



Public Engagement in Hamilton: Laying a Strong Foundation

Mayor's Task Force on Transparency, Access, and Accountability

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Jocelyn Strutt and Blaze Forgie

City Manager's Office | Government Relations and Community Engagement Division

Effective public engagement is...

- Authentic & meaningful
- Inclusive and equity-centered
- Planned for at the start of a project
- Happens when participants feel their input is valued
- Reflects the needs, interests, ideas, and voices of community
- Informs decision-making

Public engagement is the intentional process involving participants in thoughtful discussion to help inform City decision-making processes.

Impact of Public Participation



Public engagement provides an opportunity for the City of Hamilton to better understand the wants, needs and expectations of our community. By engaging the public in projects and decision-making processes, we can:

- Achieve better project outcomes;
- Strengthen relationships with community members; and
- Build trust and confidence to ensure that we are actively responding to and meeting the needs of our community.

Term of Council Priorities

2022-2026:

1 Sustainable Economic and Ecological Development

2 Safe & Thriving Neighbourhoods

3 Responsiveness and Transparency



Public Engagement Charter: 2014-2015



Internal Community of Practice: 2019 to Present



Public Engagement Policy: Council Approval January 24, 2024

Evaluation Framework: 2025



Our Future Hamilton: 2015 to Present



Internal Survey of City-Led Public Engagement: 2020 to present

Engage Hamilton: 2020 to Present



Reimagining Public Participation Campaign: 2022



Municipal Scan of Public Engagement Practices: 2022



Policy Implementation: 2024 (Pilot Year)



Project Planning Support & Resource Development: 2024



Reimagining Public Participation (2022)



 **3,696** PROJECT PAGE VISITORS

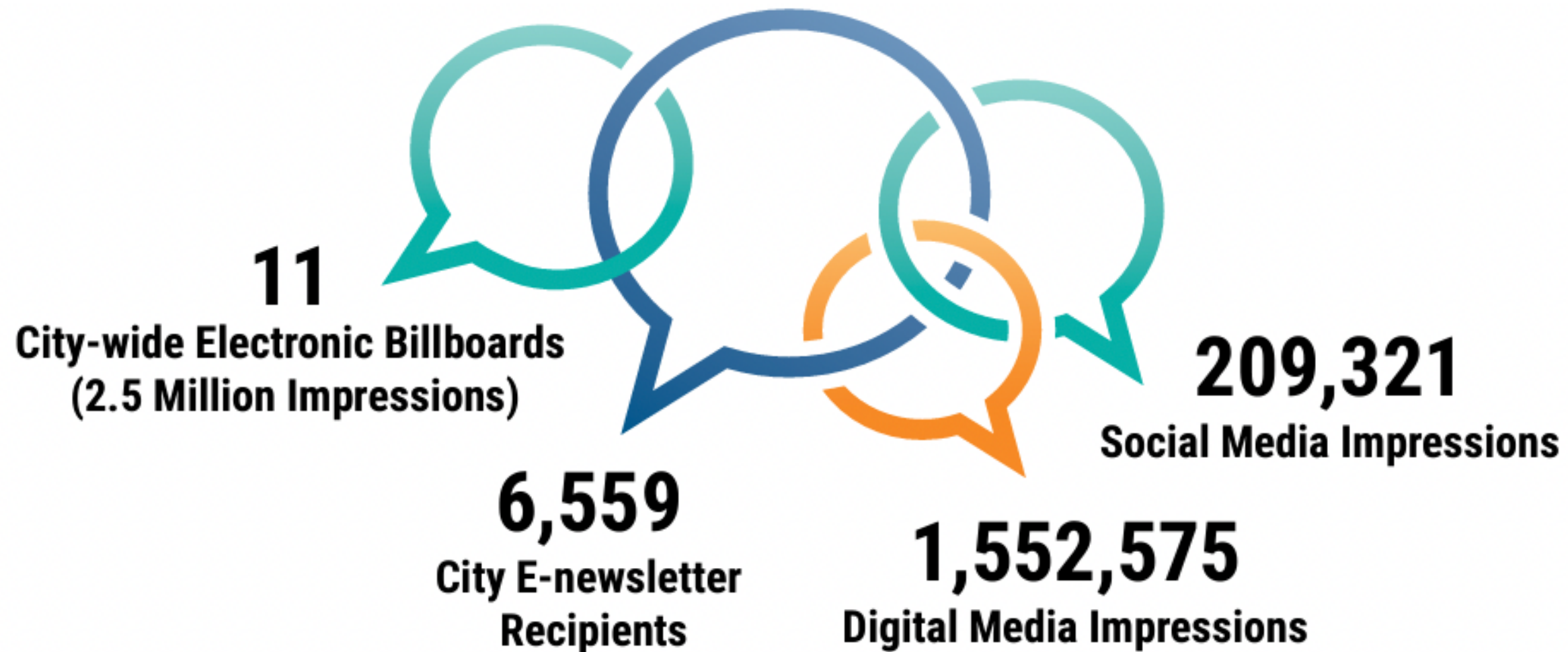
 **669** SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

 **319** POLL RESPONSES

 **34** COMMUNITY AND KEY STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

 **54** SPECIALIZED ENGAGEMENT SESSION PARTICIPANTS

Reimagining Public Participation (2022)



What did we hear?

Include public input in decision-making

Establish clear and consistent engagement processes

Use an IDEA lens in planning for engagement

Build capacity through public engagement training

Lead authentic community collaboration and outreach

Share information, report back

Multiple engagement methods are needed

Strengthen public trust and improve transparency



87%

Participants who experienced 1 or more barriers to participation



Using an IDEA lens when planning for engagement is essential.



NOT KNOWING ABOUT THE ACTIVITY OR EVENT



NOT HAVING ENOUGH NOTICE ABOUT THE ACTIVITY OR EVENT TO BE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE



THE DATE AND/OR TIME OF THE ACTIVITY OR EVENT WAS NOT CONVENIENT



FEELING THAT YOUR FEEDBACK WOULD NOT MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Municipal Scan of Best Practices (2022)

What we heard:

- ☑ Communication is vital
- ☑ Engagement support is important
- ☑ Hybrid engagement models work
- ☑ Acknowledge and remove barriers
- ☑ Staff training is key



Annual Internal Public Engagement Survey

The City's Annual Public Engagement Survey invites cross-departmental staff input to help identify key City-led projects and initiatives requiring any form of public engagement.





international association for public participation



Hamilton's Public Engagement Policy

Purpose



To guide consistent, effective, and meaningful public engagement processes between the City of Hamilton, the public, and interested community partners to support decision-making.

Who



The policy applies to all public engagement activities led by the City of Hamilton, including staff, members of Council and consultants.

Policy Goals

1

Achieve a consistent, strategic, and outcomes-driven approach to public engagement

2

Outlines the roles and responsibilities of Council, City staff, and the public in the City's public engagement processes.

3

Establish trust and relationships with members of the public who are impacted by decisions

4

Cultivate an internal culture and infrastructure of excellence and innovation in public engagement

5

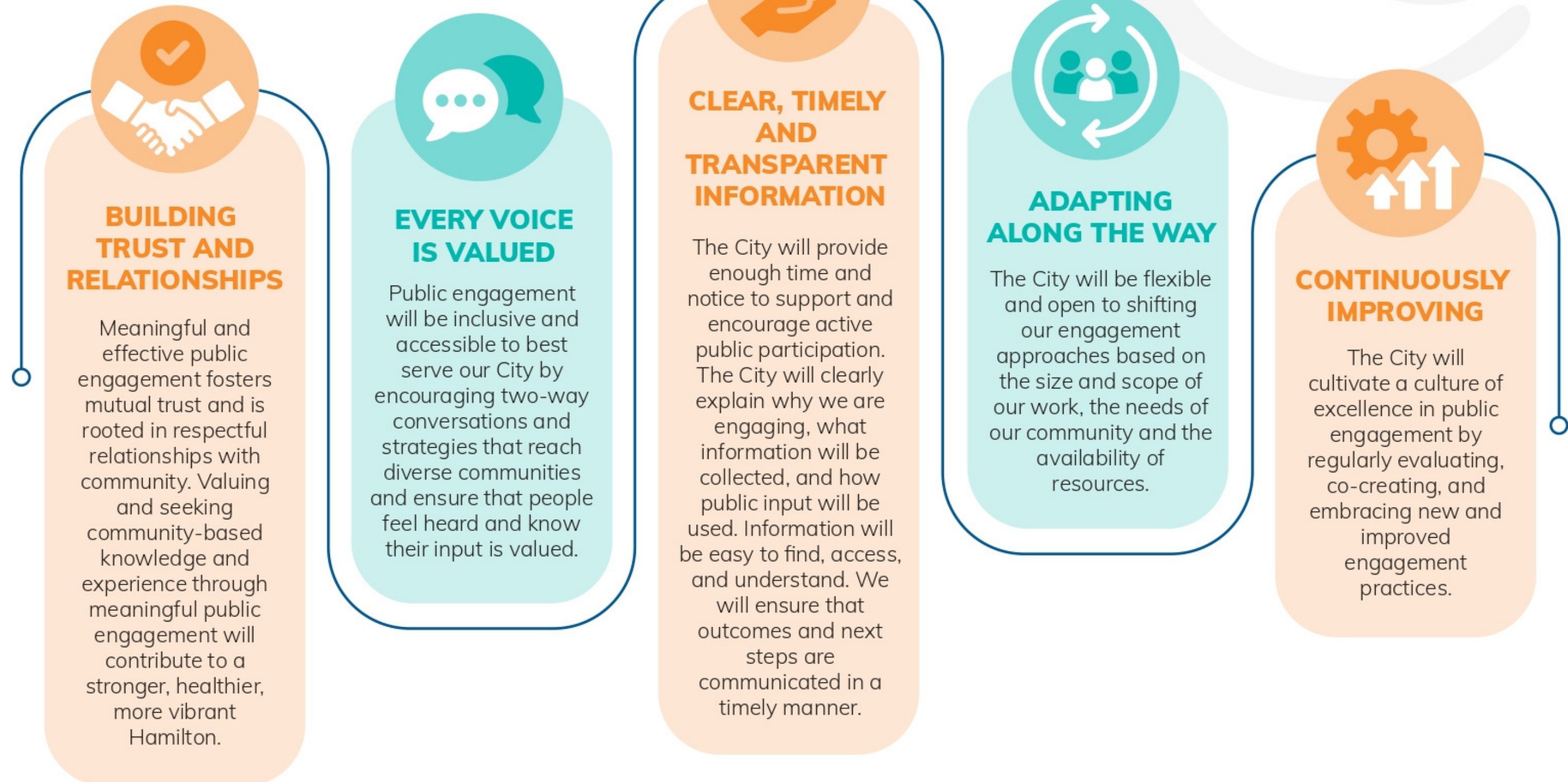
Support high-level Council priorities including (1) Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and (2) Trust and Confidence in City Government

6

Increase impact on decision-making

HAMILTON'S PRINCIPLES FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The City of Hamilton's strategic approach to public engagement will align with the following principles:



Hamilton's Levels of Engagement

CONSULT



Staff will get your **feedback** on a project/initiative.

WE PROMISE TO:

Keep you informed.

Listen to and acknowledge your concerns or hopes for the project.

Provide feedback to you on how the input received was used to inform the project.

INVOLVE



Staff will **work with you** throughout the project to ensure your concerns or ideas are understood and considered.

WE PROMISE TO:

Work with you to understand your hopes or concerns.

Develop alternatives that reflect your involvement.

Provide feedback to you on how your involvement contributed to the decision or recommendation.

COLLABORATE



Staff will **partner with you** in order to shape a decision for the project.

WE PROMISE TO:

Ask for your advice.

Incorporate your advice into the project as much as possible.

Provide feedback to you on how your advice contributed to the decision or recommendation.

INFORM

WE PROMISE TO:

Ensure you are aware of and knowledgeable about the project.

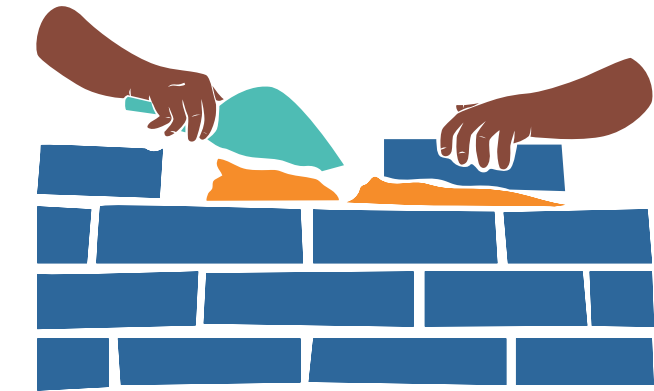
Ensure you are able to provide informed input.

Ensure you are aware that a decision or recommendation has been made.

What's Next?

2024: Our pilot year

Laying the foundation for strong engagement.



- 1 INVEST in training and capacity building across the corporation
- 2 REDUCE barriers to meaningful public engagement opportunities
- 3 DEVELOP a comprehensive evaluation framework



Questions?