



**Policy Title:** Engage Policy  
**Policy Number:** CS009  
**Report Number:** PFC2013-0235  
**Approved by:** City Council  
**Effective Date:** 2013 May 27  
**Business Unit:** Customer Service and Communications

---

### **BACKGROUND**

The City of Calgary (Council and Administration) recognizes that decisions are improved by engaging citizens and other stakeholder groups where appropriate. Within The City's ability to finance and resource, The City commits to conduct transparent and inclusive engagement processes that are responsive and accountable.

### **PURPOSE**

The Engage Policy provides the guidelines for the development and implementation of engagement processes for stakeholders, both external and internal, in order to achieve the following:

- alignment with City Council's priorities for citizen-centric service delivery
- support for City Council's decision making by providing information about stakeholders' opinions and perspectives
- consistent and clear engagement practices
- enhancement of The City of Calgary's reputation as an organization that listens to citizens and stakeholders

Administration is directed to develop and adhere to the Engage Administration Framework – outlining how The City's commitment to engagement will be carried out, how it will be resourced, and how accountability will be managed.

### **POLICY**

#### **Definitions**

"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.



“Stakeholders” for the purpose of this policy are defined as anyone (person or group of people) who can impact or can be impacted by the results of a decision made by The City, and may include: citizens, the public, customers, businesses, community organizations and partners, other government agencies and any other body interacting with The City.

### **Engage Guiding Principles**

The City of Calgary assigns a high priority to appropriately involving citizens and other stakeholders early on and throughout the process, especially when the decision(s) impact their lives.

This policy incorporates the following five principles for guiding engagement initiatives:

1. *Accountability* – The City upholds the commitments it makes to citizens and stakeholders and demonstrates that results and outcomes of the engagement processes are consistent with the approved plans for engagement.
  - Stewardship of the Engage Policy lies with Council.
  - The City Manager, and General Managers and/or designates, are responsible for adherence to the Engage Policy and stewardship of the Engage Administration Framework.
  - The City’s project managers and work leads are responsible for the correct and thorough completion of The City’s engagement processes, as directed in the Engage Administration Framework.
  - Customer Service & Communications is responsible for the development and maintenance of the Engage Administration Framework, including The City’s processes, tools, training and data archives with respect to engagement.
  
2. *Inclusiveness* – The City makes its best efforts to reach, involve and hear from those who are impacted directly or indirectly.
  - Opportunities are provided for citizens and stakeholders to get involved at the beginning and throughout a City project or initiative when decisions will impact their lives.
  
  - Best efforts are made to accommodate diverse needs and backgrounds including those in accordance with CSPS003 Calgary Corporate Accessibility Policy and CSPS034 Welcoming Community Policy.



- Opportunities are provided to create shared visions embraced by diverse interests.
3. *Transparency* – The City provides clear, timely and complete information, and endeavours to ensure decision processes, procedures, and constraints are understood and followed.
- The promise, purpose and limitations on engaging citizens and stakeholders are made clear.
  - The roles and responsibilities of all parties are clearly communicated.
  - Citizens and stakeholders are provided with relevant background and context about the project or work requiring engagement, as well as information about how to participate in the engagement process.
  - The City communicates to citizens and stakeholders:
    - what was heard – sharing input received, and
    - how input was considered, or why input was not used, in decision making.
4. *Commitment* – The City, within its ability and work plans, allocates sufficient resources for effective engagement.
- Business Units identify appropriate funding and resources for engagement processes within business plans for capital and operational work.
  - Customer Service & Communications develops and delivers training to support effective engagement across The City, specific to roles and responsibilities of The City’s engagement processes.
    - Stakeholder time and resources are respected and used effectively.
5. *Responsiveness* – The City of Calgary endeavours to understand citizen and stakeholder concerns.
- Timely information is provided to citizens and stakeholders about opportunities for input via channels that best suit the audience.



- Feedback is collected and delivered to citizens and stakeholders in order to share input on both engagement processes and outcomes.
- The City is receptive to hearing the views of citizens and stakeholders.

## **PROCEDURE**

### **Application of the Engage Policy**

This policy applies to the following types of opportunities for engagement that exist within The City:

- Engagement in specific planning, policy, and project initiatives that directly or indirectly impact citizens and stakeholders.
- Mandated/legislated processes involving public participation.

### **Administration of the Engage Policy**

Customer Service & Communications has the following responsibilities:

- Develop and keep current the Engage Administration Framework.
- Provide internal training and build familiarity with the Engage Policy and Engage Administrative Framework.
- Provide advice regarding engagement process design.
- Provide support to Council, staff, civic partners, citizens and stakeholders with regards to engagement expertise and process stewardship for consistent application of this policy.
- Advocate for, coordinate, and link engagement activities, standards and practices across The City through the Engage Administration Framework.

### **Spectrum of Strategies and Promises**

This policy includes a spectrum of four strategies and associated promises related to reaching and involving citizens and stakeholders in specific engagement initiatives. Whenever The City embarks on an engagement process, the purpose of the engagement and the 'promise' will be clarified at the beginning of the process. The Inform/Communicate tasks are required for all engagement initiatives at The City. The processes and details of how to conduct engagement will be outlined in the Engage Administration Framework.



**INFORM / COMMUNICATE**

The City will provide context and background information (for all levels of engagement) to assist citizens and stakeholders in understanding issues, problems, alternatives and / or solutions, and services we provide. Our commitment is to:

- Provide information that is timely, accurate, balanced, objective, and easily understood.
- Respond to questions for clarification and direct citizens and stakeholders to sources of additional information.
- Share with stakeholders what we heard from them.
- Share with stakeholders if the input cannot be used in making the decision and the reasoning for why it may not be used.
- Share how the input was factored into the decision.

	<b>Listen &amp; Learn</b>	<b>Consult</b>	<b>Collaborate</b>	<b>Empower</b>
<b>Strategy</b>	Stakeholders and The City listen to and learn about each others' views, plans, concerns, and expectations.	Stakeholders' feedback is obtained through consultation to analyze issues and build alternatives, and thereby make contributions to the decision-making process. Consulting with stakeholders ensures issues and concerns are understood and considered.	Stakeholders are considered partners in the decision-making process, including collaboration on analyzing issues, building alternatives, identifying preferred solutions and making recommendations.	Aspects of the decision-making process are delegated to stakeholders.
<b>Promise</b>	We will listen to stakeholders and learn about their plans, views, issues, concerns and expectations and ideas	We will consult with stakeholders to obtain feedback and ensure their input is considered and incorporated to the maximum extent possible. We undertake to advise how consultation impacted the decisions and outcomes.	We will partner with stakeholders in a process that results in joint recommendations. We undertake to advise how collaboration impacted decision making.	Where legislation permits, we will abide with the decisions made under delegated authority. Where legislation precludes making such a commitment in advance, we undertake to be guided by the outcome.



## **AMENDMENTS**

2003 New Policy

2010 - Revisions to policy. Policy number changed from FCS002 to CS009 due to department reorganization

2013 May 27 (PFC2013-0235)

Effective 2016 January 07, Council Policy revised from *engage!* Policy to Engage Policy