

# OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT 2022-2023 RESOURCE PLAN

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## INTRODUCTION

In late 2014, the City of Saskatoon established a Risk-Based Management (RBM) Program to provide “a systematic, proactive and ongoing process to understand and manage risk and uncertainty...” Following the adoption of the RBM program, the City conducted a strategic risk assessment to identify the high, medium, and low priority risks. One of the high priority risks identified during that process was, “the City’s engagement and communications initiatives and opportunities may not be effectively reaching its citizens.”

Since that time, the City of Saskatoon’s Communications & Public Engagement Department has either led or supported the implementation of several initiatives aimed at mitigating the risk. With respect to “communications initiatives” it appears that the City’s efforts are working. In fact, the 2017, 2018 and 2021 Civic Services Survey indicates satisfaction is very strong in communications. However, with respect to “engagement” the Survey indicates there is a need for improvement. These contradictory results may indicate that, on the one hand, the human resources allocated to the communications (and marketing) function is better meeting the expectations of the community while the resources allocated to engagement are not meeting those expectations. Therefore, the purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the City of Saskatoon’s Public Engagement Section of the Communications & Public Engagement Department.

The report is necessary to offer important perspective about the work Public Engagement delivers to the corporation and the community. The primary goal is to further elaborate on the important work the Public Engagement Section does and how it plans to address existing service gaps. A secondary goal is to identify ways to build internal public engagement capacity for a more sustainable future through two important streams. To provide appropriate context and analysis on these and other related topics, the remainder of this document is organized as follows:

**Section I** provides an overview of the Public Engagement Section so the reader has an understanding of how the area has evolved since “An Overview of the Communications Division” report was presented in 2017 and achievements since 2018.

**Section II** provides a comparative analysis between the City of Saskatoon and the cities of Calgary, Edmonton and Regina. Although Calgary and Edmonton have much larger populations they are included in the analysis because they are often seen as key benchmark cities in terms of their approach to engagement. However, additional tables have been included to adjust for the larger population size to provide more appropriate comparisons to the City of Saskatoon.

**Section III** provides more information on the service levels provided to the City division and departments based on current capacity along with what it could look like in the future. To that end, it addresses achievements made in the development and implementation of the policy framework, and outlines achievements with engagement events and activities since 2018.

**Section IV** outlines a 2022-2023 resource plan to address the public engagement gaps in order to move towards achieving better satisfaction results, meet the principles identified in the Council Policy on Public Engagement, deliver on the approved framework, support department engagement plans, and ultimately, mitigate the corporate risk related to public engagement.

## SECTION I: OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

### 1. Current State

As a result of the report titled “An Overview of the Communications Division”, received by City Council in September 2017, the City of Saskatoon created a Public Engagement Section, within the Communications & Public Engagement Department. This was the initial step in developing and building a more sustainable structure to support public engagement throughout the corporation. Since 2018, the Section’s capacity has remained the same and includes a Public Engagement Manager and one permanent Public Engagement Consultant. There is also one temporary Public Engagement Consultant who was hired permanently in 2020 as an over-complement. The Department has been working towards hiring an additional temporary position since mid-May to be assigned to support the Transportation Department. During the initial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the section was operating with 50% of the staff capacity (2 staff) while still providing significant support to transition to online engagement and support the Saskatoon Inter-agency Response to COVID-19.

With this small incremental increase in engagement capacity since 2017, the corporation continues to be heavily reliant on staff within the various departments to manage a significant portion of the City’s public engagement activities on a regular basis. Most of these staff come from varied backgrounds (engineers, planners, communications, marketing, etc.) and have not necessarily been formally trained in engagement, particularly for deeper and more deliberative forms of engagement required for complex or politically sensitive projects.

To provide additional context, and the need for staff formally trained in public engagement, it is important to understand the spectrum of public engagement. The International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) designed a spectrum of public participation “to help groups define the public’s role in any public engagement process” (IAP2, 2014). The spectrum includes five categories of public participation process: informing, consulting, involving, collaborating, and empowering the public. Each of these categories has clear objectives and are linked to increasing participatory forms and public commitment. This spectrum is the international standard for public participation (IAP2, 2014).

The spectrum is not meant to place a value judgement on one level over another. It is also not intended to be a linear tool because in one project there may be different stakeholders who are engaged at different levels, at different times, all within the same overall strategy. Additionally, new information or learnings might change the level of participation in the process partway through.

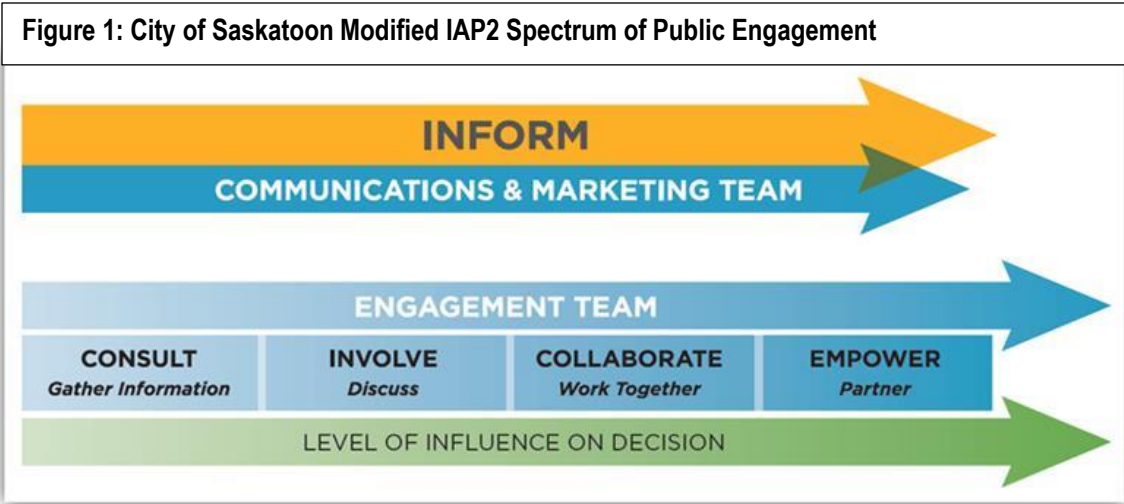
Since the 1990s, governments around the world have adopted variations of this spectrum for their own uses and needs. One of the adaptations made by the City of Saskatoon is to pull out the “inform” level and put it across the top in a yellow arrow, to represent how informing happens throughout the entire engagement process. The City’s approach is illustrated in Figure 1. This version adds further context to the objectives as well as role clarity for the City. Most significantly, it places the inform level as a separate and concurrent feature to each level of the engagement spectrum. This approach is common among other municipalities, as a way of noting that the informing function must happen throughout any engagement process, regardless of how it happens, but that it is not considered engagement in and of itself.

The City’s approach shows how communications and marketing are not only a key ingredient but also integral to the success of engagement. This is where communications and marketing education and experience play best to contributing to successful engagement.

As we move up the spectrum, the level of influence on the decision increases, represented by the green arrow. Please note that one project can be at many different points on the spectrum throughout its lifespan-or even at the same time (i.e. different stakeholder groups or audiences being at different levels,



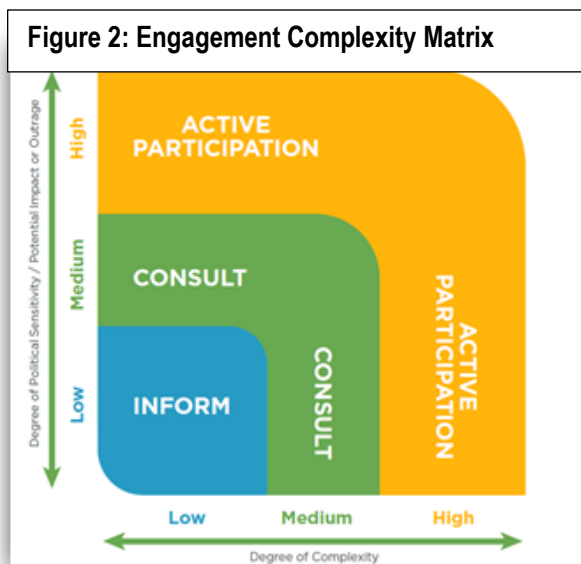
even simultaneously). This is where formally trained public engagement professionals contribute to deeper and more deliberative forms of engagement on complicated projects.



The IAP2 Spectrum is often presented as if decision-makers have control. However, communities and individuals have power to change a situation regardless of what Administration might like. It can also be used to impose one organization's expectations on participants rather than opening a conversation about how affected individuals and communities want to participate. At times the spectrum can perpetuate patterns of marginalization and reinforce power imbalances. More bluntly, it does not enable a more holistic, community-building approach. And finally, the spectrum does not consider factors including risk, complexity, controversy, and potential outrage, which may require higher levels of participation than initially thought.

These key critiques must be considered and mitigated when developing an engagement strategy. Figure 2 offers a version of an Engagement Complexity Matrix. This adaptation is from the consulting firm Dialogue Partners. Its usefulness comes from the fact that it simplifies the levels into three core categories but maps them onto the level of complexity and degree of political sensitivity/impact or outrage involved to add nuance to the approach.

The bottom x axis speaks to the degree of complexity from low to high. Complexity is how complicated the project is. For example, highly complex projects have many different moving parts that are interacting with each other, often have many unknowns, many people involved, and large scopes. Whereas, the side y axis is about the level of political sensitivity that comes with this project, and the level of possible outrage you could expect from those who are highly impacted.



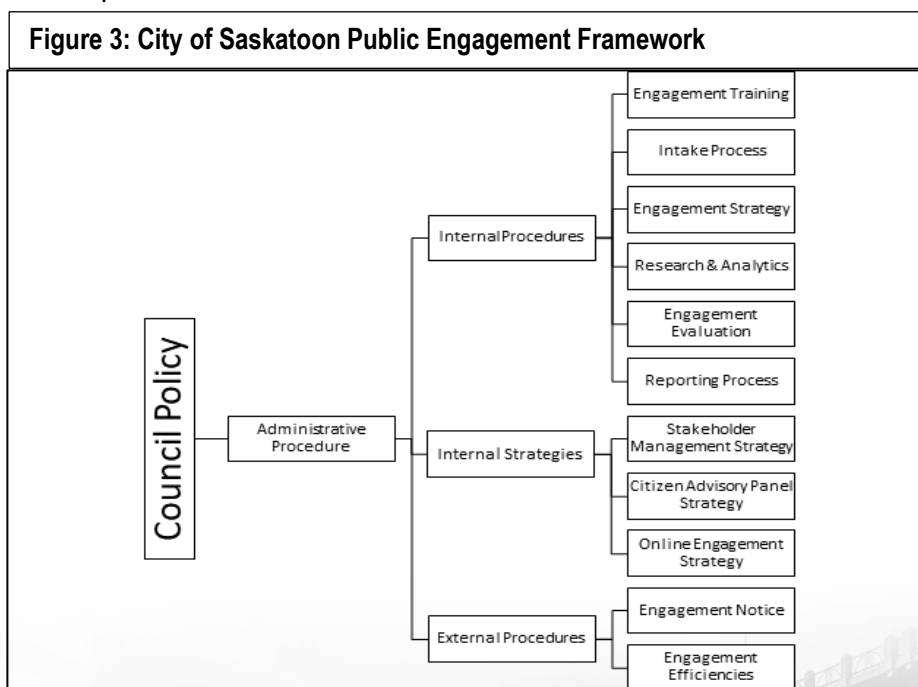
Again, if an engagement project has higher degrees of complexity and/or level of political sensitivity, the emphasis on having formally trained public engagement professionals developing and implementing the strategy is necessary.

## 2. Public Engagement Achievements – Policy, Procedures & Framework

Administration has made progress towards the following action in the 2018-2021 Corporate Strategic Plan identified with the Culture of Continuous Improvement strategic goal:

- Improve public participation in civic programs and services with the implementation of a Community Engagement Strategy

The overall Community Engagement Strategy was to develop a Public Engagement Framework for the City of Saskatoon as outlined below in Figure 3. Elements of the overall Framework are in various stages of completion.



A significant achievement was the unanimous approval of a **Council Policy on Public Engagement (C02-046)** on July 25th, 2019, which came into effect on September 1, 2019. The policy replaces a dated Public Participation Strategy from 2004 and it recognizes and affirms the City of Saskatoon's commitment to public engagement. Furthermore, the policy outlines seven guiding principles for meaningful public engagement including inclusivity, early involvement, decision making, transparency and accountability, open and timely communication, relationship building and evaluation. To implement the policy, an Administrative Procedure was developed and shared internally.

Work continues on several other elements of the framework as explained below starting with **Internal Procedures**.

- **Engagement Training** – Several introductory meetings have started, but work is required to develop a broader corporate engagement training implementation strategy.
- **Project Intake** - A four-step standardized process to evaluate project readiness through to right sizing engagement plans. This includes the initial **Project Intake Form** available on MyCity.
- **Engagement Strategy** – The City is striving to use a cooperative and respectful approach to engage with Indigenous Peoples. The Engagement Team, Indigenous Initiatives and various project teams began discussions on developing a specific procedure for Indigenous Engagement at the City. In late 2019, work with students with the Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy began but was cancelled in 2020 due to COVID-19.
- **Research and Analytics** – Increased staff effort is required for developing, analyzing and reporting related to online engagement results. This resulted from the increased use and participation rates in online surveys during the activation of virtual engagement over the course of the pandemic.
- **Engagement Evaluation** - A standardized template for an **Engagement Evaluation Form** has been designed and is available on MyCity.
- **Engagement Reporting** - Templates have been designed for Engagement Reporting which includes three forms (Report to Project Team, What We Heard Report for participants and a Final Report for City Council). Initial discussions are taking place to review the report template and identify plain language improvements for ease of reading.

Work on developing the three different aspects of **Internal Strategies** within the engagement framework shown in Figure 3 is in various stages.

- **Stakeholder Management Strategy** - A business case for a software solution to manage external stakeholders is complete. Work is continuing to identify potential funding sources to proceed with stakeholder management software. Improvements related to stakeholder management and procedures will continue to be made such as those identified in a August 24, 2020 Report to GPC titled the **Implementation of Non-Disclosure Agreements for Stakeholders**.
- **Citizen Advisory Panel Strategy** – The online **Citizen Advisory Panel** has been operating for some time and currently the City has approximately 1,800 subscribed members but additional refinements and enhancements to improving the online experience will need to be identified, implemented and promoted in the future. Additional work related to in-person Citizen Advisory panels has included establishing the first technical advisory group to engage stakeholders in a more meaningful dialogue on decisions that may impact them. Specifically the **Indigenous Technical Advisory Group**, a new structure through which members of First Nations and Métis communities participate in the design of City initiatives to help ensure that the unique interests

and perspectives of Indigenous peoples are acknowledged, affirmed and implemented. This was in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Call to Action 92, and in support of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Article 19 - the City of Saskatoon is dedicated to pursuing opportunities to build respectful relationships and engage in meaningful dialogue with Indigenous peoples on the decisions that may impact them. The City of Saskatoon currently has opportunities available where application of specialized knowledge could greatly benefit project outcomes.

- **Online Engagement Strategy** – As a result of COVID-19, a report titled [Modifying Public Engagement in Saskatoon During COVID-19](#) was submitted to GPC on May 19, 2020. The City continues to be within Phase 3 – Activate Online Public Engagement. Lessons will be learned and reviewed to determine a more comprehensive online engagement strategy in the future. Currently, the City uses various online engagement tools such as Online Surveys and an Online Discussion feature through Disqus. Additionally, virtual meetings are being held using Microsoft Teams along with pre-recorded videos.

Work on developing the two different aspects of External Procedures within the engagement framework shown in Figure 3 is in various stages.

- **Engagement Notice** – A Saskatoon Light & Power Infrastructure Projects Procedure was presented and accepted at City Council on June 25, 2018.
- **Engagement Efficiencies** – Work was completed for the re-branding Shaping Saskatoon to **Engage!** The external engage page [www.saskatoon.ca/enage](http://www.saskatoon.ca/enage) is an engagement tool to help the public find information regarding all active and past engagement opportunities at the City in one central location. More work is required related to efficiencies which requires a comprehensive system to identify engagement activities across the organization and better coordinate public events.

### 3. **Public Engagement Achievements – Events & Activities**

Public Engagement Consultants (currently a mix of 1-3 permanent and temporary staff) support multidisciplinary project teams on engagement activities and events that are developed in public engagement plans. They deliver activities and events through engagement strategy and planning development, logistics management, development of materials and/or activities, hosting and facilitation support, and the analysis, evaluation and reporting of results.

Table 1 demonstrates the estimated total number of engagement events and surveys over three years (2018-2020).

Table 1: 2018-2020 Summary of Public Engagement Activities		
	2018 -2020	Annual Average
<b>Public Events</b>		
Budget, Finance, Strategic Plan	3	1
Bylaws, Policies, Strategies	18	6
Environmental & Corporate Initiatives	53	18
Infrastructure, Development	16	51
Growth Plan	29	10
Land Use Applications/Rezoning	30	10
Local Area Plan	2	1
Transportation, Neighbourhood Traffic Reviews	79	26
Other	28	10
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>86</b>



<b>Surveys</b>		
Public surveys	52	17
Citizen Advisory Panel	12	4
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>TOTAL PUBLIC EVENTS &amp; SURVEYS</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>107</b>
<p><i>* Due to project variability and data limitations the annual average has been used.</i></p> <p><i>** The primary information source for this table is the <a href="#">Engagement Calendar</a>. Any public events or surveys that occurred that were not confirmed in the Engagement Calendar may not be included.</i></p> <p><i>*** Due to COVID-19, all public engagement was suspended from March 17 to July 8, at which time a graduated restoration of virtual forms of public engagement was implemented. Public engagement was also suspended from September 22 to November 9 due to the Civic Election.</i></p>		

#### 4. How we Track and Manage our Work

The Public Engagement Section is responsible for planning, tracking, and controlling the work they undertake to support various departments. The information below is based on time tracking information from 2019 to demonstrate the volume and time required for various initiatives Public Engagement is responsible to oversee.

In 2019, over 77 engagement related projects and initiatives were tracked by a mix of 3.5 permanent and temporary staff (excluding administrative duties). This also excludes engagement projects and time that were managed by other internal staff within various Departments or work contracted out for external support. Worth noting is engagement projects within the Sustainability Department, Planning & Development Department and the Growth Plan accounted for 67.1% of the total available engagement staff time. Furthermore, 49.4% of the total available engagement staff time was required for three major initiatives including:

• Sustainability – Green Strategy	14.8%	119 days
• Sustainability – Waste Industrial, Commercial and Institutional	13.2%	106 days
• Plan for Growth/BRT/Corridor Planning	21.4%	171 days
<b>Total</b>	<b>49.4%</b>	<b>396 days</b>

In comparison, the amount of time available to spend on researching, developing and basic implementation of the Public Engagement Policy and Framework was 8% of available staff time or 66 days.

Using the Engagement Complexity Matrix shown earlier in Figure 2, the following information attempts to break down the engagement projects based on the number of days and percentage of staff time required. Worth noting is although some projects are defined as low or medium based on the number of workdays, some may still be considered complex or sensitive.

• Low degree of complexity/Low degree of sensitivity	83%	1-10 days
• Medium degree of complexity/Medium degree of sensitivity	5%	11-50 days
• High degree of complexity/High degree of sensitivity	12%	51+ days

The above information is important to consider since only 12% of the total number of projects are highly complex and have a high degree of sensitivity but they also take up 49.4% of staff capacity available. This information demonstrates that the number of engagement initiatives does not adequately reflect the amount of staff capacity required to complete engagement from intake through to reporting. The size and scope of each initiative varies but generally all initiatives require seven various steps. The

information below demonstrates the percentage of staff time allocated to each step in 2019 (excluding administration and meetings).

Engagement Task	Percentage of Staff time	
1-Intake	9%	
2-Strategy	13%	
3-Planning	15%	49%
4-Execution	21%	
5-Evaluation	5%	
6-Data Analysis	8%	
7-Reporting	27%	

With the staff capacity available, almost half of the staff time is spent on planning, execution, evaluation, and data analysis (49%). Whereas, staff time spent on bookend activities such as strategy and reporting out accounted for 13% and 27% of staff time respectively. This information has potential relevancy when reviewing information in Section II of this report.

## 5. Summary & Observations

The small incremental increase in engagement capacity since 2017 means the City remains heavily reliant on staff within the various departments to manage a significant portion of the City's public engagement activities on a regular basis. Again, most of these staff come from varied backgrounds (engineers, planners, communications, marketing, etc.) and have not necessarily been formally trained in engagement. The lack of engagement professionals leaves the City at risk to effectively manage the variety of engagement projects, particularly those with higher degrees of complexity and/or level of political sensitivity which require significant amount of staff time.

Despite the adoption of a City Council Policy on Public Engagement in 2019, the available capacity has made it difficult to make significant movement on the development and implementation of the framework or achieving the principles outlined in the policy. In addition, it is difficult to predict the policy issues that may emerge over time but having the proper capacity to address these will allow the City to better succeed. Although some important progress has been made since 2018, there is much work left to complete and maintain to improve satisfaction, achieve the engagement principles, and mitigate the corporate risk.

## SECTION II: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT LEVELS AND PERFORMANCE

### 1. Service Levels Provided

One way to understand the amount of service (capacity) that the Public Engagement Section provides to the organization is by looking at the ratio of staff to each business unit and by service line.

Table 2 shows that public engagement staff must be responsible for a significantly high number of business units (or service lines). This means the staff must spread out their time across more business units (or service lines) versus how it would look with 4 or 6 permanent staff.

<b>Table 2: Estimated Service by Function</b> (as of April 2021)			
Includes Manager and Consultants	<b>Current</b> Public Engagement Permanent Only	Future of 4 Public Engagement	Future of 6 Public Engagement
Total Permanent Staff	2	4	6
# of Business Units **	44	44	44
<b># business units supported by each staff (rounded)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>
# of Service Lines	80	80	80
<b># of service lines supported by each staff (rounded)</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13</b>
**Business Units is the total number of Divisions, Departments and Offices as shown in the March 2020 Organizational Chart.			

## 2. How is our Performance?

The City of Saskatoon has established a “Satisfaction” Performance Target of 90%. To better measure performance related to the public engagement, three new questions were added to the 2018 Civic Services Survey. These questions were designed to measure performance related to strategy, plan/execution and reporting out.

As demonstrated in Table 3, engagement planning and execution is performing relatively well but still requires improvement. It is within this category that it is more appropriate to tap into the use of staff with varying degrees of engagement experience to help facilitate the implementation of engagement events and activities. However, additional emphasis is required on developing engagement strategy and framework and reporting out the results which are areas more appropriate to be led by professional public engagement staff but current capacity is limited.

<b>Table 3: City of Saskatoon Civic Services Survey – Public Engagement</b>		
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2021 (preliminary data)</b>
City of Saskatoon does enough to get public input on decisions it makes. (Strategy)	53% Telephone 45% Online = <b>48%</b> (weighted average)  29% Self-Selected (n=619)	48% Telephone 56% Online = <b>53%</b> (weighted average)  43% Self-Selected (n=1100)
The City provides meaningful opportunities to participate in engagement activities (Engagement Plan/Execution)	87% Telephone 79% Online = <b>82%</b> (weighted average)  85% Self-Selected (n=590)	76% Telephone 77% Online = <b>76%</b> (weighted average)  66% Self-Selected (n=1022)
The City communicates how it will use public input to help make its decisions (Reporting Out)	68% Telephone 55% Online = <b>60%</b> (weighted average)  53% Self-Selected (n=590)	62% Telephone 67% Online = <b>65%</b> (weighted average)  40% Self-Selected (n=1220)

Worth noting are the following:

- As a result of the pandemic, the City of Saskatoon suspended all public engagement on March 17, 2020. An Information Report was submitted to Governance and Priorities Committee on May 19, 2020 titled [Modifying Public Engagement during the Covid-19 Pandemic](#). Shortly after, virtual public engagement activities were activated and remain in place as of June 2021.
- Additionally, public engagement was paused between September 22<sup>nd</sup> through to November 9<sup>th</sup> to facilitate an appropriate space for Saskatoon’s residents to fully participate in the civic election process.
- An additional question was asked in 2021 to measure whether COVID-19 impacted satisfaction levels with the quality of services provided by the City of Saskatoon. Based on preliminary data, 45% of telephone

and 55% of online respondents noted that they somewhat or strongly agreed that their satisfaction level was impacted which may have resulted in lower levels of satisfaction related to the quality of City public engagement. A total of 32% of self-selected survey respondents noted their satisfaction level was impacted.

Table 4 shows the results of the City of Calgary with slightly different questions than the City of Saskatoon.

<b>Table 4: City of Calgary Civic Services Survey – Public Engagement</b>				
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Calgarians have enough opportunities to provide input into decision-making about City projects and services (Strategy)	n/a	58% Spring n/a Fall <b>=58%</b>	66% Spring n/a Fall <b>66%</b>	61% Spring
The City allows citizens to have meaningful input into decision making. (Engagement Plan/Execution)	n/a Spring 67% Fall <b>=67%</b>	58% Spring 60% Fall <b>= 59%</b>	65% Spring 63% Fall <b>= 64%</b>	63% Spring
The City uses input from Calgarians in decision-making about City projects and services (Reporting Out)	n/a Spring 70% Fall <b>=70%</b>	61% Spring 65% Fall <b>=63%</b>	67% Spring 67% Fall <b>=67%</b>	65% Spring
Calgarians are confident that The City of Calgary is working to improve how it includes citizen input into decisions"	n/a Spring 74% Fall <b>=74%</b>	66% Spring 68% Fall <b>=67%</b>	71% Spring 68% Fall <b>= 70%</b>	69% Spring
<a href="#">2021-spring-pulse-survey-report.pdf</a>				

### 3. Summary & Observations

Since 2018, the City has achieved slightly better results when it comes to doing enough to get public input on decisions (strategy) when looking at the weighted average of telephone and online respondents. A more significant improvement was made when looking at self-selected participants. This may indicate that the creation of a Public Engagement Section and professionally trained staff are making a difference. In comparison to the City of Calgary, Saskatoon results are still significantly lower. What might help explain the gap between the cities? Later, Section II of the report demonstrates the City of Calgary's investment in engagement staff capacity is significantly higher.

The City has slightly lower results from those in 2018 when it comes to providing meaningful opportunities to participate in engagement activities (plan/implementation) when looking at the weighted average of telephone and online respondents. The results are significantly lower for those self-selected respondents when compared to 2018. It is unclear how much the cancellation of public engagement in the early stages of the pandemic and the shift to online engagement only in 2020/2021 may have had on these lower results. However, an additional question was asked in 2021 to measure whether COVID-19 impacted satisfaction levels with the quality of services provided by the City of Saskatoon shows that 45% of telephone, 55% of online respondents and 32% of self-selected noted that they somewhat or strongly agreed that their satisfaction level was impacted which may have resulted in lower levels of satisfaction. The results for telephone and online respondents are similar in comparison to the City of Calgary. However, the results demonstrate that more needs to be done to mitigate the corporate risk related to engagement initiatives and providing better opportunities more meaningful activities.

And finally, the City has slightly higher results from those in 2018 when it comes to communicating how it will use public input to help make its decisions (reporting out) when looking at the weighted average of telephone and online respondents. This demonstrates that additional work invested within the Public External Procedures – Reporting Process are making a difference. These results are like the City of

Calgary when comparing the 2021 telephone survey. The results are lower than 2018 for the self-selected respondents.

Overall, the City achieved slightly higher results in two areas and lower results in one area from the previous three-year period. However, it is unclear how much the Pandemic, the shift to online engagement and the pause of engagement during the civic election may have played a role in 2020 results. Regardless, the information demonstrates that more needs to be done to mitigate the corporate risk related to engagement initiatives and opportunities not effectively reaching its citizens and achieving the principles outlined in the Council Policy on Public Engagement.

## SECTION III: HOW WE COMPARE TO OTHER CITIES

The Communications & Public Engagement Department has a proposed plan to begin to address the existing gap of public engagement staff resources. However, before doing so, this section attempts to provide a comparison of the City of Saskatoon to three other western Canadian cities. The information was obtained from a variety of sources including most recent business plan and budget documents available on the website. Given the slightly different structure and accounting it is difficult to do an “apples to apples” comparison.

### 1. 2021 Capacity of each City to Provide Service?

Table 5 provides a comparison of communications, marketing, creative services, media relations and engagement staff for four cities including the City of Saskatoon.

Table 5: 2021 Comparison of City Staff and Population (Excludes Temporary Positions)				
	Saskatoon	Calgary	Edmonton	Regina*
Engagement Staff	2	32.3	24	1
<b>Total Staff</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>236.9</b>	<b>161.90</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>2021 FTEs</b>				
Total Budgeted FTEs	4,007.4	16,410.3	14,765.5	2,899
% of Engagement staff to total employees	0.04%	0.2%	0.2%	0.03%
Combined % of City employees	0.6%	1.44%	1.1%	0.5%
Ratio of Engagement one staff to employees	2,004	508	615	2,899
Combined ratio of one staff to employees	174	69	91	193
<b>2020 Population</b>				
Population	280,174	1,361,852	1,047,00	238,503
Ratio of one Engagement staff to population	140,087	42,163	43,625	238,503
Combined ratio of one staff to population	12,181	5,749	6,467	15,900
1. City of Saskatoon - <a href="https://www.saskatoon.ca/sites/default/files/documents/asset-financial-management/finance-supply/2020-2021_approved_business_plan_budget_final_web2.pdf">https://www.saskatoon.ca/sites/default/files/documents/asset-financial-management/finance-supply/2020-2021_approved_business_plan_budget_final_web2.pdf</a> 2. City of Calgary <a href="file:///C:/Users/cccar0lab/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/IE/QL2ZQ5DT/service-plans-and-budgets-2019-2022.pdf">file:///C:/Users/cccar0lab/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/IE/QL2ZQ5DT/service-plans-and-budgets-2019-2022.pdf</a> and <a href="file:///C:/Users/cccar0lab/Downloads/service-plans-and-budgets-2019-2022-supplemental.pdf">file:///C:/Users/cccar0lab/Downloads/service-plans-and-budgets-2019-2022-supplemental.pdf</a> 3. City of Edmonton - <a href="https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/documents/APPROVED_2019-2022_OPERATING_BUDGET.pdf">https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/documents/APPROVED_2019-2022_OPERATING_BUDGET.pdf</a> 4. City of Regina – telephone discussions and <a href="https://www.regina.ca/export/sites/Regina.ca/city-government/budget-finance/galleries/pdfs/2021-Proposed-Budget-Book.pdf">https://www.regina.ca/export/sites/Regina.ca/city-government/budget-finance/galleries/pdfs/2021-Proposed-Budget-Book.pdf</a> 5. Population Statistics <a href="https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/cv.action?pid=1710014201">https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/cv.action?pid=1710014201</a>				
*The City of Regina is moving toward increasing the staffing complement for the Communications & Engagement Department and submitting a business case for more Public Engagement resources in 2022.				



Table 6 provides a comparison of engagement expenditures for the selected cities. It is important to note that the amounts reflected in the table are budgetary expenditures specifically for the public engagement program but does not account for similar expenditures made by other departments and divisions.

<b>Table 6: 2021 Comparison City Expenditures and Budget</b>				
	<b>Saskatoon</b>	<b>Calgary</b>	<b>Edmonton</b>	<b>Regina*</b>
<b>2021 Expenditures</b> (excludes cost recovery)	Estimate Only			
Engagement Expenditures	\$199,900	\$5,483,000	\$2,814,000	\$20,000
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$2,171,300</b>	<b>\$34,468,000</b>	<b>\$19,247,000</b>	<b>\$830,000</b>
<b>2021 City Budget</b>				
Net Expenditures – 2021	\$551,658,800	3,910,568,000	\$3,171,483,000	\$380,676,000
Engagement % of City Budget	0.04%	0.1%	0.1%	.005%
% of City Budget	0.4%	0.8%	0.6%	0.2%
<b>Population</b>				
Population	280,174	1,361,852	1,047,003	238,503
Engagement Investment/Person	\$0.71	\$4.03	\$2.69	\$0.08
Combined Investment per person	\$7.75	\$25.31	\$18.39	\$3.48
1. City of Saskatoon - <a href="https://www.saskatoon.ca/sites/default/files/documents/asset-financial-management/finance-supply/2020-2021_approved_business_plan_budget_final_web2.pdf">https://www.saskatoon.ca/sites/default/files/documents/asset-financial-management/finance-supply/2020-2021_approved_business_plan_budget_final_web2.pdf</a> 2. City of Calgary <a href="file:///C:/Users/cccar0lab/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/IE/QL2ZQ5DT/service-plans-and-budgets-2019-2022.pdf">file:///C:/Users/cccar0lab/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/IE/QL2ZQ5DT/service-plans-and-budgets-2019-2022.pdf</a> and <a href="file:///C:/Users/cccar0lab/Downloads/service-plans-and-budgets-2019-2022-supplemental.pdf">file:///C:/Users/cccar0lab/Downloads/service-plans-and-budgets-2019-2022-supplemental.pdf</a> 3. City of Edmonton - <a href="https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/documents/APPROVED_2019-2022_OPERATING_BUDGET.pdf">https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/documents/APPROVED_2019-2022_OPERATING_BUDGET.pdf</a> 4. City of Regina – telephone discussions and <a href="https://www.regina.ca/export/sites/Regina.ca/city-government/budget-finance/galleries/pdfs/2021-Proposed-Budget-Book.pdf">https://www.regina.ca/export/sites/Regina.ca/city-government/budget-finance/galleries/pdfs/2021-Proposed-Budget-Book.pdf</a> 5. Population Statistics <a href="https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/cv.action?pid=1710014201">https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/cv.action?pid=1710014201</a>				
*The City of Regina is moving toward increasing the staffing complement for the Communications & Engagement Department and submitting a business case for more Public Engagement resources in 2022.				

## 2. Summary & Observations

The preceding analysis reveals several important points worth noting. First, each City structures their communications, public engagement, and related functions slightly differently. They also provide a different scope of services with internal staff and account for their budgetary expenditures in different ways.

Second, when looking at the size of the organization based on the number of FTEs, the City of Saskatoon Communications & Public Engagement Department is operating with at least six less public engagement staff. This gap is illustrated in Table 7 and adjusts Saskatoon's ratio to that the larger cities of Calgary and Edmonton. As a result, each staff person Saskatoon must provide support to a larger number of employees and department projects and initiatives.

<b>Table 7</b>	<b>Saskatoon Current</b>	<b>Saskatoon Adjusted to be Comparable to Calgary</b>	<b>Saskatoon Adjust to be Comparable to Edmonton</b>
Engagement Staff	2	8	8

Third, adjusting on per capita basis, Table 8 indicates that the City of Saskatoon Communications & Public Engagement Department is operating with at least four (4) fewer public engagement staff, compared to the benchmark cities

Table 8	Saskatoon Current	Saskatoon Adjusted to be Comparable to Calgary	Saskatoon Adjusted to be Comparable to Edmonton
Engagement Staff	2	7	6

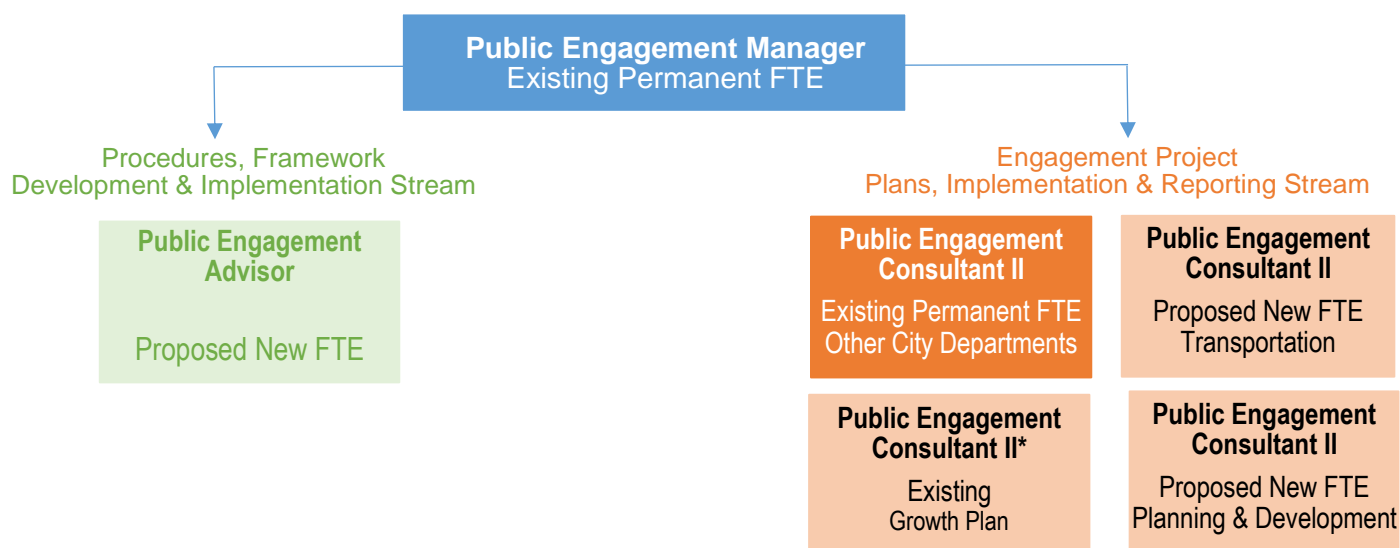
Fourth, an evaluation of the budgetary expenditures of each organization reveals that the City of Saskatoon Public Engagement budget is funded by a lower rate of approximately \$352,000 when adjusted to the budgets of larger Cities and by \$352,000 as shown in Table 9.

Table 9: 2021 Comparison City Expenditures and Budget			
	Saskatoon Current	Saskatoon Adjusted to be Comparable to Calgary	Saskatoon Adjusted to be Comparable to Edmonton
Engagement Expenditures	\$199,900	\$551,700	\$551,700

Finally, like the larger cities used in the comparative analysis, the City of Saskatoon has adopted a Public Engagement Council Policy and Framework. Unlike them, however, the City of Saskatoon is on average under resourced and funded by a factor of four, making it very challenging to achieve the expectations.

## SECTION IV: 2022-2023 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT RESOURCE PLAN

Given the preceding analysis, this section of the report proposes a multi-year integrated resource plan aimed at achieving better satisfaction results, meet the principles identified in the Council Policy on Public Engagement, delivery on the approved framework and mitigate the corporate risk related to public engagement. To that the end Administration is proposing the following structure and resource plan.



\*Temporary was hired permanent in 2020 as an over-compliment requiring it be converted to a permanent FTE in 2022.

### 1. Procedures, Framework Development & Implementation Stream

A primary goal of Public Engagement is to provide a common and consistent approach to engaging the public in the affairs of their city. Although all departments share this responsibility, the Communications and Engagement Department is viewed as the primary source of methodology, support and resourcing for those strategies and processes, especially those that have broad and strategic impact on the relationship of the City and the public. Focusing attention on this stream with a new position would

provide capacity to build the administrative procedures, framework, and the change management process to successfully implement at the project level.

### **Public Engagement Advisor**

*New - Financial Impact - \$107,600*

There is a need for greater coordination and consistency among the projects, and for shared standards of practice to ensure that engagement is authentic, purposeful, and appropriate and achieve the principles outlined in the newly adopted City Council Policy on Public Engagement and the approved Framework. There is a significant opportunity to provide training and resources to these staff members, while continuing to add staff resources to the Public Engagement Section. Council adopted a Public Engagement Policy and Framework but there is no staff capacity to build out the framework and administrative procedures that achieve the principles outlined in the Policy.

The Advisor would have a key role in leading the public engagement strategic planning process, leading corporate wide initiatives, and supporting the development, coordination and integration of plans, policies and procedures related to engagement. The Advisor ensures that the Public Engagement Section is continually accountable and transparent to the public in its projects and activities and provides meaningful engagement in its decision-making process. This position will also procure and lead learning and training, and evaluation of engagement processes and activities.

Furthermore, the Advisor would play an active role in providing advice related to a review of public engagement strategy to enhance the overall delivery and continuous improvement of public engagement particularly with equity deserving groups as identified in a September 28, 2020 Council Resolution.

a) September 28, 2020 Identifying and Addressing Systemic Barriers

“2. That the Administration report back on a strategy to identify and address systemic barriers that prevent residents from accessing, taking part in, and providing feedback within public engagement conducted by the City, with a specific emphasis on underserved and underrepresented populations in the community. This strategy should be informed by best practices from other cities”

Without this position there are risks for the City including but not limited to the following:

- Currently, the Public Engagement Manager is primarily responsible for developing the overall public engagement framework, in addition to supporting high profile and complex public engagement initiatives, typical managerial duties, and providing support to project teams as needed due to a lack of capacity within the Section to meet demands. Since the implementation of the Public Engagement Policy in September 2019, little progress has been made toward developing other elements of the framework due largely to a lack of capacity.
- Without a dedicated resource with the education and professional qualifications assigned to developing the elements of the overall framework, it will continue to be a challenge to progress on its development and corporate adoption at an acceptable rate.
- Some communities in Saskatoon are harder to reach with our communications and engagements efforts than others due to various barriers they face. Those communities that are more readily engaged with, and who may tend to have a different perspective than those from harder-to-reach communities, is more commonly heard and considered. Building engagement strategies to

access harder-to-reach communities to ensure we hear and consider their valuable input requires additional time and effort.

- Supporting all department projects while trying to achieve the City's guiding principles for public engagement is a challenge, if not impossible, at current capacity. As City Council and public expectations for public engagement increase, meeting these expectations without an overall framework to guide public engagement in place will become an even greater challenge.

## **2. Engagement Projects, Plans, Implementation & Reporting Stream**

In comparison, the second stream would focus on application of the framework through the development of specific engagement projects plans, implementation, and reporting to support the 30+ Departments across the organization. Public Engagement Consultants support multidisciplinary project teams, engagement activities and events that are developed in public engagement plans and reports. They deliver activities and events through logistics management, development of materials, hosting and facilitation support, and the analysis, evaluation and reporting of result.

### **Public Engagement Consultant II**

*Convert temporary to permanent – Financial Impact - \$105,200*

In 2020, a permanent position was hired as an over-complement when 50% of the 4 people in Public Engagement team left the City at approximately the same time. The permanent position was necessary to minimize the risk to the City.

### **Public Engagement Consultant II – Transportation Department**

*New – Financial Impact - \$105,200*

Position would be fully assigned to support Transportation engagement projects. As demonstrated on Table 1, a significant portion of engagement projects (approximately 30% based on the 3-year average) require support. These can include a variety of topics such as neighbourhood /community traffic reviews, active transportation network, sidewalks, e-scooters, etc.

### **Public Engagement Consultant II – Planning & Development Department**

*New – Financial Impact - \$105,200*

Position would be fully assigned to support Planning & Development engagement projects. As demonstrated on Table 1 a significant portion of engagement projects (approximately 25% based on the 3-year average) require support on an annual basis. These can include a variety of topics ranging from growth, infill, land-use issues, policy development, local area plans and rezoning. Furthermore, this position would support work related to Council resolutions such as:

#### **a) March 8, 2021 Finance Committee – Tax Abatement Request**

“That the matter be referred to the Administration to provide a report on what best practices are available in other jurisdictions to reduce neighbour frustration as it relates to development.”

#### **b) January 25, 2021 City Council - Land Use Matters - Public Engagement**

“Whereas City Council is regularly presented with land use issues where residents have concerns about the adequacy of our public engagement and information sharing practices; and

Whereas challenges persist in communicating clearly about land matters, re-zonings, etc.;  
That the Administration report back about:

Work currently underway in this area, including any recent/related changes, and potential options for future improvements in public engagement practices on land use matters, including but not limited to the application of plain language principles, increasing the scope of potential public engagement practices, an assessment of best practices from other communities; and

Options for partnering with stakeholders to ensure prospective homeowners and/or residents understand the potential for changes in Saskatoon neighbourhoods.”

Without these positions, there are risks to individual projects, as well as reputational risk for the City.

- With current staff capacity, it will continue to be a challenge to meet City Council and public expectations for public engagement while supporting the increased number of projects requiring complex engagement.
- Improving satisfaction at any significant rate with public engagement will be difficult if not impossible at current capacity.
- Some communities in Saskatoon are harder to reach with our communications and engagements efforts than others due to various barriers they face. Those communities that are more readily engaged with, and who may tend to have a different perspective than those from harder-to-reach communities, is more commonly heard and considered. Building and maintaining relationships with these harder-to-reach communities to ensure we hear and consider their valuable input requires additional time and effort.
- Public engagement that does not adequately achieve the Policy's guiding principles or meet City Council or public expectations can damage the public's trust with public engagement. Public opposition to a project may also be enflamed and the ability to mitigate the corporate risk will persist.

### **3. Summary & Observations**

Public engagement continues to be an important responsibility for the City of Saskatoon. Fundamentally, it enhances transparency by encouraging public participation in the decision-making process of the City.

It is often said that municipal government decisions affect the daily lives of community members more than those of federal or provincial governments. To that end, Council and Administration require input from residents and stakeholders to adequately weigh the facts, data, options, public values, and potential trade-offs. This generates increasing expectations for greater public input on projects, policy, service levels or programs, priorities, and decisions.

To meet these expectations, this document offers a credible, yet affordable path forward to continue to build the necessary building blocks for a more effective and integrated public engagement approach in Saskatoon. More specifically, the proposed plan aims to:

- a) Address the shortfall in capacity of the 4-6 staff seen in larger cities once adjusting for population size with an initial investment of 4 positions in 2022-2023.
- b) Identify and resource two work streams to move forward on building out the framework while providing more adequate levels of public engagement expertise to the various departments who have less training in deeper levels of engagement.
- c) Ultimately puts the City in a position to achieve better satisfaction with public engagement and the principles outlined in the public engagement policy thereby mitigating the corporate risk.