collaboration, inclusiveness and innovation.

ONE OF OPEN CITY'S GOALS Open Engagement – aspires through innovative and inclusive public engagement approaches to create opportunities for people to interact with the City and impact the design, development and delivery of public programs, services and policies. The City supports community building and leadership for engaged citizenship through education and collaboration.

Open Engagement's two objectives are 1) a coordinated and strategic approach to public engagement, and 2) innovative approaches to engage with Edmontonians in ways that are relevant to them.

The Open City mandate and principles and the Open Engagement goal and objectives are directly aligned with the findings described in this report, and the Implementation Roadmap is a path forward to achieving them.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT POLICY

The City of Edmonton values public engagement processes and activities that contribute to policy, program, service and project decisions by providing City Council and Administration with the best possible information to support decision making.

This is the policy statement that forms the foundation of the City's new Public Engagement Policy, which, if approved by City Council, will replace Policy C513 – Public Involvement that was adopted by Council on January 17, 2006.

The Policy describes when public engagement is applied, the role of decision makers, the importance of respectful and safe discussion and debate, a definition of public engagement and public engagement spectrum, a vision and guiding principles for public engagement, and key supporting activities for public engagement.

The new Policy initiates some key changes from the current one:

- Provides detail and clarity about the Policy's purpose and when it applies;
- Provides guidance on the role of decision makers regarding public engagement;
- Highlights the importance of respectful and safe discussion and debate;
- Defines public engagement more clearly, by linking it with decision making and highlighting the importance of reporting back to people about how their input was used;
- Includes vision, guiding principles, spectrum and supporting elements right in the policy;
- Removes “inform” from the public engagement spectrum and uses citizen-centred language to describe the spectrum; and
- Includes key supporting elements for public engagement that are critical for success.

APPLICATION The policy applies to all of the City's policies, programs, projects and services that have an impact on the public for the purposes of:

- Designing or implementing a new policy, program, project or service;
- Evaluating, changing or ending an existing policy, program, project or service;
- Fulfilling a legislated or regulated requirement; or
- Responding to a community-initiated request.

This Policy applies to public engagement regarding all of the City's policies, programs, projects and services whether it is planned and delivered by City staff, contractors or community volunteers.

ROLE OF DECISION MAKERS The role of decision makers – City Council or Administration – in public engagement is to strive for the best understanding of the public's views and perspectives on topics and issues, consider public input in decision making, and communicate to the public how their input was used and why decisions were made. Public engagement is one factor in the decision making process and will have more or less influence relative to other factors for every specific decision.

RESPECTFUL AND SAFE DISCUSSION AND DEBATE

The policy also recognizes that the discussion and debate that underlies public engagement activities will be conducted in a respectful and safe manner by all participants – City staff, contractors, stakeholders and the general public.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT POLICY

DEFINITION OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Public Engagement creates opportunities for people to contribute to decision making by City Council and Administration about the City’s policies, programs, projects, and services, and communicates how public input is collected and used.

This definition is not intended to replace the more common usage of the term “engagement,” which can refer to all the various ways of interacting with people such as community relations, communications, 311 interactions, etc. Rather, the term is used here to better align the expectations of City Council, City Administration and the public when it comes to the City’s “public engagement” activities.

increasing level of public influence and commitment from the City and the public.

ADVISE The public is consulted by the City to share feedback and perspectives that are considered for policies, programs, projects, or services.

REFINE The public is involved by the City to adapt and adjust approaches to policies, programs, projects, or services.

CREATE The public collaborates with the City to develop and build solutions regarding policies, programs, projects, or services. This can include community initiated engagement.

DECIDE The public is empowered to make decisions directly or on behalf of the City about policies, programs, projects, or services.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SPECTRUM

The Public Engagement Spectrum explains the four roles the public can play when they participate in City of Edmonton public engagement activities. It also indicates the City’s purpose for engaging them (in brackets). Within the spectrum, there is an

The spectrum is used to facilitate the discussion about the appropriate influence of the public that occurs during the development of a Public Engagement Charter. It should also be used to explain the role of the public in various activities delivered through Public Engagement Plans (PEPs).

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SPECTRUM

What is the appropriate role for the public? Can we aspire to more influence and commitment?



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT POLICY

VISION FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

A city where we are connected, invested and proud to participate in shaping our community.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY Engagement of people in an authentic way contributes to robust solutions to challenging issues and encourages participation that supports democratic decision making.

RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING AND PERSPECTIVE SEEKING Meaningful engagement values local perspectives and community experiences; it recognizes that respect and equitable processes foster trust and stronger relationships.

PROACTIVE, TIMELY AND TRANSPARENT People have enough time and notice to engage early in the process which enables considered input and impact on decision making. How input will be assessed and used is clearly communicated during engagement and reported on afterwards

INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE Engagement planning and delivery is inclusive and accessible to best serve our city by encouraging two-way conversations and strategies that reach diverse communities and ensure people feel heard and know their input is valued.

INNOVATIVE AND CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVING As Edmonton grows and evolves, we aspire to co-create and embrace new and better engagement processes, tools and tactics based on a sound approach to evaluating success.

SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The following are activities that support effective public engagement, but only doing these activities is not considered public engagement. Public engagement and its activities are described above in the definition of public engagement and the public engagement spectrum.

COMMUNICATIONS The City and the public are informed about, listen and learn about City policies, programs, projects and services through clear and transparent communications focused on plain language, active listening and responsiveness. This is a key activity underlying all four levels of the public engagement spectrum.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT Carrying out engagement within an effective and aligned project management process.

DECISION MAKING Clearly identifying decisions, decision makers and decision making processes for every public engagement process.

RELATIONSHIPS Developing and enhancing relationships through meaningful dialogue that is based on respect and trust.

CAPACITY BUILDING Providing the knowledge and tools to engage by building capacity internally and within communities.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT Building community and staff leadership by facilitating leadership development opportunities.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCEDURE

The purpose of the Public Engagement Procedure is to provide direction on implementation of the City of Edmonton's Public Engagement Policy, including initiation, execution, goals and outcomes, and roles and responsibilities.

GOAL EDMONTON DEMONSTRATES A CULTURE OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT.

OUTCOMES

- City staff and the public are aware of the value of public engagement and are motivated to participate.
- Public engagement results are viewed by City staff and the public as strategic assets, which means they are captured, shared, considered by decision makers and referenced in future engagements.
- The public have opportunities for ongoing, continuous dialogue beyond specific engagement projects or initiatives.

GOAL PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT DISPLAYS MUTUAL RESPECT AND BENEFIT.

OUTCOMES

- City staff and the public feel safe, respected and heard.
- The City of Edmonton aspires to collaborate with and empower the public (general public and stakeholders such as: community organizations, businesses, government departments) to enable better decisions.

GOAL PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IS INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE.

OUTCOMES

- Public engagement is accepting of a diverse range of views.
- The public engagement process provides meaningful engagement opportunities for those most affected by and interested in the project or initiative.
- Barriers are not an impediment to participation.

GOAL PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESSES ARE EFFECTIVE.

OUTCOMES

- The public engagement process is well designed and planned.
- The public engagement process uses open, two-way communication.
- The process is transparent so the public understands when, how and to what extent they will be engaged.

GOAL PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES ARE WELL MANAGED AND EFFICIENT.

OUTCOMES

- Public engagement activities are coordinated across the organization.
- Public engagement activities use resources efficiently.

The Procedure is championed by the Engagement Branch of the Communications and Engagement Department but the implementation and accountability for public engagement is the responsibility of all City branches and departments that undertake public engagement.

Decision makers, staff, communications advisors, public engagement advisors, stakeholders and members of the public all have important roles to play in public engagement, an interest in achieving positive outcomes, and will benefit from moving the practice of public engagement forward.

The Procedure applies to the City's public engagement processes and activities whether they are delivered by City staff, contractors or community volunteers.

The Procedure describes in detail the roles of the Communications and Engagement Department, the Engagement Branch, Administrative decision makers, project managers and staff, contractors, stakeholders and the public.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The City's Public Engagement Framework answers the question "How does the City of Edmonton carry out public engagement?"

It is made up of eight parts:

Public Engagement Policy

Public Engagement Procedure

Public Engagement Learning and Training

Public Engagement Planning and Design

Public Engagement Communications

Public Engagement Reporting

Public Engagement Evaluation

Public Engagement Recognition

The elements of this eight-part Framework are further described in the:

- Public Engagement Learning and Training Method
- Public Engagement Planning, Communications and Reporting Process
- Public Engagement Evaluation and Recognition Approach

The Public Engagement Framework is championed by the Engagement Branch of the Communications and Engagement Department but its implementation and accountability are the responsibility of all City branches and departments that undertake public engagement. The Engagement Branch supports this work through leadership, advice, planning, training and evaluation.

Furthermore, the public should play an important role planning for and implementing public engagement. They are critical for providing the right external context and checking City assumptions. Public engagement that is informed by and sometimes planned with or jointly created by the public can often be better public engagement.

Also, increasing awareness of the City's public engagement approach and activities respects the relationship the City has with all of its diverse citizens, supports inclusion, builds trust and provides a good starting point for better engagement.

A ROADMAP FOR SUCCESS

The Engagement Branch of the City's Communications and Engagement Department will champion the City's efforts to improve public engagement by bringing the Initiative's findings to life through leading and innovative practice. Improving public engagement aligns directly with the new department's vision, mission and business model principles.

Although Communication and Engagement will take the lead, responsibility and accountability for public engagement rests with all City branches and departments that undertake public engagement.

PRIORITIES

The City has identified the following six priorities for public engagement based on the work completed through the Council Initiative on Public Engagement. They are described further below and can also be found in the Implementation Road Map for Public Engagement:

1. Organizational development and culture;
2. Community leadership and capacity building;
3. Public engagement planning, delivery and reporting;
4. Public engagement learning and training;
5. Public engagement evaluation; and
6. Communications for public engagement.

TURNING PRIORITIES INTO ACTIONS

For each of the priorities, action plans have been identified, to be pursued in 2017 and 2018. In total, 20 Actions have been identified. Progress towards completing these actions will be re-assessed periodically, at minimum in fall 2017, spring 2018 and winter 2018. Upon these reviews, the actions will be revised as required and new actions added if needed.

Delivering these action plans will require time and resources. However, in 2017 the City will not be seeking additional budget dollars for this work. Rather, the organization will reallocate existing budget resources as required.

A ROADMAP FOR SUCCESS

ACTION PLAN 1.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURE

Any strategy requires the right structure to succeed and effective structures are often the result of excellent organizational cultures. For the City of Edmonton to deliver on its strategic priorities for public engagement, its structure and culture must be optimized.

The City is in a unique position when it comes to structure as it is currently in the midst of wide-ranging organizational change. One of those changes was the creation of a new Public Engagement Section within a new Engagement Branch in a new Communications and Engagement Department. The creation of this new structure, which did not exist before, combined with the outcomes of the Initiative's work, has created a unique opportunity to inform a new structure and culture that is purposefully designed to move forward the desired shifts in public engagement.

Structure is not simply an organization chart. It is all the people, positions, processes, culture, technology and related elements. It defines how all the pieces work together. We must carefully think out every aspect of the new structure and move forward carefully and intentionally. The objective is to change not only what people do but how they think about public engagement.

The new Public Engagement Procedure outlines the roles and responsibilities of the Department, Branch and staff, which need to be supported by purposeful organizational design. There is also a need to support the change to a new Public Engagement Policy and Public Engagement Framework through change management processes and activities that support staff. This should include formal recognition of innovative and improving public engagement practices.

Also, process improvements such as developing new intake and delivery models, tracking systems, and data storage and knowledge sharing protocols, and better service delivery approaches based on a professional services firm model are needed so the Department and Branch can provide the advice and support the organization needs for public engagement.

Furthermore, implementing an integrated, team-based approach for how we work together as a City is necessary to pursue the challenging priorities we have set for ourselves and to find solutions to address the complex problems we face every day.

A ROADMAP FOR SUCCESS

ACTION PLAN 1.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURE

ACTION 1.1	Develop and finalize a Branch organizational structure that supports the City’s revised approach to public engagement
TIMELINE	Q2-Q3 2017
LEAD	Engagement Branch

ACTION 1.2	Develop and implement a change management plan focused on orientation to the new Public Engagement Policy, Procedure and Framework and targeted to specific audiences throughout the organization
TIMELINE	Q2-Q4 2017
LEAD	Engagement Branch in collaboration with the School of Business

ACTION 1.3	Develop and implement a service delivery model that implements the roles and responsibilities in the Public Engagement Procedure, is based on the professional services firm model, and facilitates the creation of integrated, purpose built teams
TIMELINE	Q2-Q4 2017
LEAD	Engagement Branch

ACTION 1.4	Develop and implement a Public Engagement Recognition Program that includes a City Manager’s Award, “Thank You” templates, staff profiles on One City and a public storytelling website
TIMELINE	Q3-Q4 2017
LEAD	Engagement Branch with Support from the Marketing Branch and Web Office

A ROADMAP FOR SUCCESS ACTION PLAN 2. COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Good public engagement depends on making connections and building relationships with people. It demands that our planning and delivery choices support trust, diversity, and inclusion in our public engagement. Community Leadership is one way that we can broadly develop, maintain, and sustain connections and relationships in our communities. It is an important way to identify the individual people or groups who listen to others, build relationships, and work together to advance the interests of those around them. It is also an important way to ensure that the City of Edmonton is working in concert with members of the community who are focused on building trust and making a difference to Edmontonians.

To enhance capacity building, develop community leadership, improve awareness and communications, and provide a consistent face of the City for community, a community engagement coordinator role is needed. Where this role lives in the organization or if it may already exist and just needs to be refined or reimaged is open for debate. What is not debatable is the importance of this role for community.

The City of Edmonton needs to improve the quality of information it has about Edmonton's communities. It requires a more formal method of identifying community leaders, organizations and the characteristics and needs of communities. While many City staff work closely with or within a network of community leaders, their knowledge of these leaders is usually specific to their personal relationships or job functions. This makes it challenging to incorporate this knowledge into planning and delivering public engagement opportunities to ensure they are reaching out to, accounting for the needs of, and building strong relationships with many diverse populations.

Also, better information is needed about the various community roles and functions within the City of Edmonton organization and the various touchpoints the City has with communities. This is important to support public engagement planning, bring the best City resources and expertise to the table, coordinating activities and unifying the experience communities have with the City to make it more efficient and limit frustration.

Similarly, the City needs a better understanding of what community-based resources exist in communities and can play a role in linking them with people who need them, and community would benefit from a centralized place to access City-endorsed resources.

To continue the momentum built through the collaborative efforts of the Council Initiative on Public Engagement and to increase the transparency of and accountability for implementation through continued community leadership and involvement, the City is proposing a Guiding Coalition for Public Engagement and the creation of **Public Engagement Goodwill Ambassadors**.

A ROADMAP FOR SUCCESS

ACTION PLAN 2.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND CAPACITY BUILDING

GUIDING COALITION FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

With equal representation from the City and Community, the Guiding Coalition will monitor the City’s progress in executing the Implementation Road Map for public engagement, which will provide a level of accountability for City staff and keep public engagement at the forefront of City business. It will also be able to provide advice as the City moves its priorities forward and make suggestions for addressing the challenges that are certain to arise along the way. Finally, it can serve as a link back to community, to raise awareness of the City’s efforts to improve public engagement and provide insight into community reaction to evolving public engagement processes and activities.

A Terms of Reference for the Guiding Coalition (Draft) has been developed. The vehicle for the Guiding Coalition could be the continuation of the

current Council Initiative on Public Engagement, with the same or different Council sponsors. Its role will change from an intense and time consuming effort of examining public engagement practice and building solutions to a monitoring and assurance role, but continue the process of “engaging on engagement.”

Members will be drawn from those City staff and members of the public who participated in the Advisory Committee and Working Groups, with some new members being recruited through a public call for participation. It is anticipated that Coalition members will receive monthly updates and meet in-person quarterly. Administration and support for the Coalition will be provided by the City’s Engagement Branch.

ACTION 2.1 Review the role of a community engagement coordinator or similar position and determine where it fits in the organization

TIMELINE Q1-Q3 2017

LEAD Engagement Branch with support from other Branches of the Communications and Engagement Department

ACTION 2.2 Develop and maintain a Community Leadership Inventory and Tool, including a map of City of Edmonton community roles and functions and a catalogue of City of Edmonton community resources, City-endorsed or community-based, and enable public access, implement a communications strategy to promote the tool, and add content to the Public Engagement Learning and Training Plan regarding how to populate and use the Tool

TIMELINE 2017 and ongoing

LEAD Engagement Branch with support from the Analytics Centre of Excellence

ACTION 2.3 Create and support a Guiding Coalition for Public Engagement by finalizing a terms of reference and developing and applying a member recruitment strategy

TIMELINE Q2-Q4 2017, 2018

LEAD Engagement Branch with support from the Office of the City Clerk

A ROADMAP FOR SUCCESS

ACTION PLAN 3. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PLANNING, DELIVERY AND REPORTING

A lot of work has already been done to lay the foundation for better public engagement practice. The Public Engagement Policy and Public Engagement Procedure set out the overarching goal posts for how the City of Edmonton approaches public engagement and describes the roles and responsibilities needed to deliver effective public engagement.

Some of the actions identified in the Organizational Development and Culture priority also address improving planning, delivery and reporting — a change management plan and service delivery model. Similarly, some actions identified in the other four priorities also support this priority — better information tools under Community Leadership, orientation and training under Learning and Training, tools and instruments to support evaluation under Evaluation, and all the actions under the Communications for Public Engagement priority.

Therefore, what is discussed here are the tools designed specifically to support public engagement planning, delivery and reporting. These tools are included in the Public Engagement Framework — Public Engagement Charters, Public Engagement Plans (PEPs), and public engagement reporting.

Public Engagement Charters are a new concept and although the rationale for them is sound, the template needs to be piloted, tested and refined as needed. Similarly, although the concept of PEPs is not new, this particular format is different from the previous PIPs (Public Involvement Plans) so the template also needs to be piloted, tested and refined as needed. However, the most significant change for public engagement planning is not different templates, but rather how they will be completed. Responsibility for developing them now rests not only with project managers and project staff but equally with decision makers, public engagement advisors, communications advisors, and project managers and staff. This new way of working together also needs to be tested and refined.

The Public Engagement Section of Council Reports is also being enhanced to better align with evolving practice. There will be the requirement to document if public engagement was carried out regarding the subject of the Report and if not, why not. If it was, then the Report describes an attachment that must be completed with all the relevant public engagement information. This enhancement is needed to improve transparency, provide the best results of public engagement to decision makers, and show public engagement participants and the public at large that public engagement matters and the input provided is considered in decision making.

Another tool to achieve those objectives is “What We Heard and What We Did” reports, a change from simply “What We Heard” reports. Although part of the Guidebook for Public Engagement Communications, they are important to mention here as they play an important role in timely and periodic reporting back to public engagement.

PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH

One area of public engagement deserves special mention because it is an often used tactic for consultation and touches thousands of Edmontonians each year — public opinion research. This research is usually done via surveys, online, by telephone, on paper, or in person, and delivered directly by the City or by a private research company hired by the City.

In the past few years, efforts have been made to better coordinate all of the public opinion research the City does, to limit respondent fatigue, make better use of results, improve the quality of the questions and methodologies used, gather better data and information, and improve the overall user experience; however, more can and needs to be done.

A ROADMAP FOR SUCCESS

ACTION PLAN 3. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PLANNING, DELIVERY AND REPORTING

One aspect of public engagement research has been particularly challenging — qualitative research and analysis. The sheer volume of input and the resource intensity of theming responses requires a different and better approach. The answer is not necessarily reducing the number of open ended questions asked because respondents expect at least some opportunity to put their answers in their own words and it is often in this feedback where the very best ideas and insights are found.

One particular research tool that has been very successful is the Edmonton Insight Community. It provides a cost effective and fast means for City staff to conduct research and allows members to engage with the City on their own time, on their own

device, about topics that interest them. The Insight Community has much more potential and would benefit from a refresh and a more dedicated effort at recruitment and retention and sharing back results, along with more innovation in how it is used.

Related to the Insight Community is digital engagement in general as a delivery mechanism. It is definitely the way of the future, if not already the present. The City has experimented with various online platforms and has completed a digital engagement needs assessment and vendor scan. In collaboration with Open City, this work needs to be leveraged into a comprehensive digital engagement strategy.

ACTION 3.1	Roll-out Public Engagement Charters across the organization and require all business areas that do public engagement to have completed Charters by the end of 2018; start with select project teams, document the findings, and revise and improve the template
TIMELINE	Q2-Q4 2017, 2018
LEAD	Engagement Branch, Communications Branch and other departments
ACTION 3.2	Roll-out Public Engagement Plans (PEPs) across the organization and require all business areas to be using PEPs by the end of 2018; start with select project teams, document the findings, and revise and improve the template
TIMELINE	Q2-Q4 2017, 2018
LEAD	Engagement Branch, Communications Branch and other departments
ACTION 3.3	Improve the use of the Public Engagement Section of Council Reports, evaluate its effectiveness, and make refinements as necessary
TIMELINE	Q2-Q4 2017
LEAD	Engagement Branch with support from the Office of the City Clerk
ACTION 3.4	Roll-out What We Heard and What We Did Reports in conjunction with Communications for Public Engagement, evaluate their effectiveness, and make refinements as necessary
TIMELINE	Q2-Q4 2017
LEAD	Engagement Branch and Communications Branch in collaboration with departments
ACTION 3.5	Build and operationalize a Corporate Research Unit with the responsibility for coordinating and delivering public opinion research, including developing and implementing an annual Corporate Research Agenda and refreshing the Edmonton Insight Community
TIMELINE	Q2-Q4 2017
LEAD	Public Engagement Section
ACTION 3.6	Develop a Digital Engagement Strategy, including platform options, based on the needs assessment and vendor scan already completed effectiveness, and make refinements as necessary
TIMELINE	Q2-Q4 2017
LEAD	Engagement Branch in collaboration with Open City

A ROADMAP FOR SUCCESS

ACTION PLAN 4.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT LEARNING AND TRAINING

Work has already started on building a Public Engagement Learning and Training Plan and this work should continue based on a three tiered approach to training: engagement fundamentals, engagement best practices, and leading complex engagement.

This program will be an important piece in the City's overall change management strategy for public engagement. It will begin by delivering a small number of courses to support this change management and expand over time.

There will also be a need, prior to offering this training, to offer orientation sessions to staff and the public to make them aware of the new Public

Engagement Policy, Procedure, and Framework, provide a basic understanding of the new approach, their role and expectations, and to provide a gateway to further training.

Another consideration is how the training will be delivered, which may depend on the target audiences and the content of particular courses or other methods.

ACTION 4.1	Develop and implement public engagement orientation sessions to support change management; build awareness, describe fundamentals, and access further training regarding the new Public Engagement Policy, Procedure and Framework, to support change management
TIMELINE	Q1-Q3 2017
LEAD	Engagement Branch with support from the School of Business

ACTION 4.2	Develop a comprehensive Public Engagement Learning and Training Plan based on the Public Engagement Learning and Training Approach and roll it out across the organization, directed at both internal and external audiences, and develop courses and materials
TIMELINE	Q2-Q4 2017
LEAD	Engagement Branch with support from the School of Business

A ROADMAP FOR SUCCESS

ACTION PLAN 5.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT EVALUATION

The Public Engagement Evaluation Approach lays the groundwork for a comprehensive Evaluation Program for Public Engagement for the City of Edmonton. Measures are already under development and a phased process for their implementation is being considered. Further work is needed to develop the instruments for gathering the data needed for implementation. Staff require training to carry out public engagement evaluation. A collection and reporting process is needed to aggregate the results for organization wide reporting.

Also, ongoing work to develop benchmarks, set targets, tweak and improve metrics, and provide guidance on using the results for continuous improvement is required. The first few years of any evaluation effort is essentially a testing phase. The approach and specific measures look good on paper but they must be used and tested for relevance, reliability, timeliness, ease of collection and many other factors.

Furthermore, an overall, annual assessment of the City’s public engagement performance is needed and should be started for 2017 with the following selected measures.

- % of Council reports that have the public engagement section filled out
- % of Edmontonians that agree their awareness of public engagement has increased

- % of City staff who agree they felt safe
- % of projects that have a documented public engagement plan
- % of participants that agree the purpose of the activity was clearly explained
- % of participants that agree they had enough information to contribute to the topic
- % of participants that agree they understand how the input from the engagement activity will be used
- Cost per project

Furthermore, the Evaluation Program would benefit from a coordinated approach to evaluating Return on Investment (ROI) or the cost-benefit of public engagement.

ACTION 5.1	Build a comprehensive Public Engagement Evaluation Program based on the Public Engagement Evaluation Approach and roll it out across the organization using a staged approach by year, including developing instruments for data collection, training materials, testing, benchmarking, developing targets, and reporting
TIMELINE	Q2-Q4 2017
LEAD	Engagement Branch

ACTION 5.2	Develop and deliver an annual Public Engagement Performance Report, starting in 2017 with selected measures that aggregates together all public engagement evaluations to assess the City’s overall public engagement performance, including an approach to ROI
TIMELINE	Q2-Q4 2017
LEAD	Engagement Branch

A ROADMAP FOR SUCCESS

ACTION PLAN 6.

COMMUNICATIONS FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Communications underlies all aspects of public engagement so it must be done well for public engagement to be successful, which means a consistent approach before, during, and after public engagement processes and activities to support higher levels of participation and better outcomes.

To be coordinated and effective, public engagement and communications must integrate their research, planning, delivery, and evaluation to support the other function and to present a coordinated approach to the public. This starts with an integrated planning process that involves both public engagement advisors and communications advisors, along with decision makers, project managers, project staff, and, ideally stakeholders.

Also, a consistent, identifiable public engagement user experience must be in place, which will greatly assist in delivering clear, accessible communications and establishing shared engagement expectations for both the public and City staff.

Furthermore, a variety of communications tactics must be employed from news releases, to handout materials, to web content, to advertising, in order to reach a broad and diverse audience. This is needed

to make people aware of specific public engagement opportunities, promote engagement more broadly, and report on public engagement activities and results.

All of these aspects of communications for public engagement — planning, participant experience and tactics — would benefit from a broader corporate communications and marketing approach that was strategic, organizationally aligned, and consistently applied. This would allow public engagement processes and activities to be placed in the appropriate communications context to raise public awareness and understanding.

One of the first communications tasks resulting from the Initiative should be a public celebration of the Initiative's work and volunteers, and ideally, the release of a new participant experience promise, a new look and feel for public engagement, and a revamped web presence.

ACTION 6.1 Develop an ongoing strategic awareness and communications plan for public engagement, including a celebration event, media strategy, new participant experience, and revamped intranet site and web presence

TIMELINE Q1-Q4 2017

LEAD Public Engagement Branch with support from the Communications Branch, the Marketing Branch and the Web Office

ACTION 6.2 Develop, test and implement a Guidebook for Public Engagement Communications that provides a set of tools and tactics to research and plan, promote, implement, report, and evaluate public engagement communications

TIMELINE Q1-Q2 2017

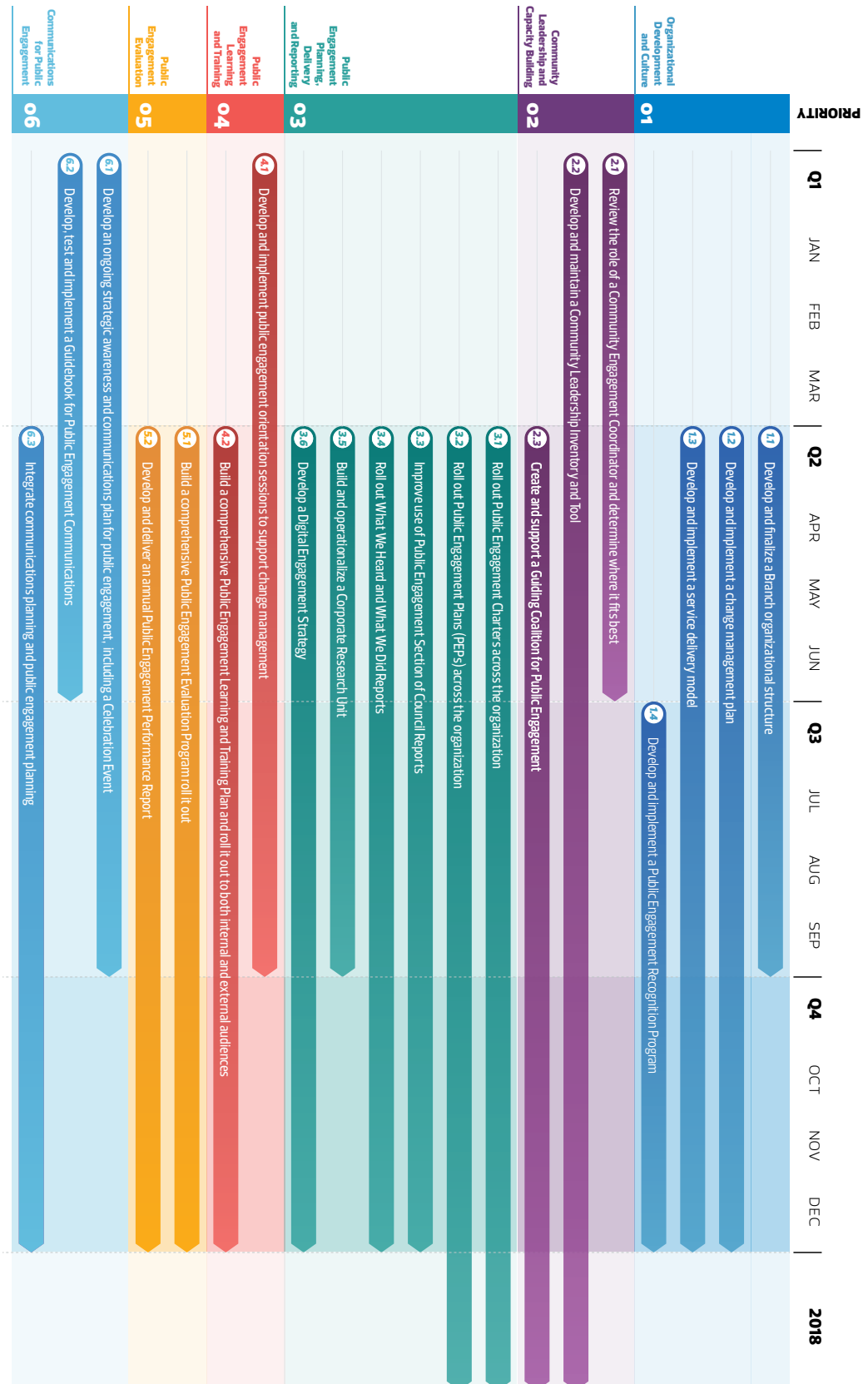
LEAD Communications Branch

ACTION 6.3 Integrate communications planning and public engagement planning within the Public Engagement Planning and Reporting Framework and test the approach via the development of Public Engagement Charters and Public Engagement Plans

TIMELINE Q2-Q4 2017

LEAD Communications Branch and Engagement Branch along with project teams

IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ACTION PLANS



CONCLUSION

The actions described, when implemented, should lead to the City of Edmonton achieving measured improvements in the planning, design and delivery of public engagement. However, it is important to note that the job of improving public engagement will never be done. It is a journey of continuous improvement that relies on constant evaluation and iteration. Therefore, the Implementation Roadmap described in this report should be considered a point-in-time effort that will continue to evolve as objectives are accomplished and new challenges arise.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AT THE CITY OF EDMONTON
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NEW PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT
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