



Open Government Action Plan Initiative Interim Report

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Project Background and Objective

In November 2012, Guelph City Council approved an Open Government Framework in order to establish a suitable vision of Open Government for the City and to support the development of an Open Government Action Plan.

The goal of the Open Government Action Plan is to define a deliberate and realistic 5-year action plan to move the City of Guelph towards Open Government, in co-production with stakeholders.

Approach

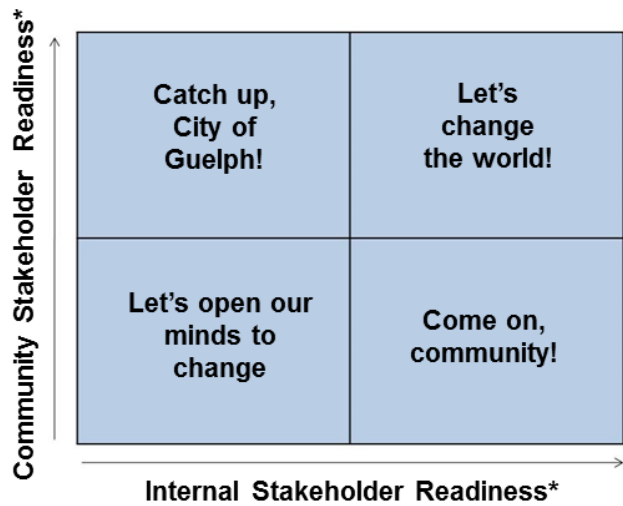
In order to meet the above objective, the project approach was designed to start with a thorough internal assessment of the current state of the Corporation as well as an external assessment of the Open Government practices. These assessments provide a benchmark to inform the vision and to measure progress against.

Steps and timeframe of key phases are outlined below:

| PHASE 1 CURRENT ASSESSMENT | PHASE 2 COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT | PHASE 3 OPEN GOVERNMENT ACTION PLAN |
|---|---|--|
| <p>1.1 Best Practice Review</p> <p>1.2 Policy Review</p> <p>1.3 Organizational Environmental Scan</p> <p>1.4 Community Scan</p> | <p>2.1 Interim Report</p> <p>2.2 Community Engagement Program</p> | <p>3.1 Action Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current Assessment Findings • Community & Stakeholder Engagement Findings • Implementation Plan • Governance Model • Performance and Success Measurement |
| <p>September – December 2013</p> | <p>December 2013 - June 2014</p> | <p>April - July 2014</p> |

Purpose of the Interim Report

The purpose of *Phase 1: Current Assessment* is to deliver key insights from the best of breed examples in the world of Open Government that are relevant and achievable for the City of Guelph (for both its internal and external stakeholders). Phase 2 invites community consultation to gauge citizen readiness for Open Government and to further enhance the vision for the City. Ultimately, Phase 1 and 2 of the project paint a picture of the current state in order to identify key inputs required to build the action plan for the City of Guelph.



This Interim Report, as suggested by its title, is a mid-project check-point that documents the results from *Phase 1: Current Assessment*. It provides client stakeholders with an opportunity to learn about the Best Practice and Policy Review findings and Delvinia's perspectives on City of Guelph's current state with respect to Open Government. This provides City of Guelph stakeholders an opportunity to bring additional perspectives to shape Delvinia's thinking prior to delving into the solution phase of the project, particularly regarding those contextual elements unique to the City of Guelph.

Approach to the Various Current Assessment Activities

In greater detail, we conducted the current assessment in the following manner:

Best Practice Review (details of review findings can be found in Appendix A of this document)

Includes a landscape scan of best of breed governmental organizations and best practices based on the four action areas outlined in 'A Survey of Open Government', including:

- Open Engagement
- Open Governance
- Access to Information
- Open Data

A holistic approach is taken to review best practices at all jurisdictional levels, including local, state/provincial, national, and supra-national.

Policy Review ([details of review findings can be found in Appendix B of this document](#))

Includes a landscape scan of best of breed governmental policy practices and a comparison of these with the practice at the City of Guelph, based on the four action areas previously outlined in 'A Survey of Open Government', including:

- Open Engagement
- Open Governance
- Access to Information
- Open Data

The focus is provided at the municipal level to ensure direct comparison of policies and legislative frameworks for the City of Guelph.

Organizational Environmental Scan ([details of review findings in Appendix C of this document](#))

The goal of the organizational environmental scan is to understand the internal starting point for the Open Government Action Plan project. This required us to gain an appreciation of internal stakeholder perspectives and the roles that staff sees themselves playing. To gain the necessary insights, Delvinia surveyed and consulted councilors, interviewed 55 internal stakeholders in various departments at the City, and reviewed pertinent City documentation and plans (e.g. Corporate Technology Strategy, Community Engagement Framework).

Community Scan ([details of review findings can be found in Appendix D of this document](#))

The goal of the community scan is to gain insight into how to engage external stakeholders in the co-production of the Action Plan and how to effectively engage the community in the City's journey towards Open Government. To do this, Delvinia reviewed City community engagement studies (e.g. Community Engagement Policies in National and International Municipalities) and best practices (e.g. Community Engagement Framework), drew insights out of the best practice review and consulted internal stakeholders to identify appropriate on-the-ground community stakeholders to engage (e.g. Innovation Guelph, University of Guelph).

Key Findings

In our Best Practice Review, we find that there are a variety of Open Government definitions and models. No one single model or definition can be considered a best approach, given that each jurisdiction is characterized by unique contextual factors and has different needs. For example, based on the citizen feedback, one jurisdiction may wish to have a greater focus on open engagement, whereas another places a greater emphasis on access to information based on transparency and accountability pressures there. Looking at the application of Open Data in models of Open Government at the national level around the world provides a helpful example. In the UK 45% of government text relating to Open Government focuses on Open Data whereas in Canada, Brazil, the Netherlands and the US it represents 9%, 14%, 11% and 4% respectively. Finally, in areas such as Kenya and Azerbaijan mentions of Open Data in Open Government approaches are not included at all. These differences highlight that the components of Open Government models differ based on jurisdictional needs.

We also find that Open Government is still in the very early stages of its journey. While a wide variety of methods are being experimented with in the Open Government space, most lack the track record and an established evaluation framework to effectively measure the impact of the method to determine its staying power and effectiveness. This lack of rigorous evaluation is consistent with other aspects of policy assessment, particularly at the municipal level in Canada, and makes development in this area that much more important, especially for exhibiting leadership in the Open Government space.

While there is not one model that can be considered a best approach, the best practice review did reveal a certain set of rules of engagement that can be applied to make the development of an Open Government framework more successful. These include:

- **Integrative Approach** - Different functions of Open Government (e.g. Open Engagement, Open Data) are approached in an integrative, holistic way given their interconnectedness
- **Supportive Cultures** - The organizational leadership team, public service employees, and the broader community are aligned and supportive of Open Government
- **Joint Ownership** – Making co-production and joint ownership across leadership, public service employees and the broader community a fundamental way of working
- **Test and Learn Culture** – Encourages testing and learning in a managed and disciplined way that is premised on an incremental approach to model and policy management and development.

Below are the details for each of the rules of engagement highlighted:

Integrative Approach

Although Open Government approaches have different components that make up their frameworks, it is important to note that these elements do not function as siloes but are interconnected. In this way the success of one is largely dependent on the effectiveness of another. Therefore the approach taken with respect to Open Data directly impacts the design,

implementation, evaluation and overall success of Access to Information policies. Likewise, the strategy taken with regard to Open Engagement will affect the quality and character of Open Governance. None of the components of the Open Government approach should be treated as mutually exclusive endeavours. The influence and interconnectivity of these elements should be taken into consideration in all phases of the policy cycle, notably design, implementation, and evaluation.

Supportive Cultures

Fostering supportive cultures has been shown to be a critical factor in the successful implementation of Open Government programs. Cultures of support are important on three levels.

First, clear support and leadership needs to come from key political and bureaucratic leaders. The UK and US are examples of jurisdictions that have had members of the political executive clearly acting as champions of Open Government. This has contributed toward greater uptake and support from lower levels within the bureaucracy and among civil society. Canada, at the federal level, is an example where political leadership was assigned too late and this has negatively impacted program development, use, and public opinion of the policy change.

Next, fostering a culture of support in the bureaucracy is necessary for effective administration since these officials are the government representatives who will largely be executing this policy change. Support from this group is especially important for gaining approval among civil society. In the UK for example, Open Government administration was much more successful because of support from bureaucrats, whereas in the US it was less successful because the internal culture was not as robust.

Finally, growing a supportive culture among civil society is essential for public buy-in of the service shift and public use of the service. Engaging key societal actors before the official launch through a beta release is one strategy the UK government used to start building public support from key groups before the program went mainstream. The UK government was much more successful in its early adoption of Open Government compared to administration of other jurisdictions based on this strategy. Government departments and agencies have been successful in their implementation of other changes to technology and engagement by identifying leaders or key outreach persons in the community to serve as public champions for the service change. Examples include Internet voting and international electoral engagement of key groups that participate at lower levels including youth, seniors, certain ethnic minority groups and Aboriginal electors. Support from the political top, the bureaucratic middle, and civil society (bottom) is fundamental, yet interconnected, requirements for successful implementation.

Joint Ownership and Co-Production

A core value of Open Government is collaboration. Part of creating positive support for an Open Government initiative is the involvement and consultation that internal and external stakeholders have in the development of the Open Government vision and the policies and programs that are developed to guide the framework. Terms like “joint ownership” and “co-production” can be used to refer to the type of collaborative mentality that goes hand -in-hand with the mentality of Open Government. This collaboration should include government institutions, the private sector, and civil society organizations and actors to incorporate a variety of voices and perspectives to build rich relational capital that will benefit implementation.

One helpful example is the BC government’s use of crowdsourcing to develop a collaborative model of environmental and climate action policy in 2010. This initiative, called “The Apps 4 Climate Action” contest, invited Canadian software developers to raise awareness of climate change and inspire action to reduce carbon pollution through the development of new applications for the web and mobile devices. This initiative ran as a contest with \$40,000 prize money with sponsors from the industry such as Microsoft, SAP, Telus, etc.

In this example, the BC government benefited from the resources and network of multiple external stakeholder groups. It benefited from the sponsors’ resources and outreach networks. It also benefited from promotions by both the development and climate advocacy communities. Finally, using this contest mechanism, it also tapped into the innovation and creative horsepower of the development community.



Embracing a collaborative approach can help overcome deficiencies in the system of representative government, build stakeholder capacity, improve implementation of policies and action plans, and ensure sustainability of decisions.

Test and Learn Culture

As with any innovation initiative and emerging ways of working, it is important in Open Government to test and learn methods as a way to arrive at successful model(s). With a test and learn method in mind, three aspects become imperative.

First, the organization needs to develop an innovation culture that fosters a safe environment to test new things with the understanding that many of the initiatives will not have staying power. This requires deliberateness from the leadership team to foster a culture of risk taking in innovation and to identify and partner with on-the-ground change agents both within and outside the City of Guelph (e.g. University of Guelph, citizen groups).

Second, balancing risk taking, the organization also needs to put in place a governance framework to ensure innovation is aligned with organizational goals and to contain risks. In other words, test and learn activities can 'fail small and quickly' without incurring huge cost or risk to the organization, while purposefully moving the organization towards Open Government.

Third, put in place a discipline of measurement to quantify the level of success and to benchmark future iterations. Part of this means pursuing incremental change in terms of approach to delivering services, policy, necessary changes to the legal framework, and working to foster necessary support inside and outside of government. Trying to overhaul something overnight will not build needed support and will not ensure that adequate research, review, testing, and evaluation of key policy proposals can take place. Taking an incremental approach will ensure various ways of working has more time to take shape and meet unique jurisdictional needs.

In summary, Open Government represents a paradigm shift in the rules of engagement in many governmental organizations. We cannot emphasize enough the significant cultural and process change required in order to make Open Government successful. For that reason, effective change management practice is the centrepiece of an Open Government initiative. This is crucial to enabling a collaborative approach and to fostering cultures of support from middle-level bureaucrats and among bureaucratic and political leaders. It can also be a significant support to ensure a realization of the integrative capacity of these changes (Integrative Approach) and to impart the salience of a Test and Learn mentality.

Following the Best Practice Review, Delvinia conducted a review of City of Guelph resources framed by the above perspectives. The scan consisted of interviews with 55 City stakeholders plus the Council team and reviews of pertinent City documents (e.g. Corporate Technology Strategy, Community Engagement Framework) and policies. In comparing with the best practices revealed above, the scan showed that the City has a few foundational gaps preventing it from fully embracing Open Government.

Overall, we found that the organization has a healthy level of advocacy for Open Government, particularly within the leadership team and the support services area. However, it is missing a few critical building blocks, namely:

- **Lack of Open and Collaborative Organizational Culture** – The organizational environmental scan revealed a hierarchical and siloed culture where strategic plans were often created with limited involvement from the stakeholders, yet those same stakeholders are expected to realize the strategies without resource support.
- **Need Clear Definition of Open Government Initiative at the City of Guelph** – Currently, there is a lack of a clear, common definition of the Open Government initiative at the City of Guelph, common understanding on stakeholder roles and responsibilities, as well as, how the initiative interplays with other initiatives underway.
- **Need Corporate Resource Management and Prioritization Framework Informed by the Citizens** – A prioritization framework informed by citizens is important to ensure the City moves towards joint ownership and co-production of Government where there is alignment across the leadership, employee and community groups.
- **City Data Is Not Ready for Public Use** – Stakeholders revealed that there are gaps in the data sets from the standpoints of accuracy, currency, and ensuring data is in consumable formats by the public.

Below are the details for each of the rule of engagement highlighted:

Lack of Open and Collaborative Organizational Culture

While there is a healthy level of advocacy for Open Government within the organization, Delvinia also heard skepticism, particularly from the operational groups, towards organizational change. The skepticism is due to poor change management practices and results with past initiatives. Some stakeholders conveyed that strategies are often created without their

“We got lots of plans and strategies. Look great but no urgency around implementation or accountability associated with implementation.”

“We don’t want flowery language [in the Action Plan]. We want to see man hours, money, practical stuff, timelines, etc. Please don’t give us things we don’t understand and can’t act on.”
- City Staff

involvement yet they are expected to realize the strategies without resource support. As a result, the Open Government project is suffering from a deficit of trust amongst employees. This suggests a hierarchical culture and poor change management practices and highlights the opportunity for further collaborative planning and prioritization of initiatives across the organization.

On a positive note, while the organization has traditionally had a hierarchical and siloed culture, there is movement towards a more collaborative culture. For example, projects such as the Integrated Operational Review (IOR) and the Community Engagement Framework were developed by cross-functional working groups. In the City’s journey towards Open Government, it is important to

continue the momentum of such internal collaboration and to institutionalize these practices so that they become the dominant culture across the organization.

Need Clear Definition of Open Government Initiative at the City of Guelph

Stakeholders agree Open Government means a widespread change at the organization where most organizational stakeholders play a role. However, the term 'Open Government' can be quite abstract. At times, it can be interpreted by some narrowly (e.g. Open Government is about open data). On the other end of the spectrum, Open Government can be interpreted as something all encompassing, where many organizational projects can arguably fit under (e.g. the Geospatial Information System project, Mindmixer Community Outreach). In this way, there could be confusion around the boundaries of projects in relation to the Open Government initiative.

These insights point to the importance of having a clear, common definition of the Open Government initiative at the City of Guelph, common understanding on stakeholder roles and responsibilities, as well as, how the initiative interplays with other initiatives underway. It also highlights the importance to take a collaborative approach with internal stakeholders in the creation of the Open Government Action Plan in order to ensure the various activities weave together cohesively.

Need Corporate Resource Management and Prioritization Framework Informed by the Citizens

Stakeholders conveyed that resources are stretched internally and morale is low within the organization. These concerns are also captured in the recent Organizational Assessment Results (dated August 2013) by Western Management Consultants.

The Open Government initiative will require resources across the organization. At the minimum, it requires resources to work in more collaborative ways and make space to test and learn. For example, Google is an organization well known for their "Innovation Time Off" policy where staff is given Fridays dedicated to research and development activities. For those reasons, Delvinia echoes the need to put in place a systematic corporate wide, standardized approach to program/project management, including a prioritization framework.

From the perspective of Open Government and joint ownership with the community, we would recommend the prioritization framework also reflect the priorities of the citizen and community, rather than be decided solely by the needs of the internal stakeholders.

City Data Is Not Ready for Public Use

Internal stakeholders highlighted the lack of readiness on the open data front. While the organization has possession of a lot of data, a lack of data governance and integrity pose barriers for the Open Government initiative. On the data governance front, data standards, data inventory, and organizational data champion(s), are cited as gaps. From a data integrity standpoint, stakeholders highlighted the need to evaluate data for accuracy, and currency, and to ensure data is in formats that can be easily utilized by the public (e.g. not in abbreviations or with industry jargon).

Additionally, Stakeholders highlighted that 2014 is an election year which may present a variety of opportunities or obstacles to the realization of Open Government.

Given the as yet unknown impact of the election and a deficit of trust amongst employees, Delvinia believes 2014 should be focused on building the foundation for Open Government. Foundational activities include testing and learning various Open Government approaches for the City's context, demonstrating effective change management to internal stakeholders, and creating a governance and prioritization framework to facilitate change.

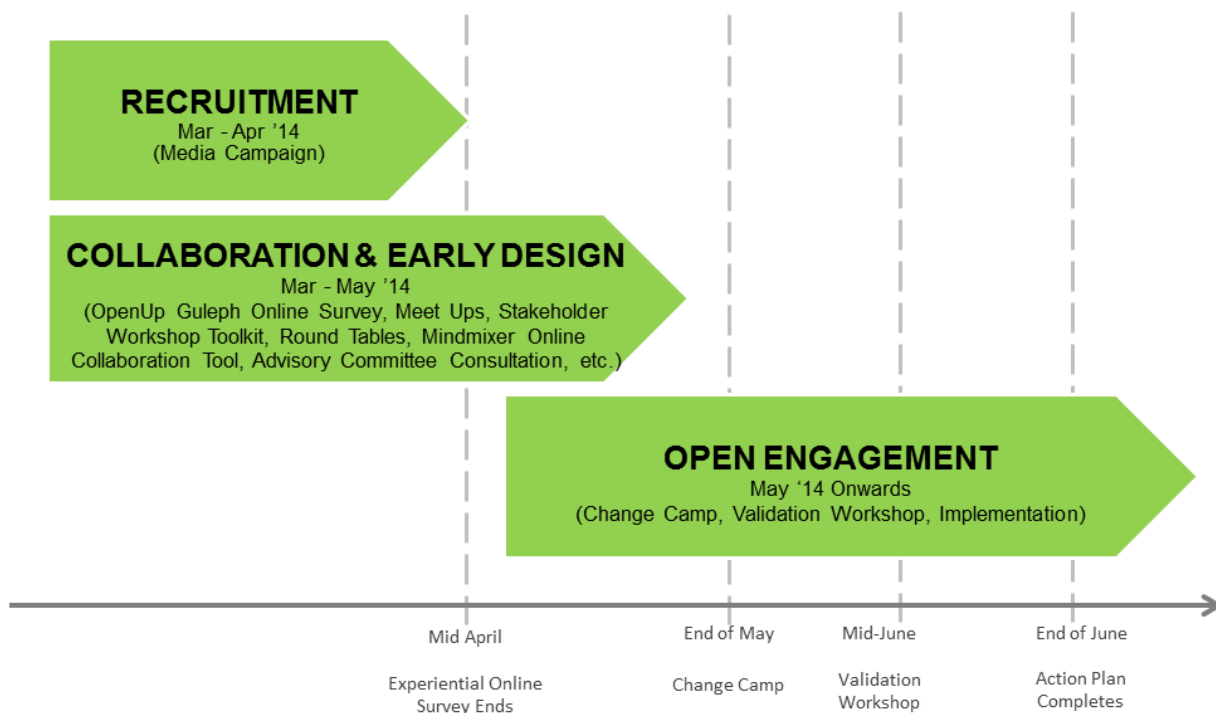
In summary, the key findings above underscore the importance of:

- Change management as part of the City's journey towards Open Government
- Creating an Action Plan in collaboration with the internal stakeholders
- Taking a community-centric approach in guiding and prioritizing the Action Plan
- Leveraging the election

Next Steps

The next step of the project is to consult the wider community as a complement to the consultation completed to date. Based on the findings of the community scan and in collaboration with the steering committee members, Delvinia suggests an approach that will set the stage for the journey towards Open Government. This includes engaging both internal and external stakeholders on an ongoing basis, starting with the recruitment for the OpenUp Guelph online survey.

Below are the details of each step:



1. Recruitment (Target Timeframe: March – April '14)

In this step, the City will start engaging the community by inviting them to participate in the Collaboration & Early Design Phase in two ways. First, the City will engage influencer groups (e.g. University of Guelph, Innovation Guelph) to inform them about the Open Government initiative and invite them to participate in Sector-specific Roundtable Discussions and encourage them to initiate and lead community-led meet ups. This includes inviting influencer groups to assist the City in recruiting for the OpenUp Guelph online survey through their networks. Additionally, the City will also invite the community at large to participate in the OpenUp Guelph online survey through available media venues. Some of the media venues planned include the City's website, social media, and other media outlets, the Guelph Mercury and Guelph Tribute Websites, transit ads, and radio ads to name a few.

2. **Collaboration and Early Design** (Target Timeframe: March – May '14)

In this step, residents and City employees will be invited to participate in the OpenUp Guelph online survey. The goal of the collaboration & early design phase is to generate awareness of what Open Government is and to gain an appreciation for the community's perspectives and readiness.

For influencers that are further along in their Open Government journey, the goal is to seek perspectives and identify opportunities that can support the City's Open Government initiative. This step will be accomplished through a variety of techniques including sector-specific round table discussions, community-led meet ups (supported by do-it-yourself toolkits), and advisory committee consultation. The outcome from these in-person stakeholder meetings will be posted on a designated online collaboration space (on the Mindmixer platform) where the rest of the community can also comment on. The outcome collected will be a key input into the Action Plan.

3. **Open Engagement** (Target Timeframe: May '14 Onwards)

In the beginning of this step, a strawman Action Plan will be developed based on the preceding assessments and community engagement activities. Community stakeholders will then be invited to participate in an in-person Change Camp towards the end of May, to help shape the particulars of the Action Plan.

The Change Camp will be a half-day session designed to build momentum toward open government by educating and inspiring community members and City employees and developing champions. The event will start with an inspirational speaker series. Following the speaker series, Change Camp participants will be walked through the Action Plan strawman. Finally, the participants will be led through breakout brainstorm sessions to help define and refine focus areas in the Action Plan strawman. This approach is designed to ensure buy-in and joint ownership out the gate, an element critical in the successful implementation of the Open Government Action Plan.

Following the Change Camp, a specific group of change leaders will be invited to attend the Validation Workshop in June to help finalize the Action Plan. At the Validation Workshop, change leaders invited will be walked through a comprehensive version of the Action Plan with much of its details outlined. Change leaders will be invited to help prioritize focus areas and provide further refinements to them, before the finalization of the Action Plan.

Appendix A: Best Practice Review

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following report examines best practices related to Open Government in anticipation of the City of Guelph's development and adoption of an Open Government framework. Best practices are grouped into four action areas: open governance, open engagement, open data, and access to information.

Key findings include:

Best Practices with respect to Open Engagement:

- A combination of online and traditional engagement tools and strategies is recommended to maximize engagement;
- Some of these include:
 - (1) The use of crowdsourcing as a tool to tap into public wisdom and the creativity of the citizenry
 - (2) The adoption of collaborative forms of social media where possible;
 - (3) New, deliberative methods of engagement can greatly contribute to the development of transparent and collaborative government.

Best Practices with respect to Open Governance:

- (1) Greater transparency and accountability of governance, notably through financial disclosure
 - This includes greater budget transparency (comprehensive information from budget reports);
 - Making all fiscal activities transparent and publicly viewable.
- (2) Open collaboration between government institutions, the private sector, and civil society
 - Building relational capital;
 - Forging collaborations and network building.
- (3) Participatory, citizen-focused approach to service delivery
 - Engaging residents as co-producers in policy design, implementation, and evaluation;
 - Regular public consultation.

Best Practices with respect to Access to Information:

- (1) A proactive approach to information management
 - Creating access to information;
 - Political will and leadership to pursue Open Government;
 - Pursuing the structural and legal changes necessary to facilitate its implementation.
- (2) Introducing an explicit policy of proactive disclosure, preferably in legislation
- (3) Use of open web portals with participatory characteristics
 - Make portal as open as possible;

- Introduce participatory mechanisms to help facilitate openness and interactive capacity.

Best Practices with respect to Open Data:

(1) Amount and quality of data posted

- Work to ensure high-value data is made available to the community;
- Obtain data through other collection mechanisms (i.e. social media) and make it available and useable;
- Adopt user-friendly interfaces.

(2) Foster and build an internal culture of support through training, education, and investments in research:

- Focus on understanding the impacts of open data policies and sharing this information internally;
- Making research investments to learn about these effects firsthand;
- Sharing open data stories with staff.

(3) Value of engaging citizens and other actors

- Engage civil society groups and actors where possible;
- Conduct an initial 'in beta' release;
- Work to ensure equality of access;
- Consider establishing public access points ;
- Help to offer courses and training to facilitate equity is use.

INTRODUCTIONS

This report provides a synthesis of best practices used in the implementation of Open Government approaches in various jurisdictions. The goal is to provide the City of Guelph with information to shape its own Open Government Action Plan. Specifically, the report focuses on best practices of Open Government in the context of four action areas, which include: (1) open engagement, (2) open governance, (3) access to information, and (4) open data. These topic areas were chosen based on their identification in the *Survey of Open Government* as directions to facilitate the fulfillment the following principles, whose goal is to inform and guide the development and refinement of Open Government in the City of Guelph. These principles include: participation, innovation, transparency, and accountability. This review represents a first step in charting the City of Guelph's course toward Open Government and determining the types of practices that will not only promote a successful and effective framework of Open Government, but also set Guelph apart as a jurisdictional leader in Open Government at the local level, worldwide.

OPEN ENGAGEMENT

Why open engagement?

Although the concept of "Open Government" was pioneered by the open source software movement and initially focused on the premise of free access to information, it has gradually evolved toward the idea of a

transparent and collaborative system of governance where citizens can participate in meaningful ways (Lathrop & Ruma, 2010). In this way, public participation has become an essential component of Open Government programs. As United States (US) President Barack Obama indicated in the *Memorandum on Transparency and Open Government* issued on his first day in office, “citizen engagement enhances the effectiveness of government and improves the quality of its decisions” (Executive Office of the President, 2009). In recent years, there has been no shortage of talk about the need for greater citizen involvement in decision-making and increasing institutional possibilities for public engagement, particularly when the goal is ensure public trust and make government more accountable, transparent, and collaborative. Enhancing citizen participation in different areas of contemporary governance can help overcome deficiencies in the system of representative government, build stakeholder capacity, improve implementation of policies and action plans, and ensure sustainability of decisions (Fung, 2006; Philips & Orsini, 2002; Lukensmeyer & Torres, 2006; Sheedy, 2008).

Governments and industry alike are increasingly seeking to move away from engagement mechanisms that involve one-way communication with the public and to pursue activities that promote dialogue and ensure both the breadth and depth of public engagement. Traditionally, governments have focused either on strategies for informing the public (public communication) or have sought feedback from citizens by way of opinion polls, focus groups, or citizen testimony at public hearings (public consultation). By contrast to such “thin” approaches, public participation mechanisms that involve the public directly into decision-making provide more meaningful ways of communication, in which both governments and members of the public are open to negotiation and possibly changing their positions (Rowe and Frewer, 2005). Open Government is an innovative approach whose focus has been on creating mechanisms to stimulate more robust, meaningful, and open citizen participation. Yet, this often receives less attention than other elements of Open Government approaches. In the first two years of the Open Government Initiative in the US, for example, the topic of public participation has received less attention than the issues of transparency and data access (Lukensmeyer, Goldman, & Stern, 2011).

There are a variety of online strategies and tools that can facilitate open engagement and increase participation of diverse audiences. Examples range from the use of websites, blogs, Twitter, and Facebook pages dedicated to specific engagement initiatives to more complex approaches such as wikis, crowdsourcing, and online town halls. It is expected that social media, which has been widely adopted by the general public, will play an increasing role in implementing Open Government since it provides platforms for open, continuous, and ubiquitous public engagement (Lee & Kwak, 2012). However, most of these interactive online tools should be viewed as means, not ends (i.e. simply having a website, blog or a Facebook page can help to engage people, but does not qualify as engagement by itself). Productive and meaningful engagement occurs

The major challenge for governments seeking to implement Open Government, therefore, is to provide citizens with a meaningful voice in decision-making, and not just increase opportunities for access to and sharing of information.

when governments proactively reach out to large, diverse numbers of people, get them into settings where they can learn, deliberate, collaborate, and act, and then find ways of supporting action at a variety of levels.

In recent years, deliberative public engagement has become the standard for high quality participation, mainly because deliberation engages citizens in meaningful ways. This method provides opportunities for participants to consider multiple, diverse viewpoints, realize a shared understanding of the underlying issues, and develop more substantive policy solutions (Gastil, 2008). Deliberative forums, such as citizen panels, citizens' assemblies, deliberative polls, and citizens' juries, engage an informed citizenry, a carefully selected "mini-public," in focused deliberations on complex policy proposals and enable decisions that are acceptable to all participants involved (Crosby et al., 2006; Warren, 2009). This type of engagement increases the legitimacy of decision-making; produces better policies; overcomes polarization, reduces conflict, and helps to find common ground; build competent and responsible citizens; engages citizens in political life; and includes minorities in the political process (Sheedy, 2008). In this sense, the use of new deliberative methods for public engagement can greatly contribute to the development of a transparent and collaborative system of governance.

It is worth noting that an *America Speaks* report assessing public participation in Open Government plans of the US Federal Agencies has indicated that although a variety of online and face-to face forums are used to engage citizens, deliberative processes, which provide a more meaningful way for public involvement, are rarely incorporated (Lukensmeyer, Goldman, & Stern, 2011). Although under the Open Government Directive many agencies are striving to embed a culture of participation into their organizations, little guidance is provided as to what constitutes good public participation and how to evaluate the quality of participatory activities (Lukensmeyer, Goldman, & Stern, 2011). These concerns are not unique to the US. Municipalities in Canada have re-considered their public involvement strategies to ensure high-quality public participation. Cities such as Toronto, Edmonton, Ottawa, Burlington, Guelph, among others, have adopted the Public Involvement Spectrum of the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) as an evaluation tool for different types of engagement activities. The IAP2 spectrum uses five categories to categorize participatory activities: 1) Inform; 2) Consult; 3) Engage; 4) Collaborate; and 5) Empower. Using pro forma techniques of participation to simply inform and/or consult citizens often fails to meet the public's expectation that their concerns are properly understood and considered by the decision-makers. By contrast, activities that engage citizens directly into the decision-making processes, ensure collaboration with the public in each aspect of the decision, and empower citizens by delegating decision-making authority to the public are considered best practices since they increase the depth and value of engagement.

Best practices overview

There are two major types of public participation activities that are included in Open Government plans: (1) online public participation and (2) face-to-face public participation. Although online participation is often considered a priority in Open Government initiatives, face-to-face engagement, particularly deliberative forums, can be conducive to the principles of Open Government, especially the principles of collaboration, participation, and innovation identified by the City of Guelph. These two models, however, should not be seen as antagonistic, but rather as complimentary.

A key consideration in implementing open engagement is participant recruitment, which is almost invariably the most difficult and time-consuming task in any public engagement effort. A particular challenge is that people may not be motivated by a single recruitment message, even if it corresponds closely to their interests.

Recruitment efforts are more successful when potential participants receive messages from a range of sources, including emails, web-based appeals, advertisements in the news media, and, especially, through a personal appeal from someone they already know and trust.

Achieving recruitment goals often requires the creation of extensive “webs” of community organizations and individual leaders that are instrumental in providing access to underrepresented groups, members of which are usually difficult to recruit through traditional channels (i.e. Aboriginals, minorities and immigrants). In cases of open engagement through online tools, some additional challenges include: 1) maintaining continuous participation; 2) gathering meaningful and useful feedback; and 3) ensuring that citizens are aware of, and can make connections between, different elements of the engagement plan. For example, the City of Grande Parries in Alberta is using SeeClickFix to enable citizens to collaborate with the municipal government and play an active role in improving their community. Citizens can use the interactive tool on the City website to report location-based issues such as potholes or graffiti; non-emergency, non-crime, and non-bylaw issues; and neighborhood clean ups and work bees. Furthermore, the interactive map allows citizens to track progress on construction and maintenance in different parts of the city, as well as to share information with others in the community through social media applications such as Twitter, Facebook, and Google+. The municipal government, on the other hand, can also use the application to track the level of community engagement over time.

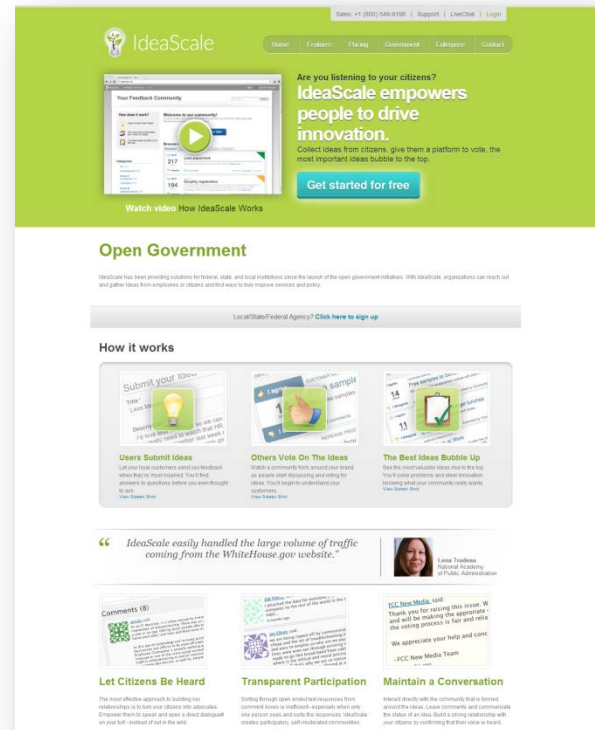
“The major difference between online public participation and face-to-face public participation is that online tools enable engagement on a large scale and can ensure continuous participation over extensive period of time, while face-to-face models tend to engage smaller groups of citizens within shorter time frames. The latter are particularly efficient in local decision-making since they promote the virtue of solidarity and build social capital in communities.”

Finally, it is worth noting that municipalities in Canada are currently striving to develop a more comprehensive approach to public involvement that integrates traditional face-to-face consultation methods with online tools. The goal is to utilize the best available engagement tools to achieve broad participation from a diverse set of audiences, to maximize public feedback on the initiative under consideration, and to ensure that public participation is genuine and robust. An example of a mixed approach is the employment land policy consultation process in Toronto, which took place from January to March 2013. The public and stakeholder involvement initiative was implemented by Lura Consulting and utilized diverse communication and engagement tools including: stakeholder roundtable sessions; public open houses across the city; dedicated project web page; online questionnaire; online “Do It Yourself” consultation process; online video presentation with voiceover and captioning; social media campaign; promotion through online ‘blogging community’; live stream of City Hall presentation on RogersTV.com; discussion guides; interactive open house panels; media advertising; and, finally, summary and analysis of all feedback received (see *Consultation Summary Report*, City of Toronto, 2013). The wide scope and variety of methods used by this public involvement initiative is intended to engage many residents and community groups, business and voluntary associations and organizations, faith-based organizations, and labour. It also ensured that participants’ feedback was accurately documented for consideration and that suggestions for policy changes were incorporated into the final policies.

Crowdsourcing as a best practice in open engagement

Crowdsourcing or online ideation processes are the most prominent approach used by government agencies which implement Open Government plans (Lukensmeyer, Goldman, & Stern, 2011). Crowdsourcing refers to an open process, in which groups of people are invited to submit, discuss and refine ideas for a specific question or a problem posed by an organization. Furthermore, participants are often invited to evaluate and rank submissions. This way the best ideas are identified and nominated by the vast majority of participants. Crowdsourcing is an efficient method for community engagement, which is commonly used by governments and nonprofit organizations for a number of purposes, including activities such as pooling collective knowledge, micro-volunteering, crowd-creation, crowd-voting, and crowd-funding. Online ideation is also widely used by businesses for future marketing and product innovations and crowdsourcing-focused market research is a growing trend. Although governments, non-profits, and businesses have traditionally relied on experts to develop solutions for pressing problems and concerns, recent popular research on crowdsourcing has suggested that seeking public input could generate better results than just asking the experts (O’Reilly, 2010). Supporters of this approach point out to the creativity of the crowd and maintain that random aggregations of lay people can perform better on certain tasks, develop more accurate predictions, or more offer valuable advice than what experts alone can produce (O’Reilly, 2010).

In the US, the Open Government Initiative has recommended to agencies to take advantage of this best practice for open engagement by using an online ideation tool, developed by the General Services Administration with software from Ideascale (HowTo.gov, 2013). Almost every federal agency has incorporated this engagement method in their Open Government plans (Lukensmeyer, Goldman, & Stern, 2011). The Department of Homeland Security, for example, used crowdsourcing to engage more than 20,000 stakeholders from all fifty states in a dialogue on the Quadrennial Homeland Security Review. This national consultation initiative includes a three-stage process, in which participants initially proposed and voted on ideas about the goals and objectives of the review, then prioritized how to achieve the proposed goals and objectives, and finally provided feedback on the outcomes of the crowdsourcing exercise and identified next steps.



In Canada, the British Columbia (BC) government utilized crowdsourcing to develop a collaborative model of environmental and climate action policy. In 2010, it launched “The Apps 4 Climate Action” contest, which invited Canadian software developers to raise awareness of climate change and inspire action to reduce carbon pollution through the development of new applications for the web and mobile devices. The BC Government had created a catalogue of its best climate and greenhouse gas emission data and shared the data with companies and the public to facilitate the design of novel, creative, and fun climate action applications. The use of crowdsourcing can be a best practice with respect to open engagement and the City of Guelph should consider its use as it develops and refines its own model.

Social media as a best practice in open engagement

Web-based platforms, such as blogs, Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube, enable people to interact in a variety of different ways and can facilitate open engagement of a large group of participants. This may be achieved through a regularly updated blog covering the public involvement process and addressing issues related it; a Twitter hashtag or general outreach through Twitter; a Facebook group page or general outreach through Facebook; and, finally, through other micro-blogging social media sites. In the scholarly literature, social media is classified into two major categories depending on its purpose. The first group is the so-called *expressive social media*, which enables people to share information such as text, pictures, videos and music and is comprised of web-based platforms such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Flickr,

and Foursquare (Lee and Kwak, 2012). The second group is *collaborative social media*, which engages users in interactive and social processes. Examples of this type of social media include applications such as Wiki and Google Docs, which allow collaborative creation and editing of online content. Presently, there are heightened expectations about the role of social media-based public engagement in Open Government, particularly the prospect of engaging a young demographic who are heavy users of these online platforms. Nonetheless, governments at all levels still lack expertise and knowledge about how to use effectively social media (Lukensmeyer, Goldman, & Stern, 2011; Lee and Kwak, 2012).

In politics and government, an innovative use of an expressive social media tool such as Twitter was the first ever live Twitter town hall which President Obama hosted on July 5, 2011, from the East Room of the White House. The President responded to questions from citizens, Members of Congress, and reporters. In all, there were 169,395 tweets that included the #AskObama hashtag, with the most popular topics being jobs (23 percent), the budget (18 percent), taxes (18 percent), and education (11 percent) (OhMyGov Inc., 2011).

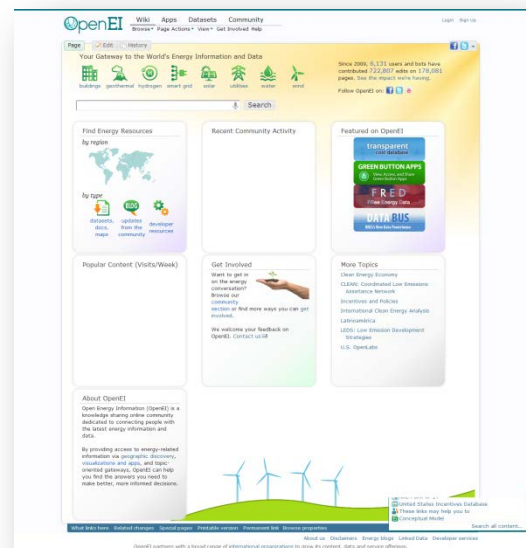
A good example of a collaborative social media tool that incorporates features of both traditional face-to-face deliberation and online participation are *wikis*. A wiki is a web application that allows visitors to edit existing web pages by adding, modifying, or deleting content in collaboration with other participants. They are most commonly used to aggregate information from multiple sources. Wikipedia is the best known example of such collaborative editing that can engage people at large scale and over extended time. A distinctive feature of wikis is their open-source structure, which ensures lower or no cost (i.e. the software code used in these applications is not proprietary, but is in the public domain). Two examples of successful use of wiki platforms in Open Government include: 1) a wiki hosted on the website of the US Environmental Protection Agency, which allows watershed organizations, managers, and communities to share watershed management plans and identify best practices

(<http://water.epa.gov/type/watersheds/datait/watershedcentral/wiki.cfm>);

and 2) the US Department of Energy Open Energy Information website, which uses a wiki platform to share resources and data between government, private sector, project developers, and the community

(http://en.openei.org/wiki/Main_Page). Although the online mode of interaction promoted by wikis departs from many of the qualities associated with face-to-face deliberation (i.e. small groups interaction, focused discussions on shared values, consensus decision-making, etc.), many believe it can enrich and improve traditional deliberative forums.

Klemp and Forcehimes (2010), for example, have suggested that the wiki model can realize values of deliberative democracy since it promotes inclusion and accuracy at large



scales and eliminates problems that arise in deliberative practice, such as group polarization, hidden profiles, and concealed information. The incorporation of social media, particularly media that facilitates collaborative interaction, can be considered a best practice to employ in the City of Guelph's strategy of open engagement.

Deliberative forums as a best practice in open engagement

Citizen forums such as citizen panels, citizens' juries, citizens' assemblies, deliberative polls, and planning cells engage a small group of citizens in a focused deliberation on key policy and governance issues. These methods of public participation are oriented towards achieving societal consensus and are particularly useful for resolving contentious societal issues. A notable characteristic of these deliberative methods of public participation is the rigorous approach to participant selection used to avoid manipulation by either special interests or elected officials (Crosby et al., 1986). Unlike more direct participation mechanisms which are open to all who wish to attend, the method of stratified random sampling ensures that the group selected is truly representative of the broader public and minimizes the influence of special group interest on the outcome of public deliberation (Crosby et al., 1986; Fung, 2006). While there is a lesser degree of openness in terms of who is allowed to participate in comparison with social media-based engagement, deliberative methods are more efficient in ensuring inclusiveness of under-represented groups and outcomes based on shared values. Moreover, the learning process involved in deliberation empowers citizens and increases the quality of decision-making.

In recent years, a number of municipal governments in Canada have utilized citizens' panels to engage citizens in decision-making regarding budget priorities. Participatory budgeting (PB) is an experimental approach to budget participation that originated in 1989 in the Brazilian city of Porto Alegre and its popularity has ever since grown worldwide. A consultation on municipal budgeting was successfully implemented in the City of Guelph in 1999 by a civil society organization, called the Neighbourhood Support Coalition, in collaboration with the municipal government, and with funding from external donors (Pinnington et al., 2009). For the past ten years, Toronto Community Housing has also engaged residents in PB processes to decide on the best way capital funds should be spent to improve communities (Lerner and Duarte-Laudon, 2010). In Quebec, the Montreal borough Plateau Mont-Royal deployed participatory budgeting from 2006 to 2008 by initially engaging a large assembly of citizens and later evolving into a series of meetings of elected neighborhood delegates (Patsias, Latendresse, and Bherer, 2012). Most recently, the City of Edmonton conducted a pilot project with the University of Alberta to use a citizen panel in the 2010-2011 budget process. In this case, a panel of 49 randomly selected Edmontonians met over six Saturdays in the spring of 2009 to deliberate over the City's spending priorities. The panel developed two new directions and four recommendations for City Council to consider in setting the budget priorities. The report was presented to City Council on July 22, 2009 and the citizens' recommendations were reflected in the budget planning (Adria and Mao, 2011).

Deliberative forums can be conducted online and constitute a best practice in public engagement provided that standard measures of deliberative quality used in face-to-face deliberation, such as quality of information, use of accurate facts to support arguments, respect for alternative points of view, and perceptions of participants, are met. This can be ensured through the development of rigorous evaluation tools of recruitment procedures, the deliberative process itself, and its impact. Collaborations between academia and governments are particularly useful in this respect as illustrated by the “Connecting to Congress” Project, which involved the design and implementation of 20 online town hall meetings in 2006 with U.S. Representatives and one in 2008 with a U.S. Senator, with a total number of 600 participants. The project was a partnership between the Congressional Management Foundation (CMF) and researchers from the Harvard Kennedy School, the University of California-Riverside, and the Ohio State University. Online discussions were held with Members of Congress on contested political issues such as immigration, unemployment, and other pressing concerns for voters. Each online forum included a small but diverse group of randomly selected constituents (15–25). Participants were surveyed before and after deliberation to determine changes in behavior and attitudes over time. The research conducted on this online deliberation has indicated that trust in the Member of Congress increased 14 percent in comparison with the control group; that these sessions attracted more people from demographics not traditionally engaged in politics and people frustrated with the political system; that approval ratings of the Member of Congress increased after deliberation; and that participants in the town hall were they more likely to vote and follow elections in the news, as well as to persuade others to vote (Congressional Management Foundation, 2009). The use of this type of method would be a thoughtful complement to other online engagement tools, suggested above.

Deliberative methods of engagement are a best practice through which to meaningfully engage citizens into the political process and potentially have a positive impact on their political attitudes and external orientations toward government and political institutions.

OPEN GOVERNANCE

Why open governance?

There has been an increasing trend toward adopting Open Government principles at all levels of government decision-making. Open Government frameworks and action plans implemented by local, sub-national, national and supranational governments aim to promote transparency in the public sector, make institutions more accountable, and increase civic participation in governance. Historically, the idea of ‘Open Government’ has been associated with freeing access to government information. Now that innovations in information and communication technology (ICTs) are making this a reality, there are more calls for expanding the concept of Open Government beyond simply freeing information (Francoli, 2011). Most discussions have emphasized increased collaboration, transparency, and accountability as an essential step in opening up government (Lathrop & Ruma, 2010). Although the term ‘Open Government’ is still used interchangeably with concepts such as ‘e-government’ or ‘government 2.0’, it

cannot be limited to the use of technology by governments. Presently, Open Government initiatives put greater emphasis on creating a new 'culture of governance' where 'the goals of openness, sharing and collaboration are reflected, more broadly, in government operations and priorities' (Francoli, 2011:152). This by no means diminishes the role of ICTs in implementing Open Government. The use of technology, particularly technologies of collaborative nature that comprise Web 2.0, remains central to Open Government plans as it enables better solutions to collective problems locally, nationally, and internationally (O'Reilly, 2010).

Governments around the world are developing new and creative solutions to improve their effectiveness, stimulate economic efficiency, counter corruption, and increase the public sector responsiveness to citizens' concerns. As indicated in a recent report on Open Government by the Transparency and Accountability Initiative, a significant number of jurisdictions have undertaken the first step towards Open Government by passing legislation which mandates public access to information in practical and usable formats (T/A Initiative, 2011). In addition,

some governments have committed to making revenues and expenditures more transparent, engaging communities to improve the delivery of public services, and are utilizing digital technologies to promote novel forms of citizen engagement and participation in civil society (T/A Initiative, 2011).

Moreover, there is an ongoing global effort to help promote innovative ways for governments to increase their openness. The Open Government Partnership (OGP) was formally launched on September 20, 2011 in

New York, when the eight founding governments - Brazil, Indonesia, Mexico, Norway, Philippines, South Africa, United Kingdom, and the United States endorsed an *Open Government Declaration* and announced country action plans (OGP, September 2011). Since the launch 47 new countries have joined the initiative. This multilateral coalition aims to encourage action plans and innovation in the areas of transparency, accountability and citizen engagement. Key priorities for national reforms identified by the OGP include: 1) increasing public sector responsiveness to citizens; 2) countering corruption; 3) promoting economic efficiencies; 4) harnessing new technologies; and 5) improving the delivery of services to citizens (T/A Initiative, 2011).

Canada has joined the OGP on 2012 and has since committed to taking concrete steps to develop Open Government. An Open Government Initiative was developed as early as March 2011, which included three main streams: open information, open data, and open dialogue (Canada Action Plan on Open



Government, 2012). The Federal Government also launched an open data portal that has resulted in over 100,000 dataset downloads since its launch (Canada Action Plan on Open Government, 2012). Nonetheless, Canada has been criticized for its lack of a coherent policy and well-developed infrastructure to implement open governance (Francoli, 2011). Concerns that it is lagging in a key area of open governance, such as freedom to information, have been recently expressed in an open public dialogue on Canada's access to information regime, which was initiated by the Office of the Information Commissioner on September 28, 2012. In their submission to the dialogue, Cooke and Israel (2013) have indicated that deficiencies exist primarily in the Canadian federal right to information laws, while provincial governments have adopted more effective and versatile statutory regimes, which are more reflective of open data innovation trends internationally. Canada's federal transparency law has shown to be ineffective and there is a decline in compliance with access to information legislation, as indicated in a letter to the Treasury Board by Canada's federal and provincial information commissioners. A strong indicator of ineffectiveness is the number of requests that have not produced any results, which in the last five years have increased by 49 percent (Ibid.). Furthermore, a recent audit of access to information practices in Canada found that over 50 percent of the access to information requests at the federal level did not receive a response within the statutorily designated 30-day period. It is by no means surprising, then, that in a recent survey of international freedom of information regimes Canada ranked 55 of 92 countries globally (Ibid.).

Best practices overview

Best practices in open governance promote three major principles: 1) transparency and accountability, 2) open collaboration between government institutions, the private sector, and civil society; and 3) a more participatory, citizen-centered approach to service delivery.

Such practices effectively utilize online platforms to facilitate collaboration, access to government information and provide services to citizens where and when they need them. Furthermore, the goal is to empower citizens by engaging them in the development of innovative, user-friendly, and improved approaches to governance. This model is consistent with notions of Open Government as a platform for partnerships between government institutions, external organizations, and citizens (O'Reilly, 2010). It is by no means surprising that many people nowadays want to see government as a convener, rather than initiator of civic action, and expect that government institutions will be open to creative collaborations with the public and stakeholders in the development of government services and public value (Ibid.).

Lee and Kwak (2012) have observed that federal agencies in the US are keen to implement the Open Government directive and tend to launch multiple governance projects simultaneously, even when they

“One of the greatest challenges in Open Government is that institutions in some jurisdictions are under tremendous pressure to implement transparency, collaboration, and participation within a relatively short timeframe.”

- Lee and Kwak (20120)

lack capabilities and the resources necessary for their successful completion. This tendency can have a negative impact on the performance of their Open Government initiatives, and, subsequently, can result in serious consequences such as financial loss, damaged reputations, and undermined public trust in government. The best strategy to achieve success in Open Government plans is the adoption of a gradual approach to implementation.

Lee and Kwak (2012) have proposed an (OGMM), which establishes five maturity levels of Open Government: 1) the initial conditions (i.e. the focus is primarily on static, one way communication methods, rather than using interactive communication capabilities such as social media and Web 2.0 tools); 2) data



transparency (i.e. the focus is on increasing transparency of government processes and performance through sharing data with the public); 3) open participation (i.e. opening government to the public's ideas and knowledge through effective use of expressive social media and Web 2.0 tools such as web dialogues, social networking, micro-blogging, photo/video sharing, social bookmarking,

and ideation tools); 4) open collaboration (i.e. engaging the public and the private sector in complex projects that aim to co-create specific outputs, particularly through the use of collaborative social media such as Wiki, Goodle Docs, Yammer, and Jive Social Business Software); and 5) ubiquitous engagement (i.e. government data, public engagement methods, social media tools, and government services are integrated within and across different agencies allowing the public to participate effectively and continuously in various government activities by using intelligent devices such as smart phones, tablets, laptops, desktops, and other computing applications).

Although the Maturity Model has been developed based on observations and data from the US federal agencies, it also provides a useful framework for assessment of Open Government initiatives at the local level and in other jurisdictions. It is worth noting that while there has been a strong political push in America to move quickly towards Open Government, other nations, such as the UK and Australia, have adopted a gradual approach to implementation (Francoli, 2011). In 2007 the UK Government appointed a Power of Information Taskforce to study the best ways to pursue Open Government. The Government of Australia also adopted a slower approach by convening its Government 2.0 Taskforce to identify existing mechanisms that would support an Open Government framework and develop guidelines for public servants on how to engage citizens through online participation (Ibid.).

Budget transparency as a best practice in open governance

Governments need to be accountable for their actions and spending of public funds. Making budget systems more transparent constitute an important step in this process. Providing the public with access to this information significantly reduces suspicion and can help to restore trust in government. The Transparency and Accountability Initiative (2011) has identified some key areas for open governance, where proactive disclosure of information is needed to increase transparency and make governments more accountable, include: the budget process; climate change action; donor aid; financial system reform; and natural resource governance. Adopting open budget systems increases credibility of policy choices made by governments, reduces wasteful spending, and, in the case of developing countries, facilitates access to aid programs and international financial markets

Budget transparency should not be limited to the timely release of information on governments' revenues and expenditures by publishing budget reports during the financial year.

Publishing and dissemination of key budget documents (i.e. pre-budget statement, executive's budget proposal, enacted budget, citizens' budget, in-year reports, mid-year review, year-end report, and audit report) constitutes only a minimum requirement for the development of an open budget system. A more substantial step towards transparency is governments' commitment to follow best standards in providing comprehensive information in all core budget reports (i.e. disaggregated information on revenues and expenditure and prior year data for comparative purposes) and to disseminate such information for a public review (T/A Initiative, 2011).

Finally, the most relevant goal for best practices in budget transparency is making all government fiscal activities transparent, not just those that are reflected in the budget. Openness and transparency is greatly increased when governments, at both local and national level, are willing to publish extensive records of their 'off-budget' activities that involve extra-budgetary funds such as pension funds, state-owned enterprises, and discretionary or secret funds. It is also important to provide information about expenditures such as government salaries and benefits, welfare entitlements, payments to contractors providing public goods and services. Comprehensive reporting on tax expenditures is currently adopted in countries such as the US and New Zealand, while Chile has taken a lead in best practices in maintaining public records of expenditures on benefits and salaries received by government officials, government contractors, and beneficiaries of social programmes and subsidies by mandating that each government agency releases relevant information every three months (T/A Initiative, 2011).

Although providing access to information is an essential component of any open budget system, citizen participation in setting budget priorities and evaluation process has become a best practice, particularly at the local level as indicated by the growing trend towards participatory budget (PB) initiatives worldwide. The Participatory Budget Project, a non-profit organization that helps communities in the US and Canada

to develop PB initiatives, has estimated that there are over 1,000 cities and institutions in North America, Latin America and Europe implementing PB, and there is a great diversity of models utilized to engage citizens in the process. Case studies of the most developed and innovative initiatives are available on their website (<http://www.participatorybudgeting.org/>). Making budget information and details of additional fiscal activities then, can be considered a best practice for the City of Guelph.

Open collaboration as a best practice in open governance

The development of open collaborations between government, the private sector, and civil society is a common goal in most Open Government plans. Such collaborations can improve communities, especially in situations where local public services are affected by budget cuts, rising demand, and heightened public expectations. In particular, engaging the capacity and resources of civil society is the key to building 'relational capital' (strong networks of relationships), which enables local administrations to develop creative and cost effective solutions to meet social needs (Savage et al., 2010). Building strong networks of relationships and improving local partnerships could be achieved through the use of the following innovative tools: 1) encouraging non-profit organizations to act as local innovation brokers; 2) providing community dividends to encourage local action and improve outcomes; 3) shared use of public assets (i.e. providing civil society organizations with access to disused buildings, play areas and land to support the development of local initiatives); 4) new local and national performance measures to reward effective partnerships with civil society; and, 5) providing individual public servants with training, tools , and discretionary funding to develop best practices in implementing partnerships with community organizations (Ibid.).

In addition to these five tools, using the capabilities of Web 2.0 to create and sustain social networks can be instrumental in leveraging the interest of the general public, establishing government-industry collaborations at local, sub-national, and national levels, and building relational capital as part of an Open Government plan. A good example of harnessing the collaborative capability of information technology is the extensive mapping exercise implemented by Industry Canada as part of their Broadband Canada Program. The goal of this open collaboration was to evaluate access to high-speed Internet services in rural communities in order to identify the places that would qualify for a new broadband infrastructure finance program. The department initially developed the National Broadband Maps by using publicly available data, information from provincial and territorial partners, other federal departments and agencies, and Canadian Internet Service Providers (ISPs). These maps were posted online on July 6, 2009, and both the consumers and ISPs were invited to participate in cataloguing their services on the map. Feedback on broadband coverage and availability was provided by more than 2,100 Canadians and more than 80 IPSs. As a result, updated maps were posted at on September 1, 2009. The maps were subsequently updated in January 2010 and on July 6, 2011, and the most current status of broadband services in households across Canada is reflected in the Interactive National Broadband Map available on the department website (<http://www.ic.gc.ca/app/sitt/bbmap/hm.html?lng=eng>). In Canada, closing the broadband gap is on the top of national agenda, and open collaborations between the private sector,

different levels of government, and unserved communities are needed to implement the current national broadband strategy. Forging collaborations and network building is a best practice with respect to open governance that the City of Guelph should consider as it moves forward.

Participatory models as a best practice in open governance

Open Government plans invariably seek to embed a culture of participation at all levels of governance. It is important, therefore, that a wide public support is ensured for such plans and that citizens are provided with opportunities to participate at all stages of Open Government implementation. While soliciting public feedback on action plans is an important step, engaging residents as co-producers in the design, implementation, and evaluation of such plans significantly increases the depth and value of public participation and ensures the public acceptance of individual initiatives. In some countries, such as the UK and Australia, extensive discussions and negotiations between government departments and civil society have taken place prior to the development of national Open Government plans. A good example of the use of a participatory model is The Government 2.0 Taskforce, which was appointed to advise and assist the Australian government in developing a framework for open governance. The Taskforce conducted its meetings in an open and transparent manner and sought to creatively engage the public and stakeholders in decision-making. This was accomplished through the creation of a \$2.45 million dollar fund available to the Taskforce, which was used to finance: 1) Pilot projects and trials (including scoping, development and implementation) in respect of Web 2.0 tools and applications to enable government engagement and consultation with the Australian public; and 2) Awards, prizes and other benefits for groups or individuals who develop innovative information technology tools and applications that make use of government information sources (Government 2.0 Taskforce, 2009).

The federal government in Canada has also undertaken steps to engage citizens in evaluation of the progress on its *Action Plan on Open Government*. The public was invited to participate in online consultations launched on August 19, 2013 by Tony Clement, President of the Treasury Board. This consultation process was implemented over a three-week period, from Monday, August 19 to Monday, September 9, 2013, on data.gc.ca. Public commentary generated through the online consultations will be incorporated into the Government's report on the success of Canada's Open Government Action Plan during the first year of its implementation. Bringing citizens in various stages of the governance process for consultation, and particularly as co-producers, can be considered a best practice for the City of Guelph.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Why Access to Information?

Access to information is an important tenet of Open Government for a few reasons. First, the history of the concept of 'Open Government', which began long before the onset of digital and mobile technologies, was

focused on the premise of free information, notably making government knowledge more accessible and transparent (Francoli, 2011). This guiding value has remained an important part of the conception and practice of Open Government frameworks as the emergence of more advanced technologies has fostered greater opportunities for information sharing and access. Second, the findings of a recent study analyzing definitions of Open Government in seven countries indicates that traditional foundations of Open Government, of which access to information is a key part, remain dominant in Open Government approaches (Clarke and Francoli, 2013). This supports the assumption that access to information is an area where best practice information should be collected and shared in the development of Open Government models. Finally, access to information is salient because many traditional government mechanisms and legislation have been put in place to limit information access (Francoli, 2011:156). As a consequence, focusing on re-working these structures and updating legislation to facilitate more transparent and accessible policy frameworks is important in making Open Government work and another illustration that highlights why a focus on access to information, and best practices surrounding it, is necessary.

Best practices

A number of strategies have been adopted by jurisdictions to enhance the freedom of information and promote increased access to it. Three core best practices have been identified and are explored here. These include (1) a proactive approach to information management, notably the political will and leadership to pursue such a change and the institutional structure to facilitate its implementation; (2) an explicit policy of proactive disclosure, preferably in legislation; (3) the use of open web portals with participatory characteristics for citizens to obtain information while engaging with it, and having the opportunity to engage with government.

A Proactive approach to information management

This means that government is proactively responding to or foreseeing a public need or benefit in providing access to information, instead of implementing reactive policy in response to an issue or problem. In jurisdictions where Open Government approaches have been successful (i.e. the UK or US) it has meant governments' recognizing the goals of openness, collaboration, sharing, and transparency, to varying degrees, and the presence of political will supporting the initiative. In most cases, this denotes explicit support for the policy from key individuals in senior or executive positions. US President Barack Obama and former UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown and their Chief Information Officers are examples of key members of the executive in those countries who

“Research confirms that a core best practice with respect to access to information is a proactive model of information fiscal activities transparent, not just those that are reflected in the budget.”

- Francoli, 2011

publicly spoke out in support of changes toward a more open model of government and provided leadership in this regard. Supportive comments from senior politicians in Australia and Chief Information Officers in advance of Open Government development there was also seen as a factor contributing to over success of implementation. In addition, this verbal or written support must be further reinforced by actual implementation of greater openness and access. A common way of achieving this is to first put necessary infrastructure in place to facilitate access to information; and second, to introduce policies that practically support this service delivery.

At the federal level, Canada is cited as a jurisdiction that has adopted a reactive approach and enjoys less success with Open Government as a consequence. Prime Minister Stephen Harper has said very little about Open Government and as of 2011 leadership on the initiative remained ambiguous. In addition, the federal Chief Information Officer was relatively muted on the topic and in committee discussions it was unclear who exactly was in charge of Open Government at the federal level. Although since 2011 political champions of Open Government have become clearer (i.e. Treasury Board President Tony Clement) and in June of 2013 the government re-vamped its open data web portal, it can be argued that a lot of momentum was missed in the beginning. In 2011, the web portal launched by the Canadian government to facilitate access to information did not encourage participation like its US or UK counterparts and the infrastructure to support Open Government was largely request-based. This means that information was provided once a request was made and not before, signifying a reactive approach. In addition, there was no clear framework leading Open Government such as the Open Government Directive in the US. This highlights the importance of leadership and support from the political executive as well as a clear framework that guides the implementation of Open Government. A clear strategy or model established in advance of implementation, open disclosure, and political and bureaucratic support are areas where this could be improved and could be considered the main differences between proactive and reactive approaches to Open Government, specifically access to information. Looking at the cases of Canada, the UK, and the US specifically, it is clear that open political support from key officials, leadership, and a guiding mandate or approach are critical components that contribute to the success of government and access to information principles and policies. These elements can be considered part and parcel of a *proactive approach to information management*.

Most governments have existing legislation or policy that speaks to information access, only typically these policies have been designed to limit access to, or conceal information. In some cases this may require the enactment of new legislation and policies; in others it may require the reinterpretation of existing ones. President Obama, for example, argued for a reinterpretation of the American Freedom of Information Act to ensure access and openness would be supported by legislation. He said, "The government should not keep information confidential merely because public officials may be embarrassed by disclosure, because errors and failures might be revealed, or because of speculative or abstract fears. In the face of doubt, openness prevails" (World Resources Institute, 2009). This implies political support is necessary, but more than that it emphasizes a need for an internal culture of support among bureaucrats and politicians.

From this, we can recommend three best practices for the City of Guelph moving forward. First, being proactive in terms of creating access to information and providing a model of information is essential. Ensuring adequate infrastructure, and legislative and policy support are key institutional determinants in making this happen. Second, having the political will to move forward with such change is paramount. Support is critical from members of the political and bureaucratic executive, but a broader culture of support is required from the bureaucracy and political sides of government. Third, effective leadership seems to be a necessary component in the success of Open Government approaches, notably as it relates to access to information policies. There needs to be an open political champion, or champions, who publicly endorse this policy shift and who is taking clear responsibility for overseeing the policy change, its development, and its implementation.

Proactive disclosure

A key component of a proactive approach to information management is *proactive disclosure*, which can be considered a best practice of Open Government and access to information. Outlined above, *proactive disclosure* refers to the process of making data freely available and downloadable prior to specific requests for that information. Instead of placing the onus on an individual resident to request information or data, proactive disclosure means that government is taking the initiative to open themselves up and make it readily available (Global Partners, 2011). The concept of proactive disclosure merits further discussion because in many ways it holds the key to an effective model of Open Government.

Providing access to information forces government to open up in many ways. For one, politicians and bureaucrats are required to be more transparent when documents and information are committed to being publicly viewable without an arduous request process. Second, greater openness regarding contracts can generate additional competition, improving the legitimacy of the process, and making it more inclusive by potentially attracting contract bidders that may have been excluded under traditional procurement methods and advertising. Additionally publishing laws is cited as a benefit of access to information policies given that it can improve public awareness and knowledge of laws and regulations. France, for example, regularly publishes updates on relevant legislation and has detailed online resources outlining laws and regulations (Ibid.)

In a nutshell, information is made more accessible by proactive disclosure. This enhanced accessibility inherently makes government more open since government officials are committed, in varying capacities, to make a larger amount of information freely available to the public. This is important because being more open and transparent lends itself improved perceptions of government accountability and trust, which can improve civic culture and promote citizen engagement. While there are many other benefits from the proactive disclosure of information, perhaps the most salient is the potential impact of this approach on the political participation of citizens. In addition to influencing citizens' attitudes of the external political system (institutions and actors) positively, providing citizens with information gives them

the knowledge they need to inform their participation and shape their opinions and decisions regarding governance and policy. Furthermore, it is cited as a mechanism to prevent special interest groups from framing certain policy changes or government business in a light that may not be authentic and offers a biased perspective.

Finally, the idea of access to information in an Open Government framework means frames the process of *informing* as a two-way interaction between government and citizens instead of the traditional one-way model commonly adopted by governments. Peru, for example, has used this technique to inform its participatory budgeting process, which ties together open engagement, access to information, open data, and broader notions of open governance and government. Other best practice public disclosure examples can be found in Chile, with respect to improving transparency, and in Canada as public disclosure of the earnings and expenses of civil servants are written into law (Global Partners, 2011).

Making proactive disclosure law can be considered a best practice as it improves fulfillment of the right to information. India and Hungary are two additional examples where elements of proactive disclosure have been addressed in lawmaking and policy.

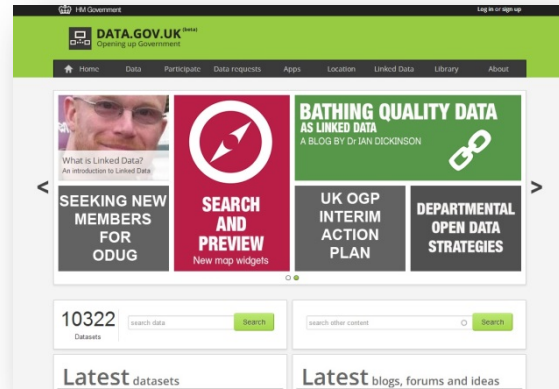
It should be noted that limitations on proactive disclosure policies, such as making the policy narrowly focused so that it only applies to particular types of information can be seen as encumbering the underlying principles of Open Government more than facilitating them. Emphasis should be on a wide range of information (Francoli, 2011). Proactive disclosure can also be referred to as open data since making the information or data freely available online is part of the commitment to disclosing information proactively (Davies and Lithwick, 2010).

It is recommended not only that Guelph make a well outlined proactive disclosure policy a cornerstone of its approach to Open Government, but also that the roots of this policy be entrenched as much as possible in formal legislation to create a proper legislative framework that enhances the public's right to information and will guide the implementation of policies.

Web portals

One of the most popular methods of facilitating access to information is through the creation of government operated web portals. These portals are particularly used to access and download datasets, but they possess participatory characteristics as well. The site data.gov.uk, for example, was created in 2009 as part of Prime Minister Gordon Brown's commitment to make government information "accessible and useful for the widest possible group of people" and to hold government to greater scrutiny, particularly

in terms of spending (Francoli, 2011; Opening Up Government, 2013). To highlight the growth of information accessible on the site, as of August 2011 5,400 data sets were available for download and as of August 2013 that number has increased to 9,803 data sets. A key features of the site is a 'spend reporting tool' that allows for the tracking of UK departmental spending. Any government expenditure in excess of 25,000 pounds is logged for public scrutiny. Applications or "apps" created through the use of the data are also freely searchable and the activity of the entire web site is published online (Ibid.).



In addition to the presence of freely available data, citizens are able to participate through the site by offering a suggestion for a data set that is not part of the existing repository or a case study that should be included. They also have the option of commenting on the government's current Open Data White Paper in an open forum facilitated through the portal, providing general comments regarding how the site or approach to the delivery or data could be improved, or commenting on a blog. Direct.gov.uk is another site that provides easy and clear access to government information, although the primary focus appears to be on linking citizens to specific services, such as applying for a bus pass, appealing a parking fine, or applying for special collected of large waste items (Gov.UK, 2013).

In the US, a similar style portal, data.gov is used to provide access to information. As of August 2013 183,858 data sets are available for download. The Government of Canada also has a website dedicated to open data, called data.gc.ca, which has 197,800 searchable data sets. These websites all share the common goal of making government information publicly downloadable and easily accessible. They provide options for general feedback, to comment on a blog, suggest a data set that is not already included in the repository, and submit an application that was prepared using data accessed on the particular site. There is also the option, in the Canadian case, to participate in ongoing consultations by responding to some survey questions. While generally, these portals provide enhanced access, and perhaps more opportunities for participation than were available previously there are varying gradations of *openness*. Being "accessible" does not have to mean that something is participatory, but the underlying premise of "openness" seems to imply that. In this regard, these web portal examples are not as participatory and open as they could be. The province of British Columbia's has a similar portal (openinfo.gov.bc.ca) that includes 2,959 freely accessible data sets, but whose focus seems to be on open information generally as opposed to the larger emphasis placed on data by the UK and US models. Useful information is separated based on whether you are a resident, business, or educator. With respect to participation, 26 opportunities to comment or be consulted on current issues, projects or proposed policy changes are listed and made easily available. As of August 2013 these ranged from a province-

wide BC Coastal Ferry Consultation, where comments were accepted online, by email and traditional mail, to a Coastal GasLink Pipeline Project where participation was encouraged online, in person, and via traditional mail.

While web portals can be considered a best practice, the City of Guelph should consider how *open* they want their portal to be. To best fulfill the principles of participation, innovation, transparency, and accountability it is recommended to introduce more participatory mechanisms, which could also set a precedent for future best practices. Ideas for participation would focus on citizen-initiated efforts as opposed to processes that are government led, which could limit the *openness* of the site.

OPEN DATA

Why open data? How “open data” is your model?

The term ‘open data’ was first introduced in the 1970s in reference to making information available to NASA for its satellites (Yu & Robinson, 2012). A couple of decades later, the language reference was coined in a scientific paper that advocated for greater publication of geophysical and environmental data. Then in 2007 a group of thinkers and activists met near San Francisco to define the term and with aspirations of having the ideal of open data adopted by US presidential candidates. The concept was premised on the same principles of openness and community that are inherent in open source software and collaborative initiatives that have come from this frame of reference, such as Wikipedia (Chignard, 2013). With its focus on transparency, accountability, participation, and collaboration open data is a natural extension of the principles and values embodied in the ideals of Open Government and can be considered an important element of an Open Government approach.

The rationale behind open data in Open Government approaches is simple. If government is to become more “open” a natural extension of that is to make more government information public. This includes data that has been collected with public tax dollars, but which for many reasons has been relatively closed off from the public domain. While some components of Open Government have established roots in traditional governmental procedures and processes, the practice of making government information open and freely available for download on the Internet is a newer phenomenon that has only witnessed a noticeable uptake in the past five years. Largely, open data portals serve two main objectives. First, they provide a central point of access to information. Second, they make access simple by offering the information through common formats and facilitating a legal framework that permits the download and use of the data (Rittenbruch, 2012).

Looking at national models of Open Government around the world, open data is surprisingly not featured prominently in many. This, however, does not mean that open data cannot be considered a best practice or a core component of an effective Open Government framework. It seems that those jurisdictions that fully embrace an open and proactive approach to the public release of data have the most comprehensive

approaches to Open Government. Recent analysis for example, notes that open data accounts for 45 percent of the text describing Open Government in the UK, whereas in countries such as Canada, the US, the Netherlands, and Brazil it represents less than 15 percent of the method. In jurisdictions such as Kenya and Azerbaijan it is not included at all (Francoli and Clarke, 2013). The UK is arguably one of the strongest models of Open Government to date, and their open data component can be considered equally robust, and an important contributing factor to the success of the framework.

Best practices

A review of jurisdictional cases, literature, and reports addressing open data points to a few best practices that should be given consideration in the development of an Open Government approach. These include (1) the amount and quality of data posted, as well as the formats in which data is made available; (2) the importance of fostering an internal culture of support among professional public administrators to implement open data policy and programs; and (3) the value of engaging other actors in the development and release of open data platforms. This includes support from civil society, notably the programming community, and other actors that could help facilitate better design and service delivery based on their technical knowledge and expertise. This best practice also stresses the importance of accessibility for citizens from all walks of life, and working to ensure the benefit of open data is for the collective society, instead of merely a selective group of the population in a given jurisdiction.

Amount and quality of data posted

Committing to a program of open data by itself does not ensure that particularly interesting or quality data will be made available. Governments run the risk of being accused of selectively posting data or what is perceived as being too few data sets. The US ran into this criticism early on in their implementation of open data policies after the government's open data website initially offered 76 data sets from eleven government agencies. In response, Obama passed a decree requesting that each government agency post at least three datasets considered to be of "high-value" by a specified date. Nearly six months later the repository held 1,284 from 170 government agencies (Hogge, 2011).

Although the UK's open data portal was launched six months after the American one it was perceived as offering more useful datasets. From the official launch of the project, the UK Ordnance Survey committed to making all "crucial" datasets available for public download. Upon its inception this included 3,241 datasets and hosted 49 derived applications. In this case it was not compulsory for government departments and agencies to release data, they were able to do so on their own accord based on the department's individual commitment to open data and its possibilities (Hogge, 2011). Although in the UK example, departments were not expected to release data there was a strong emphasis on leadership to embrace open data and pressure to promote a culture of support for the initiative.

More technical research suggests that the release of data on its own is insufficient and that government should be supporting citizens to compose data to easily solve their problems and the specific interfaces that make citizen interaction with this data simple. In addition to government information, citizens also

have a range of other data available to them, particularly through social media and other user-generated content such as reviews, opinions, feedback, traffic accidents, local repairs, and other information. Sensing and ubiquitous computing is cited as another group of mechanisms by which data can be obtained through mobile devices, or other electronic devices with small computers (Rittenbruch et al., 2012). It is suggested that to truly enable problem solving that additional data be obtained through these 'other' collection tools and also be made available publicly through user-friendly interfaces. Though this seems to be an emergent topic, this is likely the direction the field of open data will move.

In terms of best practices then, it is important for Guelph to make as much useful, high-value data available to the community as possible to support social innovation, economic development, facilitate transparency, and the emergence and development of ideas and prospective policy solutions. This can either be mandated, or kept optional, depending on the level of support from key internal staff. Second, a trend worth investigating is to explore the possibility of harnessing additional data for public use and also working to develop or adopt interfaces that make this information practically understandable and useable by citizens.

It is important for Guelph to make as much useful, high-value data available as possible.

Fostering an internal culture of support

A recent comparison of international open data strategies (Huijboom and Van den Broek, 2011) that looks specifically at open data programs in the UK, US, Spain, Denmark, and Australia finds that one of the primary limitations of the growth of open data involves a lack of a supportive government culture. While many national and regional governments (especially in these five jurisdictions) have implemented open data components to varying degrees, individual agencies of government are hesitant to actually administer the policy of open data. Much of this reluctance stems from the fact that there is often a closed culture in most governments that is driven by a fear of publicly disclosing government mistakes or failures and managing the political fallout.

Another consideration that equally contributes to government hesitancy to embrace open data is that the effects of open data policies (political, social, and economic) and their broader democratic implications are not well known. There has not been enough systematic evaluation of the outcomes of these policies to provide a concrete map for policy development and the uncertainty associated with this reinforces internal attitudes and values that support moving forward incrementally or not at all. In addition to strong leadership, a culture of support for policy initiatives and their administration is crucial to their success and longevity. Public service employees need to be on board with policy changes, particularly if they are large changes or part and parcel of a much broader shift in the approach to government, such as Open Government.

Looking at the US and UK as examples, studies have suggested that one of the reasons the UK has enjoyed greater success with its open data launch is because of the culture of support fostered among professional public administrators. The bureaucratic culture in the US is cited as having focused on doing well within the bureaucracy and not so much what could be done to serve the public. One of the key outcomes of the commitment of UK civil servants was their effort to carry out an initial release of the open data site 'in beta', which was only open to a "self-selected community of data mashers and other civic hackers" (Hogge, 2011). This is widely regarded as a best practice to success given that it was a test that could be evaluated by experts and also helped to build a community of support around the initiative that was broader than government circles.

In terms of best practices regarding government culture, how to transform a culture of reluctance into one of motivation and support is still relatively unclear given the newness of these findings. However, focusing on understanding the impacts of certain policies and disseminating this information to staff can be seen as a crucial step toward unmasking some of that uncertainty. In addition, making research investments to learn about positive and negative effects is another strategy (Huijboom and Van den Broek, 2011). Finally, sharing the benefits and drawbacks of open data stories with staff can be a mechanism to get them excited about the policy change and positively transform internal attitudes.

One strategy advocated by Tim Berners-Lee is to provide civil servants with examples of mash-ups, web applications or sites that are developed using content from two or more sources, where a third party has re-used information with success (Hogge, 2011). This helps to illustrate the possibilities of working with open data and develop staff excitement about facilitating these opportunities. It also highlights the importance of the 'data sphere', meaning government making data available, with the 'mash-up sphere', which refers to private actors and civil society repurposing and making use of the data (Ibid).

Training and education are seen as two approaches to begin to dismantle the closed culture among government staff. Based on this information, working to develop a culture of support among internal staff can be seen as a best practice for the City of Guelph. Educating officials about the positive and negative impacts research has established regarding approaches to open data is one strategy. Discussing the impacts of mash-up projects is another.

Engaging other actors

There is an important "public" connection when it comes to open data. This best practice review has emphasized that for a successful model of Open Government it is important to have leadership at the top, seeing top level political leaders act as champions for the program both internally (within government) and externally (through public relations, appearances, speeches, and other public comments). As was just outlined, of equal importance is having a supportive culture from the "middle layer", meaning civil servants and those individuals responsible for implementing policy. Finally, a similarly supportive culture is necessary from civil society. This has been referred to as the "three-tiered approach". Berners-Lee, who

has been instrumental in facilitating a successful open data program in the UK comments, “It has to start at the top, it has to start in the middle and it has to start at the bottom” (Hogge, 2011).

One of the measures of success of an open data program is whether citizens are making use of, or benefitting from, the service, and of course whether they are supportive of the policy shift. In many cases open data programs have made it on to the political radar as a consequence of pressure from below. The UK and US are two examples of this, although there was particular pressure in the UK. Interventions by civic hackers there spurred public debate around the topic, which eventually saw it introduced as a policy program (Ibid.).

The support and presence of other societal actors can also play a role in the success of an open data initiative. The Open Knowledge Foundation (OKF) in the UK, for example, played a salient role initially by connecting government representatives with developers and programmers interested in doing civic web service work with Open Government data. It was out of this collaboration that the vision for an open data portal was born. Because of initial support from community developers and organizations such as OKF, the open data project was launched with additional resources and expertise behind it, and a supportive base to speak to its usefulness and validate its legitimacy (Hogge, 2011). The UK and US are two good examples to look at with respect to open data because they are the only two jurisdictions to have conducted evaluations of their policies and so additional insight is available for these two cases (Huijboom and Van den Broek, 2011).

Based on evidence it can be determined that a best practice for the City of Guelph is to conduct public outreach to ensure the public is engaged and supportive of the initiative. One strategy to build momentum, releasing an open data site in a test or beta version first, is cited in the section above. Engaging key stakeholders and groups to take part in this test could help to build public support and awareness and also provide additional technical expertise and advice about the design and characteristics of the portal, improving its usefulness. Furthermore, engaging other groups and actors to help develop the open data repository and to facilitate connections with key thinkers and experts can be considered a best practice to advance the quality of the programme.

Finally, an important point for consideration with respect to the public and open data is the question of access. The ideal behind making data freely available is that it will be used by a diverse group of the citizenry. Some however, express concern that a *selective group* of individuals may be benefitting from this data instead of a larger *collective group*. Concerns center on that fact that some citizens may have enhanced access to open data given faster Internet connections and affordability of computer software and hardware. Also, there is concern that certain segments of the population may have skill-sets that enable them to derive greater benefits from the data by doing more with it and potentially profiting from it. Those citizens with a higher level of completed education or technical training and with greater financial resources may have a particular advantage. This concept is referred to in the literature as the *digital divide*

and has been expressed by a number of experts, including Tim Berners-Lee (see for example his TED-talk “The year open data went worldwide”) (Gurstein, 2011).

Specific policy solutions to manage or mitigate these problems are not well developed. In terms of access to the data itself one suggestion for the City of Guelph would be to establish public kiosks or computers in the city at public access points so that individuals seeking out this information could have improved access. Training some staff in city hall and the local library for example could also help facilitate access and the preliminary stages of use. This method has worked well for approaches to Internet voting and there is a strong likelihood it could become a best practice in this context as well (Goodman, 2013). With respect to training, some options may be to engage local schools (i.e. the University of Guelph, Conestoga College and others) to offer evening courses addressing open data use. Other options could include programming that is offered at a lower cost through the public library, local community centres, or the YMCA. There is significant room for Guelph to experiment with and develop some prospective policy solutions to these problems and set the tone for best practices in this regard.

Conclusion

This report has outlined some core best practices in the areas of open governance, open engagement, access to information, and open data. The goal of the review has been to discern advice and recommendations to help develop an Open Government Action Plan for the City of Guelph that can be considered attributes of a model approach to Open Government. The range of Open Government programmes adopted by various jurisdictions throughout the world is diverse and encompass varied degrees of the elements explored here. Largely, there are many opportunities for Guelph to develop a cutting-edge approach to Open Government and establish itself as a progressive thought leader in the area. The key for the municipality moving forward will be to select those best practices and model characteristics that best speak to the unique contextual and environmental factors that make up the community of Guelph and are a natural extension of the values and attitudes of the citizenry and the political institutions that govern the municipality.

Appendix B: Policy Review

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Policy Review details existing policies in four key areas for Open Government: (1) Access to Information; (2) Open data, (3) Open engagement, and (4) Open governance. After reviewing best practices in each area, innovative policies are noted, with key recommendations concluding the review. In *access to information*, a 'proactive' access regime is recommended in three areas; travel, hospitality, and other expenses; contracts, grants and awards; and information requests. In *open data*, an open data policy is recommended that covers staffing and governance, as well as a data portal location and administration strategy, with feedback mechanisms, specific timelines and an inventory of data assets. In addition, the city should create a policy that encourages working with partners, sets aside funds for a city sponsored coding event, and encourages open source procurement. In *open engagement*, in addition to alignment with Guelph's community engagement policy, the review recommends integrating open data into existing and future engagement policies. Evaluation of engagement is recommended, as well as operationalizing social media strategies on Guelph's 'Have Your Say' website, with the goal of leaving citizens better informed. In *open governance*, a broader review of Guelph's accountability related policies is recommended, along with an accountability framework and a matrix to track these policies. As well, the city should consider joining the OMBI benchmarking initiative, working with NGO partners, and most importantly, a full review is needed for the positions of each municipal accountability officer (Registrar of Lobbyists, Ombudsman, Integrity Commissioner, and Auditor General).

Overall, key findings/ recommendations include:

Ways to Innovate with respect to Access to Information:

- Create a proactive policy framework to access information.
 - Development of the framework should be premised on the principle of access by design.
 - This framework should include a full suite of policies that focus on expenses, contracts, and freedom of information.

Ways to Innovate with respect to Open Data:

- Outline government responsibilities with regards to open data that are in line with Guelph's new governance strategy;
 - Outlined administrative elements in a by-law or council resolution.
- Work to develop a permanent local portal;
 - Make a commitment to maintaining the portal and its information assets;
 - Make it available in additional formats.
- Where possible with respect to open data;
 - (1) Digitize;
 - (2) Becoming citizen-centric and use that as a guiding force in policy-making surrounding open data; and
 - (3) Engage in partnerships;
- Develop a forward open procurement policy and suite of open source tools;

- Sponsor initiatives which promote and support the exploitation of open data and work with partners to educate on how best to use information.

Ways to Innovate with respect to Open Engagement:

- Work to improve citizen understanding of policy issues, along with open engagement.
- Develop tools to measure and evaluate engagement.
- Place information in an open, standard format.
- Strive for innovative uses of social media and crowdsourcing.

Ways to Innovate with respect to Open Governance:

- Work to develop an Open Government ecosystem.
- Created a code of conduct on the basis of meaningful public input.
- Collect feedback on the use of Local Authority Services versus the services of the Ontario Ombudsman.
- Consider the creation of a lobbyist registrar at the local level.
 - Create an open audit structure.
- Develop an accountability and transparency matrix to track policies and practices.
- Facilitate and develop partnerships.
- Built open data and open source into the open governance framework.

INTRODUCTION

This policy review provides an assessment of current City of Guelph policies in key areas in an effort to prepare for the implementation of an Open Government Action Plan. To support this goal, it also examines key policies in other jurisdictions or local communities that relate to or support Open Government frameworks elsewhere to get a sense of helpful strategies, approaches, and some best practices. This approach seeks to provide an outline of the current status of City of Guelph policies and identify areas that may require revision or removal, ideas for new supporting policies, and policies that may already be inclined to support an open approach to local government. Specifically, the review has organized policy areas into four topic areas that were identified by the city in its *Survey of Open Government*; these include: (1) Access to Information; (2) Open Data (including procurement); (3) Open Engagement; and (4) Open Governance. The information discerned from this review will be used to help inform and develop a supporting framework for the adoption of Open Government in the City of Guelph. Strategic recommendations will also be made as a consequence of the findings.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Direction: “To subscribe to best practices and support the necessary tools with respect managing civic information for the purpose of enhancing the transparency of city business and the enrichment of information assets.” City of Guelph, Blair Labelle City Clerk, A Survey of Open Government (Governance Committee: Guelph, November 13, 2012), Appendix 1, 13.

Existing Policies

Overall, policy frameworks developed by jurisdictions to facilitate Open Government can be characterized by varying degrees of openness. While a number policy approaches are proactive in terms of achieving an Open Government model, different definitions of Open Government result in policy frameworks with mixed levels of openness and varied degrees of elements such as access to information.

At the municipal level in Ontario, municipalities have developed access to information policies primarily in response to statutory obligations under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (MFIPPA).¹ All municipalities must respond accordingly to MFIPPA's legislative responsibilities and other related laws. Many municipalities do the bare minimum in responding to legislation, and lack coherent, overarching access policies.

The least open municipal access policy frameworks deals only with legislated responsibilities. This policy type can be characterized as a reactive regime. The policy regime can be considered fundamentally reactive because, as Canada's Information Commissioners note: "While access to information provides a right of access to government information, the laws *are fundamentally reactive* because access is granted only after a request is made"[emphasis added].²

Innovative Policy Frameworks

Two types of policy frameworks go beyond the 'reactive' access policy regimes. These proactive policies are based on the principles of routine disclosure and proactive disclosure (defined below).

Routine disclosure can be defined as an instance "when a request for a general record can be granted routinely either inside or outside of the formal access process prescribed by MFIPPA" A 'routine disclosure' policy improves upon basic MFIPPA responsive-policies by regularly releasing basic municipal data for public access (this is essentially an open data strategy, as discussed in the Open Data section).

Proactive disclosure of information, by contrast, refers to the process by which "public bodies make their records publicly available" in advance of requests from individuals. Publication of the salaries of senior executives on public websites is an example of proactive disclosure of government held information in British Columbia.³ Proactive disclosure is the most open and accessible type of policy framework, and can

¹ "Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act," http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90m56_e.htm.

² "Open Government Resolution of Canada's Access to Information and Privacy Commissioners," September 1, 2010, Whitehorse, Yukon, http://www.priv.gc.ca/media/nr-c/2010/res_100901_e.asp.

³ BC Freedom of Information and Privacy Association, *Proactive and reactive disclosure of government-held information in British Columbia: FIPA response to an investigation by the Information and Privacy Commissioner into proactive disclosure by public bodies*, 1 (West Broadway, Vancouver, March 2011)

be considered the core principle of an innovative access to information policy. A ‘proactive disclosure’ regime not only provides commonly requested information routinely, but also includes additional information that goes beyond legislated public data. Furthermore, it provides knowledge requested under the act to the public, while preserving the right of access of the requestor. There are three common areas where information is typically released under proactive disclosure policies, and these include:

- (1) Travel, hospitality, and other expense details;
- (2) Contracts, grants and awards; and
- (3) Information (MFIPPA) requests.

‘Access by Design’ Principles

Ontario’s Information Commissioner has put forward the “access by design” policy principle as the core of a new proactive policy model that promotes Open Government. “*Access by Design* advances the view that government-held information should be made available to the public, and that any exceptions should be limited and specific.” Access by design is ‘proactive’ because it makes disclosure automatic, making access the *default*.⁴ Ann Cavoukian, Ontario’s (current) Information and Privacy Commissioner, argues that the release of information helps citizens hold government accountable, and the principle of ‘access by design’ ensure this information is not just that which is easiest to release.

Best Practices

Select municipal cases demonstrate the best policies in the area of access to information. Areas covered in this review include: Travel, Hospitality and other Expense Details and Contracts (Grants and Awards), and Information Requests (MFIPPA). Practices in these areas are considered the essential components of an access to information strategy, because together they foster Open Government.

Travel, Hospitality and other Expense Details

The City of Hamilton’s “Disclosure Policy for Expenses Submitted by Elected Officials and Senior Staff” resolve that expenses of officials and senior staff should be subject to a proactive disclosure policy and that “all approved monthly expense reports, with details, be made publicly available online within 30 days.”⁵ This policy can be considered a best practice because it is proactive, applies to staff and

http://fipa.bc.ca/library/Reports_and_Submissions/FIPA_response-OIPC_Consultation_on_Proactive_Release-March_9_2011.pdf.

⁴ Ann Cavoukian, *Access by Design The 7 Fundamental Principles* (Toronto, Ontario: Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario, May 2010), 1.

⁵ City of Hamilton, “Disclosure Policy for Expenses Submitted by Elected Officials and Senior Staff,” http://www.hamilton.ca/NR/rdonlyres/F83ED0DA-EBC8-42E3-BBF6-CAD57D37EC44/0/Jun29EDRMS_n186652_v1_8_1__Notice_of_Motion__Clr__Clark.pdf.

elected officials, and because it requires that the information be made available online (and not simply presented to council).

At the federal level, the Government of Canada has implemented a comprehensive public disclosure of “financial- and human resources-related information by departments and agencies.” The government publishes the date of the expenditure, the purpose, and the total cost.⁶ The rationale for publicly providing this information on department web sites is that: “Canadians and Parliament are better able to hold the Government and public sector officials to account.”⁷ Other bodies such as the office of the Ontario Ombudsman, also publishes travel and hospitality expenses for the office online on a quarterly basis.⁸

Publishing the details of expense claims helps support the transparency and accountability of government. The total amount of expense claims gives the public some clarity, but the details of claims fully substantiate the legitimacy of these expenses. Expenses can only be labelled transparent and accessible when complete details are made publicly available, as is the current practice at the federal level, and by the office of the Ontario Ombudsman.

Contracts (Grants and Awards)

Municipal policies on the release of information on contracts vary as to the level of openness. The City of Ottawa, for example, has implemented a policy on disclosing contracts of ‘particular interest’ to the public. The City of Ottawa’s policy is not fully transparent, however, given that the decision regarding which (if any) contracts are in the public interest and the threshold of disclosure (\$100,000) are determined by the city. The federal government, by contrast, requires departments and agencies to publish any contracts over \$10,000, regardless of perceived public interest.⁹ The lower threshold of \$10,000 and ‘automatic’ and not discretionary release policy is more transparent and open. Grants and awards may also be considered for proactive release.

Information Requests (MFIPPA)

Many bodies recommend “proactive disclosure as the primary method of release of information requests.” Proactive disclosure can increase efficiency, because in many cases (i.e. British Columbia) it has been shown to reduce the volume of freedom of information requests and remaining requests are more focused

⁶ See for example, <http://www.agr.gc.ca/eng/about-us/planning-and-reporting/proactive-disclosure/travel-and-hospitality-expense-reports/aafc-travel-and-hospitality-expense-reports/aafc-travel-and-hospitality-expense-reports/?id=1364329470960>.

⁷ Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, “Proactive Disclosure,” <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pd-dp/index-eng.asp>.

⁸ Ontario Ombudsman, “Proactive Disclosure,” <http://www.ombudsman.on.ca/About-Us/The-Ombudsman-s-Office/Proactive-Disclosure.aspx>.

⁹ Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, “Disclosure of Contracts Over \$10,000 – Overview,” <http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pd-dp/dc/index-eng.asp>.

on particular information not already disclosed.¹⁰ When adopting this policy regime, however, extreme caution needs to be exercised so that public release of information is not punitive towards requesters, and that public disclosure does not “pre-empt” the rights of requesters (as in the case of BC ferries and VANOC).¹¹ In these cases, information was intentionally released to the public at the same time (or prior) to the requester. This is considered discouraging to requesters because they do not receive the exclusive benefit of their time and efforts to obtain the information.

The rights and duties to requesters under MFIPPA take precedence over a general public release, based on the principle of the public interest. However, they can both be preserved, and the significant time and resources invested by the requester respected, if a public release occurs after the release to the requestor. A period of time (a month or longer) can be given to “allow the requester to have a reasonable period of time to review the materials requested....”¹² Information from requests should never be placed online before the applicant receives it. In this way, the requestor is initially afforded the exclusive benefit of the request. A report by the BC Freedom of Information and Privacy Association on proactive disclosure further recommends that freedom of information requests be posted indefinitely, so that all future citizens and researchers can benefit from them (instead of a policy of time-limited posting, such as 90 days).¹³ If these conditions are met, a proactive disclosure policy may be formulated that benefits the public interest, and FOI requestors.

This approach to proactive disclosure of freedom of information requests is adopted in Canada at the federal level of government and locally, by other municipalities. It serves as an addition that bolsters routine disclosure strategies already in place.

Guelph: Current Policies

Guelph’s current privacy and access policies include its website privacy policy, and its Access to Information policy.¹⁴ These are based on the guiding principles of MFIPPA, and include freedom of information process, disclosure, and privacy protection provisions. The policy outlines the steps in the access to information process, with steps “applicable to both the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA), and the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA).”¹⁵ These

¹⁰ BC Freedom of Information and Privacy Association, *Proactive and reactive disclosure of government-held information in British Columbia*, 4.

¹¹ An assessment of VANOC and BC Ferries’ release policies by the BC Freedom of Information and Privacy Association, noted that these two organizations’ strategies were intentionally punitive to requestors. BC Freedom of Information and Privacy Association, *Proactive and reactive disclosure of government-held information in British Columbia*, 5.

¹² BC Freedom of Information and Privacy Association, *Proactive and reactive disclosure of government-held information in British Columbia*, 9.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ City of Guelph, “Access to information,” <http://guelph.ca/city-hall/access-to-information/>.

¹⁵ Ibid.

access and privacy provisions are also referenced in a number of supplementary policies. They reflect a normal *reactive* framework, which primarily responds to MFIPPA.

Some of Guelph's policies are currently under revision, with the City Clerk's Office completing "initial work" on a new access and privacy program. In 2013, staff "will analyze the current personal information holdings and practices and use the data to inform the development of a corporate-wide Privacy Program."¹⁶ Program development will begin in the first quarter of 2014.

Expense Disclosure Policy

Currently, the City of Guelph makes councillor and mayor remuneration figures publicly available online. Expenses are filed, as required by the *Municipal Act*, with the Treasurer who files with Council a "statement of total remuneration and expenses paid in the previous year."¹⁷ Council also has a policy for determining eligible expenses. Additionally, there is an allocation for attending conferences, meetings, and training.

Areas for Change/Innovation

Guelph is in the process of adapting its privacy and access policies (as noted above). Overall, it is recommended Guelph create a proactive policy framework for access to information, based on the principle of 'access by design' (see above). In general, most municipalities have one or two distinct proactive disclosure policies in place, but lack a full suite of proactive policies. In some cases, they reserve discretion to apply the policy, with the result that it is not fully transparent. To be a leader in access policy, be it in a Canadian context or globally, Guelph would ideally adopt access policies in all three areas (expenses, contracts, and freedom of information) for releasing information in public, online, machine-readable formats.

OPEN DATA

Direction: "To encourage the use of public data to be made available in practical formats for the purpose of facilitating the development of innovative and value added solutions." City of Guelph, Blair Labelle City Clerk, A Survey of Open Government (Governance Committee: Guelph, November 13, 2012), Appendix 1, 11.

¹⁶ City of Guelph, "City Clerk's Office 2012 Annual Report," 5, http://guelph.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012AnnualReport_CityClerks.pdf.

¹⁷ City of Guelph, "Council Remuneration," <http://guelph.ca/city-hall/mayor-and-council/city-council/council-remuneration/>.

Existing Municipal Policies

In Ontario, municipalities are not required to release public data specifically in machine-readable formats, or online. The *Municipal Act* does require the collection of certain ‘public data’, but depending on the application this data only needs to be submitted to municipal council. Open data, then, is an area in which municipalities are required to do very little, but have the scope to do much if they choose. The data that can be released is only limited by the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (MFIPPA) and any municipal legal and third party concerns. The license the municipality offers open data under must also be carefully considered.

Innovative Policy Frameworks

There has been huge scope for municipalities to open up their data assets by simply adding them to public city websites. In response, many have formulated innovative policies to direct open data strategies, such as New York City’s ‘Digital City’ Roadmap, and Vancouver’s partnership with the ICIS in their open data policy (detailed below).¹⁸ Municipalities generally begin the open data process by composing and legislating a by-law and policy. Another approach is to begin with a resolution, which is followed with a by-law or policy document, as Vancouver, Portland, and Austin have done.¹⁹ Finally, some have chosen a more informal codification strategy, without the passage of an official by-law (i.e. developing a strategy document without a by-law or resolution). The formalization of open data policy in a by-law or resolution is a relatively standard policy, so the scope for innovation generally lies in specific aspects of open data policy, as detailed below.

Licenses

Most data release is only covered tangentially by the privacy and access provisions of MFIPPA. When choosing a voluntary release, municipalities have the freedom to specify what kind of license is attached to the data they release. For this reason, licenses have a great deal of variation. Two basic policy options are available: using an existing license (of which there are a number of kinds), or creating a new license. Open data experts make two points clear – first, municipalities should not make new licenses, otherwise they harm developers’ abilities to use their data alongside that of other municipalities. Second, the focus of an innovative policy should be on access to information, not restriction – adding extraneous provisions (such as preventing ‘harm’ to the city’s reputation) are unenforceable and benefit no one.²⁰

¹⁸ City of New York, “*Roadmap to the Digital City: Achieving New York City’s Digital Future*,” <http://www.nyc.gov/html/digital/html/roadmap/roadmap.shtml>.

¹⁹ Eric Busboom, San Diego Library, “Municipal Open Data Policies,” 1, <http://www.sandiegodata.org/reports/municipal-open-data-policies/>.

²⁰ David Eaves, November 20, 2011, “The New Government of Canada Open Data License: The OGL by another name,” <http://eaves.ca/2011/11/20/the-new-government-of-canada-open-data-license-the-ogl-by-another-name/>.

Best Practices

Select municipal cases demonstrate the best policies in each area. While special attention is paid to the municipal ‘G4’ of open data, Ottawa, Edmonton, Toronto and Vancouver (see below), other Canadian municipal and select international examples are used. Different municipalities have better practices in the areas of staffing, leadership, management and administration, publication and digitization, and partnerships.

The first piece of any resolution or policy is a statement of the principles or motivations behind a municipality’s open data policy. Common motivations include: transparency and participation, increasing trust, efficiency, progress – both economic and social, empowerment, collaboration, innovation, and elements of the ‘principles of open data.’²¹ These motivations are often linked to the Open Government movement as a whole, as demonstrated in Guelph’s Open Government principles of participation, innovation, transparency, and accountability.²² The motivations behind adopting open data strategies are the background for the resolutions of open data policy, which determines open data structures, schedules, and administration.

There are four core areas around which to create open data policy frameworks. These include: staffing and structure, administration, publication, feedback and partners, as well as implementation and licensing.

Staffing and Structure/Leadership

| Temporary Structures | Permanent Structure Options |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open data taskforce or assessment team • Temporary open data coordinator position | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open data center • Steering/oversight committee • Department leads/liaisons • Position of Chief Information Officer • Position of Chief Data Officer • Change job description of current General Manager for IT |

Open data resolutions may outline changes within the existing structure, or add new roles and responsibilities to existing positions. There are two types of new structures, which include formalized and permanent, or temporary and /or informal.

²¹ See the G8 (G8 Open Data Charter, http://www.international.gc.ca/g8/open_data-donnees_ouvertes.aspx?lang=eng) and elsewhere.

²² City of Guelph, Blair Labelle City Clerk, *A Survey of Open Government* (Governance Committee: Guelph, November 13, 2012), Appendix 1, 2, 7.

Three options exist for permanent structures – top down ‘czar’ type posts such as the ‘CIO’ and ‘CDO’ (described below), distributed department positions, and advisory/oversight committees. Temporary structures could include a taskforce or a limited-term coordinator. The position of ‘Chief Data Officer’ (CDO) is used in some larger cities, in addition to any CIO, to fully integrate open data strategies throughout government. The CDO’s role “is to oversee compliance to plans and guidelines” and San Diego’s municipal study suggests it could be integrated with the role of ‘Director of Open Government.’²³ However, the position has been criticized as being unnecessary given its overlap with existing ‘Chief Information Officer’ positions and IT departments.

The ‘department’ model uses department heads (or other designated personnel) as liaisons, distributing responsibility for open data to each department instead of coordinating it centrally. A department open data officer can be designated as liaison to an overseeing committee. The benefit of a department or ‘liaison’ model is that it integrates open data responsibility into existing structures, but the drawback is that it lacks central coordination (if used alone).

An ‘open data center’ is a more atypical policy choice, and comprises a semi-independent center, usually affiliated with an academic institution or NGO.²⁴ An oversight or steering committee can be used in combination with these structures, or integrated into existing committees with oversight responsibility for IT.

One important factor in open data is leadership. It can be difficult to maintain momentum for open data, with data sets held by different departments, sometimes requiring legal opinion for release, and often implemented as extra responsibilities on already stretched personnel. For this reason, leadership can be an important factor in Open Government. The City of Toronto’s open data policy, for example, attempts to remedy this lack of direction by outlining separate responsibilities for executives, for the Open Government committee, and for the city as a corporate whole. Under Toronto’s policy, executives are responsible for identifying data sets for release, archiving, planning metrics, incorporating any technology enhancements, and releasing Freedom of Information (FOI) request-related datasets.²⁵

Ongoing Management /Administration

Many policies include specific provisions for the ongoing management of open data. Provisions for continuing efforts are important because if data is static or outdated it may become useless for citizens,

²³ Eric Busboom, San Diego Library, “Municipal Open Data Policies.”

²⁴ Noor Huijboom and Tijs Van den Broek, “Open Data: an International Comparison of Strategies,” *European Journal of ePractice* 12 (March/April 2011): 9.

²⁵ City of Toronto, “Open Data Policy,” <http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentonly?vgnextoid=7e27e03bb8d1e310VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD&vgnnextfmt=default>

and therefore counterproductive to Open Government. On the other hand, maintaining a repository of older data may be important for comparative analyses. The key part of an ongoing management policy is the development of guidelines. These aid departments in assessing what data is valuable, whether it can be released in view of existing privacy laws, and when to schedule releases of new data. Who is charged with developing guidelines surrounding this decision-making is dependent on the structure adopted by the jurisdiction. In some cases it may be the IT department, the CDO or CIO, a committee or taskforce.

Administrative policies may also be included, such as those relating to privacy, those requiring departments to make a 'reasonable effort' or to 'keep current' data, to report on certain schedules, or other matters related to data. The most important element of these scheduling and release policies are whether the policy specifies which datasets must be released, and whether departments are required to identify which datasets they can or cannot release. In some cases, departments will be issued a timeline for when they must release certain datasets (such as in the cases of Austin and Chicago).²⁶ If no datasets are specifically mentioned, the decision is left up to individual departments, based on criteria or guidelines, or reported on at a later date.

Identifying specific datasets or datasets of particular value to the public may be useful to specify in open data policy. However, a policy that requires the release of all datasets, on a pre-determined schedule (barring exemptions for privacy and any other legal concerns) may accomplish the same end as long as appropriate guidance is provided to departments. Some policies require that an assessment template or form be developed for future use.²⁷ Others, by comparison, only direct that a general assessment of appropriate data be made available. If the particular jurisdiction accumulates a large number of data sets, the designation of specific data sets that require updating may ensure that information is kept current. If departments update a dataset included in the catalogue a standard update schedule should be included, some studies suggest that this should occur no less than once per quarter.²⁸ The City of Brampton's policy indicates their update schedule will be determined at the same time as the initial data assessment.²⁹ It also requires that departments consider designating some data for "routine release", particularly data that is being generated on an ongoing basis.³⁰

²⁶ Eric Busboom, San Diego Library, "Municipal Open Data Policies."

²⁷ City of Brampton, Policy 1.130, "Corporate Policies: Section: Financial & Information Services, Council & Administrative Services: Brampton Open Data Policy," 4, section 4.1.8, <http://www.brampton.ca/EN/City-Hall/OpenGov/Documents/Bramptonpercent20Openpercent20Datapercent20Policy.pdf>.

²⁸ Eric Busboom, San Diego Library, "Municipal Open Data Policies."

²⁹ City of Brampton, Policy 1.130, "Corporate Policies: Section: Financial & Information Services, Council & Administrative Services: Brampton Open Data Policy," 3, section 4.1.7.

³⁰ Ibid, 4, section 4.2.3.

Publication and Digitalization (Portal location)

Open data becomes useful by making it available to the public. Many policies set out the portal address to be used, along with other conditions on the data to be made available. As an example, New York City specifies that a single web portal that is linked to nyc.gov must be maintained permanently. It further stipulates that data sets must be available without registration, license or restrictions (save for the possibility of attributing, and noting alterations to the original dataset). It also specifically requires that data sets be “accessible to external search capabilities.”³¹

Feedback and Partners

Some policies require feedback mechanisms for data sets. Feedback not only helps to keep the jurisdiction in touch with those using data, but it can also help direct efforts towards the ‘most wanted’ data. Examples include surveys which ask users to vote on or rank those data sets that are perceived as highly valuable. Some experts suggest if all data sets are not included in an initial release, an inventory of data sets should be included so that users know what data assets exist and can provide feedback on which data sets should be released first. Other mechanisms include an open data email, which is compiled into an FAQ, an open data wiki, and engagement through other social media tools.³² Additionally, feedback is solicited from the public via workshops, town hall meetings, and other community engagement initiatives and exercises (for a fuller discussion of the latter options see the open engagement section).

Partners

Some jurisdictions at the local level include partners in open data plans to increase the impact of data or increase the effectiveness of data in their data catalogue. For example, the City of Vancouver’s open data resolution named the Integrated Cadastral Information Society (ICIS) specifically as a partner, resolving that the city will develop an agreement to share ICIS and “...encourage the ICIS to in turn share its data with the public at large.” The ICIS provides data based on land parcel information provided by BC and local governments.³³

Third parties and third party data can restrict the ability to freely offer datasets. The City of Vancouver has made it part of its Open Government policy to require that third party data (from developers, consultants and contractors) is provided in an unlicensed, “ in a prevailing open standard format, and not copyrighted

³¹ For example, to google searches from outside the City website (see New York resolution, s 23-502 e).

³² For example, Brampton’s policy specifically requires the creation of an open data email for feedback.

Ibid,

3, section 4.1.3.

³³ “ Integrated Cadastral Information Society,” <http://www.icisociety.ca/>.

except if otherwise prevented by legal considerations.”³⁴ This can help simplify the process departments need to use to release new data, because it provides stronger assurance that data is not encumbered by third party restrictions, except in special cases.

Other options include requiring participation with other municipalities, or with certain groups or conferences. The City of Austin’s open data policy, for example, resolved that the City Manager specifically participate in dialogue on open standards at the municipal level.³⁵ In Canada, by comparison, the municipalities of Toronto, Ottawa, Edmonton and Vancouver work together as an open data ‘G4’.³⁶ Many Canadian municipalities have become part of informal partnerships surrounding open data which may lead to synergies in creating future open data policy and processes. Toronto is currently working with a group, which Guelph is a member of, called the Public Sector Open Data (PSOD) in conjunction with the province of Ontario and other communities with open data policies to develop common processes and formats.³⁷

Implementation and Financing

The City of Ottawa’s city council recommendation included a provision to specifically approve the funding of an open data contest to create a digital application. Monies were to be pooled into a one-time account, which included prize money and incentives totaling \$50,000.³⁸ Providing for the financing of a major event such as an open data *hackathon* or *codefest* can create a centerpiece event for open data policy around which data set release and education can be planned. The rationale for including this kind of event in official council decision-making is to ensure monies and resources can be set aside to finance open data initiatives.

Other elements of implementation policies

Some jurisdictions leave implementation of open data policy to the group or individuals tasked with it, but cities like Edmonton, an open data leader, have a suite of process documents that support and guide implementation. Edmonton’s open data toolkit includes, under Strategic

³⁴ City of Vancouver, support Item no 5 CS&B Committee Agenda, May 21 2009, “Open Data, Open Standards and Open Source,” 2, <http://former.vancouver.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk//20090519/documents/motionb2.pdf>.

³⁵ City of Austin, resolution no. 20111208-074, 4, further resolutions no 3, <http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=190842>.

³⁶ “G4 Canada,” <https://twitter.com/G4Open>.

³⁷ City of Toronto, “Open data, ”

<http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentonly?vgnextoid=9e56e03bb8d1e310VgnVCM10000071d60f89R> CRD.

³⁸ City of Ottawa, Information Technology Sub-Committee and Corporate Services and Economic Development Committee and Council, 12 April 2010 “Open Data Resolution,” [http://ottawa.ca/calendar/ottawa/citycouncil/occ/2010/05-12/csdc/08-ACS2010-COS-ITS-0005-Openpercent20datapercent20\(2\).htm](http://ottawa.ca/calendar/ottawa/citycouncil/occ/2010/05-12/csdc/08-ACS2010-COS-ITS-0005-Openpercent20datapercent20(2).htm).

Planning Documents, a road map and a project management plan, and under Business Documents, a business requirements list, an MOU with stakeholders/participants, a service support agreement, and a metadata set. Finally, it also comprises technical documents, including a system architecture framework, a PowerPoint on architecture alternatives, and the legal terms of use and disclaimer.³⁹

Licenses

Some municipalities (i.e. New York City) do not restrict licenses except with very basic non-alteration provisions. One option is the existing 'creative commons' or 'CC' licenses, which is a form of open copyright that is used across the web for multiple types of intellectual property.⁴⁰ The other approach is to subscribe to or create a license intended for government open data. For example, for the creative commons license, San Francisco's ordinance has a clause that refers to making datasets "available to a generic license" and specifically mentions 'CC'. This type of license is an excellent example of Open Government, because it is based on granting the user rights, instead of focusing on restrictions.⁴¹

Other municipalities have developed their own data licenses, and there is value in adopting an existing license, so that citizens comparing multiple jurisdictions can use municipal data simply and easily. This means that users are not forced to follow a multitude of different rules and provisions when using multiple datasets. The Canadian municipalities of Nanaimo, British Columbia and Grand Prairie, Alberta recently adopted the "Pan-Canadian Open Government License".⁴² The federal government and the provincial governments of British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario currently use this license. It can be considered innovative, because as Kathryn Bulko points out, "Canada has become the first country in the world to have a standard open-data users' license that applies to all levels of government." The City of Nanaimo has called for all municipalities to adopt the standard.

Experts argue that while many municipalities have adopted what is called the 'Vancouver' license, it has three remaining problems that an innovative open data license could address.⁴³ First, open data licenses should not require attribution. It is not necessary, hinders the goal of re-use, and is never likely to be enforced in any case. Second, new licenses should encourage the sharing of data, instead of requiring (as

³⁹ City of Edmonton, "Open Data Toolkit, "

http://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/initiatives_innovation/open-data-toolkit.aspx.

⁴⁰ "Creative Commons," <http://creativecommons.org/>.

⁴¹ Eric Busboom, San Diego Library, "Municipal Open Data Policies."

⁴² MISA-ASIM, "Nanaimo, Grande Prairie Adopt Canadian Open Government License," July-30-13, <http://www.misa-asim.ca/news/134738/>.

⁴³ Eaves does not want municipalities to use the Vancouver license, or the CC license, because of the problems with both. He suggests the best outcome would be the adoption of either the PDDL license, or the UK's Open Government license because they remedy the problems with the Vancouver license. David Eaves, "The State of Open Data in Canada: The Year of the License," February 16 2011, <http://eaves.ca/2011/02/16/the-state-of-open-data-in-canada-the-year-of-the-license/>.

Vancouver does) that any re-use of the data also use the Vancouver license. Third, all licenses adopted in the future should be standardized. As noted, users are significantly hindered when each data is licensed differently. For this reason, Eaves has suggested the PDDL license, or the UK's Open Government license would be the most open licenses to adopt for Canadian municipalities.⁴⁴

Guelph: Current Policies

Staffing

Currently, Guelph's IT department structure is headed by the General Manager of Information Technology. The 2012 Guelph Corporate Strategic Plan suggests a change to a 'corporate IT governance model' that reflects a new partnership between executives, IT management, and departments.⁴⁵ In the proposed model, the IT steering committee is "at center of the governance model" and comprises the Executive Director and GM membership. The IT Portfolio Evaluation Committee reviews projects for "inclusion in the IT work program." The General Manager, Information Technology, is responsible for policy development for technology strategy, and oversees the IT governance framework, as well as advising the IT Governance Committee.⁴⁶ Guelph could make the current IT General Manager responsible for open data, or adopt any of the alternate open data structures.

Ongoing Management /Administration and Publication Portal (location)

Guelph can create an appropriate portal and publishing policy based on best practices. The city's 'pilot' open data site was clearly intended as a temporary location, but no current single-stop portal appears to have been designated as a replacement.⁴⁷

Feedback and Partners

Guelph IT services serve library and police services' needs. Guelph is taking part a new initiative, the PSOD group (Public Sector Open Data) with the Province of Ontario and other municipalities, working towards common formats.

Licenses

Guelph does not currently publish datasets, and as such, has no set data license. The city's pilot datasets included a disclaimer, which limited city liability, but made no other common constraints around the attribution of the data.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ City of Guelph, *Guelph Corporate Technology Strategic Plan Final Report*, volume 1 (Guelph, August 2012), 30, <http://guelph.ca/uploads/GuelphITStrategy.pdf>.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ City of Guelph, Blair Labelle City Clerk, *A Survey of Open Government* (Governance Committee: Guelph, November 13, 2012), Appendix 1, 14.

⁴⁸ Guelph's test datasets were prefaced by a short license/disclaimer, reading: "We are providing these data sources for testing purposes only. The Corporation of the City of Guelph makes no guarantees,

Areas for Change/Innovation

Overall, it is recommended that the city outline open data governance responsibilities in line with its new IT governance strategy. Ideally, a council resolution or by-law should outline the administrative elements from the above ‘best municipal practices’, instead of delegating all elements to committee. By requiring certain principles, council and administration will ensure a truly robust open data strategy. Additionally, a permanent portal location should be developed and included in the city’s open data related policies. The city should make a commitment to permanently maintain this portal and its information assets, and continually innovate to make them more accessible and available in additional formats.

Finally, going beyond the average municipal policy to the innovative, the city should focus on three strategies to be a world-leader with respect to the open data component of Open Government: digitizing, citizen-centric and standardized policies, and working with partners.

Digitizing

To be a digitization innovator, the city needs to fully utilize its data assets. The utilization of archives is an innovative way to create data assets. The City of Vancouver’s award winning city archive is a pillar of its open data strategy. The council motion resolves that the city “Develop a plan to digitize and freely distribute suitable archival data to the public” and names the city archive as an asset.⁴⁹ This represents innovative thinking around harnessing all the city’s data assets. Other creative uses are evident in the City of Toronto’s use of its Daily Bread Food Bank statistics and other unusual partner data in its data catalogue.⁵⁰

Citizen Centric Policies

The city should adopt a feedback focused open data portal, and should specify in its open data policy the specific feedback mechanisms required (i.e. a survey, email, twitter, FAQ, or wiki). The city should also make Open Government more citizen-centric by adopting the least-restrictive licensing policy (see the license section above) that allows the greatest access to data. Finally, in the civic spirit, the city can encourage open data formally by providing funding for a *codefest* or *hackathon* and declaring open data day, as well as informally by encouraging coder ‘meet-ups’ and providing workshops using city expertise.

representations, or warranties respecting the data, expressed or implied, arising by law or otherwise, including but not limited to, effectiveness, completeness, accuracy, or fitness for a particular purpose.”

⁴⁹ City of Vancouver, support Item no 5 CS&B Committee Agenda, May 21 2009, “Open Data, Open Standards and Open Source.”

⁵⁰ City of Toronto, “Open data.”

Partnership Policies

The best open data policies leverage the assets and resources of others, and harness the expertise of partners. Guelph could resolve to participate in growing Canadian municipal events, conferences, groups and partnerships (G4) working on open data and Open Government at the municipal level. Guelph could also adopt G8 open data principles, to connect with partners at the international level.⁵¹

Guelph should also innovate by encouraging direct partners served by the city IT department (i.e. police and library staff), through appropriate channels, to adopt similar digitization and information sharing processes. As an example, Vancouver releases crime data as part of its open data framework.⁵²

Canadian municipalities are generally not as open with crime data as American police services.⁵³

Guelph's Police Crime statistic page does not appear to be updated at present,⁵⁴ so creating an open data strategy in cooperating with police and library services would make it a premier open data city.

Furthermore, Guelph's Police Services' 'cop logic' online reporting system may have data collection capabilities, which could be utilized. Additionally, other statistics from annual and other reports could be made available, with the cooperation of the police board. Private companies (such as Crimereports.com) offer mapping services, but are restrictive to data. As Halton Police Services found, "CrimeReports data harvests information about citizens viewing crime information and sells that data to make its profits – the service is not the crime map, it's anonymized data about citizens."⁵⁵ Council may specifically call on the Police Services Board to consider or assist with an open data strategy.

As a whole, an innovative open data strategy collects data from unique places and seeks out partnerships to deliver more than just information on basic city services. Open data needs to be considered in all other areas of Open Government, because the policies implemented in the other areas can help support leadership in open data.

OPEN SOURCE PROCUREMENT

“Open source software is computer software which is available in source code for use free of charge. Open source procurement is a purchasing model which allows for the consideration of

⁵¹ See the G8 (G8 Open Data Charter, http://www.international.gc.ca/g8/open_data-donnees_ouvertes.aspx?lang=eng).

⁵² City of Vancouver, November 6 2012, "From mischief to theft, Vancouver's crime data for 2003 to 2011 now available for download," <http://vancouver.ca/news-calendar/from-mischief-to-theft-vancouver-s-crime-data-for-2003-to-2011-now-available-for-download.aspx>.

⁵³ Bill Dunphy, "What's that siren? Our police won't tell you," *Hamilton Spectator* (Hamilton, Ontario), Mar 04, 2011.

⁵⁴ The page contained only the following, on 13/08/2013: "This Page Requires Updating." <http://www.guelphpolice.com/crime-statistics/>.

⁵⁵ Joey Coleman, March 27, 2013, "Open Data and the City of Hamilton – getting there?" <http://www.joeycoleman.ca/archives/content/open-data/open-government>.

open source solutions along with proprietary products. An open-source license essentially permits users to modify and redistribute the software as they see fit.”

City of Guelph, Blair Labelle City Clerk, *A Survey of Open Government* (Governance Committee: Guelph, November 13, 2012), Appendix 1, 14).

Open source procurement has been identified by Guelph as an area in which changes could be made to current policies.⁵⁶ Open source procurement is a subset of the open data area, but considered separately because its policies are substantially separate and different.

Existing Municipal Policies

Procurement policies vary because municipalities can generally set their own requirements. Open source procurement is a relatively recent development in the field given the entrenched interests of proprietary software developers and the gradual development of sophisticated open source software. The tendency to what is called ‘lock in’ – that is, to continue to use non-open source software because of compatibility with existing proprietary systems – has led many municipalities to include a provision in their open data resolutions to change their procurement process to allow open source. Without a specific open source procurement policy, open source can still be considered by municipalities, but it is often not investigated due to time constraints. Additionally, it may not be considered fairly if its lower costs are not calculated against lifecycle costs for proprietary systems.

Best Practices

Open source procurement policies in general require that open source be considered “equally” in the procurement process (see examples below). The policy may also require that open source procurement alternatives be evaluated based on a reputable cost-benefit formula.

Vancouver adopted an open source procurement provision as part of its Open Government/open data resolution. However, a stand-alone open source procurement resolution will contain more detail and may signal a firmer commitment by the city. Portland has resolved to establish best practices for software review by: “identify[ing] existing commercial software systems with licenses that are scheduled to expire in the near future, and encourage the consideration of Open Source Software in the review, replacement and continual improvement of business solutions...” In addition, San Francisco requires that individual departments consider open source where possible, “on an equal basis to commercial software, as these may reduce cost and speed the time needed to bring software applications to production.”⁵⁷

⁵⁶ City of Guelph, Blair Labelle City Clerk, *A Survey of Open Government* (Governance Committee: Guelph, November 13, 2012), Appendix 1, 14.

⁵⁷ Luke Fretwell, January 22, 2010, “San Francisco releases new software evaluation policy,” <http://govfresh.com/2010/01/san-francisco-releases-new-software-evaluation-policy/>.

The City of Raleigh, North Carolina, passed an open source procurement policy resolution in 2012. The resolution is important example because it goes beyond a simple recommendation to consider open source in procurement. The resolution defines open source, using the prominent Open Source Initiative definition.⁵⁸ The Open Source Initiative approach covers free redistribution, source code distribution, derived works, the integrity of the original source code, and distribution of the license. The policy's main body requires that, for purchasing, "free and open-source software and proprietary software are to be considered on an equal footing..." with the object of selecting the best overall product for the needs of the city. However, it also specifies that the assessment should take into account "the total lifetime cost of ownership of the solution, including exit and transition costs, and ensuring that solutions fulfill minimum and essential capability, security, scalability, transferability, support and manageability requirements." It further encourages the use of open standards so that city systems are 'interoperable' and can provide the best return on investment, and re-use. Finally, the resolution also mentions 'open 311' (an open standard tool cities can use to electronically respond to 311 information requests),⁵⁹ and also specifically notes the need to avoid "technological lock-in."⁶⁰

Guelph: Current Policies

Guelph's current purchasing and procurement by-laws and policies do not specifically provide for the equal consideration of open source solutions. The current Guelph Corporate Technology Strategic Plan also does not detail any changes to procurement in terms of open source.

Areas for Change/Innovation

A basic open source procurement policy may not fully consider what is meant by "equal" consideration of open source. Some sources suggest that a policy of stronger than equal consideration is best to support Open Government. In the UK's open source procurement toolkit, "The Government ICT Strategy states that "Where appropriate, government will procure open source solutions."⁶¹ The UK's toolkit also provides a suite of guides and other documents towards calculating the true costs of non-open source, and advice on integrating open source into existing systems.⁶² This suite of open source tools, in addition to a forward open procurement policy could make Guelph a leader in Canada in this area.

⁵⁸ The Open Source Initiative "The Open Source Definition," <http://opensource.org/osd>.

⁵⁹ Open 311 is currently used by the City of Toronto and a number of other municipalities, but more recently 411 and 511 online and mobile solution software is in development.

⁶⁰ Many technology experts warn that proprietary software providers have a strong interest in keeping a "lock in" on technology, and may actively attempt to ensure open source provisions are not in force.

⁶¹ Cabinet Office (UK), "Guidance: Open Source Procurement Toolkit," <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/open-source-procurement-toolkit>.

⁶² The documents in the UK open source toolkit are: All About Open Source, FAQs, ICT Advice Note - Procurement of Open Source, Procurement Policy Note on Open Source, OSS Options, CESG Guidance

Transition to Open Source

A ‘mixed’ model has been suggested as a transitional path to open source. In a mixed model open source and commercial product work together. The city does not need to commit to completely open source, or completely commercial software.⁶³ “It is also important to understand that the software world has evolved and is not divided into an “either/or” model anymore but rather an “and” model, where customers and governments want a “mixed” source environment so that proprietary software can run on top of OSS and vice-versa.”⁶⁴ However, a municipality may set a goal of partial open source adoption for further down the road. A transition policy could be a good option for Guelph to move towards open source, while creating future milestones for increased open source procurement.

OPEN ENGAGEMENT

Direction: “To build on the traditional and legislative foundation of public consultation to realize a transformative approach to the way in which the city can inform, consult, collaborate and empower the community.” (City of Guelph, Blair Labelle City Clerk, A Survey of Open Government (Governance Committee: Guelph, November 13, 2012), Appendix 1, 7).

Existing Municipal Policies

While open data has garnered much attention in the development of Open Government approaches, some authors write that open engagement is the most important goal of an Open Government programme. “If the primary goal of Open Government is to engage citizens, then current initiatives must be re-evaluated and new approaches explored—shifting beyond data delivery.”⁶⁵ Open engagement policies are not as formal, or specific. However, they contribute to the goals of Open Government by placing the citizen at the center. Specifically, the primary goal of Open Government “is to ensure that the ...public has access to objective, relevant, and reliable information to help them arrive at informed

on Open Source - for Government users only, Publically accessible summary of the security guidance, Total Cost of Ownership, Total cost of ownership of open source software: a report for the UK Cabinet Office supported by Open Forum Europe, and OSS SI Assessment Criteria. Cabinet Office (UK),

“Guidance: Open Source Procurement Toolkit.”

⁶³ Carl Gipson, March, 2009, “Policy Notes Procurement Policies and the Differences among Open Source Software, Open Standards, and Open Government,” <http://www.washingtonpolicy.org/publications/notes/procurement-policies-and-differences-among-open-source-software-open-standards-an>.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Angela M. Evans and Adriana Campos, “Open Government Initiative: Challenges Of Citizen Participation,” *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 32, no.1 (2013): 172.

judgments about issues and the government's role in tackling these problems.”⁶⁶ This may ultimately help create a deeper understanding of issues and the policy process.

Engagement policies are not always formalized, and often vary in their application. In most cases, municipalities have leeway to choose the level of engagement they will ask or encourage from citizens. The minimum level of engagement, allowing delegations to present to council meetings, is generally surpassed in municipalities. Most have some mechanisms to gather more information, through email, surveys, workshops, or other forms of consultation.

Guelph: Current Policies⁶⁷

Guelph's Open Government survey lists four components to open engagement; Guelph's Community Engagement Framework, Web 2.0 Integration, Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing, and E-Government Services. The review of policies is structured according to these items.

Guelph's Community Engagement Framework

The centerpiece of engagement policy is Guelph's Community Engagement Framework, a document that is based on the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Engagement – a framework that is being adopted by a number of municipalities and encourages going outside of traditional consultation approaches to those that are more participatory and empowering for citizens. Guelph reviewed policies in a suite of four preliminary reports that were commissioned from the Institute for Community Engaged Scholarship at the University of Guelph. Reports outline comparator municipalities, and best practices.⁶⁸ They include:
 Report – Community Engagement Policies in National and International Municipalities;
 Report – Community Engagement Policies in Australia, the United Kingdom and America;
 Report – Community Engagement Policies in National Cities; and
 Report – Community Engagement Policies in Comparator Municipalities.⁶⁹

At the present, the city solicits feedback in a number of ways. The 'have your say' section of the City of Guelph website notes three ways community feedback is sought currently.⁷⁰ Some standard methods

⁶⁶ Evans and Campos, "Open Government Initiative: Challenges Of Citizen Participation," 173.

⁶⁷ Because Guelph is currently in the process of adapting its policies, and has completed policy studies towards this change, this section will focus on existing policies.

⁶⁸ Guelph's survey of Open Government notes that a policy is currently in progress. "A Community Engagement Framework (CEF) for the City of Guelph is currently being developed in response to both internal and external demands, both from the community and from City Staff, with respect to enhancing the level of support for the process of engaging the community. The CEF will provide staff with a toolkit of engagement activities which can be used to interface with the community." City of Guelph, Blair Labelle City Clerk, *A Survey of Open Government* (Governance Committee: Guelph, November 13, 2012), Appendix 1, 9.

⁶⁹ City of Guelph, "Guiding principles for community engagement," <http://guelph.ca/city-hall/communicate/community-engagement/>.

(phone, email, surveys and delegations on council business) are used alongside more digitally forward and innovative access methods. These include web polls, and the Mindmixer idea platform, which brings together the community to crowd source feedback and new ideas on Guelph projects. Citizens also spread awareness of these issues online, and finally, feedback can be measured through the Mindmixer platform so that the best ideas are implemented.⁷¹

The city has also set out an agenda for ambitious new ways to engage stakeholders in the *City of Guelph Communications Plan*, which prioritizes two way communications. The plan proposes to identify new opportunities for accessible engagement, including moving consultation out of City Hall to the public, holding Town Hall meetings to encourage public questions, and increasing informal stakeholder participation online.⁷² The plan also suggests ways to engage special interests as part of understanding citizen concerns, and focuses on making all city information more accessible.⁷³

Finally, Guelph's community engagement policy creates shared responsibilities for engagement, between the community engagement team, city employees, participants, and council. Guelph's policy requires that the community engagement team is able to demonstrate the effectiveness of city engagement policies by evaluating "clear performance measures, employee feedback and emerging practices, on an annual basis."⁷⁴ They also provide residents, stakeholders and Council with reports on the Community Engagement policy. City employees are then responsible to ensure that resources are provided for engagement, and the level of engagement promised is met. They also ensure that final project reports reflect all feedback, and overall that "decisions and recommendations acknowledge the needs, values and desires of the community."⁷⁵

The Report on Community Engagement Policies in National and International Municipalities⁷⁶ studied comparator municipalities in Canada and the US with formal policies. This included 26 municipalities with policies in this area. In particular, Ajax, Kitchener, London, Oakville, Ottawa, and Waterloo are cited as appropriate comparator municipalities with engagement guidelines already in place⁷⁷ and the report

⁷⁰ This is as of August 2013.

⁷¹ City of Guelph, "How it works," <http://cityofguelph.mindmixer.com/how-it-works>, and <http://www.mindmixer.com/>.

⁷² City of Guelph, *City of Guelph Communications Plan* (Guelph, 2010), 10, http://guelph.ca/wp-content/uploads/COG_CommunicationsPlan.pdf.

⁷³ City of Guelph, *City of Guelph Communications Plan*, 13.

⁷⁴ City of Guelph, "Guiding principles for community engagement."

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Kim Chuong, with Kathryn Walton, Morgan Marini, and Sophie Maksimowski, *Report for the City of Guelph: Community Engagement Policies in National and International Municipalities* (Guelph: The Research Shop, University of Guelph, July, 2012).

⁷⁷ Ibid, 3.

summarized similar and best policy practices in these municipalities.⁷⁸ Guelph will review policies and practices in these areas based on the existing policy review.

Web 2.0 Integration

Web 2.0 and social media are newer tools that facilitate engagement digitally. New Web 2.0 technologies have pushed governments to be more transparent, and experts suggest they have created an increased impetus for ‘civic participation’.⁷⁹ Social media policy is not usually formalized into by-laws, but more or less comprehensive policies are developed through the IT department. Sometimes social media policies are lacking, or are not focused on generating engagement but more on policing. The goal of social media policies should be to open up engagement, not to shut it down, according to the principle of open engagement.

Guelph’s Web 2.0 and Social Media Policies

Guelph has a number of social media related policies, including social media principles and guidelines for City of Guelph elected officials. City policy regarding social media commenting is simple: permissible content is to be outlined in cases when the city uses a social media site to communicate with citizens.⁸⁰ The city also posts its social media statistics (with some missing years and areas).⁸¹

Guelph’s technology strategic plan suggests it will refresh its Customer Service Strategy in 2013, including a better handling of social media, so that “social media will rely on a common technology framework.”⁸² These policies, currently under review, should follow open engagement principles, with the least restrictive rules and most open principles predominating.

E-Government Services & Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing

Austin, Texas and New York City can be considered leaders in creating e-government and ‘digital city’ policy. Austin’s first Open Government resolution was dedicated to its online presence, redesigning its website, and outlining its Open Government online policy. This policy included enlisting citizen

⁷⁸ According to the Report, policies are defined in five steps: Step 1: Defining the Issue, Goals and Stakeholders; Step 2: Choosing the Appropriate Level and Methods of Engagement; Step 3: Implementing; Step 4: Evaluating (During and After Engagement); Step 5: Reporting and Follow-Up.

⁷⁹ Angela M. Evans and Adriana Campos, “Open Government Initiative: Challenges Of Citizen Participation,” 173.

⁸⁰ City of Guelph, “Social Media Commenting Guidelines,” <http://guelph.ca/news/social-media/social-media-commenting-guidelines/>.

⁸¹ Guelph maintains a social media presence on LinkedIn, Facebook pages for Guelph and Guelph transit, twitter accounts for @cityofguelph, @visitguelph and @guelphtraffic and @guelphtransit. City of Guelph, “Social Media Statistics,” <http://guelph.ca/news/social-media/social-media-statistics/>.

⁸² City of Guelph, *Guelph Corporate Technology Strategic Plan Final Report*, volume 1, 19/20.

participation, identifying user groups, patterns and experience with the site, supported by town hall meetings, focus groups, and online collaboration tools.⁸³ The resolution also specified that the site would “Add an increased number of on-line service offerings and enhanced delivery of those services,” increasing number of service/transactions to the public, and adding better search capabilities, and use marketing to educate public on services/site. The policy is important because it formalizes goals for collaboration and online services, and it also creates key governance measures, including oversight at the executive level for web policies and standards, and annual reports to the sub-committee.

New York’s (NYC) more recent “Roadmap to the Digital City: *Achieving New York City’s Digital Future*” (2011),⁸⁴ is an expansive roadmap covering new practices, and outlining strategies for engagement with the private sector, along with sections on access to information, engagement, and industry. The engagement policy states: “The City will improve digital tools including nyc.gov and 311 online to streamline service and enable citizen-centric, collaborative government. It will expand social media engagement, implement new internal coordination measures, and continue to solicit community input...” through a website relaunch, a 311 online tool, central twitter, crowdsourcing for emergencies, digital citizen toolkits, and hackathons.⁸⁵ The NYC strategy is a combination of new policies and practices.

Guelph’s E-Government Services& Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing

Guelph’s internal and external policies are held at the IT level and are currently under review.

Areas for Innovation

Engaging for Better Understanding

Municipalities should make it their ‘engagement goal’ to ensure that citizens understand the policy issues more deeply at the end of engagement. This can be accomplished by providing more context to data.⁸⁶ Municipalities can also create a protocol to measure engagement, and have independent evaluations of engagement results. The results of engagement should also be evaluated with the community, to ensure they are meaningful to citizens.

Some international innovators suggest crowdsourcing policy itself. In Amsterdam, for example, crowdsourcing is used for city policy issues and challenges. The city’s pilot project asked for ideas on solving public bike storage, green energy and district redesign.⁸⁷ Cities can also adapt crowdsourcing to

⁸³ City of Austin, Resolution No. 20071101-037, <http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=109967>.

⁸⁴ City of New York, “Roadmap to the Digital City: *Achieving New York City’s Digital Future*” (2011).

⁸⁵ City of New York, “Roadmap to the Digital City: *Achieving New York City’s Digital Future*” (2011), p2

⁸⁶ Angela M. Evans and Adriana Campos, “Open Government Initiative: Challenges Of Citizen Participation,” 175 and 177.

⁸⁷ “Amsterdam Open (Open Innovation project led by the Municipality of Amsterdam Economic Affairs),”

infrastructure. An example is Boston's 'adopt a fire hydrant' site, where citizens adopt a hydrant to shovel out when it snows.⁸⁸ Adopt-a-Hydrant has been modified in other municipalities (Seattle uses it to clear storm drains, while Chicago uses it for sidewalks). Five other municipalities are also "using the technology for their own crowd-sourced municipal solutions."⁸⁹

Guelph

Using NYC's digital cities roadmap as a template, Guelph could create a formal policy that discusses engagement alongside other aspects of Open Government policies. This could build on, and relate to, Guelph's in-progress community engagement work. It is clear that to be a leader, Guelph needs to create measures to evaluate its engagement, and not only rely on 'fuzzy' internal metrics. To become a leader in open engagement policy, Guelph should also consider innovative uses of social media for crowdsourcing and policymaking. In addition, the city should ensure that information generated will be automatically placed in open standard format so that it is available to citizens.

OPEN GOVERNANCE

Direction: "To develop a management and control framework as well as the necessary policy instruments to define expectations and verify the performance of strategic initiatives related to Open Government." (City of Guelph, Blair Labelle City Clerk, A Survey of Open Government (Governance Committee: Guelph, November 13, 2012), Appendix 1, 18)

Existing Municipal Policies/Context

Open governance is not as developed in policy terms as some of the other aspects of Open Government. Governance is the most important area in which cities and councils can demonstrate openness, but governance innovations have been slower to develop in the Open Government rubric. One loose definition of the idea of open governance according to the UK's sunlight foundation is "**...helping the public to be their own watchdog by improving access to existing information which is difficult to obtain and digitizing this information and thus fostering greater transparency and openness in the British political system.**"⁹⁰ In essence it is linked with open data, access to information and open engagement. A mature Open Government ecosystem, then, is needed to support open governance.

http://opencities.net/node/22_

⁸⁸ "Adopt a Hydrant," <http://adoptahydrant.org/>.

⁸⁹ Matthew Wheeland, March 15, 2012, "Jennifer Pahlka: Crowdsourcing can revolutionize government," http://www.greenbiz.com/blog/2012/03/15/jennifer-pahlka-crowdsourcing-revolutionize-government_

⁹⁰ [Sunlight Centre for Open Government, "About," http://www.sunlight-cops.org.uk/about/](http://www.sunlight-cops.org.uk/about/)

One of the background ideas for proponents of open governance is the ‘open politics’ philosophy. Open politics embraces concepts of “citizen journalism, participatory democracy and deliberative democracy, informed by e-democracy and netroots experiments.”⁹¹ At the international level, open governance strategies are seen to “promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance.”⁹² It is now considered insufficient to have good governance, it must be open governance, governance that is run through e-government and based on the principle of the citizen power and rights.⁹³

Innovative Policy Frameworks

Policy and Procedure Framework Review

To help ensure that core municipal procedures are as transparent and open as possible, municipalities may conduct a review of relevant by-laws and policies. The Town of Collingwood, for example, conducted a review to “ensure the Town is transparent in its operations and that residents are not only aware of how decisions are made and carried out, but that they are able to participate as well.”⁹⁴ The review covered the following policies and by-laws:

- Council Procedure By-law
- Public Posting and Distribution of Council Agenda Meeting Documentation
- Public Notice By-law
- Procurement By-law
- Land Sale/Disposal By-law
- Closed Meeting Investigator Policy and Retainer
- Facility Naming Policies
- Committee/Board Recruitment Policies
- Land Acquisition Guidelines
- Accessible Barrier Complaint Policy
- Records Retention By-law
- Social Media Policy

To ensure policy monitoring was adhered to, the town implemented a complaints procedure. The procedure recommends that complaints can be filed if “anyone feels Council or Staff are not being accountable and transparent for their actions in accordance to the policy.” A regular review of the policy was recommended, as well as a review within the year of a new council term (or as required).⁹⁵

⁹¹ Kerry, Monday, October 18, 2010, “Open Politics Theory,” <http://opengovgroup.org/2010/10/open-politics-theory/>.

⁹² [Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, “Open Government Partnership \(OGP\),” http://per.gov.ie/open-government-partnership-ogp/](http://per.gov.ie/open-government-partnership-ogp/).

⁹³ Mall Hellam, Open Estonia Foundation, October 18, 2011 “Open Governance: Speaking the Language of a Whole New Generation,” <http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/open-governance-speaking-language-whole-new-generation>.

⁹⁴ Ian Chadwick, April 11, 2013, “The Open Government report,” <http://ianchadwick.com/blog/the-open-government-report/>.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

Guelph's Policy and Procedure Framework Review

Guelph has reviewed the following policies with respect to accountability and transparency and compliance with the *Municipal Act*: Sale and Disposition of Land, Hiring of Employees, Procurement of Goods and Services, Public Notice, Accountability and Transparency, Delegation of Authority, and the Delegation Of Authority Bylaw (Office Consolidation).

Accountability Framework

In Ontario, open governance is generally pursued under an accountability framework. One of the basic ways municipalities create open governance is through municipal accountability officers, as provided for in the *Municipal Act*.⁹⁶ These posts help improve the accountability and transparency of governance.⁹⁷ The Act allows for municipalities to create four positions in a full 'accountability' framework for open governance:

1. Auditor General
2. Integrity Commissioner
3. Ombudsman
4. Lobbyist Registrar

Depending on the size of the municipality and their governance arrangements, however, some of these posts may be combined.⁹⁸ There may also be certain specifications and restrictions for each. No municipality is required to have these positions, except in the case of the City of Toronto (see section 223.2 of the *Municipal Act*). Municipalities also have some leeway in how they set up the duties of these positions. A few municipalities have created only one of these posts, however, many have added enhancements in different areas to ensure more open and accountable governance. These posts are often the core of a larger accountability framework.

An accountability framework is intended to be an overarching support for open governance, which goes beyond the four accountability officer posts. It helps "conduct an open and participatory process" so that the City has a broad and open manner for the conduct of all business, in a way "that makes it easy for

⁹⁶ Some have argued municipal rules themselves need an overhaul – Justice David Cunningham recommended some changes, including: that the municipal conflict of interest act be more specific defining conflict, have a broad overarching preamble, and recognize powers of the integrity commissioner in the Act. Jayme Poisson, "Overhaul municipal conflict rules, inquiry head urges," *Toronto Star* (Toronto, Ontario), Oct 3 2011,

http://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2011/10/03/overhaul_municipal_conflict_rules_inquiry_head_urgues.html.

⁹⁷ Toronto has an alternate set of laws, in the *City of Toronto Act*.

⁹⁸ The City of Ottawa's Integrity Commissioner is also the Lobbyist Registrar.

everyone to participate and collaborate.”⁹⁹ Accountability is necessary to good open governance. Two municipalities have taken specific steps to improving their accountability frameworks. Collingwood focused on the four basic accountability posts, reviewing their discretionary powers to determine if they could be strengthened to add ‘more layers of accountability.’¹⁰⁰ Toronto’s accountability policy framework was also reviewed and amendments were suggested to council procedures “to provide for a 2/3 vote of all Members of City Council respecting the appointment and removal of the accountability officers, and to enable the accountability officers to submit reports directly to City Council as outlined in section 5 of Appendix 1.”¹⁰¹ Overall, Toronto’s policy framework details appointment, term of office, renewal, removal, remuneration, reports to council, carriage and control of office, and accountability to council. The framework also recommends protocols be developed to outline services provided to the offices of the accountability officers, and, most importantly, “clarify their authorities in areas where they interface with corporate processes.”

Guelph’s Accountability Structures

Guelph initially responded to amendments in the *Municipal Act* by implementing new accountability and transparency measures, through an Accountability and Transparency Special Committee, which struck the Governance Standing Committee.¹⁰² The mandate of Guelph’s Governance Committee is to ensure that appropriate policies, principles, procedures and roles are established to guide and enhance:

- Effective governance of the organization;
- Accountability and transparency measures;
- Strategic planning, priority setting and performance reporting processes;
- Committee and Council effectiveness;
- CAO performance and review;
- Enterprise risk management;
- Council compensation; and
- Committee performance reporting.¹⁰³

Integrity Commissioner and Code of Conduct

The *Municipal Act* allows municipalities to create a Code of Conduct, which is a document that outlines standards for ethical behavior for Council Members as well as local Boards.¹⁰⁴ With growing public

⁹⁹ City of Ottawa, *It’s About Accountability* (Ottawa: Interim and Annual Reporting & Budget Document, September 27, 2004), 4.

¹⁰⁰ Ian Chadwick, April 11, 2013, “The Open Government report.”

¹⁰¹ City of Toronto, 2009, “Policy Framework for Toronto’s Accountability Officers,” http://www.toronto.ca/city_council/qa.htm.

¹⁰² City of Guelph, “Accountability and transparency,” <http://guelph.ca/city-hall/mayor-and-council/city-council/values-and-principals/>.

¹⁰³ City of Guelph, “Governance Committee,” <http://guelph.ca/city-hall/council-and-committees/standing-committees/governance-committee/>.

concern for the ethical behaviour of elected officials more municipalities have adopted this provision in an effort to improve transparency and accountability with respect to governance [see section 223.2 (1) of the *Municipal Act*]. Provisions of the code can be more or less open, and encourage better governance. A code of conduct goes beyond “pecuniary or financial issues that are the focus of the conflict of interest legislation.” The code also augments each councillor’s sworn oath of office.¹⁰⁵ To support Open Government, studies suggest that the municipality needs to ensure the code is not used as a shield, or catch-all strategy for ensuring ethical and transparent behaviour for elected officials.¹⁰⁶

In the pursuit of open governance, accountability must not be seen as just an important standard for council or individuals; transparency and accountability are collective (for the council as a governing body), as well as personal, for councillors. Experts note that: “Transparency at the individual level as a civil servant but especially as a politician, being a public authority, is crucial. That means to be transparent about received presents, travels, visits. Implement transparent procedures on public jobs and relations and separate responsibilities as much as possible.” In this way, officials, both elected and appointed, can be trusted as “independent actors” working to supply public goods for all citizens.¹⁰⁷ Officials must, in turn, regard their work as servants of the citizens. Open governance recognizes that different mechanisms come into play for collective and individual accountability and transparency and therefore a code for councillors needs to be supplemented by other measures.

Based on the experience of other municipalities, the code of conduct should include public input. If the public was not involved in the formulation of a code, public input should be gathered on possible revisions.¹⁰⁸ To reinforce their impact on day to day behaviour, a code should be reviewed “at least, at the beginning of each term of Council.” It should not be perfunctory, but a real review to determine what best practices are.

Guelph’s Code and Integrity Commissioner

Guelph’s Integrity Commissioner investigates suspected contravention of the Code of Conduct. The Commissioner reports annually to the Council’s governance committee, as well as providing ‘best practices’ “and the potential development and/or revision of policies and procedures which underscore the importance of ethical conduct.” Guelph should utilize this advice on best practices and review procedures

¹⁰⁴ City of Guelph, “Accountability and transparency,” <http://guelph.ca/city-hall/mayor-and-council/city-council/values-and-principals/>.

¹⁰⁵ City of Oshawa, Helen Break, *ATSC Discussion Paper on Municipal Codes of Conduct: ATSC Memo no.8* (Oshawa: Accountability and Transparency Sub-Committee, November 2007), 17.

¹⁰⁶ Toolkit on Accountable and transparent service delivery at a local level: about participatory mechanisms and civil society interventions, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Netherlands, 8.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, 9.

¹⁰⁸ City of Oshawa, Helen Break, *ATSC Discussion Paper on Municipal Codes of Conduct: ATSC Memo no. 8*, 18.

regularly. Guelph should review its code against best comparators, as other municipalities have done,¹⁰⁹ to determine if it meets the needs of open governance and Open Government principles as a whole.

Ombudsman

The *Municipal Act* section 223.13 (1) authorizes “the municipality to appoint an Ombudsman who reports to council...” The Ombudsman’s function is to conduct independent investigations on “any decision or recommendation made or act done or omitted in the course of the administration of the municipality....”

The city can assign certain duties to the Ombudsman, with limits. If the city does not have an ombudsman, the Ombudsman of Ontario “has authority to investigate complaints about closed meetings.”¹¹⁰

Guelph’s Ombudsman

Guelph has a paid service (LAS) to act for investigations, and does not use the services of the Ontario Ombudsman. “LAS” is an investigator service provided by the “Local Authority Services” of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. It provides access to a pool of qualified investigators. Some commentary has presented the opinion that the LAS service is more responsive to the municipality than the Ontario Ombudsman, and thus less likely to find wrongdoing. The LAS strongly rejects this. Guelph might collect feedback regarding their use of LAS on an openness basis against the services of the Ombudsman.¹¹¹ While this concern might not appear serious, public perception of this decision suggests more consultation and public awareness is required to create full transparency for Guelph in this area.

Lobbyist Registrar

The registration of lobbyists is an important part of an accountability framework. This is the least-used provision of the *Municipal Act* because it requires the creation of registry, which is not common at the municipal level. The lobbyist registrar oversees the lobbyist registry, which is usually an electronic database, available through the city’s website (with paper forms available through usual city service channels). Municipalities are required to “Define “lobby” (see section 223.9 (2) *Municipal Act*), as well as a number of other items, such as specifying “activities with respect to which the requirement to file returns and provide information does not apply.” A Code of Conduct must also be established for lobbyists (see the *Municipal Act*, 223.9 (2)).

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ontario Ombudsman, “Investigations,” <http://www.ombudsman.on.ca/Investigations/Municipal-Meetings/Municipal-FAQ.aspx>.

¹¹¹ Ward 2 Guelph, Dec 19, 2007 , 10:22 AM “Ombudsman vs Advisor,” <http://ward2guelph.wordpress.com/2007/12/19/ombudsman-vs-advisor/>.

To establish a registrar, the city must include the provisions specified by the *Municipal Act*. However, the major problem in establishing a registry is the same faced at higher levels of government, namely balancing the requirements of registration and penalties for non-compliance without making the system so onerous that lobbyists refuse to take part. More importantly, setting up a lobbyist registry it is difficult to resist pressure to create real penalties and accountability mechanisms. In some cases, lobbyist registry provisions provide additional information on lobbying but have no real repercussions for failure to comply, and thus are practically voluntary.

As a best practice in establishing new policies, municipalities need to learn from the extensive work of the federal Lobbying Commissioner on appropriate penalties and clear definitions for lobbying.¹¹² The five-year review of the *Lobbying Act* also reviews the differences in Canadian lobbying regulations at the provincial and municipal level (including the provinces of Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario, Newfoundland and Labrador, Manitoba, British Columbia, and Alberta).¹¹³ Cities with lobbying by-laws include Surrey, British Columbia and Toronto and Ottawa, Ontario. Surrey's by-law notes that lobbyist registration is complementary to Municipal Codes of Conduct for councillors, ensuring accountability on both sides.¹¹⁴

Guelph's Lobbying Policies

Guelph does not currently have a lobbyist registrar. To develop a registration system would require an investment, however, the city could be an innovator by using or developing open source and open standard systems. If the city partners with other interested municipalities to create the electronic backbone of the lobbyist registration system, with similar policy definitions, initial costs could be reduced. An increasing number of provinces and cities have begun to develop lobbyist registries, thus to be at the forefront of Open Government, Guelph should consider this as part of a mature open governance policy.

Auditor General

As with the other accountability officers, the post of Auditor General (AG) is provided for in the *Municipal Act*, section 223.19 (1). A municipality can "appoint an Auditor General who reports to council and is responsible for assisting the council in holding itself and its administrators accountable for the quality of stewardship over public funds and for achievement of value for money in municipal operations."

¹¹² House of Commons Canada, *Statutory Review of the Lobbying Act: Its First Five Years* (Ottawa: Public Works and Government Services Canada, May 2012 41st Parliament, 1st Session) 11, 12.

¹¹³ House of Commons Canada, *Statutory Review of the Lobbying Act: Its First Five Years*, 5-9.

¹¹⁴ City of Surrey, Corporate Report NO: R171, September 8, 2008, 3, discussion section 4, <http://surrey.ca/bylawsandcouncilibrary/R171-C773.pdf>.

The need for an Office of the Auditor General is more complex than the other accountability posts. For many large municipalities, an Auditor General “can deliver added value for taxpayer dollars.”¹¹⁵ According to the Town of Oakville’s study of Auditor Generals, having an AG demonstrates “good leadership, a higher degree of competitiveness, cost effectiveness and return on investment.”¹¹⁶ Moreover, well operated and properly designed audit programs are “recognized sound business practice and contribute to continuous improvement through uncovering and sharing best practices between departments and municipalities.” The Auditor General assists in creating Open Government because the office provides an objective view regarding whether the public gets ‘value for money’. This office also contributes to efficiency and streamlining.

The complexities with the post are that municipalities already have in place some legislated audit requirements. Oakville wrestled with the question of whether an auditor general was needed, given the existing presence of internal audit procedures.¹¹⁷ In some cases, an auditor general may not be given the resources to effectively do the work of holding the municipality accountable. The fear is that without effective independence, few will be willing to take on the work of a municipal Auditor General. However, the suggestion for the post is an improvement over internal audits alone. In general, whether or not the municipal internal and external audit system is framed in terms of an auditor general, “Properly designed and operated audit programs are a recognized sound business practice and contribute to continuous improvement through uncovering and sharing best practices between departments and municipalities.”¹¹⁸ The post of an auditor general demonstrates “good leadership”, but the leadership can be exhibited by a particularly transparent and open audit structure as well.

Oakville’s audit structure also includes a Fraud and Misconduct Procedure, which “applies to all Town employees, elected officials, local boards, agencies and commissions over which Council has authority to require general procedures to be followed, as well as any business or individual doing business with the Town.”¹¹⁹ This policy is an addition check to ensure accountable behavior at the municipal level.

¹¹⁵ Kelly Gorven, October 12th, 2010, “Does Oakville need a municipal auditor General,” <http://www.oakville.com/articles/does-oakville-need-a-municipal-auditor-general/>.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ London Chamber of Commerce, “Ontario Should Mandate Municipal Auditors General,”

http://www.londonchamber.com/_dat/news/files/607/ontario_should_mandate_municipal_auditor_generals.pdf.

¹¹⁹ Town of Oakville, Policy HR-MNG-007, 2008 May 05, “Fraud and Misconduct,” <http://www.oakville.ca/townhall/hr-mng-007.html>.

Guelph's Audit Policies

Guelph has internal and external audit capability. Internal auditors are employees of the audited organization. It has been reported that its external auditors do not audit spending less than \$600,000.¹²⁰ This policy might be reviewed given recent (2011 and 2012) changes to the city audit function.¹²¹ City audit planning should also be reviewed to ensure it provides as much open data and support to open governance as possible. While annual reports, investigations and follow ups are currently reported through Council's Audit standing committee, the city should ensure internal and external audit information is more publicly available and searchable, where possible.

Finally, some citizens have voiced concern about areas of accountability they feel are not being met.¹²² Open Government would give citizens the tools to improve governance accountability, and the evidence to determine whether accountability standards are met. For truly open governance, it is not enough to be accountable (and open); public perception must also reflect a sense that the city is genuinely accountable. If the public is not aware of, or does not trust or participate in, accountability measures, then governance is not truly open.

*Areas For Change/Innovation**Accountability Framework*

Leading municipalities develop the broadest possible accountability frameworks. Because accountability measures must be implemented in so many areas, it can be difficult to track whether measures are universally implemented and how they support each other. For this reason, Collingwood developed a comprehensive "Accountability and Transparency Reporting Matrix" that "contains current activities and practices that hold the Town of Collingwood accountable and transparent." This shows both council and staff responsibilities and authority in these issues.¹²³ A matrix could help Guelph tracking accountability and transparency policies and practices.

¹²⁰ Gerry Barker, March 11, 2013 "Will the real Cam Guthrie please stand up?"

<http://guelphspeaks.wordpress.com/2013/03/11/will-the-real-cam-guthrie-please-stand-up/>.

¹²¹An Internal Auditor working out of the CAO's Office was appointed in 2012. Deloitte began to provide external audit for the City of Guelph from 2010 to 2014. The internal audit function has been referred to the governance committee. City of Guelph, 2010, By-law Number 19094, "Appointment of Auditors for the Corporation of the City of Guelph,"

<http://www.wdgpulichealth.ca/sites/default/files/wdgpfiles/MargaretNeubauerCofG.pdf>.

¹²² Gerry Barker, August 6, 2013, "The painful truth about the City of Guelph's financial management," <http://guelphspeaks.wordpress.com/2013/08/06/rge-painful-truth-about-the-city-of-guelphs-financial-management/>.

¹²³ Ian Chadwick, April 11, 2013, "The Open Government report."

The City of Ottawa has also implemented a number of wide ranging open governance measures as part of an accountability framework. Ottawa has reviewed its delegation of powers policy to ensure that “accountability and transparency requirements for every new delegation” are met. The city also participates in the Ontario Municipal Benchmarking Initiative (OMBI), which could assist open governance. The OMBI collects data on 37 service areas with 850 measures. This information supports a ‘service excellence’ culture by creating comparable performance data. The OMBI data supports accountability because it “acts as a source of credible information to assist Council, Senior Management, Staff and Citizens to understand how their municipality is performing over time and in relation to others.”¹²⁴ Other municipalities have reviewed corporate and departmental planning to ensure it is open and multi-year. The City of Ottawa also conducted a review of its financial reporting.¹²⁵ These examples demonstrate how far-reaching a leading open governance and accountability framework must be.

Accountability Partnerships

An excellent way to promote open governance is work with partners. Just as accountability officers are independent, and have powers set out in the *Municipal Act*, the city can foster accountability/transparency partnerships with others to ensure that independent systems automatically help keep city governance open and accountable. Experts recommend cities “Build strong partnerships with civil and private sectors.”¹²⁶ For example, in one international municipality in Montenegro (Tivat, an ‘empty chair’ procedure for NGO representatives in local parliament encouraged all NGO groups big and small to participate) with clear guidelines implemented as to who could ‘sit’ at the chair to ensure fairness.¹²⁷ This kind of exercise builds openness, promotes citizen trust, ownership, builds capacity, and opens an institutionalized space for accountability – not just by seeking out delegations on particular subjects, but by always being inviting.

Integrating Open Data to Further Open Governance

Open data and open source needs to be built into open governance. An open source and open standard lobbyist registry would be a pioneering project. At the federal level, the information that the registry generates is considered integral in keeping citizens informed in a timely way of communications regarding items before the government. At the federal level, information collected from the registry is available through annual reports, and by inquiry and freedom of information request to citizens, academics, and

¹²⁴ OMBI, “About,” http://www.ombi.ca/?page_id=4.

¹²⁵ City of Ottawa, *It’s About Accountability*, 5 – 6.

¹²⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, *Toolkit on accountable and transparent service delivery: About participatory mechanisms and civil society interventions* (Netherlands: Union of Municipalities of Montenegro International and Cooperation Agency of the Association of Netherlands Municipalities) 12.

¹²⁷ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, *Toolkit on accountable and transparent service delivery: About participatory mechanisms and civil society interventions*, 43/44.

media.¹²⁸ The registry is public, and has multiple search functions. It also produces “standard statistical reports” which are available on:

- Number of active lobbyists and registrations by type;
- Subject matters in active registrations;
- Federal government institutions in active registrations;
- Number of monthly communication reports by reporting period;
- Subject matters in monthly communication reports; and
- Federal government institutions in monthly communication reports.¹²⁹

In general, the key principle for innovative open governance is to not just feed information on governance out. Scholars advise “Don’t keep your information flow one-way, just “feed the public” with your success stories. It can lead to detachment and the false impression that “you are doing great” but not really hearing citizens’ opinions and requests, which can jeopardize citizens’ trust in your administration.”¹³⁰

CONCLUSIONS

Open Government policy has slowly become a necessity for municipalities to demonstrate their commitment to participation, innovation, transparency, and accountability. However, as long as municipalities only respond to legislated responsibilities, they do not show leadership and commitment to Open Government. For this reason, Guelph can be an Open Government innovator by creating a suite of policies that incorporate the best practices of Canadian and international municipalities, and new ideas from the forefront of the field. Many Ontario municipalities have also created a few specific policies in one or more of the areas of access to information, open data, open engagement, and open governance. However, a more comprehensive approach, aligning these disparate policies, could make Guelph an international template for a broad and forward-looking Open Government policy. Bringing together best policies, in combination with best practices, will put Guelph at the forefront of the municipal Open Government revolution.

¹²⁸ Office of the Commissioner of Lobbying Canada, “Reports and Publications,” http://ocl-cal.gc.ca/eic/site/012.nsf/eng/h_00017.html.

¹²⁹ According to the Office; “Users can view or generate real-time reports related to registrations and monthly communication reports, as well as view historical information and perform trend analysis. All reports can be exported to CSV/Text files, which facilitate data analysis by users who wish to further manipulate them.” Other lists of recent registrations, and monthly communication reports are available. In 2013 the Registry began to offer a dataset for download, which is updated every month. Both the data and the registry support the concept of open, democratic accountability. Office of the Commissioner of Lobbying Canada, “Annual Report 2012–2013 (Page 2 of 11),” <http://ocl-cal.gc.ca/eic/site/012.nsf/eng/00765.html>.

¹³⁰ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, *Toolkit on accountable and transparent service delivery: About participatory mechanisms and civil society interventions*, 36.

Appendix C: Organizational Environmental Scan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To understand the starting point of the City of Guelph Open Government Action Plan, Delvinia reviewed pertinent city documents (e.g. Corporate Technology Strategy, Community Engagement Framework) and conducted stakeholder consultation with all parts of the organization.

Overall, Delvinia finds a healthy level of advocacy and readiness for Open Government within the Corporation, particularly with the leadership team and the support services groups (e.g. Corporate Communications, H. R., and Community Engagement). But there are also a few apprehensions and missing building blocks, namely:

- A lack of common understanding of what Open Government means, why Open Government, and how it can be practically applied to the City of Guelph
- A lack of clarity on the respective roles that internal stakeholders play and how the initiative affects their current departmental plans
- Skepticism around the effective implementation of what is perceived as yet another strategic plan
- Concerns around siloed culture being a barrier to Open Government
- Data assets not open data ready
- Anticipation of the impact of 2014 election

The findings from the organizational environmental scan highlight the importance of:

- Creating an Action Plan in co-production with the internal stakeholders
- Taking a citizen-centric approach in guiding and prioritizing the Action Plan
- Need for a culture change from siloed and hierarchical to integrated and collaborative
- Effective change management, including:
 - clear and memorable communication of the vision
 - ongoing programs to help employees internalize why Open Government
 - ongoing stakeholder communication and consultation
 - demonstrating success early and often
 - providing rewards and recognitions along the way

The sections below provide deeper insights into our approach and findings.

APPROACH

To understand the starting point of the Open Government Action Plan at the City of Guelph, Delvinia reviewed pertinent city documents (e.g. Corporate Technology Strategy, Community Engagement Framework) and conducted a series of stakeholder consultations with all parts of the organization. While the goal was to consult key stakeholders from all departments of the organization, some stakeholders were unable to participate in the process due to scheduling conflicts. Below is the list of stakeholders that participated in the sessions:

| Group Name | Attendees |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Councillors | Karen Farbridge, Mayor Todd Dennis, Councillor (Ward 6) Jim Furfaro, Councillor (Ward 1) Karl Wettstein, Councilor (Ward 6) Cam Guthrie, Councillor (Ward 4) June Hofland, Councillor (Ward 3) Ian Findlay, Councillor (Ward 2) Bob Bell, Councillor (Ward 1) |
| CAO Office and Mayor | Karen Farbridge, Mayor Brenda Boisvert, Corporate Manager, Strategic Plan Barbara Swartzentruber, Senior Policy Analyst Petronilla Ndebelle, Mayor's Communications Assistant and PR Officer Chrystal, Research Intern |
| Corporate and Human Resources | Mark Amorosi, Executive Director Blair Labelle, City Clerk Jennifer Slater, Records and Information Specialist Laura Mousseau, Communications Officer Stacey Hare, Seniors Communications, Issues Management Tina McKinnon, Access, Privacy and Records Specialist Dana Nixon, Manager, Staffing Workforce Planning Patricia Eales, Corporate Communications Michelle Rickard, Corporate Communications Joanne Oliver, H. R. Kerry Pletch, H. R. Dana Nixon, H. R. Tina Agnello, Deputy City Clerk Susan, City Clerk's Office Marilyn Hoffmann, City Clerk Office |
| Information Technology | Dan Lubitz, Manager, Corporate Applications Chetan Hassarajani, Manager, Client Services John Russell, Manager, Technology Services Sasha Tousignant, Manager of Projects and Services Sombat Singsomboon, BSA Technical |
| Community and Social Services | Derrick Thomson, Executive Director Colleen Clack, General Manager of Culture and Tourism Mario Petricevic, General Manager, Corporate Building Maintenance Murray Cameron, General Manager, Parks & Recreation |
| Community Engagement | Barbara Powell, General Manager, Community Engagement Kate Bishop, Supervisor, Community Engagement Rodrigo Goller, Community Engagement Coordinator Jenny Smith, Research Policy Analyst Lynne Briggs, Manager, Partnerships & Inclusion |
| Finance and Enterprise | Doug Godfrey, Manager, Bylaw Compliance and Security |

| | |
|---|---|
| | <p>Katherine Gray, Supervisor, Service Perform. & Development Rob Kerr – Community Energy</p> |
| <p>Operations, Transit and Emergency Services</p> | <p>Derek McCaughan, Executive Director - Operations, Transit and Emergency Services Coralee Barfoot, Executive Assistant (standing in for Ian Panabaker, Corporate Manager, Downtown Renewal) Shawn Armstrong, General Manager, Emergency Services/Fire Chief Rodney (Rod) Keller, GM Public Works Joanne Starr, Public Works</p> |
| <p>Planning, Building, Engineering and Environment</p> | <p>Janet Laird, Executive Director Bruce Poole, Chief Building Official Dean Wyman, General Manager, Solid Waste Resources Kiran Suresh, General Manager, Wastewater Services Peter Busatto, General Manager, Water Services Todd Salter, General Manager, Planning Services Don Kudo, Manager, Infrastructure, Planning, Design & Construction Melissa Aldunate, Senior Policy Planner Sylvia Kirkwood, Manager, Development Planning Karen Sabzali, Manager Parks and Open Space Peter Rider, Engineering Adrian van Eck, Building</p> |

KEY FINDINGS

Based on an organizational environmental scan, Delvinia uncovered the following key themes:

- **Healthy Level of Advocacy within the Corporation**

Delvinia finds a healthy level of advocacy and readiness within the Corporation, particularly with the leadership team and the support services groups (e.g. Corporate Communications, H. R., and Community Engagement). Within the employee body, we find sufficient support in changing the way

“Open Government is about doing bigger things.”

- Member of the Executive Team

“My dream is to reduce reliance on 3rd party to tell our story.”

- Corporate Communications

the City does business in order to better service the public. These individuals in different corners of the organization are great assets to help rally fence-sitters and reluctant participants in the organization.

- **A Lack of Common Understanding of What Open Government Means, Why Open Government and How It Can Be Practically Applied to the City of Guelph**

There is a lack of common understanding of what defines ‘Open Government’ at the City of Guelph. Depending on the organizational lens, certain dimensions of Open Government are over represented while others are under-represented (e.g. citizen-facing groups may see Open Government mostly about open engagement). This is understandable given the abstract nature of the concept, the stage the project is at, and the variety of functions and lenses the organization has. It highlights the need to create a common understanding and programs to help internalize why Open Government across the organization, while providing practical, low-hanging fruit examples of how it can be leveraged by different parts of the organization.

For example, the Parks and Recreation area has a history of strong public consultation. A more immediate application of Open Government in their area may be to complement existing consulting approaches with the implementation of new, innovative channels for dialogue such as online forums, which encourage the development of user-generated content and thus draw out the voice of the citizen who may not otherwise attend a live consultation.

“I don’t understand. We are already open.”

- City Staff

As another example, there is a high level of complexity behind budgeting and service scope decisions where participatory decision making may not be the first opportunity out of the gate. However, an innovative ‘inform’ approach may be effective in early days of the City’s Open Government journey. In this case, we may be able to borrow a chapter from the stock market where simulation games and contests are one mechanism to educate. The City may be able to create a simulation game where interested parties can make certain service scope decisions and see how they affects tax or citizen experience. The City may also turn the game into a contest where interested parties are invited to help solve certain challenges through the simulated environment.

- **A Lack of Clarity on the Respective Roles Internal Stakeholders Play and how the Initiative Affects Their Current Departmental Plans**

Almost all stakeholders agreed that they need to play a role for the initiative to move forward. However, the lack of common understanding of Open Government leads to a lack of clarity on their respective roles.

Stakeholders also highlighted that there are many initiatives at the City of Guelph that either embrace the spirit of Open Government or have interdependencies with the Open Government initiative. For example, self-service for service requests, licensing and other transactional services are potential initiatives where the City can provide citizens with better access, choice and control while freeing up city staff to work on higher value work. In these examples, the City is undergoing major technology infrastructure upgrades including upgrades to Work and Asset Management (WAM), AMANDA, and CLASS Systems.

As another example, the Community Engagement Group has also been quite active in creating community engagement frameworks and community outreach initiatives (e.g. the MindMixer forum launched in August 2013) that are designed to promote citizen engagement. Such frameworks and initiatives are interrelated with the Open Engagement dimension of the Open Government initiative. Consequently, the City will need to ensure that community outreach has one consistent face in order to avoid market confusion

These findings reveal that the development and delivery of the Open Government Action Plan initiative is working on a shifting landscape. It highlights the importance to take a co-production approach with internal stakeholders in the creation of the Open Government Action Plan in order to ensure the various activities weave together cohesively.

- **Skepticism Around the Effective Implementation of What is Perceived as Yet Another Strategic Plan**

Stakeholders agree Open Government means a widespread change at the organization. Delvinia repeatedly heard skepticism, particularly from operational groups, towards organizational change. Some stakeholders conveyed that strategies are often created without their involvement yet they are expected to realize the strategies without resource support. Such insights suggest a hierarchical culture and poor change management practices. They also suggest opportunity for further collaborative planning and prioritization of initiatives across the organization.

“We got lots of plans and strategies. Look great but no urgency around implementation or accountability associated with implementation.”

- City Staff

It also highlights the hierarchical culture and the lack of a prioritization framework at the City.

“We don’t want flowery language [in the Action Plan]. We want to see man hours, money, practical stuff, timelines, etc. Please don’t give us things we don’t understand and can’t act on.”

- City Staff

As a result, the Open Government project is suffering from a deficit of trust amongst employees. To address this deficit and earn support from the operational groups, the City will need to provide a grounded action plan that invites their input and clearly outlines their roles. Quick wins that are easily implemented with low effort on operational groups and that demonstrate results early on would also go far in helping build that trust.

Effective organizational change management is critical. This includes providing clear and memorable communication of the vision, developing ongoing programs to help employees internalize why Open Government, engaging in ongoing stakeholder communication and consultation, demonstrating success often and early, and providing rewards and recognitions as part of advancing the Open Government initiative.

- **Concerns Around Siloed Culture Being a Barrier to Open Government**

Internal stakeholders highlighted the siloed culture at the organization. There are concerns that this culture could impede the organization's ability to implement Open Government and expose the lack of coordination across functional areas.

Stakeholders conveyed that while the Open Government initiative will induce integration and collaboration at the City of Guelph, it could also compromise the already fragile trust the public has with governmental organizations.

“We have a lot of data that don’t talk to each other. I go to open a file and am told I don’t have permission to access it. ”

- City Staff

- **Data Assets Not Open Data Ready**

Internal stakeholders highlighted the lack of readiness on the open data front. While the organization has possession of a lot of data, a lack of data governance and integrity pose barriers for the Open Government initiative. On the data governance front, data standards, data inventory, and organizational data champion(s), are cited as gaps. From a data integrity standpoint, stakeholders highlighted the need to evaluate data for accuracy, currency, and ensure data is in consumable formats by the public (e.g. not in abbreviations or with industry jargon), prior to opening it to the public.

One suggestion offered was to pilot data sets internally as way to gain insights into improvement opportunities for the data sets. This approach reduces risks and exposes internal stakeholder to the data sets so that they can champion and represent them to the public at a later time.

- **2014 Being an Election Year Can Be a Potential Disruptor**

Stakeholders highlighted that 2014 is an election year. As a consequence, there is uncertainty in the leadership team (namely the Mayor and Council team) and among the broader employee base about the concrete follow through of the Open Government Action Plan.

SUPPLEMENTARY FINDINGS

In addition to the above insights, Delvinia also identified the following supplementary findings:

- **Assets and Risks**

Internal stakeholders thoughtfully pointed out assets and new risks associated with Open Government during the interview sessions.

Assets that the City can leverage include a wealth of data sets (e.g. details on City assets such as all parks items, age, and condition), Community Engagement best practices and momentum generated by the good work from the Community Engagement team (e.g. MindMixer, Community Engagement Framework, Civic 101), and the 10,000 City of Guelph Twitter followers. In addition, the City is experienced in public consultation. A lot of the activities and content can be leveraged in further engaging the public in innovative ways.

At a high level, new risks associated with Open Government include misinterpretation of data without context, increased volume of inquiries due to new information made available to the public, and potentially the new expectation of a 24 x 7 government.

- **Mindful of Compliance, Privacy and Security**

Internal stakeholders also highlighted the importance of compliance with the *Municipal Act*, *Privacy Act*, and the City's duty to ensure security and integrity. The compliance, security, and integrity obligations translate into a dimension the Action Plan needs to take into consideration.

- **Low Hanging Fruit in Improving Website Usability, Findability and AODA Compliance Requirements**

The City demonstrates sincerity in sharing information with the public. In many cases, efforts are made to share information (e.g. 500 page town hall meeting transcript), but usability and findability issues can prevent users from finding or consuming information effortlessly. As a result, efforts to share information are under-recognized and further contribute to the fragile trust citizens have with the City of Guelph (as pointed out in the 'Guelph Community Well-Being Survey' where satisfaction with 'honesty and transparency of the local government' scored the lowest out of all the selections).

In addition, numerous stakeholders also dutifully highlighted the fact that the City has an obligation to comply with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) by January 2014. At this time, it does not appear the City will meet the compliance deadline. This new requirement creates both strains and opportunities for the City. It translates into higher barriers in making information accessible (e.g. no PDFs, diligent metatagging) but at the same time provides justification for the City to make its website – one of its key communication venues – a higher priority.

In summary, improving usability and findability of the City's pertinent website content appears to be low hanging fruit in advancing towards Open Government, changing public perception, and meeting compliance requirements.

- **Opportunities to Leverage Outside Technologies and Resources**

Some stakeholders point to opportunities to leverage outside technologies and resources. On the technology front, readily available technologies can be leveraged such as the Open 311 protocol. As another example, the Fire Chief identified ‘RuberrNecker’, an app that enables the public to report accident scenes where the longitude and latitude information are captured through the GPS technology on the mobile devices and efficiently conveyed to the emergency unit for action.

On the resource front, the Mayor and CAO Office and the City Clerk’s Office pointed to an Incubator Network in Guelph that has an initiative on Open Government. The City can leverage such outside resources to enable Guelph in advancing towards Open Government.

These examples shed light on the opportunity to leverage readily available technologies and willing external resources as options for delivering value to the community in Guelph.

- **Identified Opportunities**

As part of the internal stakeholder interviews, Delvinia inquired about both quick win and long-term opportunities. Here is a list of opportunities internal stakeholders offered:

| No. | Opportunities | Open Government Type | Department/ Functional Area |
|-----|---|--|---|
| 1 | Consultation - What Parks & Recs facility/amenity should look like | Open Engagement | Community & Social Services |
| 2 | Provide access to museum/public art collection | Access to Information | Community & Social Services |
| 3 | Events info (e.g. charity bike event) | Access to Information | Community & Social Services |
| 4 | Parks & Recs planning & development | Open Engagement Access to Information | Community & Social Services |
| 5 | Park & facility info (e.g. location, park amenities, intended use, hours) | Access to Information | Planning, Building, Engineering & Environment |
| 6 | Land Use Change | Open Engagement Access to Information | Planning, Building, Engineering & Environment |
| 7 | How citizens can effectively get involved (e.g. Civic 101, when citizen will have the most impact of road planning) | Access to Information | Planning, Building, Engineering & Environment |
| 8 | Wastewater master plan process | Open Engagement Access to Information | Planning, Building, Engineering & Environment |
| 9 | Transit service information/ data set sharing (e.g. bus arrival time) | Open Data Access to Information | Operations, Transit & emergency Services |
| 10 | Self-served Service Request (e.g. public work requests, transit complaints) | Open Data Access to Information | Variety |
| 11 | Energy Conservation (e.g. gamify water/electricity conservation where neighborhoods compete against neighborhoods) | Open Data Access to Information | Finance & Enterprise |
| 12 | Budgeting | Open Governance Access to Information | Variety |
| 13 | Freedom of Information Proactive Disclosure | Access to Information | Corporate & HR |
| 14 | Road info (e.g. scan QR code to know everything about that location/area, how to participate as citizen) | Access to Information | Planning, Building, Engineering & |

| | | | Environment |
|----|---|--|--|
| 15 | Direct communication with citizens (vs. high reliance on 3rd party like media) | Open Governance Open Engagement | Corporate & HR |
| 16 | Maintenance schedule (e.g. drain vacuuming, tree pruning) | Open Data Access to Information | Operations, Transit & Emergency Services |
| 17 | Real-time (or near real-time) town hall/council meetings | Open Governance Access to Information | Corporate & HR |
| 18 | Making information on website easy to find, search, machine-readable, public-friendly | Access to Information | Corporate & HR |
| 19 | City initiatives, spending and performances | Open Governance Access to Information | Mayor & CAO Office |
| 20 | Submit building compliance info online (e.g. insurance, fire code info) | Open Engagement | Emergency |
| 21 | QR code on building leads to information on safety code and fire exits of buildings | Open Data Access to Information | Emergency |

Appendix D: Community Scan

OBJECTIVES AND APPROACH

The objective of the community scan is two-fold. First, it is to provide insights into how to engage external stakeholders in the creation of the City of Guelph Open Government Action Plan. Secondly, it is to provide insights into how to effectively engage the community in the City's journey towards Open Government – a component to be outlined in the action plan.

To accomplish the objectives, Delvinia conducted three sets of activities:

- Review the City's community engagement studies (e.g. Community Engagement Policies in Comparator Municipalities), best practices (e.g. Community Engagement Framework), and extrapolate key findings
- Complement the above with a scan of external institutions for best practices
- Consult City stakeholders on the various on-the-ground groups that should be considered

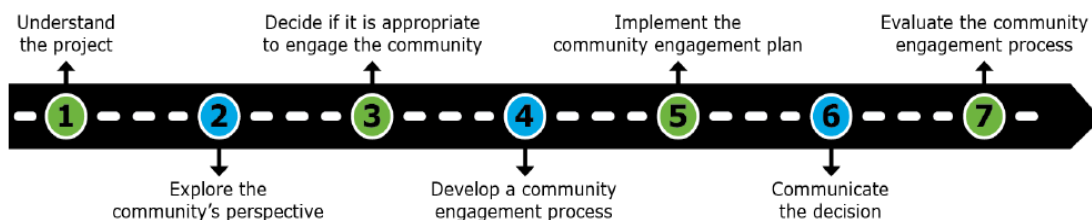
KEY FINDINGS

With the above approach, Delvinia found the cardinal rules of traditional engagement (e.g. start with your goals, understand your target audience) stay true with Open Government while the toolsets are proportionately heavier with online methods. With that, comes the need to put governance and processes into place to manage the risks associated with online methods, particularly on user generated platforms where organizations are no longer in control of the messaging and messages are amplified in reach and speed.

Inwardly when we looked at the City of Guelph's specific stakeholder groups, Delvinia found that there is a wide array of stakeholders to potentially engage with for the initiative. Differentiating between core and supplementary stakeholder groups, as well as, differentiating groups by phases of the Open Government journey would be prudent. Below are the key findings from the scan:

- **Cardinal Rules of Traditional Engagement Stay True**

Program design and messaging are critical in ensuring successful engagement. The more targeted a program and messaging can be, the more likely the target audience is going to respond to the call to action. However, with limited budget, organizations need to balance between reach and response rate. In order to most effectively achieve results, the City of Guelph Community Engagement Framework offers a clear roadmap in assessing and planning for effective engagement:



- **Effective Reach of Target Audience Can Be Based on Demographic or Topic**

With Open Government related activities, Delvinia observed that the targeting of a specific program is either broken down by demographic segments or by goals/topics of interest. Common targeting by demographic attributes include life stage, geographical regions, ethnicity, equality groups. Common targets by goals/topics are around land use (e.g. development plan or zoning), social issues (e.g. affordable housing priorities, social policies), environmental issues (e.g. climate change), safety (e.g. traffic, crime) and recreational issues (e.g. parks and rec programming, cultural centres).

- **Complementary Use of Engagement Methods Produce the Best Results**

Once the goals and target audience are determined, the best fit engagement methods can then be determined. As comprehensively outlined in the *Community Engagement Tools* document, different engagement methods are suitable for different goals. More importantly, as each one has different strengths, weaknesses and attract a different segment of the population, the use of multiple complementary methods produces the best results.

- **Maximize Results by Engaging Influencers**

In both the public and private sectors, Delvinia also finds best of breed organizations leverage influencers to more effectively access certain segments of the population and help promote on the organization's behalf. Usage of such tactic has increased since the explosion of social media.

In the area of Open Government, certain groups are engaged more frequently due to their strong ability to embrace Open Government and bring value to the community. Based on the scan, these groups include: development and innovation groups within and outside the region, industry, media and bloggers, other governmental organizations, and early adopters amongst the citizens.

For example, The BC government engaged the development community to develop apps to raise awareness of climate change and inspire people to reduce their carbon pollution.

This initiative ran as a contest with \$40,000 prize money with sponsors from the industry such as Microsoft, SAP, Telus, etc.

In this example, the BC government benefited from the resources and network of multiple external stakeholder groups. It benefited from the sponsors' resources and outreach networks. It also benefited from promotions by both the development and climate advocacy communities. Finally, using this contest mechanism, it also tapped into the innovation and creative horsepower of the development community.



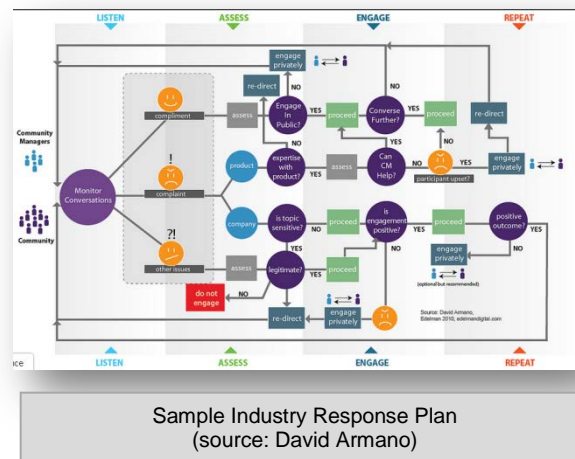
- **Put in Place Governance and Processes to Manage Risks that come with Online Methods and User Generated Platforms**

Online methods of engagement are attractive alternatives to traditional methods. They take away constraints such as time, geographical boundaries, and scale. Online methods have the ability to have longer lasting presence, reach a larger audience and accelerate word of mouth.

Online methods with user generated components, in particular, pose great opportunity to generate dialogue and build trust. On the other hand, they pose greater uncertainty for organizations. In such cases, organizations are no longer in control of the messaging and messages are amplified given the greater reach, speed messages travel at and the freedom to communicate outside the 'office hours'. These new attributes pose new risks for the organizations.

To manage these risks, organizations that practice open engagement in both the private and public sectors are becoming more proactive at putting in place governance and response plans or altering their existing Public Relations response plans for the user generated age.

For the City of Guelph, it is important to also take these steps in conjunction with rolling out online open engagement platforms.



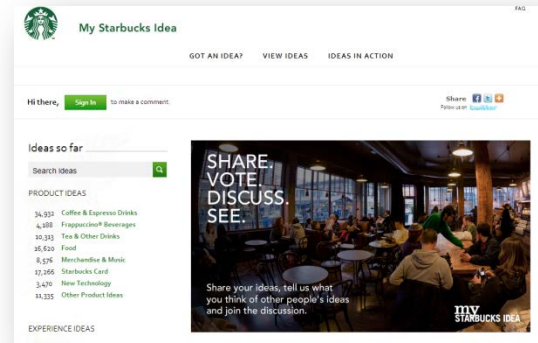
- **Innovative Methods of Engagement**

In complement to the tools outlined in the *Community Engagement Tools* document, Delvinia would like to highlight three innovative engagement methods for consideration: crowdsourcing, serious games, and online contests.

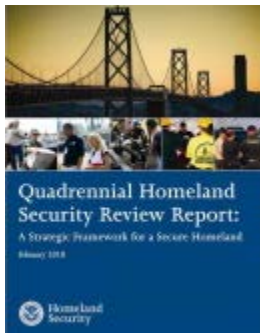
Crowdsourcing

As introduced in the Best Practice Review section of this document (see Appendix A), crowdsourcing refers to an open process, in which groups of people are invited to submit, discuss and refine ideas for a specific question or a problem posed by an organization. Furthermore, participants are often invited to evaluate and rank submissions. It is a method growing in popularity and adoption in government, non-profit and industry. The method overlaps with the methods identified in the *Community Engagement Tools* document (e.g. electronic forums) but is worth calling out because of its unique attributes. To help comprehend the nuance and application of crowdsourcing, here are a couple of private and public sector examples.

A gold standard crowdsourcing example is MyStarbucksIdea.com. Through MyStarbucksIdea, Starbucks created a standing forum for product, experience, and social responsibility ideas sourced from the public.



At its 5th anniversary in March 2013, over 150,000 ideas have been submitted and 2 million votes have been casted. Over five years, Starbucks has implemented 277 ideas generated through MyStarbucksIdea. The number of ideas implemented each year increased as the number of great ideas grew in proportion to the size of the community. To illustrate, Starbucks implemented 75 ideas in 2012, compared to 25 in MyStarbucksIdea's inception year. Implemented ideas include the splash sticks, free wi-fi and cake pops. Best practices by MyStarbucksIdea include having a permanent, centralized and well promoted ideation destination. It also includes providing status on the ideas (e.g. under review, reviewed, coming soon) and providing recognition to its top contributors.



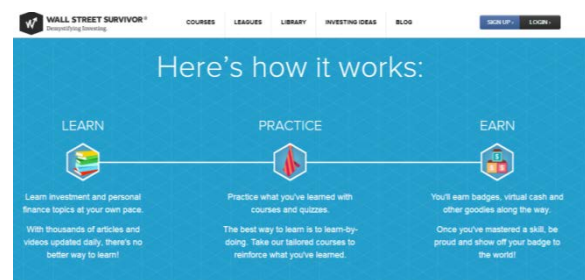
In the public sector, the Department of Homeland Security consulted more than 20,000 stakeholders from 50 states in its National Dialogue on the Quadrennial Homeland Security Review. Through this three-stage process, participants submitted ideas about goals and objectives for the review, decided how best to prioritize and achieve proposed goals and objectives, gave feedback on the final products, and identified next steps (Source: U.S. Department of Homeland Security Open Government Plan, Version 1.1, June 10, 2010, p.20).

The City of Guelph has also started to deploy crowdsourcing initiatives such as the Jubilee Park consultation through the MindMixer platform, as part of its journey towards Open Government.

Serious Games

'Serious games' (or applied games) are games designed for the purpose outside of pure entertainment. They are used to educate, to conduct scientific exploration, or to acquire insights. This approach is also gaining popularity across private, non-profit and the public sector.

For example, through *Wall Street Survivor* and the like, people can gain financial literacy by playing 'fantasy stock market' through a simulated stock market environment and earn badges, virtual cash and other rewards along the way.





In the public sector, the Maryland Budget Game, a joint project of the Maryland Budget and Tax Policy Institute and the University of Baltimore, allows users to develop their own proposals for balancing the state budget. The game presents different budget options for a range of policy areas, along with background information and factors to consider. The game calculates a short-term budget, and predicts a long-term balance, based on the options chosen by the user. It also builds in predictions for how different interest groups will react to

particular budgets. (Source: Using Online Tools to Engage – and be Engaged by – The Public, IBM Center for The Business of Government).

Online Contests

Online contests are also a popular method to induce engagement. Typically, online contests are used in conjunction with other methods such as the crowdsourcing and serious game methods mentioned above.

Like the earlier example shared on the BC App 4 Climate Change Contest, the City has the opportunity to provide rewards through prize money, special access/status both with the City’s own resources (e.g. concerts tickets, museum archive access) or in partnership with the industry (e.g. businesses associated with Guelph) and other community groups (e.g. University of Guelph).

- **Take a Segmented Approach to Engaging the Wide Array of City of Guelph Community Stakeholders**

As part of the internal stakeholder consultation, Delvinia also inquired about the practical stakeholder groups to engage, both in the creation of the Action Plan and in the City’s journey towards Open Government. What became evident quickly was the wide array of community stakeholders to engage, both within and outside the geographical boundary of Guelph. This shed light on the importance of prioritizing and targeting, based on the phases and goals on the City’s journey towards Open Government.

List of Community Stakeholders for the City of Guelph

Below is a working list of community stakeholder groups, collected from the stakeholder consultation sessions, with supplementary research on the sample online influence:

| Stakeholder Group | Description | Resource Available/ In Connection with ... | Sample Online Influence | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|-------------------------|-------------------|
| | | | Twitter Following | Facebook Fan Base |
| @cityofguelph Twitter Following | | n/a | 10,399 | n/a |
| Downtown Guelph | Assoc. with 450 businesses in the | Guelph | 3,644 | 3,845 |

| Business Association | city's downtown core | businesses in the downtown core | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| Guelph Chamber of Commerce | The Guelph Chamber of Commerce represents the voice of business contributing to economic growth, profitability, competitive and community involvement for all types of business and business people in Guelph. | Guelph businesses | 2,136 | 198 |
| Guelph Civic League | Non-profit; local community engagement and citizen's advocacy group http://guelphcivicleague.org | Citizens | 388 | n/a |
| Guelph Hydro | Guelph Hydro distributes electricity to 50,000 residential, commercial, and industrial customers in Guelph and Rockwood, Ontario. | | 1,395 | n/a |
| Ignite Guelph | "Ignite Guelph is a celebration of geek culture in the Guelph area." | Entrepreneurs Innovation advocates | 358 | 85 |
| Innovation Guelph / Lean Coffee | Innovation Guelph acts to cultivate entrepreneurialship, powerful partnerships, and innovative initiatives that transform the way we do things in business and in our communities. | Entrepreneurs; Ontario Network of Entrepreneurs | 1,934 | 127 |
| Net Zero | Environment related special interest group http://netzerocityguelph.wordpress.com/about-nzc/ | Environmental Minded Groups/Individuals Guelph Hydro, Transition Guelph, Project Neutral, Elora Environment Centre, Guelph Environmental Leadership, Guelph Sustainable Solutions Group, City of Guelph, Union Gas | 258 | n/a |
| Sierra Club of Canada | Environment related special interest group (Canada wide) | Environmental Minded Groups/Individuals | 1,349 | 323 |
| University of Guelph | The University is a source for innovative research, innovation, manpower, and access to youth. | Experts in various topic areas (e.g. climate, health, policies); (Low cost/ student) manpower ; Youth Alumni's | 16,415 (while many may not be Guelph residences/ qualified voters) | 2,682 (while many may not be Guelph residences / qualified voters) |
| Poverty Elimination Task Force | | | | |
| Downtown Renewal Task Force | | | | |
| Guelph Libraries | | Citizens | 1,146 | 624 |
| Various advisory boards (e.g. Cultural Advisory Committees, | | Various | | |

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| Accessibility Advisory Committee) | | | | |
| Land/Real Estate Developers | | | | |
| Realtors | | | | |
| New Immigrants | | | | |
| Provincial organizations | | | | |