



Hamilton



# REIMAGINING Public Participation **Together** SUMMARY

## ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

**3,696**PROJECT PAGE  
VISITORS**669**SURVEY  
PARTICIPANTS**319**POLL  
RESPONSES**34**COMMUNITY AND  
KEY STAKEHOLDER  
INTERVIEWS**54**SPECIALIZED  
ENGAGEMENT SESSION  
PARTICIPANTS

## Why Engage?

Community engagement is a key priority of the City's 25-year Community Vision. It is also an important focus area of Hamilton's City Council to build transparency, trust and confidence in City government through increased public access to City information and participation in decision-making processes that impact residents and their community. Many City services rely on community engagement as a critical component of City building initiatives, placemaking, legislative-required processes, and as a best practice to help inform the development of City projects, policies and initiatives.

Engaging residents on issues that affect their lives and their city is a key component of a democratic society. Engagement encourages participation, action and personal responsibility. It also helps to identify sustainable solutions and lead more informed decision-making through a range of perspectives, experience and knowledge. Hamilton is our city. We all have a role to play in shaping our city and helping to make Hamilton an even better place to live, work and play.

## We're Making Changes

Over the past two years, in-person public engagement was placed on hold in accordance with public health guidelines and safety measures. To keep our community conversations going, City staff shifted engagement efforts online with virtual public meetings, live streamed events and digital tools to make it easier for residents to share their thoughts with us. The City maximized digital platforms, launched the Engage Hamilton platform, and continued to leverage existing channels such as social media, marketing, paid advertising and direct mail where possible.

Although COVID-19 has changed the way we engage with the community, it has not changed how important feedback from residents and the community is to the decision-making process. We understand that online engagement isn't for everyone - that's why the City of Hamilton has prioritized the need to establish a corporate-wide public engagement policy to ensure residents are informed and involved in shaping important City decisions.

## A Path Forward: **Hamilton's Public Engagement Policy and Framework**

The path towards creating a corporate-wide public engagement policy and related administrative framework was unanimously approved by Hamilton's City Council in October 2021. The goal of establishing a well-defined public engagement policy and framework will:

- ✓ Ensure consistency, transparency, accountability, equity and inclusivity for all City-led public engagement processes
- ✓ Recognize, affirm and contribute to the City of Hamilton's commitment to public engagement
- ✓ Support high-level City Council priorities including (1)Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and (2)Trust and Confidence in City Government
- ✓ Advance City decision-making efforts by ensuring the process by which participants are provided information and are engaged is meaningful, clear, convenient and accessible
- ✓ Ensure that City public engagement efforts meet the expectations of Council and community
- ✓ Provide clear descriptions for the roles and responsibilities of Council, City staff and the public in the City's public engagement processes
- ✓ Cultivate an internal culture and infrastructure of excellence and innovation in public consultation and participation in civic affairs

## Reimagining Public Participation Together: **Our Engagement Activities**

As part of our efforts to develop and implement a corporate-wide public engagement policy and framework, the City launched a multi-faceted public engagement and awareness campaign in February 2022. The Reimagining Public Participation Campaign kicked-off with a public survey inviting residents to share their thoughts and experiences with City-led public engagement on February 23, 2022, along with two community polls at **engage.hamilton.ca**.

Additional engagement efforts included one-on-one interviews with City Councillors, senior City staff, and key community stakeholder groups, as well as specialized consultation sessions with racialized, equity-seeking and traditionally under-represented groups taking place from March through to May 2022. The campaign also coincided with the release of the City's first Engage Hamilton summary report (*Community Engagement Review: June 2020- December 31, 2021*).

## What We Did and Who We Heard From

### Public Engagement Survey and Online Polls

To help better understand resident preferences and experiences with City-led public engagement initiatives and to help make our engagement efforts and interactions better, the City's *Reimagining Public Participation* online survey and polls were open for public feedback on **engage.hamilton.ca** from February 23 – April 3, 2022. During the six-week period, the online project page received **3,696 visitors**. A total of **669 residents** completed the survey, including both online and paper submissions. The project's two quick polls received a combined total of **319 responses**.



**3,696**

PROJECT PAGE  
VISITORS



**669**

SURVEY  
PARTICIPANTS



**319**

POLL  
RESPONSES

### One-on-One Interviews with Key Stakeholders

In order to support authentic and meaningful dialogue through a fully transparent and unbiased process, the City of Hamilton retained a local Hamilton-based third-party consulting group (Enterprise Canada) to conduct one-on-one interviews with the Mayor and Members of Council, City staff and key public stakeholder groups. Over 60 individuals received requests to participate in the comprehensive one-hour interview process, with a total of **34 interviews** conducted from March to May 2022.



**34**

COMMUNITY AND KEY  
STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS



**54**

SPECIALIZED ENGAGEMENT  
SESSION PARTICIPANTS

### Specialized Consultation Sessions

The City of Hamilton partnered with the Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton (SPRC) to conduct specialized engagement sessions with diverse community stakeholders using an equity, diversity and inclusion lens. Through their collaborative relationships with local community groups and networks, SPRC led a combination of targeted focus groups and one-on-one interviews with **over 50 participants** including individuals representing youth, senior, Indigenous, racialized, equity-seeking and traditionally under-represented groups.

## Reimagining Public Participation Together: **Our Communications Strategy**

<b>14</b>	<b>Print Advertisements (9 Papers)</b> <i>*including daily, weekly community and monthly neighbourhood publications</i>
<b>11</b>	<b>City-wide Electronic Billboards (2.5 Million Impressions)</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Local Radio Stations (368,728 Listeners)</b>
<b>6,559</b>	<b>City E-newsletter Recipients</b>
<b>209,321</b>	<b>Social Media Impressions</b>
<b>1,552,575</b>	<b>Digital Media Impressions</b>
<b>75,000</b>	<b>Homes (Mailbox Delivery Print Publication)</b>

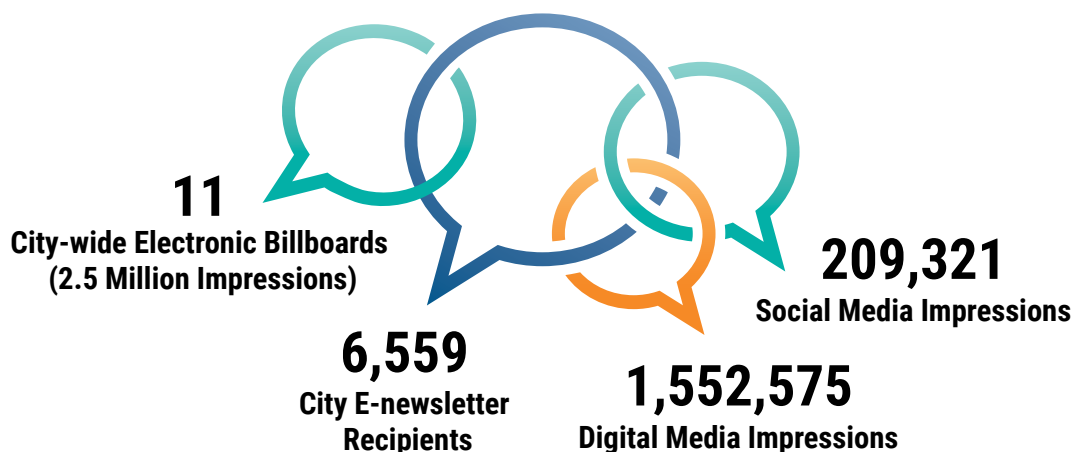
### How We Shared Information

#### Digital

The *Reimagining Public Participation* campaign was promoted through the City of Hamilton's various communication channels including: Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, hamilton.ca and engage.hamilton.ca. Electronic newsletters were sent to more than 2,782 Our Future Hamilton subscribers, 3,277 Engage Hamilton registered users and 500 Youth Strategy network recipients.

Promotional efforts were also supported through the City's cross-departmental Public Engagement Community of Practice members, select City of Hamilton Citizen Volunteer Advisory Committees and over 200 community partners including local organizations, neighbourhood associations and community networks to help broaden reach.

Online marketing efforts included paid digital advertising to zoned postal codes, along with ads promoted through various channels such as the Weather Network, CHCH, Bell Digital, Corus Digital, and Metroland Media, achieving a combined digital reach of 1,552,575 impressions. 11 city-wide electronic billboards also highlighted the campaign's survey achieving an additional reach of 2.5 million impressions, along with digital signage at City Hall and the Hamilton Farmer's Market.



## Print

Print advertisements were featured in nine papers, including daily, weekly community and monthly neighbourhood publications targeting residents in Ancaster, Binbrook, Dundas, Flamborough, Hamilton and Stoney Creek. A mailbox delivery print publication targeting both urban and rural neighbourhoods reached 75,000 households. Printed campaign posters and surveys were made available at all Hamilton Public Library branches including the Bookmobile, City recreation centres, seniors' centres, and municipal service centres.

14

### Print Advertisements (9 Papers)

*\*including daily, weekly community and monthly neighbourhood publications*

75,000

Homes (Mailbox Delivery  
Print Publication)

## Radio

The *Reimagining Public Participation* engagement campaign was promoted through popular radio stations unique to the Hamilton area inclusive of AM900 CHML, Bounce Radio 102.9 and KX94.7 New Country FM. Radio announcements comprised of 30-second produced spot commercials aired from February 28 through to March 19, 2022, reaching 368,728 radio listeners. AM900 CHML also featured an on-air interview about the engagement campaign during the Good Morning Hamilton program hosted by Rick Zamperin on March 1, 2022.

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Radio Stations  
(368,728 Listeners)

## Public Engagement Insights: What We Heard

### Key Themes

The City's multi-faceted Reimagining Public Engagement campaign was conducted over a span of three months and included various engagement opportunities with residents, community stakeholders, staff and Council using multiple methods and tactics to better understand and address current challenges and needs.

Based on the engagement findings of over 1,000 project participants, the following eight key themes emerged that will help inform the development of a corporate-wide public engagement policy and administrative framework to ensure consistency, transparency, accountability, equity and inclusivity for all future City-led public engagement.

1. **Incorporate Public Input into Decision Making Efforts**
2. **Establish Clear and Consistent Public Engagement Processes and Expectations**
3. **Lead Authentic Community Collaboration and Outreach Efforts**
4. **Ensure Inclusive, Equitable and Accessible Public Engagement Planning and Design**
5. **Use Multiple Engagement Methods to Collect Feedback**
6. **Share Information Broadly, Listen and Report Back**
7. **Enhance Capacity through Public Engagement Training and Awareness**
8. **Strengthen Public Trust and Improve Transparency**



# REIMAGINING Public Participation **Together**

## WE'RE MAKING CHANGES.

### Have Your Say in How You Shape City Decisions.

COVID-19 has changed the way we engage with our community, but it has not changed how important your feedback is to the decision-making process. Over the past two years, we have shifted engagement efforts online with virtual public meetings, live streamed events and digital tools to make it easier for you to share your thoughts with us.

We understand that online engagement isn't for everyone - that's why we need to hear from you!

Take our short survey and help us shape the way we do public engagement at the City of Hamilton.

To learn more, visit **[engage.hamilton.ca/ReimaginingPublicParticipation](https://engage.hamilton.ca/ReimaginingPublicParticipation)**.

*Hardcopies of the survey are also available at City Municipal Service Centres, City Recreation Centres and Hamilton Public Library branches.*