

HOMELESSNESS SUBCOMMITTEE OF COUNCIL: 2025 APPROACH TO HEAR COMMUNITY VOICES

March 12, 2025



GOALS TO HEAR COMMUNITY VOICES

While elected officials evaluate and explore potential role(s) for the City, with respect to the new Plan that is currently under development to address homelessness in Saskatoon, an important component of the Plan will be informed by community members through engagement activities. The Plan is centred on the voices of those most impacted – those with lived experience of homelessness and those organizations who support them. In addition, the engagement activities will provide ample opportunity for the broader community to be heard. It is crucial for the success of the engagement portion of the project to have defined, agreed-upon goals that can be achieved in a manner that upholds the guiding principles of the City's Public Engagement policy (C02-046) – namely that engagement processes have the ability to influence decisions and the activities that contribute to the building of trust and respect, which in turn can lead to partnerships. The engagement goals for this project are:

- Implement a comprehensive engagement process that allows for the diverse voices to be heard by City Council and the Council Subcommittee who are overseeing the City's role with respect to the new Plan to address homelessness in Saskatoon.
- Residents who are concerned about the homelessness situation can contribute their thoughts on the City's efforts to positively address the situation.
- To acknowledge that those with lived experience of homelessness and allied-service providers are subject matter experts and should play a pivotal role in influencing what the City should lead and/or support within the new Plan.
- Homelessness impacts not only those experiencing it, but others in the wider community, such as people who own businesses, provide programming, and for those who live in areas of the City where there is a greater degree of homelessness. This cross-section of the population experiences homelessness in different ways, and as such, they can make a positive contribution by providing insights into homelessness and exploring opportunities for partnerships.

The Orbits of Participation shown on the next page visualizes the need for opportunities for the various sectors to be engaged at varying degrees through different engagement techniques. Some participants might be willing to work collaboratively, but others may prefer to only give input or be informed.



In sum, the overarching goal is to provide many opportunities for the community (e.g., those experiencing homelessness, Saskatoon residents, businesses, and service providers, Indigenous Rights Holders, Elders) to participate in the creation of the Plan while the engagement processes contribute to the building of partnerships, through mutual respect and trust.

PROPOSED APPROACH

To accomplish the outlined goals, it is key to acknowledge who are the subject-matter experts and sequence the opportunities for engagement in a manner that maximizes resources and the sharing of information. Throughout the different engagement processes/tactics it is important that there is transparency regarding the intent of the tactic and opportunities for participation.

Based on the City’s Public Engagement Spectrum, different groups of participants will be engaged in different ways. For example, in recognition of what the subject-matter experts can contribute, their role will be associated with collaboration (co-creating). Whereas residents on a city-wide basis will be informed of the Plan and asked for their thoughts on specific matters. It is important to involve agencies and community-based groups who are addressing homelessness in Saskatoon.

Table 1 on the following page provides further details on who is to be engaged to hear the voices of the community, and a process of how they could be effectively engaged along with some other considerations.

TABLE 1: ENGAGEMENT APPROACH AND KEY PARTICIPANTS

City Council and the Council Subcommittee would hold the primary responsibility of the various proposed engagement approaches but will be supported by City Administration where required.

WHO IS INVOLVED	POTENTIAL TACTICS/TOOLS	POTENTIAL MATERIALS REQUIRED
<p>Residents – City Wide</p> <p><i>Level of Engagement: Ask</i></p> <p><i>Focus of the work:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate information sharing, increase public awareness about homelessness, the Saskatoon Homelessness Action plan (SHAP), and the potential role that the City may play. Measure public support related to the potential roles of the City of Saskatoon. Collect ideas from residents based on successes they've seen in other communities or innovative approaches the City could consider. 	<p>Phase 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online Survey – promoted city-wide <p>Phase 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Special Council Open House/Town Hall Meeting (Council Chambers) with Lobby Display. 4-6 Community Based Open Houses/Town Halls. (The approach would be to have two or three Wards collaborate to offer one community session). Individual Open House/Ward Meetings if strongly preferred by Ward Councillors. 	<p>Survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depending on volume of participants, this may require an external research firm to consolidate feedback and provide a summary report. <p>Presentation Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PowerPoint Display Panels Sign-In Sheets Other Print Materials Feedback form to report on what was heard. <p>Advertising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social media and print assets, news release, PSAs, Engage page <p>Event Planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Room Rental, Food/Beverage Safety & Security Event Guide
<p>Agencies & Service Providers</p> <p><i>Level of Engagement: Involve</i></p> <p><i>Focus of the work:</i> Understand the realities of current service providers. Understand the different types of services provided and assess what the City should lead and/or support within the Plan. Explore ideas and innovative approaches the City could take for each potential role, explore opportunities for partnerships.</p>	<p>Stakeholder Meeting(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend or host virtual stakeholder meeting(s) with agencies and services providers. Potential to leverage the SHAP Advisory Committee represented by over 20 agencies and community service providers. <p>Self-Guided Kits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer Self-Consultation Kits for Service Providers who cannot attend the stakeholder meeting(s). 	<p>Presentation Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PowerPoint Display Panels Sign-In Sheets Other Print Materials Feedback form to report what was heard. <p>Event Planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Room Rental, Food/Beverage <p>Self-Consultation Kits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design Print materials

<p>Indigenous Elders, Indigenous Rights Holders and Indigenous support organizations/housing providers</p> <p><i>Level of Engagement:</i> Collaborate/Co-create</p> <p><i>Focus of the work:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Gather feedback on preferred approach for hosting an Indigenous Gathering with an emphasis on Youth. Understand perceptions of the City's roles/responsibilities and assess what the City should lead and/or support within the Plan. Explore ideas and innovative approaches the City could take for each potential role, explore opportunities for partnerships. 	<p>The format of these discussions could take place in the form of meetings, talking circles and/or interviews.</p>	<p>Presentation Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PowerPoint Display Panels Other Print Materials Feedback form to report what was heard <p>Event Planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Room Rental, Food/Beverage <p>Remuneration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remuneration for Elders and for those with lived experience
<p>Lived and Living Experience with Homelessness</p> <p><i>Level of Engagement:</i> Involve</p> <p><i>Focus of the work:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> In collaboration with support organizations host focused discussions on targeted activities that the City may take a lead or support within the Plan. Host an Indigenous Gathering to engage the Indigenous community with an emphasis on youth representation to understand their experiences and challenges. Discussions on targeted activities that the City may take a lead or support within the plan that may have the biggest impact. 	<p>Focused Discussions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2-3 focus group/discussion tables <p>Indigenous Gathering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Half day or full day event. 	<p>Presentation Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PowerPoint Display Panels Other Print Materials Feedback form to report what was heard <p>Advertising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social media and print assets, news release, PSAs, Engage page <p>Event Planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Room Rental, Food/Beverage <p>Remuneration and Ceremony</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remuneration for Elders and for those with lived experience Ceremonialist
<p>Business & Government Urban Reserves, Businesses, Landlords, Provincial and Federal Governments</p> <p><i>Level of Engagement:</i> Involve/Collaborate</p> <p><i>Focus of work:</i> Share information, seek out partnerships and innovative approaches, and build community champions to support homelessness initiatives.</p>	<p>In-depth discussions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group or individual in-depth discussions with various businesses. In-depth discussions with various levels of government. 	<p>Presentation Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PowerPoint Other Print Materials Feedback form to report what was heard <p>Event Planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Room Rental, Food/Beverage

ESTIMATED COSTS

Engagement Activity	Estimated Cost
Residents	
City-Wide Survey	\$10,000
Special Council Open House/Town Hall Meetings Community Based Open Houses/Town Hall Meetings and/or Individual Open House/Ward Meetings	Funded by Councillor Ward Budgets
Agency and Service Provider	
Stakeholder Meeting(s)	\$1,000
Self-Consultation Kits	\$1,000
Indigenous	
Meetings, Talking Circles and/or Interviews	\$7,500
Lived and Living Experience	
Focus Groups/Discussions	\$7,500
Indigenous Gathering	\$30,000
Business	
In-Depth Discussions	\$5,000
Estimated Subtotal Engagement Activities	\$62,000
Communications and Incidental Costs	\$18,000
Combined Estimated Costs (Excluding Administrative staff time)	\$80,000

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINES

Once City Council approves an approach to the comprehensive engagement process, detailed engagement plans will be prepared for the various engagement activities. The detailed engagement plans will identify estimated timelines and actual costs.