



Community Representation Framework – Action Dignity Engagement

Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard

December 4, 2018

Project overview

City Council formed a Community Representation Framework Task Force to review options and advise Council on how community organizations can more effectively represent the diverse interests and perspectives within their communities.

The Community Representation Framework Task Force is composed of a broad range of stakeholders representing Council, the development and building sector, community associations and resident's associations, the University of Calgary and City Administration.

The goals of the Community Representation Framework are to:

1. Enhance the effectiveness of community groups to contribute to the representation of the diverse interests and perspectives within their communities;
2. Promote community representation best practices and help develop a more collaborative working relationship between community groups and The City;
3. Revitalize City processes related to planning and development so they are more open, inclusive and welcoming to a broad range of community groups;
4. Identify the necessary supports and resources required by community groups so they can be effective representatives of their communities in dialogue with The City.

In December 2016 City Council created the Community Representation Framework Task Force. The Task force is looking at ways to improve Calgary's current approach to community representation on planning applications. They are looking at ways to create more collaborative dialogue between even more organized community groups. Council approved a recommendation to:

1. Gather input from a diverse range of community stakeholders in response to a new approach for community representation envisioned by the Community Representation Framework Task Force;
2. Use the input gathered to inform the Community Representation Framework Task Force recommendations that will be presented to City Council by the end of 2018.

For more information, meeting minutes, and past reports visit the project website www.calgary.ca/crf

What is public community planning

Community planning is any City Project where there are new or changes to plans for parks, buildings and streets. This can be as small as a renovations to a house in your community, to something as large as the Green Line project. To see some of the current projects visit the [Planning and Development](#) page and to learn more about the planning process visit the [planning overview online tool](#).

What is public engagement at City of Calgary

"Engagement" at The City of Calgary is defined as: "Purposeful dialogue between The City and citizens and stakeholders to gather information to influence decision making."

At The City of Calgary, decisions are made on a daily basis that impact more than a million people. Your input, and the input of other citizens and stakeholders, helps City leaders and decision makers better understand the perspectives, opinions, and concerns of people potentially impacted by City decisions. Public input is collected, where appropriate, and considered along with other factors (which may include



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things such as cost, environmental impact, technical limitations, long-range plans/goals, etc.) before decisions are made.

The City hosts various in community events as well as has the online [engage portal](#) for collecting public input. The portal was established to provide Calgarians with an online space to learn about and participate in City projects and initiatives that are open for public input.

Engagement overview

In September The City of Calgary entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Action Dignity. The Memorandum was specifically for partnering with Action Dignity to engage with its members on the Community Representation Framework implementation. We specifically want to hear from you about your group, how your group works with the City and other community organizations. We would also like to know if/how you see yourself involved in the implementation of the Framework if it is approved later this year.

To collect your feedback we did one in-person event at the Action Dignity Office on October 3, 2018 and had an online survey from October 3 to October 18, 2018. In person we received 8 surveys. Online we had 31 visits by 27 visitors and had 8 contributions.

What we asked

Specifically we asked:

- Who does your organization represent / serve?
- Are there other groups you regularly work with?
- How does your group share information with other people in the group?
- Does your group regularly work with anyone at The City of Calgary?
- Does your group participate in City process?
- Does your organization or the people you represent / serve think that community-building processes are relevant to them?
- What would your organization need to be active/participate in community planning?
- As work proceeds on the Community Representation Framework in 2019 if you would like to be involved in the work.

Summary of what we heard

Overall we heard you say that The City needs to work on how it connects with the wide range of communities you represent. We heard you say that relationships building and more culturally considerate meeting types are needed. You also told us about the specific resources and training you and others would



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need to better participate in City processes for a more inclusive environment. The section below goes through question by question of all of the ideas you shared with us.

What we heard by question

The table below is a summary of the themes and ideas we heard from you by question. We typically share all of the verbatim comments in our What We Heard reports. However, as there were few participants and many of the answers can be easily tied to a person, so they are not part of this report.

Question asked	Summary of themes/ideas we heard from you
Information about your organization	You represent a wide range of organizations and on different topics. We mostly heard about your work on: empowerment, belonging and building connections.
How you share information	Meetings and face-to-face was the main way you shared information followed by a website and social media.
Working with the City	Only a few of you said that you work directly with the City. Of those of you who do work with the City it is through existing programs or Social Workers and Councillors. This was on specific topics like transit, recreation and belonging.
Importance of community building	Although few of you directly worked with the City, majority of you said that you and your groups think that community building is important.
How you currently participate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor meetings • Raising awareness • Existing working groups and focus groups
Barriers to why you don't participate	<p>You told us that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning process is not relevant to your organization • That you are mostly concerned with building community and capacity and not on City process • The means to participate was a barrier as Western approaches exclude certain community needs for discretion, language barriers, events being held during work hours, lack of awareness of project plans, details, and awareness of projects in general.



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Question asked	Summary of themes/ideas we heard from you
Supports needed to participate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training • Resources • Culturally appropriate, less exposed way of participation specifically there was a theme of a lack of cultural humility of “active engagement in a lifelong process that individuals enter into on an ongoing basis with, communities, colleagues and with themselves” from the city’s part. • Translation • Door-to-door/in the community • Direct invitations to participate (many said by calendar, or direct invitations in general) • Awareness • Accessibility (online and in-person to be held outside of work hours and at convenient locations)
Involvement in the future	Almost all of you said that you wanted to be part of the process in 2019 in some way. Your contact information is with the project team.

Next steps

In December City Administration will share a report Standing Policy Committee on Community and Protective Services on December 5, 2018, all are invited to attend.