

People, Innovation and Collaboration Services Briefing to

Regular Meeting of Council

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Strengthening Transparency – Improving Engagement with Calgarians

PURPOSE OF BRIEFING

This Briefing provides Council with the Improving Engagement Implementation Plan developed in response to the direction given to Report EC2026-0008 *Strengthening Transparency – Improving Engagement with Calgarians* review. The plan builds on The City's existing engagement strengths and outlines enhancements intended to strengthen consistency, transparency, oversight, and accountability in engagement practices across the Corporation.

The plan demonstrates Administration's commitment to implementing Council's direction based on KPMG's recommendations. The 2026-2027 focus areas include a portfolio approach to engagement, strengthening controls through stage gates and documentation, and consistently organizing engagement around specific decisions and promises.

These improvements will provide Calgarians with clear communication about engagement scope and level of engagement, how feedback will be used, predictable engagement experiences, and greater transparency in City decision-making. Project teams will be able to begin engagement planning earlier, follow a more predictable process, and better demonstrate how public feedback informed project decisions.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Implementation Planning and Corporate Engagement

During summer 2026, the Engage Resource Unit met with General Managers and leadership teams from 13 high-engagement business units to refine the implementation plan. Feedback highlighted themes regarding role clarity within Administration and with Council, strengthening early engagement planning and service-level guidance, improving reporting and coordination, and fit for purpose engagement. The implementation plan responds by developing clear accountabilities, earlier planning, defined stage gates, audience-specific reporting, and updated tools and guidance.

Intended Outcomes

The implementation plan focuses on clear and transparent engagement for Calgarians and Council. Outcomes include predictable and coordinated engagement across The City, stronger accountability throughout the engagement process, inclusive and accessible participation, transparent decision-making after engagement, and improved public trust. The plan strengthens existing approaches to interested party identification and participation planning to support inclusive engagement.

Roles and Accountabilities

The proposed process establishes clear accountability for engagement activities. The Engage Resource Unit will be accountable for how engagement is designed, delivered and assessed against City standards, while business units will remain accountable for project scope, identifying what is open for public input, and determining how engagement input is considered in decision-making. These responsibilities will be reflected in an updated Engage Framework and supported by clear guidance regarding Council's role throughout the engagement process.

Engagement Process Enhancements

A critical improvement that will be implemented is mandatory What We Did reporting. Currently, What We Did reporting is strongly encouraged and produced in approximately two thirds of projects. This improvement is critical to support Calgarians' understanding of how project teams used engagement feedback to inform their decisions, or if they could not use the feedback, why not. The current Engage Framework and process templates will be updated, and new key performance indicators will be reported through a new dashboard.

Improvements will also be made across the engagement process, including earlier identification of engagement needs through a portfolio approach to resourcing and alignment between City engagement standards and third-party-led engagement agreements. A detailed intake and decision definition will be consistently documented, and stage-gated approvals require Directors to acknowledge the level of engagement and commit to how feedback will be used.

Resourcing requirements

Administration has undertaken implementation in 2026 with existing resources using remaining budget from the original one-time budget support. An additional one-time ask for 2027 will be brought forward as part of the 2027-2030 budget process to provide dedicated resourcing in 2027 and funding for public communication.

Performance Measurement

Community outcomes measured in the Survey of Calgarians, conducted in the spring and fall each year, will act as a city-wide measure of Calgarians' level of satisfaction with City engagement. Our business plan measure has reported, and will continue to report, What We Did completion. Existing and new measures will demonstrate how Calgarians understand the purpose of engagement and their engagement participant experience. Draft performance indicators on a project-by-project basis are under development across four focus areas: responsiveness and impact, inclusiveness and reach, transparency and trust, and accountability and improvement. Measured during project evaluation, individual indicators are intended to measure how feedback influences decisions, whether engagement commitments are fulfilled, the effectiveness of participation planning, clarity of reporting, and opportunities for continuous improvement.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Attachment 1- Improving Engagement Implementation Plan
2. Attachment 2- Supporting Detail Summary
3. Attachment 3- STIEC (Strengthening Transparency- Improving Engagement for Calgarians)

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General Manager Jennifer Kapala concurs with the information in this Briefing.