

Public Engagement Policy Renewal

Recommendation

That Executive Committee recommend to City Council:

That the revised Public Engagement Policy C593A, as outlined in Attachment 1 of the May 27, 2021, Communications and Engagement report CE00508, be approved.

Executive Summary

Public Engagement Policy (C593) was reviewed as per its three-year review cycle. The changes proposed ensure that the policy reflects principles of diversity and inclusion, Indigenous awareness and the use of digital engagement channels that help expand access to public engagement. The policy was reformatted to ensure consistency with the new corporate policy framework and template, with specific sections and content moved when they addressed operational requirements.

Report

Public Engagement Policy (C593) was reviewed as per the policy's three-year review cycle. The policy was first adopted by City Council on April 11, 2017, through Communications and Engagement report CR_4486, Improving Engagement in the City of Edmonton - Public Engagement Policy, and this is the first review of this policy since its adoption.

The proposed changes ensure that the policy reflects the evolution of the City's efforts to recognize and adopt principles of diversity and inclusion and Indigenous awareness in tandem with related corporate policies and frameworks. Additionally, the changes make explicit the use of digital engagement channels that help expand and enhance citizen access to public engagement opportunities. Attachment 1 provides a recommended version of the policy that reflects these changes.

The policy renewal, which aligns to requirements per the *Municipal Government Act*, looks to the future of public engagement while honouring past work. Contributions made under the guidance of the Council Initiative on Public Engagement remain unchanged, and the policy continues to reflect the spirit of that effort.

The policy was reviewed and revised to ensure consistency with the new corporate policy framework. A new template was used, and content was updated and specific

sections of the policy were moved to the Public Engagement Framework when those sections addressed operational requirements. The revised Public Engagement Framework can be reviewed in Attachment 2.

The changes proposed to the policy are detailed in Attachment 3. A summary of the key additions include:

- Recognition of the need to accommodate diverse needs in order to reduce barriers to participation in alignment with the City’s diversity and inclusion commitments and use of Gender Based Analysis Plus (GBA+);
- Acknowledgement that engagement should be inclusive of Indigenous Peoples and honour the City of Edmonton’s Indigenous memorandums of understanding and relevant guiding policies and frameworks; and
- Description of how digital engagement leverages technology to increase accessibility and broaden engagement.

Public Engagement

The Guiding Coalition acts as the primary community advising body to the City on best practices in public engagement. The membership consists of representation from City Administration, the public/community and City Council. The policy review engaged members of the Guiding Coalition, whose feedback informed the changes proposed to the policy.

Corporate Outcomes and Performance Management

Corporate Outcome(s): Edmontonians are connected to the city in which they live, work and play			
Outcome(s)	Measure(s)	Result(s)	Target(s)
The City’s Public Engagement Policy is reviewed for clarity and is updated to reflect the current social, political and economic context to which it applies.	# of reviews of the Public Engagement Policy	Public Engagement Policy reviews: (2020): 1	N/A

Risk Assessment

Risk Element	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Score (with current mitigations)	Current Mitigations	Potential Future Mitigations
Corporate Governance	If not approved, the policy on public engagement will be outdated.	1	3	3	The proposed policy on public engagement reflects modern views on contemporary	Follow-up review of the proposed policy.

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Attachments

1. Proposed Council Policy - Public Engagement
2. Public Engagement Framework - April 2021
3. Summary of Changes - Proposed Public Engagement Policy

Others Reviewing this Report

- M. Persson, Chief Financial Officer and Deputy City Manager, Financial and Corporate Services
- G. Cebryk, Deputy City Manager, City Operations
- A. Laughlin, Deputy City Manager, Integrated Infrastructure Services
- K. Armstrong, Deputy City Manager, Employee Services
- R. Smyth, Deputy City Manager, Citizen Services
- S. McCabe, Deputy City Manager, Urban Form and Corporate Strategic Development
- K. Fallis-Howell, Acting City Solicitor