



CITY OF HAMILTON

CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

COMMUNITY & EMERGENCY SERVICES DEPARTMENT Neighbourhood & Community Initiatives Division

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT Engineering Services Division

TO:	Mayor and Members General Issues Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	March 30, 2015
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Hamilton's Engagement Committee (CM15001/CES15010/ PW15010) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
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SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) That the vision, mission and principles contained in the Public Engagement Charter attached as Appendix A to Report CM15001/CES15010/PW15010, be endorsed;
- (b) That staff be directed to develop a City of Hamilton Engagement Policy based on the vision, mission and principles of the Public Engagement Charter;
- (c) That the engagement tools, approaches and strategies created to inform the new community vision project starting in April 2015 be endorsed;

- (d) That the infrastructure public education and engagement materials designed to engage the general public on infrastructure issues as part of the new community vision project starting in April 2015 be endorsed; and,
- (e) That staff be directed to provide regular updates regarding the progress of the 25-year Community Vision public engagement plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Hamilton is updating Vision 2020, which was the first community vision developed almost 25 years ago. "*Our Future Hamilton: Communities in Conversation*" is the engagement campaign, developed by staff with input from Hamilton's Engagement Committee, designed to engage residents, community stakeholders, groups and institutions in developing a new Community Vision for Hamilton. The project will have a broad conversation with residents and stakeholders to understand their dreams, priorities and where Hamilton should be heading over the next 25 years.

Hamilton's Engagement Committee (HEC) is a volunteer committee established by the City in the spring of 2014 to improve the City's public engagement process and in particular to inform the development of the new 25-year Community Vision for Hamilton. HEC is comprised of over forty local residents recruited through an open call process. Members are diverse and cut across different age groups, cultural backgrounds, neighbourhoods and city geography.

The mandate of HEC is to develop key engagement frameworks that will improve the way the City engages with residents to ensure every voice is heard and that everyone is able to participate in important conversations pertinent to Hamilton.

Between May 2014 and March 2015, HEC carried out its key responsibilities utilizing three Working Groups, each with distinct but highly connected deliverables.

The Public Engagement Charter Working Group has developed Hamilton's first Public Engagement Charter (attached as Appendix A to Report CM15001/CES15010/PW15010). The Charter contains a vision, mission and eight core engagement principles. HEC is recommending that Council endorse the Public Engagement Charter and that staff be directed to develop a City of Hamilton Public Engagement Policy to be used by all staff. The Charter will drive the City's ongoing and future public engagement plans and activities, including the development of a new community vision.

The Community Visioning Working Group compiled a draft of key issues to be considered as part of developing a new 25-year Community Vision. The group also developed a comprehensive list of key stakeholders that should be engaged on the project. Finally, the group documented an array of engagement tools that the City could be using to engage residents on different City projects and initiatives moving forward. Hamilton's Engagement Committee is recommending the City endorse the Community

Visioning Working Group report (attached as Appendix B to Report CM15001/CES15010/PW15010). The work will support the development of Hamilton's new 25-year Community Vision and other engagement activities initiated by the City.

The Infrastructure Working Group developed public educational tools and engagement materials suitable to engage citizens on the state of Hamilton's Infrastructure. With a current infrastructure deficit in excess of \$3.3 billion and increasing annually by \$195 million (updated from 2012 statistics), the work produced by the group will allow for a better infrastructure dialogue with residents as part of the 25-year Community Vision conversation. Hamilton's Engagement Committee is recommending the City endorse the Infrastructure Working Group report (attached as Appendix C to Report CM15001/CES15010/PW15010) as a tool to educate and engage the public on infrastructure. In the long-term, the work of the committee will support how the city sets priorities on infrastructure planning and development.

If endorsed by City Council, the deliverables of Hamilton's Engagement Committee will drive the development of a new 25-year Community Vision for Hamilton, a project that will engage broadly with residents using various engagement methods such as speakers/lecture series, online, traditional, place-based and community-led approaches. Our Future Hamilton: Communities in Conversation – Public Engagement Plan is attached as Appendix D to Report CM15001/CES15010/PW15010.

In addition, the work of Hamilton's Engagement Committee will also inform the development of a Public Engagement Policy for the City, inform the City's Strategic Planning process and overall raise the engagement consciousness of residents, staff and City leadership.

Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial:

The budget required to develop a new 25-Year Community Vision had already been approved by Council as part of the 2014/2015 budget process (FCS13096).

Recommendations from HEC may have financial implications and will be determined and identified as action plans are formalized. Financial implications required to implement the 25-Year Community Vision and its associated findings (such as Infrastructure priorities) will be identified in future reports.

Staffing:

Potential staffing implications will be determined and identified as action plans are formalized.

Legal:

There are no legal implications related to Report CM15001/CES15010/PW15010.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In April 2012, through a procurement process, staff awarded a citizen engagement project called “Our Voice, Our Hamilton” to Dialogue Partners, an Ottawa-based firm. The goal of the project was to support the City’s Service Delivery Review and to create a process to engage with residents. At a special meeting of Council on February 4, 2013, Council direction was received to end the contract with Dialogue Partners and that staff develop a plan to continue the project utilizing existing resources.

The re-launch of the citizen engagement project was presented to the General Issues Committee (GIC) on April 17, 2013 (CM13008). The project re-launch was premised on the fact that:

- the purpose, meaning and value of engagement overall was not clear in Hamilton;
- there were varying expectations and perceptions about public engagement, and the role of residents; and,
- there was uncertainty with regard to the City's approach and the level of involvement required of Hamilton residents

Staff felt that these important points warrant continued conversation with residents about the best ways to move forward on a meaningful city engagement initiative.

September 2013 to December 2013 – The Convening Table

A larger meeting of interested residents agreed to form a "Convening Table" to help the City move forward on a number of actions, including the development of approaches best suited to improve public engagement in Hamilton. The work of the Convening Table culminated in a recommended approach to launch a resident-led, citywide engagement initiative, steered by a committee of Hamilton residents and staff to be called “Hamilton’s Engagement Committee”. The Convening Table also recommended that Hamilton’s Engagement Committee should work to develop an engagement charter, inform an engagement policy for the City and develop strategies that would support ongoing public engagement in Hamilton. (Convening Table’s Terms of Reference and list of members is attached as Appendix E to Report CM15001/CES15010/PW15010)

January 2014 to March 2014 – Recruitment for Hamilton’s Engagement Committee

Recruitment for a residents’ committee took place through an open call process. All respondents numbering over 40 residents were accepted and invited to sit on Hamilton’s Engagement Committee.

May 2014 – HEC Orientation:

Committee orientation, Terms of Reference, confirmation of membership and members volunteered to work under three working groups:

- Public Engagement Charter Working Group
- Community Visioning Working Group
- Infrastructure Working Group

June 2014 – February 2015 – HEC's completion of Mandate and Key Deliverables

Hamilton's Engagement Committee met several times between June 2014 and February 2015 to complete its mandate. Key work deliverables across each of the groups include:

Public Engagement Charter Working Group

An engagement charter is a document that usually captures the values, principles and commitment of an organization to engaging with its clients, customers or stakeholders. In a municipal government setting, an engagement charter contains key commitments and values which the local government will undertake to ensure residents and stakeholders are engaged and have their say in key city projects and initiatives.

Working within these parameters, the working group has developed the first Public Engagement Charter for Hamilton. The Charter contains key elements that will support the City's effort in effectively engaging all residents and stakeholders in Hamilton on key city initiatives and priorities.

The Charter contains the following:

A Vision statement that envisions Hamilton as “a city where everyone is valued and engaged” and a Mission statement that will “empower all residents of Hamilton to be actively involved in shaping an engaged and inclusive community”.

The Core Principles highlight the eight key values and standards which should be guiding the City when engaging the public on any key project or initiative:

- Transparency and Trust
- Accountability and Action
- Inclusion and Diversity
- Create Opportunities for Active Participation
- Collaboration, Co-operation and Shared Purpose
- Ongoing Engagement and Open Communication
- Learning, Reflection and Evaluation
- Capacity for Engagement

Community Visioning Working Group

Hamilton's first community vision (Vision 2020) was adopted in 1992 by Council and is still used to understand community priorities. Vision 2020 applied a sustainability lens to local issues, and saw the collective interaction of economic, social and environmental factors as critical to community development. Vision 2020 was developed over 20 years ago and requires an update to better reflect Hamilton's new community assets, advantages, challenges, opportunities, dreams, aspirations and priorities of residents and community stakeholders.

The working group put together a list of key issues that they would consider important to Hamiltonians, who should be engaged and various engagement tools and approaches that could support the development of a new 25-year Community Vision for Hamilton.

The key deliverables of the group include:

- Defining the importance of a community vision to Hamilton.
- A list of key issues that are important to Hamiltonians, such as jobs, education, environment, transportation, neighbourhoods and health among others.
- A proposed list of who should be engaged in the new community vision development, including residents, businesses, institutions, community groups, media, staff and Council among others.
- A list of various engagement tools and creative approaches that would broadly engage residents and stakeholders, cutting across traditional, online and creative engagement approaches.

Infrastructure Working Group

The City owns and maintains assets and infrastructure worth \$17 billion. This infrastructure includes roads, transit, parks, water, facilities, etc. Hamilton's current infrastructure deficit is in excess of \$3.3 billion, and increases annually by \$195 million.

Hamilton has one of the lowest municipal tax increases among municipal comparators which include Windsor, London, Niagara Region, Halton Region, Toronto, Peel-Mississauga, Guelph, Waterloo Region, Kingston and Ottawa. With having one of the lowest municipal tax increases within the Greater Toronto Area over the past three years, maintaining critical infrastructure with the existing resources in Hamilton continues to pose challenges.

The working group developed public educational tools and engagement strategies suitable to engage residents on the state of Hamilton's Infrastructure. The outcome will allow for a better informed public and also setting key infrastructure priorities in the long term.

The key deliverables include:

- An education booklet that highlights the scope of the City's infrastructure services, current state, scoring, infrastructure revenues and investments.

- A detailed set of infrastructure questions that could be asked from the general public as part of developing a new 25-year community vision.
- A list of various engagement tools and creative approaches that would broadly and meaningfully engage residents and stakeholders with regard to infrastructure, cutting across traditional, online and place-based engagement approaches.

March 2015: Finalization and Presentation of HEC Reports

The Hamilton's Engagement Committee completed its final reports, containing key recommendations for Council's approval.

April – December 2015: HEC Strategic Support for Public Engagement

The Terms of Reference for Hamilton's Engagement Committee indicated a time commitment of May 2014 to December 2015. Between April and December 2015, HEC members will support the 25-year Community Vision project and provide other strategic advice on different City initiatives requiring their feedback.

April – December 2015: Our Future Hamilton: Communities in Conversation Campaign

Working with various community partners and staff, the City of Hamilton will launch an engagement campaign to update Vision 2020 and create a new 25-year Community Vision. The campaign is targeting to engage 50,000 residents through various engagement methods such as speakers/lecture series, online, traditional, place-based and community-led approaches. Using a combination of the list of key issues important to Hamiltonians produced by Hamilton's Engagement Committee, key issues highlighted in Vision 2020 report cards, feedback from consultation with staff across City departments and other best practices relating to community visioning, project staff created seven Strategic Themes to guide the 25-year community vision conversation with residents and city stakeholders.

The seven themes are:

1. Advancing environmental responsibility and stewardship: environment, nature, pollution, litter, water quality, air quality, conservation, trees, ecology, energy consumption, green technology, etc.
2. Maintaining community assets and critical infrastructure: transportation, roads, housing, public buildings, public spaces, land use, community centres, city facilities, etc.
3. Increasing economic prosperity and opportunities: economy, jobs, businesses, education, skills development, income disparity, creative industries, investments, innovation, youth, entrepreneurship, poverty eradication, etc.

4. Fostering an active and healthy society: healthy lifestyles, aging population, health care, healthy living, sports, recreation, exercise, obesity, disease control, food, mental health, addictions, quality of life, etc.
5. Promoting connected communities and safe neighbourhoods: breaking down urban/rural divisions, neighbourhood-level community development, public safety, policing, crime, etc.
6. Embracing culture and social diversity: culture, heritage, festivals and celebrations, history, civic pride, multicultural communities, religious diversity, immigrants and newcomers, tolerance, racism eradication, gender equality, etc.
7. Creating a city of engaged and empowered residents: civic engagement, public consultation, community dialogues, volunteering, voting, online engagement, public notices, public trust, government accountability, city leadership, open government, taxes, engagement policy, etc.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

Public engagement charters are not required by law. However, many municipalities have developed public engagement charters, policies and strategies to actively involve residents in city decision-making that impacts quality of life. These include cities such as:

- Ottawa, ON;
- Guelph, ON;
- Burlington, ON;
- Edmonton, AB; and,
- Adelaide, Australia.

The key policy implication for the City of Hamilton is that staff will be expected to work on a process to develop an Engagement Policy for the City based on the Public Engagement Charter. This process could take up to one year to complete as extensive consultation is required with staff across various departments.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

HEC members met regularly on a monthly basis between May 2014 and March 2015. Staff members providing support to HEC include staff from Community & Emergency Services, City Manager's Office, Public Works and Public Health Departments.

Throughout May 2014 and March 2015, staff have informally shared some of the work of HEC and draft deliverables with staff across various City departments. No concerns were raised but support for the work of the committee was received.

In addition to consulting with HEC, staff consulted with various departments regarding the 25-year Community Vision process for feedback. A cross-departmental project team has been formed that will support the process moving forward.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONAL FOR RECOMMENDATION

Hamilton's Engagement Committee based its recommendations on the review of the City's current engagement approaches, best practices from other jurisdictions and a series of committee meetings conducted between May 2014 and March 2015. Staff based its recommendation on the work produced by the Hamilton's Engagement Committee, engagement with staff and best practices regarding community visions.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

None

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2012 – 2015 STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Priority #1

A Prosperous & Healthy Community

WE enhance our image, economy and well-being by demonstrating that Hamilton is a great place to live, work, play and learn.

Strategic Objective

- 1.2 Continue to prioritize capital infrastructure projects to support managed growth and optimize community benefit.
- 1.3 Promote economic opportunities with a focus on Hamilton's downtown core, all downtown areas and waterfronts.
- 1.5 Support the development and implementation of neighbourhood and City wide strategies that will improve the health and well-being of residents.
- 1.6 Enhance Overall Sustainability (financial, economic, social and environmental).

Strategic Priority #2

Valued & Sustainable Services

WE deliver high quality services that meet citizen needs and expectations, in a cost effective and responsible manner.

Strategic Objective

- 2.2 Improve the City's approach to engaging and informing citizens and stakeholders.
- 2.3 Enhance customer service satisfaction.

Strategic Priority #3

Leadership & Governance

WE work together to ensure we are a government that is respectful towards each other and that the community has confidence and trust in.

Strategic Objective

- 3.1 Engage in a range of inter-governmental relations (IGR) work that will advance partnerships and projects that benefit the City of Hamilton.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix A to Report CM15001/CES15010/PW15010: Hamilton's Public Engagement Charter

Appendix B to Report CM15001/CES15010/PW15010: Final Report: Community Vision Working Group

Appendix C to Report CM15001/CES15010/PW15010: Final Report: Infrastructure Working Group

Appendix D to Report CM15001/CES15010/PW15010: Our Future Hamilton: Communities in Conversation, Public Engagement Plan

Appendix E to Report CM15001/CES15010/PW15010: The Convening Table - Terms of Reference