Community Engagement
Charter

June 28, 2023

Text only version

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The City of Guelph Community Engagement Charter

Acknowledgements

Acknowledgement of territory

Guelph is situated on treaty land that is steeped in rich Indigenous history and home to many First Nations, Inuit and Métis people today.

As a City we have a responsibility for the stewardship of the land on which we live and work.

Today we acknowledge the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation of the Anishinaabek Peoples on whose traditional territory we are meeting.

Acknowledgement of contributors

We acknowledge those that contributed to developing the City of Guelph's Community Engagement Framework.

- Those community members from equity-denied groups that despite facing additional barriers and challenges, contributed their time, living and lived experience, and emotional labour.
- Community members, businesses, cultural groups and associations, and organizations serving vulnerable populations that contributed their time and knowledge.
- Consultants and academics that shared their wisdom.
- City Councillors that shared their experience and the voice of their constituents.
- City staff that contributed their professional expertise.
- Other municipalities that shared their insights.

We also acknowledge there are those we did not hear from and are committed to improving the accessibility and inclusivity of our engagement practices.

Introduction

Staff at the City of Guelph (the City) works together to deliver responsible and responsive public service to Guelph's growing and diverse community.

How we communicate and engage with you is a critical to how we achieve this mission.

Our first Community Engagement Framework (approved in 2013 and revised in 2015) set a standard for how we engaged with you on hundreds of projects over the last ten years.

As we reviewed our Community Engagement Framework, we began by listening to you. We heard the aspirations of the 2013 Framework were still relevant, but we had work to do to consistently meet them.

We also heard our approach needed to address important issues related to inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility; reconciliation; anti-racism; and conditions coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Finally, as we spoke with other municipalities, we heard about how Guelph's 2013 Framework was an inspiration—a signal of municipal leadership in meaningful public participation in local democracy.

The revised Community Engagement Framework responds to these opportunities. It affirms the City's commitment to building relationships with and engaging community members from **equity-denied** groups and who have diverse **living and lived experiences**. It confirms the City's commitment to being a municipal innovator in pursuit of Guelph becoming the most engaged city in Canada.

The Community Engagement Framework consists of several elements that work together.

1. The Community Engagement Policy is the backbone of our Framework. It communicates:
   a. the purpose behind community engagement,
   b. the principles we use to approach community engagement, and
   c. roles and responsibilities.
2. The Community Engagement Charter (this document) is our promise to the community. It outlines the process and principles we use when delivering community engagement.
3. The Community Engagement Honorarium Policy ensures consistent provision of **honoraria** to persons with **living and lived experience** and members of **equity-denied** groups the City seeks to engage.
4. The Community Engagement Playbook is a guide to support City staff. It provides tools, resources, and procedures for delivering meaningful community engagement.
5. The Community Engagement capacity building plan is a collection of initiatives that build engagement capacity for City staff and in the community.

A few things about the language in this document

Any word that appears in **bold** in the body of this document is defined in the Glossary at the end of this document.

When we say City (with an uppercase C) we are referring to The Corporation of the City of Guelph. It consists of staff from many departments and facilities who deliver municipal programs and services to the people who live, work and play in Guelph.

When we say city (with a lowercase c) we are referring to the bounded, geographic area that is Guelph, in which you may live, work, or play.

When we say **community**, we mean you. Individuals, organizations, businesses, and groups with shared interests or values or who share an environment. There are many communities that make up Guelph and a single person might identify with many communities—for example a business owner may be a newcomer to Guelph, a single parent, and a part-time student. Another individual might identify as Indigenous, be a teacher, and volunteer as a board member of a local non-profit that provides support to **2SLGBTQ+** individuals.

When we say **community engagement**, we mean the City's practice of involving the public in the decision-making processes related to matters that affect them and that they can meaningfully influence. Community engagement is sometimes referred to as public participation, public consultation, or civic engagement.

For the purposes of this document, any time we use the word **project**, we are referring to a topic, policy, program, initiative, and/or service we might be engaging the community about.

Why is community engagement important?

Decision-making at the City of Guelph is complex.

Each decision is influenced by and impacts the diverse communities that live, work and play here, today and for generations to come. Each decision involves a unique mix of considerations.

- Intergovernmental. Different levels of government and their mandates, Treaties and inter-nation relations, and federal and provincial legislation and regulations that shape what is required.
- Social and cultural. Diverse histories, cultures, values, and current events that shape what is desirable.
- Environmental. Relationships with and impacts to the land, water, air and life beyond human that shape what is sustainable.
- Technical. Knowledge, expertise, technologies, and established or emerging practices that shape what is possible.
- Financial. Costs, financial benefits, and broader economic impacts that shape what is affordable.
- Community input. Needs, ideas, and interests collected from the community to shape what is vital.

To address this complexity, we share the responsibility for these decisions. From Treaty Partners, elected officials and City staff to you and others in the community at large—everyone has a hand in helping make decisions. These decisions should seek to maximize benefits, reduce negative impacts, be equitable, and meet the needs of a diverse community.

One way we share decision-making responsibility is through community engagement. **Community engagement** is the City's practice of involving the public in the decision-making processes related to matters that affect them and that they can meaningfully influence. It is at the very root of democracy—a participatory system of government that grants every community member with the right to be involved in shaping decisions that affect them.

We believe community engagement leads to better decisions that help the community realize its vision for an inclusive, connected, prosperous city where we look after each other and our environment.

Our promise

The City will help create the conditions for meaningful community engagement. To deliver on that, we promise to

1. Nurture relationships so there's an evolving sense of trust, safety, and cooperation between us, and within the community itself. We do this because relationships are at the heart of community.
2. Build capacity for participation so you know about and understand decisions, know what the impacts of a decision will be, and know how and when you can participate in shaping these decisions. We'll help you understand City processes and encourage you to participate. We do this because informed participation is a foundation of democracy.
3. Ensure there are meaningful opportunities to influence City decisions so decisions reflect what is important to you. This means engaging when there is a true opportunity to influence decisions and looking for ways and means of engaging to gather more meaningful input. We do this because sharing power leads to better decisions.

Our Community Engagement Charter lays out when and how we bring this promise to life.

When we will engage

We know engagement needs to happen along different timelines.

You can expect us to invest in nurturing relationships and building capacity for participation in ongoing ways (not just when there are specific projects your input is needed on!). Doing so builds critical foundations for deeper, more meaningful engagement.

When there are specific matters that affect you and that you can meaningfully influence, we will engage you as early in the process as possible and not after all the decisions have been made. In these situations, you can expect the City to engage you to

- identify your needs and aspirations
- inform the creation of new projects
- get feedback about existing projects
- fulfill a Council resolution or legislated requirement
- respond to a community-led request

The City is mindful of **engagement fatigue**. To address this, we will build on engagement that has already happened and do our best to coordinate engagement across City projects. We will also consider what else is happening in the community and do our best to avoid or mitigate conflicts with busy times. We'll also give you plenty of time to respond.

When engagement is legislated

Certain legislation like the Municipal Act and Environmental Assessment Act set out minimum standards for when municipal governments are required to get input from the community. In the City of Guelph, we aim to create more opportunities for community engagement than those required by law, and to make them meaningful.

When we won't engage

There will be certain topics we don't ask you about, like matters of immediate public safety, when change is legislated by other levels of government, or when change simply isn't possible.

The City might choose not to engage if there's little or no public interest or if we cannot engage meaningfully. Other times, we might only talk to a small group of community members who are most affected.

When we are not able to engage with you, decision-making will be guided by our commitments to the community, and the priorities established in Guelph's community plan and strategic plan.

Regardless of the decision, we will communicate it to you in a timely and transparent way.

How we will engage

We nurture relationships

Constructive, cooperative relationships between City staff, Council and the community are important. Good relationships help foster trust, create space for respectful dialogue, and allow us to hear from a diversity of voices.

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You can expect the City to make time to develop relationships with community even when there's no specific ask or project in mind:

- you'll see us around Guelph at places like community events, festivals, gatherings, and meetings
- we'll share, celebrate, and amplify community work aligned with the Guelph's community plan and the City of Guelph's strategic plan
- we'll facilitate conversations on topics that connect with City priorities and lead to collective impacts.
- we'll follow up when you reach out

We build capacity for participation

Informed participation requires us to strengthen organizational capabilities at the City and build capacity within the community.

Through professional development, training, and mentorship, we will continue to invest in growing and aligning City staff's knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values related to community engagement core competencies:

- designing and implementing inclusive and meaningful communications and community engagement
- collecting, analysing, and sharing community engagement data and insights
- developing and stewarding community relationships
- evaluating and innovating toward continuous improvement

The City and its partners will also work in the community to nurture informed participation:

- addressing barriers to participation
- delivering accessible and inclusive communications that clearly identify what's at stake, explain potential impacts and describe required changes to diverse audiences
- informing the community about diverse civic participation opportunities
- developing the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values required to participate meaningfully

We ensure there are meaningful opportunities to influence City decisions

You can expect to be engaged in different ways. This may vary from project-to-project or even within a project. It will also depend on individual interest levels and the decision being made.

To guide what's appropriate we use the **International Association for Public Participation** (IAP2) Spectrum for Public Participation (the Spectrum).

The Spectrum reminds us that not every project or part of a project needs the same type or depth of community engagement.

Determining how the Spectrum applies to each aspect of a City project is done with careful consideration. Community engagement staff with technical expertise advise project managers about what is appropriate under what circumstances.

Regardless of the approach, you can count on us to explore and experiment with approaches that drive meaningful community engagement.

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Inform

At a minimum, and regardless of the decision being made, we will provide you with balanced and objective information to help you understand the problem, options, opportunities, and/or solutions. In these situations, we won't be asking for feedback, but we will communicate what we are doing and why.

Consult

Some points of a project have limited options, or we have specific questions we need to ask to inform the decisions. In these cases, we might ask for feedback to understand your opinion or ask you specific questions about the work of staff and experts.

Involve

Some parts of the decision-making process require us to make time and space for deeper conversations with you. In these situations, the City works directly with you to ensure your concerns and aspirations are consistently understood by asking you questions, answering yours and continuing the conversation until we understand each other.

Collaborate

Some parts of the decision-making process involve collaborating on a path forward with community members. In these situations, we collaborate with you to frame the issue, develop options, and/or identify solutions together.

Empower

Sometimes you're better positioned to make decisions at certain parts of the process. In these situations, the City supports establishing an appropriate process for you to make the decision.

*Adapted from IAP2.

Though the Spectrum is internationally recognized as a framework for designing and delivering community engagement, we know that no single model can meet the complexity and diversity of every project and community. We are committed to ongoing learning about the application of the Spectrum and other models that support how we meet our community engagement promise.

What will community engagement look and feel like?

The community engagement process

Meaningful engagement takes time, people, and other resources to design and implement. We take a staged approach to creating meaningful, rigorous, and effective community engagement. Sometimes these stages go in order, while other times we might need to move back and forth between stages.

Stage 1 – Define

We will establish the scope of the decision and determine if community engagement makes sense.

You can expect us to do a few things during this stage:

- communicate the goal of the project
- assess the affects the project will have on you
- assess what opportunities exist for meaningful engagement given timelines, resources, and community interest
- assess what community data and insights already exist and may be relevant to the decision
- determine if engagement is appropriate
- set engagement objectives
- identify who we need to engage

Stage 2 – Design

We will develop community engagement plans that align with the engagement objectives set in stage 1.

You can expect us to do a few things during this stage:

- determine the most effective methods for reaching and engaging you
- identify timelines that align with your needs and the project goals
- outline what success looks like
- coordinate engagement across projects when it makes sense

Stage 3 - Deliver

We will deliver community engagement as outlined in stage 2.

You can expect us to do a few things during this stage:

- promote community engagement throughout the project using a variety of channels
- host engagement activities in the community and/or online
- collect and carefully analyse all community engagement data
- refine community engagement goals, methods, communications, and marketing as needed throughout a project
- evaluate communications and community engagement

Stage 4 – Share

We will share data and insights from community engagement

You can expect us to a few things during this stage:

- share data and insights with you in plain language

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- tell you how community engagement, along with other key considerations, informed a recommendation or decision
- tell you if, when and why community feedback did not inform a decision
- tell you about the successes and challenges associated with the community engagement opportunity

The community engagement design principles

The decisions made at City Hall affect your day-to-day lives. These decisions can affect the way you live, the way you move around, and the way you relate with one another. They can also affect how you participate in the local economy, what you buy and throw away, and what gets built or made.

You need meaningful opportunities to weigh in on these critical decisions.

We'll take a **human-centred design** approach to making that happen.

Our community engagement design principles (Principles) help us do this. The Principles help us to align our actions with our community engagement promise. They also help us measure how we're doing.

The Principles work together like instruments in an orchestra. Just like when an instrument is removed and the music changes, community engagement that misses even one of these Principles might feel incomplete.

We practice inclusive design and address barriers to participation

We know a range of everyday things create **barriers** that may stop you from participating. We strive to design engagement to be accessible to a range of community members. We will empathize with your needs. We will think about, for example, different **living and lived experiences**, different kinds of families and relationships, age, physical and cognitive abilities, environmental needs, economic impacts from participating, levels of literacy, education, and language preferences. Then, we'll do our best to meet your needs and remove barriers.

You can expect us to apply this principle in different ways:

- use **inclusive design principles** and a **human-centred design** approach to address barriers to participation
- check the accessibility of event locations, digital files, webpages, and other resources and do our best to eliminate barriers
- Contribute to fostering **safer spaces**
- check our communications for **plain language** and readability level
- translate key communications into languages other than English
- where appropriate, cover costs you incur while participating (e.g. parking, transit fare, refreshments, child and/or eldercare)
- use an equity lens to compensate equity-denied individuals for their time, unique **living and lived experience**, and **emotional labour**

We focus on the needs and experiences of equity-denied groups

We know negative impacts of City policies, plans, programs, and services disproportionately affect people who experience structural and systemic oppression. We also know that when we make things better for equity-denied groups, we make them better for everyone in the community. We're committed to understanding how new or changing policies, programs, projects, and services will affect you and insist

this knowledge shapes decisions. We'll also design engagement with an awareness of **intersecting identities**—only some of which may be apparent.

You can expect us to apply this principle in different ways:

- engage in ongoing education related to
    - Indigenous reconciliation;
    - The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action;
    - The United Nations Declarations on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act;
    - inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility; and
    - anti-racism and systemic oppression.
- use an equity lens to compensate equity-denied individuals for their time, unique **living and lived experience**, and **emotional labour**
- make space for trust- and relationship-building with individuals from equity-denied groups both within and outside of projects
- plan engagement that's mindful you have many **intersecting identities**

We engage early and evolve our approach as we go

We know asking for input too late in a project can feel inauthentic and as though important decisions have already been made. That's why when we engage, we'll do so as early as possible. We'll also apply what we learn to go deeper or adjust our approach wherever possible.

You can expect us to apply this principle in different ways:

- consider early points of a decision and challenge ourselves to bring your voice in earlier
- engage with you at different phases of a project
- let you know how your feedback from earlier phases has shaped later phases and decisions
- ask questions to help define the problem or hear your vision of how things might be, before looking at options
- be open to changing our communications or engagement approaches if they aren't working

We connect dots

Many City decisions have very specific and technical considerations. Some decisions are set out in previously approved plans or relate to a policy direction that may not be clear to you. We need to tell you the whole story in plain language so you have the right context. We must be transparent about what we know and how a decision today comes from or will influence other decisions. We will balance gathering new information to make decisions with input you've already shared during past community engagement and be transparent about all the data we use to inform a decision.

You can expect us to apply this principle in different ways:

- communicate why a decision or request for input is framed the way it is and how it may affect you
- share how a decision is connected to past decisions or approved policy and how it may inform future ones
- use visuals, diagrams, posters, videos, and images to communicate (in addition to words)

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- look at engagement data from other projects to see what we can build on when designing new engagement opportunities

We meet you where you are

We know meeting you where you are increases the likelihood you will contribute your feedback and ideas. We also know doing so helps balance the conversation and get more diverse participation and perspectives. This means starting conversations in places you already are, at physical locations you frequent or that are convenient for you, and connecting through channels and means that make sense for you, whether digital or print. It also means being present and listening when there are important community conversations being led by others.

You can expect us to apply this principle in different ways:

- host engagement at geographically diverse locations including schools, parks, community centres, libraries, businesses, festivals, events, on busses, and through digital channels you use
- engage in **social listening** on the digital platforms you frequent
- join other community groups' events and community conversations

We deliver diverse engagement opportunities

We heard the community engagement approaches that work best for you are as diverse as our community is. That's why when we design and deliver engagement, we'll consider different levels of previous knowledge on a topic; plan opportunities for participation based on different levels of interest; use different channels and methods to get your input; and accommodate different schedules. We know you are more likely to participate when we provide a variety of ways to do so and that participation from different people makes engagement more representative.

You can expect us to apply this principle in different ways:

- ask you how, when and where you would like to have conversations with us
- plan engagement opportunities you can do on your own time and ones that bring people together (in-person and/or virtually)
- host events at times when you are available (this may mean evenings or weekends for some people and daytime for others)
- use visuals including diagrams, posters, videos, and images to communicate (in addition to words)
- engage across the IAP2 Spectrum

We spark curiosity and joy

We know your lives are busy, getting by is a growing challenge, and you're surrounded by overwhelming amounts of news and information competing for your attention. We will design engagement with your experience in mind. Guelph has a vibrant spirit and tapping into it means making space for joy, creativity, and laughter as we engage. When we're navigating complex issues, we'll be sensitive and thoughtful while looking for opportunities to build community together.

You can expect us to apply this principle in different ways:

- offer incentives for participation
- create interactive engagement exhibits (physical and digital)
- communicate beyond news releases and notices
- gamify engagement

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- co-create community art installations
- create opportunities for you to bring your own projects to life
- use popup placemaking strategies
- talk to people at creative, fun, sand engaging spaces and events

We report back

Telling you what we heard and how it informed a decision is part of being transparent; it's part of demonstrating we're really listening. By sharing the larger story of what we heard from you and explaining how your feedback shaped a recommendation, or why it couldn't be considered or addressed, we hope to improve your understanding of recommendations and decisions and strengthen your trust in local government.

You can expect us to apply this principle in different ways:

- share community engagement findings with you through different channels
- share the other considerations that have influenced recommendations or decisions
- ask what we might have missed or not heard when sharing community engagement findings
- be clear with elected officials about what we heard, from who, and how that shaped a recommendation or decision
- focus more on the quality and diversity of our engagement than how many people we spoke with

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Who is responsible?

Designing and implementing community engagement is a collective effort. We collaborate to ensure we meet our engagement promise.

Our responsibilities related to community engagement

City staff plays a pivotal role in advancing the City's Community Engagement Framework:

- approaches community engagement and makes decisions with an understanding that each decision and change have an impact on people in our community
- is aware of and understands the responsibilities related to the City's Community Engagement Policy and ensures consultants and external organizations leading engagement on behalf of the City are as well
- stewards the City's community engagement promise
- help make determinations about when community engagement is appropriate
- takes action to identify and remove barriers to equitable participation
- brings the City's community engagement principles to life
- engages community and Councillors with respect
- acknowledges the role bias can play in decision-making and is responsible for using community engagement data with rigour and transparency
- communicates how community engagement has shaped decision-making
- balances community engagement with other intergovernmental, social and cultural, technical, financial, and environmental considerations when making recommendations and decisions
- evaluates community engagement efforts and aspires to continuous improvement

Your responsibilities related to community engagement

As community members, you hold important community engagement responsibilities:

- recognize the City strives to listen to many voices and takes all input into consideration (sometimes this means a decision aligns with your input while other times it may not)
- remember, community engagement is one part of good decision-making and must be held in balance with other considerations including intergovernmental, social and cultural, technical, financial, and environmental
- if you feel comfortable doing so, let us know if you or someone else experiences barriers to participation that have not been addressed
- interact with staff, Councillors, and other engagement participants with respect
- listen and look to understand other viewpoints and perspectives
- provide input and feedback within project timelines
- encourage others to participate
- tell us how we're doing

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Elected official's responsibilities related to community engagement

As key leaders in Guelph, the support of City Council is important for successful community engagement:

- ask about the Community Engagement Framework and its application on City projects
- interact with City staff, the community, and engagement participants with respect
- let City staff know when you become aware of barriers to equitable participation
- encourage community to participate in community engagement opportunities
- connect City staff with relevant community members, organizations, and businesses
- apply the community engagement design principles when engaging with community
- acknowledge the role bias can play in decision-making, review information gathered through community engagement and balance it with intergovernmental, socio-cultural, technical, financial, and environmental considerations when making decisions
- ask about and support realistic timelines and appropriate resources required to deliver meaningful community engagement

Evaluating community engagement

Bringing our Community Engagement Framework to life is a journey not a destination. We know getting community engagement right all at once on every project is unlikely. Though we strive to do so we know there will always be things we can learn and ways we can improve.

We will adopt a continuous improvement mindset and embrace innovation:

- we will try new things, evolve tired approaches, and invest in innovation
- we will regularly invite and use your feedback to make our community engagement practices better
- we will use our community engagement design principles to measure and report back about how we're doing
- we will continuously evolve our Community Engagement Framework to respond to the changing needs of our community and the context of the world around us

Conclusion

We're excited to take the next steps on our community engagement journey. We hope you'll join us in making Guelph the most engaged city in Canada.

Glossary

2SLGBTQ+ - is an acronym that stands for Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning. The plus sign indicates the inclusion of identities not explicitly included in the acronym.[1]

Barrier - an obstacle that keeps an individual or group from participating fully in society. A barrier can be visible, invisible, environmental, physical, economic, social or political. Barriers can prevent full communication, working together, progress and/or achievement.

Community - a group of people with shared interests or values or who share an environment. This term may refer to members or groups from the public or City of Guelph employees.

Community engagement - involving the public in the decision-making processes related to matters that affect them and that they can meaningfully influence.

Compensation - recognition in a form that has financial value for an act or service provided by someone who is contributing their time under specific circumstances.

Emotional labour - the process of managing feelings and expressions to fulfill the requirements of participation. More specifically, engagement participants may feel as though they are expected to regulate or suppress their emotions during interactions with the City, Council, or other community members. Additionally, participation may bring up feelings of struggle or trauma which the participant may have to process after the interaction.

Engagement activity - a specific approach to collecting input from community, for example, interviews, charettes, roundtables, surveys, working groups, citizens juries.

Engagement event - a specific engagement opportunity that takes place during an established date and time in person or online. Multiple engagement events may occur as part of broader consultation related to a single policy, program, project, or service.

Engagement fatigue - a tiredness which results in people not participating in political, democratic and community engagement processes. Often the result of previously unmet expectations, a feeling that participation won't impact decisions, a view that outcomes are pre-determined, or too many engagement opportunities.

Equity - where everyone is treated according to their diverse needs in a way that enables all people to participate, perform, and engage to the same extent.[2]

Equity-denied - individuals or groups that, because of systemic discrimination, face barriers that prevent them from having the same access to the resources and opportunities that are available to other members of society, and that are necessary for them to attain just outcomes. In Canada, groups generally considered to be equity-denied groups include , Indigenous people, people with disabilities,

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[1] Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion Glossary of Terms, A Reference Tool, January 2022, from <u>ccdi-glossary-of-terms-eng.pdf</u>

[2] Ibid.

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women, people who are part of 2SLGBTQ2+ communities, people living in poverty, religious minority groups and racialized people. The types of equity-denied groups may vary based on factors such as geography, sociocultural context or the presence of specific subpopulations.[3]

Honorarium (plural: Honoraria) - a type of compensation that is understood as a form of nominal financial recognition that may be used to honour one-time or non-routine contributions of knowledge, skills, living and lived experience, and emotional labour.

Human-centred design - a problem-solving approach that puts real people at the centre of the decision-making process enabling the creation of policies, programs, projects and services that resonate and are tailored to the people in question.

Inclusive design - a practice where products and services are designed in a way that they are accessible and can serve as many people as possible, regardless of their age, gender, or ability.

International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) - an international organization advancing the practice of public participation (community engagement). Their mission is to promote and advance public participation (community engagement) globally through targeted initiatives that are guided by culturally adaptive standards of practice and core values.

Intersecting identities - the concept that an individual's identity consists of multiple, intersecting factors, including but not limited to gender identity, gender expression, race, ethnicity, class (past and present), religious beliefs, sexual identity, and sexual expression. These intersecting factors are what make people multi-layered individuals.[4]

Living and lived experience - expertise gained through direct, first-hand exposure and involvement in events, experiences, and systems versus representations constructed by other people.[5]

Plain language - Clear, concise communication designed so the audience will understand the message

People with living and lived experience - individuals or groups who understand the issues that are relevant to their communities and have perspectives which may not be known to outsiders. They have critical vantage points about community needs, what aspects of services are working, and what needs to be changed.[6] They are technical experts as it relates to their own experiences of, for example,

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[3] Government of Canada, P. S. and P. C. (2022, August 4). *Guide on equity, diversity and inclusion terminology*.

[4] Bolding, Pharoah (2020, October 27-29). *Intersectionality vs. Intersecting Identities* [Conference presentation]. 2020 Oregon Statewide Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Conference, Virtual. Available - https://www.oregon.gov/deiconference/Documents/Pharoah%20Bolding%20-%20Intersectionality%20vs.%20Intersecting%20Identities.pdf

[5] Suicide Prevention Resource Centre. (n.d.). *Engaging people with lived experience: A toolkit for organizations*. Engaging People with Lived Experience: A Toolkit for Organizations | Suicide Prevention Resource Center. Retrieved August 26, 2022, from https://www.sprc.org/livedexperiencetoolkit/about

[6] Feige, S., & Choubak, M. (2019). *Best Practices for Engaging People with Lived Experience.* Guelph, ON: Community Engaged Scholarship Institute.

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homelessness, addictions, mental health, trauma, poverty, chronic illness, systemic discrimination, disability, etc.

Safe spaces - a space where people feel psychologically safe and can express honest impressions, thoughts, and attitudes without fear of ridicule. A safe space is one that doesn't incite judgement based on identity or experience – where the expression of both can exist and be affirmed without fear of repercussion and without the pressure to educate.[7]

Social listening - the practice of paying attention to conversations taking place across various online platforms to understand what people are talking about. Social listening helps the City understand, beyond its own social media and community engagement platforms, what people are interested in, concerned about, and hopeful for.

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[7] Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion Glossary of Terms, A Reference Tool, January 2022, from ccdi-glossary-of-terms-eng.pdf

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