

## Mid-Term Governance Review White Papers Summary #4

### Proposals regarding Public Engagement

Council has clearly stated that it wishes to “maximize input from residents in the work of Council and in policy development, while ensuring that seniors, new Canadians, women and the economically disadvantaged are included”.

City Council adopted a *Public Participation Policy* in 2003 that set out 6 principles of public participation:

1. ***Inclusive & Authentic*** – To the greatest extent possible, the City will involve all stakeholders who are potentially affected by an issue in a transparent and equitable way.
2. ***Sharing & Supportive*** – Involvement of stakeholders in the decision-making process where their input can impact the decision.
3. ***Accountable & Committed*** – Setting clear objectives and expectations for a public participation initiative and actively listening to the input of citizens, community organizations and Advisory Committees.
4. ***Meaningful & Responsive*** – Ensuring consultation is meaningful and valid, with clear objectives and expectations with respect to the ability of the public to impact the decision. Ensuring consultation is conducted in a timely manner that is appropriate to the issue and level of public involvement. Ensuring that participants receive appropriate feedback on the impact of their input is key to making public participation meaningful.
5. ***Continuously Improving*** – Continuously evaluating and measuring the success of the Public Participation Policy and public participation initiatives conducted by the City will form a fundamental part of ensuring public participation is effective and relevant. An annual review of the policy will be undertaken, and evaluation mechanisms for each consultation initiative will be used.
6. ***Facilitating & Building Capacity for a Collaborative Community*** – Strengthening links between the City and the community on public participation initiatives and building capacity in the community for citizen engagement on issues that affect them through a corporate Public Participation Community of Practice.

White Paper #7 outlines a number of ways in which the City could solicit public input:

Departmental Working Groups (where residents work directly with staff, having input into staff reports, etc.); Community Councils/Ward Advisory bodies; Task Forces and Summits; Public Opinion Surveys; Focus Groups; Web-based Consultations.

Questions/Issues:

What kinds of opportunities would make it easiest for you to make your voice heard on specific municipal issues?