Community Engagement Toolkit

Innisfil

A Guide to Planning for Public Engagement

A "Made in Innisfil" Solution

To improve the way we interact, share ideas, build relationships, and work together in all that we do. Collaboratively, we will achieve one great mission:

Make Innisfil the place to be, together.

Thank you to all of the Staff, Councillors, & Community Stakeholders that contributed to the development of this toolkit, which will continue to evolve based on our future needs.

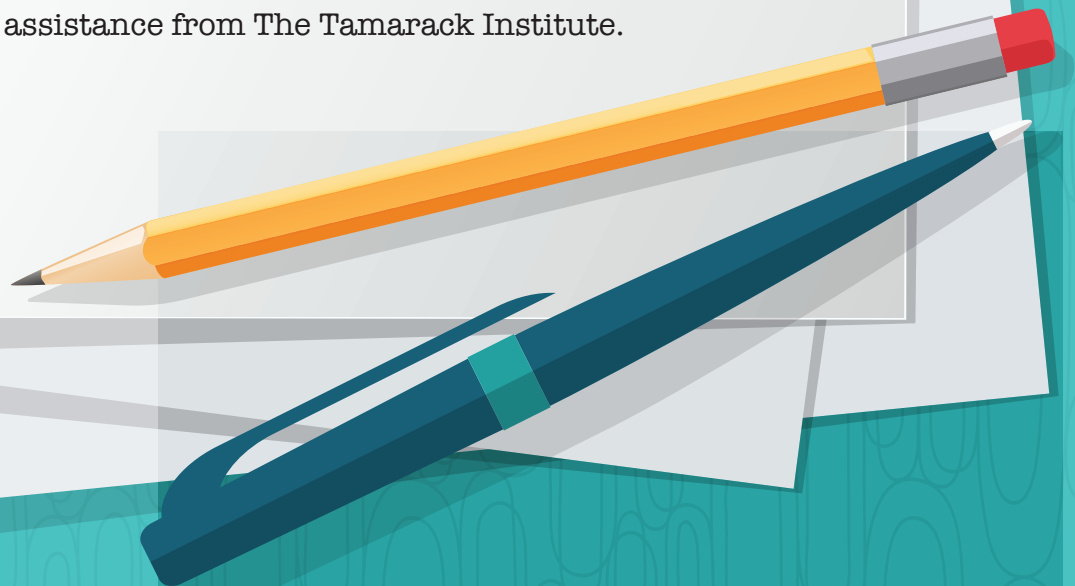Developed by the Town of Innisfil with assistance from The Tamarack Institute.

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I want to live in a community where...

Citizens are able to voice their opinions on how the Town should proceed with decisions that will affect us all. The educated opinions of its residents are valued, their voices heard, and responses are received in a positive and timely manner.

People work together to keep the small town feeling and strive to improve the community.

It's fun and safe for my kids to grow up.

Social spaces are created.

Its members are invited to take care of their community and help it thrive.

There is a clear culture.

Residents' opinions and concerns matter.

Citizens have a say in how their community grows.

- Quotes from Innisfil residents throughout the consultation process.

Chapter 1

Introduction

What is Community Engagement?

The opportunity, capacity, and willingness of the Town and the Community to work collectively to solve shared problems and bring about positive social change.

What does it look like?

Meaningful community participation in setting civic priorities, collectively making decisions, and shaping Innisfil's future, together.

Who is the Community?

The Community referenced throughout this toolkit consists of anyone who would be affected by or have influence over an issue or initiative. From residents and community leaders to schools and business owners, each individual that lives, works, or plays here is a part of the Innisfil community.

In order to generate the most well-informed decision making, the Community and the Town must connect in order to discover what each group thinks and feels about the issue. In placing the inner workings of planning and policy development alongside the real life impact of these outcomes, we can better recognize and appreciate each other's expertise. This shared knowledge will allow us to find common ground, build trust, understand each other's perspectives, and ultimately lead to better decisions.

Ensuring well-informed decisions begins by gathering the expertise of Innisfil residents and Town staff alike. Each group brings unique knowledge and experience to the table, which will in turn bring more ideas to projects and more solutions to problems.

Content Experts are professionals, staff in your organization, service providers, and leaders with formal power who have the knowledge, tools, and resources to address the issue.

Example: An engineer who contributes to master plans and has the knowledge and direct influence over whether streets be paved or speed bumps be implemented on Town roads.

Context Experts are residents who experientially know about the issue and feel the impact it has on their everyday lives. These are individuals who know the community best and experience it day to day.

Example: A mom who takes her children on a walk to Innisfil Beach Park, using the sidewalk and crosswalk to get there.

Participation, Information, Sharing, Listening, Co-Create, Capacity Building, Community Development, Education & Collaboration.

Inspiring Community Engagement in Innisfil

Inspiring **Innisfil** *2020*

Our strategic plan, **Inspiring Innisfil 2020**, outlines various objectives designed to make Innisfil a better place to live, work, and play. As we actively embark on these plans to build a more vibrant future, we recognize that we simply cannot accomplish such ambitions without the help of our community. In order to build an Innisfil that inspires us all, engagement must be embedded **in all we do**.

Although Innisfil is dispersed demographically, we are united as a community. We have always prided ourselves on our cohesive, country charm and we want to retain this strong sense of community and small-town feel that we value and cherish. To do so, we need to stay connected. We need to listen to each other. We need to engage.

Grow

1.2. Develop Our Community

- **Develop new and effective strategies for consultation, communication, and engagement with the community.**

- **Actively promote community events, activities and opportunities, and encourage broad community participation.**

- **Encourage community groups to take the lead in defining, planning, and bringing to life the community they want to live in.**

Connect

2.3. Create Opportunities For Youth

- **Encourage the development of employment and volunteer opportunities for youth.**

- **Support the creation of vibrant places that support and enable planned and spontaneous events, activities, and interaction.**

- **Promote opportunities for the participation of youth and seniors in cultural events and activities.**

Sustain

3.2. Enhance Partnerships

- **Continue to develop meaningful relationships and collaborations with higher levels of government.**

- **Partner with other organizations to support the delivery of programs, services, and programming.**

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Building a Volunteer Base

The Town of Innisfil recognizes the immense value that volunteers bring to our community. The most motivating ideas are those that stem from the altruistic intentions of the community. Therefore, we need to uncover the public's passions and connect them with the most appropriate and meaningful opportunities that are important to them. Only then will the community feel interested in the project, and therefore empowered and committed as a result.

The best engagement is generated by, with, and for the community.

It's important to identify the difference between buy-in and ownership when it comes to encouraging volunteerism. While buy-in requires the community to believe in and support an idea, ownership requires the community to commit and have a real stake in a project.

Buy-In vs. Ownership	
I did most of the work and then approached the community	I involved the community from the beginning
I want the community's stamp of approval	I want the community to drive this forward
I want people to be informed	I want people to be invested
I want to receive validation	I want to mobilize

"Volunteers don't necessarily have the time, they just have the heart."

- Elizabeth Andrew

The Need for Effective Engagement

The purpose of this Community Engagement Strategy is to unite the Town with the Community and develop a collective vision for Innisfil's future. We need to work *with* the community, not just *for* them.

There is a rising expectation for local government and leaders in our community to be transparent, responsible, and accountable with their authority. To meet this expectation and ensure good governance, effective community engagement plays an indispensable and integral role. The goal of engagement however, is not to reach an absolute consensus but rather to ensure that citizens feel heard and involved in the process. We want to build a more engaged community by inviting citizens to influence projects and ensure that decision making is well-informed and inclusive.

It is important to recognize that engagement isn't simply a set of adopted tools or techniques, nor a remedy for the disconnect we may feel, but a culture that is created over time. By establishing this culture of engagement, the Town can begin to address the root causes of disengagement by replacing apathy with agency, disinterest with purpose, and misinformation with responsibility. This strategy is more than a method to success, but a mindset and a commitment to work alongside the community. In adopting an ethos of engagement, it will not only allow us to make better decisions together, but also build trust between residents and Town officials – ultimately creating a more cohesive community.

What you will soon discover is that engaging with others will improve our work, our perspectives, and our lives. It is our aim to strengthen relationships, learn from past mistakes, rebuild trust, and share our successes. In order to make these ideas a reality, we need to build capacity both within our organizations and outside of our walls with the community. To equip and empower citizens is to promote a sense of ownership in projects and in their community as a whole. Not only is community engagement nice, it's necessary.
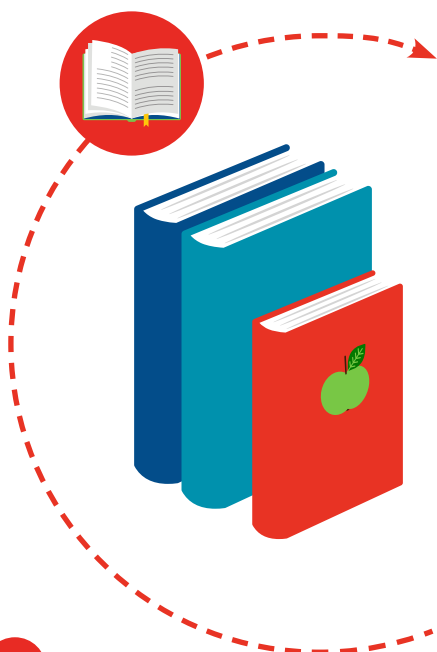
How Will This Toolkit Help Me?

This toolkit is filled with resources that will prepare and support your pursuit to engage with the public. Taking a formal approach to community engagement allows for clarity and consistency from beginning to end, therefore ensuring that no aspect or audience is overlooked. This toolkit is not meant to be prescriptive, nor a series of checkboxes to be marked complete. Instead, this engagement strategy is intended as a guide to help you move towards your goals with the community.

Benefits of Community Engagement

Community Engagement provides the Town and the Community with the opportunity to find common ground on the issues that impact them, while helping to ensure that the decisions made consider the values and interests of those affected by the outcome. We want to have lively conversations with diverse voices, and it is only by searching for and sharing the Community's unique knowledge and ideas that we can create an inclusive, innovative, and cohesive Innisfil.

> "WE RISE BY LIFTING OTHERS"
>
> - Robert G. Ingersoll

New Insight Creates Better Solutions

The more perspectives that are considered, the more informed decisions will become. Hearing from under-represented groups and inviting an array of perspectives will allow leaders to have a balanced understanding of the community's wants and needs.

More Acceptance of Decisions Made

While public involvement brings more information and expertise to the decision, not all audiences can be satisfied. However, ensuring transparency and letting others understand how an outcome was reached will allow the community to accept the decision even if they may not be in agreement.

Developing Community Ownership

Leveraging community skills and expertise is what drives meaningful engagement, while also leading people to having a higher stake in projects. By breaking down the barriers to participation and encouraging people to have their say, we can make our projects approachable and inspire the community to create their own.

Collaboratively Creating Change

Innisfil is undoubtedly amidst change and inviting the community to help shape this change will lead them to be more adoptive of the growth taking place. We should be asking what kind of change they want to see and become more responsive to priorities identified by the community. After all, we have the same goal – to make Innisfil an even better place to be. Let's shape this future together.

Perspectives

Staff: Community engagement enables staff to hear new perspectives, learn new things, and gain more representative input that improves decision-making and the policies that follow.

Community: Opportunities for collaboration with local government will deepen the community's understanding, acceptance, and ownership of the decisions reached.

5 Pillars of Community Engagement

Creating a culture of engagement begins by creating citizens who are engaged, informed, and able to make a constructive contribution to their community. The following five pillars are important touchpoints to engaging in a fun and meaningful way that will make the greatest impact.

1. *Intrigue* – Engagement at its core should be easy and enjoyable, which means finding ways to entice the community to be involved in your initiative.

2. *Involve* – Ensuring that the community is adequately involved will enable them to influence decisions and develop a sense of ownership in Innisfil.

3. *Impact* – Everyone who provides their input wants to be heard, understood, and have an influence over the topics they feel passionate about, which means that their contribution should be acknowledged and respected.

4. *Improve* – Each effort put into an initiative should shape the outcome for the better; be it big or small, every impact makes a difference and will move us one step further.

5. *Inspire* – From inviting the community to take part, to encouraging leadership roles, each interaction is an opportunity to motivate others to stay connected and continue contributing.

Include Everyone & Embrace All Ideas

Encouraging an eclectic mix of ideas and hearing from a widespread audience allows for expanded visions, develops diverse possibilities, and contributes to comprehensive decision making. Working with the community rather than simply for them, will allow residents to take ownership of their future.

Reciprocal Support & Respect

Creating change requires citizens and Town leaders to see past the structures that separate society and look towards a common goal. Considering all sides to a story and adopting another's lens will reduce apathy, encourage equity, and create a clearer picture of the united community we continue to become.

Informed & Communicative

Sharing information early and keeping the community in the know will work to strengthen a deeper understanding and allow others to make meaningful contributions. Always educating the community on relevant legislative, strategic and local context will allow them to make informed decisions.

## Demonstrate Integrity, Trust & Transparency

Remain clear about the level of engagement required, the role of residents, and how their input will be used. All engagement activities must be genuinely purposeful and sincere. Ensuring an accepting mindset and providing equal opportunities to participate will help establish authentic partnerships.

Measure Outcomes & Share Successes

Following up with participants and sharing outcomes will allow them to recognize the value of their contribution and as a result, prolong their efforts to engage. Closing the loop and evaluating engagement methods will not only solidify our projects but also strengthen our commitment to the community.

Committed to Continual Improvement

In order to be our best selves, we need to take risks and recognize that fearlessly pursuing new ways to work is what will lead us towards new opportunities and successful outcomes. Constant evaluation and a ceaseless desire to improve is what drives us to challenge ourselves and continue to grow.
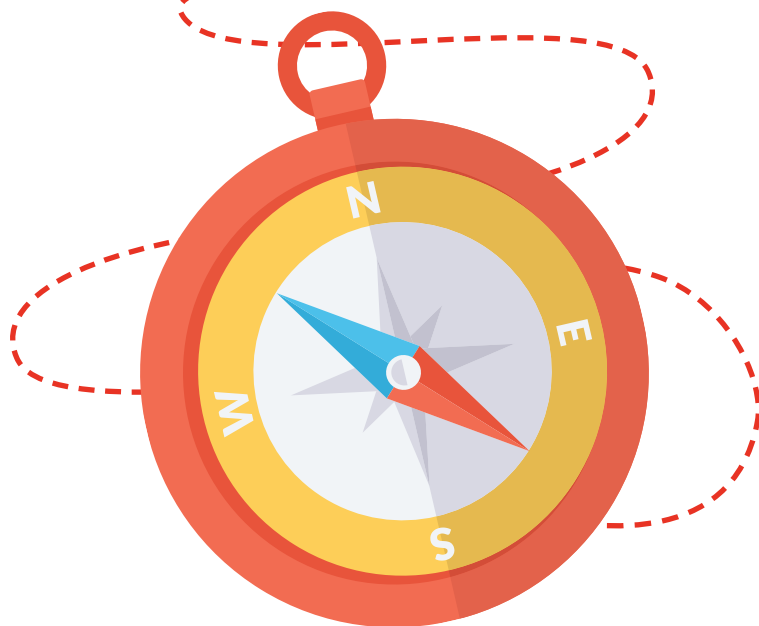
Our Vision & Promise

We envision an Innisfil that enables its citizens to have a meaningful contribution to the decisions that affect the quality of their life.

We believe that the various voices and perspectives of people in our community will allow us to discover diverse opportunities, develop our vision for the future, and shape the decisions that will lead us toward each new endeavour.

From individuals to community groups alike, the Town of Innisfil recognizes that resident involvement is a community asset. Positioning the community as the experts will allow us to gain genuine insight and implement the change they wish to see. The Town is committed to using tools and strategies to build capacity, encourage engagement, and appropriately involve the community when making decisions.

We promise citizens that we will…

Be Approachable
Simplify the manner in which the public can get involved.

Promote Dialogue
Delve deep into discussions without fear of disagreement.

Listen to What You Want
Genuinely listen to the Community's feedback & ideas.

Keep You in the Loop
Report back to citizens about project changes & outcomes.

I love Innisfil because...

It's a safe place to grow.

It's close to the lake.

The farms, green space, and healthy environment.

It's quiet and peaceful.

The small town feel and room to grow.

The fields of sunflowers.

The endless opportunities.

- Quotes from Innisfil residents throughout the consultation process.

Chapter 2
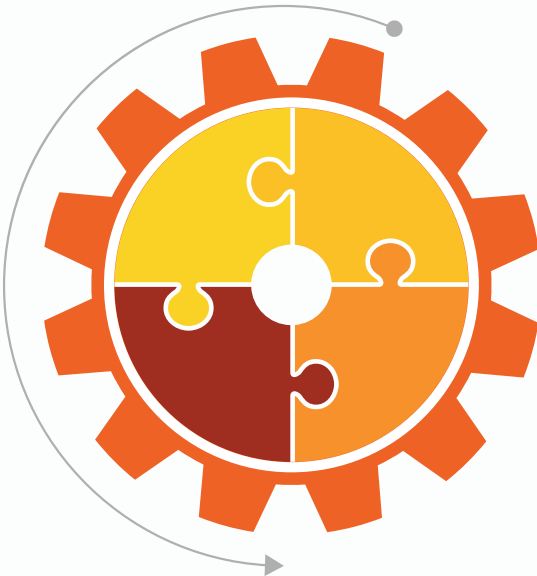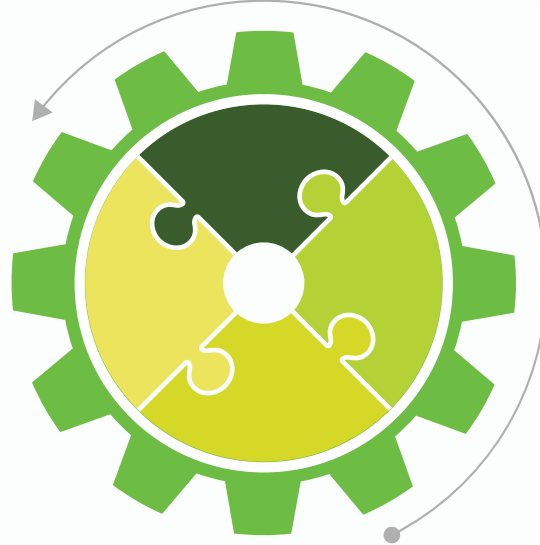## Community Engagement Guide
2.1 Plan Your Public Engagement

1

PLAN

Determining how you will engage the community is important to ensuring meaningful contributions. From defining your goals and key messages to deciding your readiness to engage, having a plan in place will improve the quality of engagement.

2

IMPLEMENT

Genuinely taking community feedback into consideration and closing the loop are key components to acknowledging the contribution of your participants and keeping them engaged.
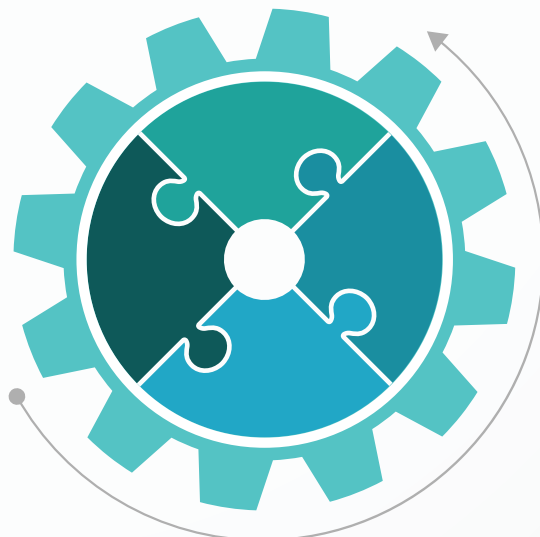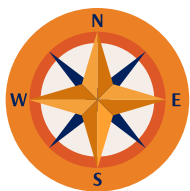
3

EVALUATE

Measuring our successes and recognizing our failures is important for consistent improvement. To progress, we must first identify areas of growth and commit ourselves to bridging these gaps.

Your Engagement Route

The Engagement Route is a tool that will help to clarify objectives and consider desired outcomes. In identifying which direction you would like to take, you will better communicate your purpose to engage with participants.

Community engagement will allow us to work more cohesively, build stronger connections, and develop more meaningful relationships with the Community, in addition to supporting strategic projects or master plans.

Consider your engagement project and assign a percentage to each direction you're looking to take, equalling a total of 100 percent.

Where will your project lead you?

INFORM DECISIONS

BUILD CAPACITY

STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS
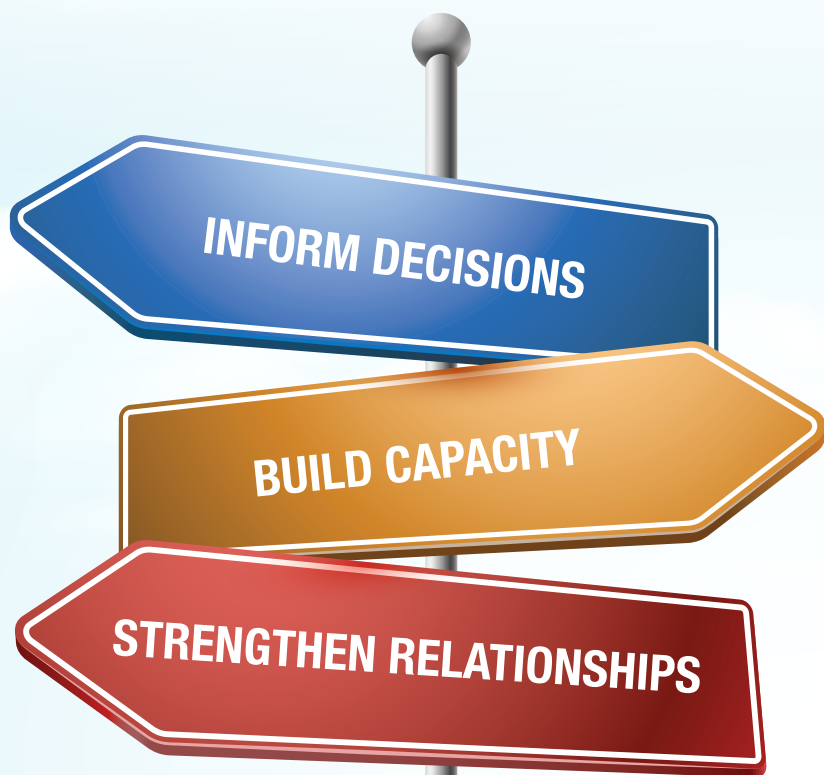
% **Informing Decisions**
To provide the community with opportunities to contribute to decision-making.

Host a health hub workshop to identify the vision of the space.
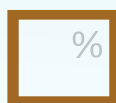
% **Building Capacity**
To educate the community on a specific topic and increase their understanding.

Launch an educational campaign on the opioid crisis.

% **Strengthening Relationships**
To build new partnerships or strengthen relationships with the community.

Work with the community to hold a neighbourhood block party.

Decide Your Goals & Purpose of Engagement

It's important to clearly identify the issue you're hoping to address and decide how involved the community should be in your initiative. Being honest with ourselves is the f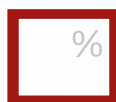irst step to being honest with the community and ensuring a more transparent process. Engaging the community is driven by a genuine interest to hear the voices of residents and have their input influence our work for the betterment of the entire community.

We need to recognize that resident input is a community asset and we will not succeed without the knowledge, experience, relationships, and participation of our community members.
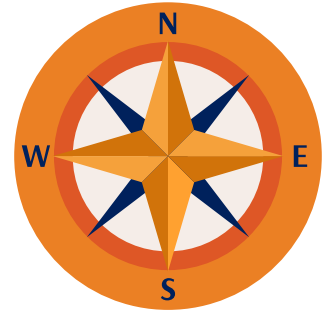
> **A Goal Without a Plan is Just a Wish.**
>
> *- Antoine de Saint-Exupéry*

Before you begin planning your engagement, answer the following questions:

Why is community engagement important to my project and how will it contribute to my results?

What do you hope the community can gain from being involved?

Which aspects of the issue are open to public influence and which are not?

Purpose of Engagement
Checklist ☑

My goal is to...

☐ Explain information to a community

☐ Get insight and opinions from a community

☐ Gather community feedback

☐ Negotiate with a community

☐ Respond to an issue that a community has defined

☐ Work with a community on a project

☐ Develop the skills of community members

☐ Build or strengthen relationships

Other: _____

_____

_____

Summarize and prioritize your top 3 engagement goals

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Innisfil

Key Messages to Communicate

Determine your core message and three supporting key messages.

The key messages are based on your engagement goals and are the main points of information that you want your audience to hear, understand, and remember when they're learning about or engaging in your initiative. These will be communicated to your stakeholders as you develop your communication materials to get the word out.
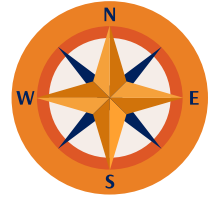
Our Commitment to Communication

From the first point of contact we have with the community, to the final messaging we convey, the manner in which we communicate should be carefully considered. How we reach out to the community and what we say will determine whether we capture our audience, build strong relationships, or receive a variety of responses. It's essential that the community is provided with simple and accurate information in plain language, because people are more likely to participate in what they can understand. More importantly, you must consider the perspective of your potential participants and why they should want to listen to what you have to say. While you may be the content expert on your project, you need to make sure that your project appeals to your audience. Keep the content relative to the context of your listeners and how it will influence their lives.

Make the Message Meaningful:

Clear
Remove jargon, acronyms, and technical language.

Concise
Convey the main point at the beginning of your message.

Compelling
Capture your audience's attention by appealing to their wants and needs.

> **Without access to information there is no transparency; without transparency there is no accountability; and without transparency and accountability there is no democracy.**
>
> *- Dr. Harrison Mwakyembe*

Your core message will act as the "prologue" to your project. It introduces your initiative to your audience, tells the story of your project's purpose, and outlines what you hope to achieve.

Example:
The Town of Innisfil is currently embarking on a Culture Master Plan, dedicated to identifying areas of investment in arts, culture, and heritage throughout the municipality. As part of the project, the Town hopes to recognize strengths, gaps, and opportunities to enrich Innisfil's quality of life and place, as well as attract new and creative talents and cultural resources.

Core Message

_____

_____

_____

Supporting Messages

The supporting messages are strong statements or underlying reasons that tie back to why you want the community to be involved.

Example: We want to get residents excited about this new opportunity for growth, contribute to the vision of arts and culture in our community, and help make Innisfil an even greater place to be.
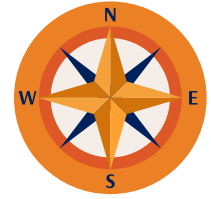
#1 _____

_____

#2 _____

_____

#3 _____

_____

Community Engagement Continuum

The Community Engagement Continuum is a framework to be used by the Town of Innisfil, that will guide each pursuit of public participation and help determine what level of engagement is appropriate.

Inform

Consult

Involve

Collaborate

Empower

This framework outlines five levels of community engagement, whereby your audience becomes more involved in your project the further you go down the spectrum. Every level is valuable and while one is no greater than the other, they do build upon each other the more involved the Community becomes. This means that if you are *involving* the Community, you are also *informing* and *consulting* them as a result. It is key that the level of involvement you select is appropriate to your given situation.

The greatest conflicts arise when leaders commit to a high level of engagement but carry out engagement at the lower end of the spectrum. It is also important to be transparent about how much influence you will allow the Community to have in the outcome of your project. You don't want your audience to put a large amount of time and energy into your initiative, only to come to the conclusion that you did what you deemed fit anyways.

It is also vital that you be clear about your position on the continuum, convey this goal to your audience, and fulfill the commitments of that type of engagement.

Public Participation Goal

	INFORM Here is what you need to know.	CONSULT Here are some options, what do you think?	INVOLVE Here is a problem, what ideas do you have?	COLLABORATE Let's work on this together.	EMPOWER How can the Town help?
WHAT IT MEANS	To assist the public in understanding the problem or solution by providing them with relevant information.	To acquire public input into priorities or decisions, and receive validation on the process.	To work alongside you to generate ideas and have you help us make these ideas a reality.	To partner with the public, organizations, and community groups in various aspects of the planning and decision making process.	To support community-led initiatives or place the final decision in their hands.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed by providing information that is accurate, accessible, timely and transparent.	We will listen to you, acknowledge and respond to your concerns, and provide feedback on how your input influenced the decision.	We will involve you in the planning process and seek your expertise as a citizen to help drive our collective ideas forward.	We recognize that this project will be more successful if we work together and involve you from the early planning stage onwards.	We will trust your expertise, work with you to reach a final decision, and implement what you decide.
EXAMPLE	Announcement of new funding, By-Laws, or other decisions of Council that impact citizens.	Seeking input on our strategic plan for the future, our annual budget, a new policy, or a change in By-Laws.	Generating ideas from the community on how to tackle a problem, like reducing speeding in neighbourhoods.	Working with a neighbourhood to develop a new community center or determine amenities for a local park.	Members of a local service club take the lead on developing a community trail.

Listening ⟷ Leading

The left side aims to mobilize individuals to support or provide feedback to decisions, while the right side organizes people to identify their interests and generate outcomes by placing power in their hands.

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Tools & Techniques

Inform

- Public Notices
- Fact Sheets
- Open Houses
- Social Media
- Videos
- Infographics
- Ads & Posters
- Presentations & Live Streaming
- Media Coverage
- Press Releases
- Library Brochure
- Community Bulletin
- Parks & Rec Guide
- Digital TV Screens
- Web Slider

Consult

- Citizen Advisory Committees
- Workshops and Focus Groups
- Consensus Building
- Participatory Decision Making
- Large Group Meetings
- Document Co-Creation
- Online Communities
- Open Spaces
- Working Groups & Study Circles

Involve

- Surveys
- Public Meetings
- Town Hall Council Meetings
- Public Comment (Online, Voicemail, Comment Boxes)
- Interviews
- Focus Groups
- Polls
- Online Forums
- Social Media Discussions
- Pop-Ups
- Kitchen Table Talks

Collaborate

- Participatory Budgeting
- Community Coalition
- Asset-Based Community Development
- Decision-Making Platform
- Community Indicator Projects
- Ballots
- Citizen Juries
- Delegated Decision

Empower

- Workshops
- Deliberative Polling
- Crowd-Sourcing
- Ideas & Ideation
- Mapping
- Digital Storytelling
- Design Charrette
- Mind-Mapping
- Visioning
- Scenario Testing
- Citizens Panels
- Hackathons
- Participatory Budgeting
- Leadership Development

My Tools & Techniques

Project Scoping Worksheet

This worksheet will help to ensure that you have considered all key elements that are important to engaging with the community, like who you need to hear from and who will make the final decision.

1. Who is the community that should be involved?

Who is involved? Who will be directly or indirectly affected?

2. What commitment is being made to the public?

Are you informing, consulting, involving, collaborating, empowering, or using a variety of engagement methods?

3. What is the information you need from the public in order to move forward?

Be prepared to clearly articulate what you need from the public.

4. What are key times in the project when community engagement will be sought?

Are there certain aspects of your project that you would like to be predominantly shaped by the community?

5. What is the timeline of this project?

Depending on the timeline, you may need to engage with the public multiple times (perhaps at the beginning, middle, and end of the process).

6. What are the key decision points that are on or off the table?

How much influence is the public able to have?

Project Name:

7. Who will make the final decision, if there is one?

Are there different decision-makers that need to be consulted throughout the process? (E.g. Council and Management).

8. Does the final outcome affect just one area of the Town or the whole Town?

What are the constraints?
Are there any regulatory considerations?
Is the issue a source of controversy?

9. What other engagement activities are happening at this point in time or at the proposed time for your engagement activity?

Will any of these other activities pose a conflict to your initiative?

10. What are the potential risks?

What are the most controversial issues?

11. Are there resources available to conduct public engagement? If yes, what are they?

*E.g. Personnel, equipment, material, time, budget, and administrative support.*

12. At what points are reports or notifications required by Management teams, Council, or the public?

How will you advise the public on any decisions? Who is responsible for completing these reports?

13. Consider your evaluation, how will you know you have achieved your public engagement goal?

Refer to p.27 for methods of evaluation.
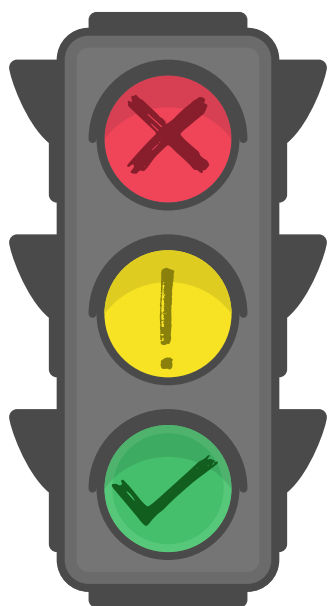
Determine Your Readiness to Engage

READINESS STATEMENT	✓	✗
Decision makers are in support of the Community Engagement Strategy. We know what information they are seeking, and how public input will be used.	◯	◯
We have a clear understanding of what information we need or would like to gather from the public.	◯	◯
We have identified any past issues that might affect how the public will respond to us.	◯	◯
All documents and information are readily available and are easily understood.	◯	◯
We have a plan to report back to the public on the process and how their input was used.	◯	◯
We are aware of other current engagement efforts. We know who has recently engaged with the community and how this may impact the responses we receive.	◯	◯

READY

! SET

✓ GO

If you answered "NO" to any of the above questions, be sure to address that topic before moving forward in your engagement efforts.

Early Stage

Activity

Cookstown Community Park Survey

Audience to Engage

Primary: Cookstown residents
Secondary: All Town residents

Communication Channels

· Social Media
· Email
· Paper Copies
· Community Bulletin
· Dedicated in-house computer for staff to encourage customers to participate.
· Share at Splash Pad Storytime.

Goals & Anticipated Outcomes

· Cookstown community members are informed of impending park updates and given the opportunity to complete the survey.

Who is responsible?

· Engineering department draft questions.
· Community Engagement make edits and provide suggestions.
· Graphic Designer if necessary.

Timeline for Completion

Draft questions: July 20
Distribution: July 31st - August 4th.
Survey will be open:
August 3rd - 31st

Resources Required

Design - $ 500
Printing - $ 1,000

How will you provide feedback?

Share survey results with stakeholders by email, three weeks after survey closes.

Your Engagement Plan

Activity	Audience to Engage	Communication Channels	Goals & Anticipated Outcomes	Who is Responsible?	Timeline for Completion	Resources Required	How Will You Provide Feedback?
EARLY STAGE							
MID STAGE							
END STAGE							

Implementation Phase

Check-In Point

Now that you've received the opinions and ideas of your target audience, it's time to implement necessary changes and let your participants know that they've been heard. This point of feedback is critical to maintaining trust and prolonging participation, because you're returning to the community saying "this is what we heard from you" rather than "this is the choice we made." When the community sees themselves reflected in the process, they will not only feel acknowledged but also more accepting of the final decision.

Middle Step

Consider this...

What feedback did you receive that you had not considered in your planning thus far?

What topics have arisen that will make the greatest contribution to your initiative?

Are we reaching our intended community groups?

Is there anything we need to do differently?

How will you let your participants know that their contribution was purposeful? Summarize the points of influence that people had over your project.

2.3 Evaluate the Engagement

Self-Evaluation Form

Evaluating community engagement is about the engagement first and foremost. It's not about proving that your organization has been successful. In order to serve the community better, we must first recognize the areas that we need to improve upon.

Name of Project:_____

Contact & Department:_____

Level of Engagement (Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, Empower):

_____

Engagement Activities (E.g. Focus Group or Survey): _____

_____

Target Groups (E.g. Youth or Newcomers):_____

Number of Participants: _____

Date of Activity: _____

Which activities worked well and why?

_____

_____

Which activities were the most challenging?

_____

_____

What could be done differently next time?

_____

_____

What great ideas did the community come up with?

_____

_____

What was the biggest concern that your participants expressed?

_____

_____

"Our purpose is to measure our performance, not find proof that we're doing a great job."

Evaluating Engagement Activities

Use this worksheet to evaluate the success of your engagement activities against your engagement goals.
Refer to p.14 for your engagement goals.

	ENGAGEMENT GOAL	EVALUATION QUESTIONS	DATA SOURCES
GOAL 1			
GOAL 2			
GOAL 3			
GOAL 4			
EXAMPLE	Expand Civic Engagement	Did the participatory budgeting process engage people that had not been involved in other municipal or community activities in the last year?	Respondent survey & municipal volunteer database

"Success is not final. Failure is not fatal. It is the courage to continue that counts."

- Winston Churchill

We keep moving forward, opening new doors & doing new things because we're curious & curiosity keeps leading us down new paths.

- Walt Disney

Chapter 3
Engagement Tools

These tools can be utilized in your engagement process, whether you're looking for the community's initial ideas and concerns, holding a meeting to discuss your initiative, or require feedback on the process.

Stakeholder Engagement Pinwheel
At the end of a workshop or consulting activity to get continued commitment from participants - p.31.

Stakeholder Mapping
At the earliest stage of your internal planning to help determine who should be involved in the project - p.32.

Develop an Invitation List
Before you reach out to stakeholders in order to determine how you will convey your message - p.33.

Empathy Mapping
When you're looking to put yourself in the shoes of your audience to gain deeper insight of their perspective - p.34.

Tips for Engaging With Your Community
When holding a workshop, focus group, open house, or when meeting with the public to discuss a topic and get their input - p.35.

Participant Feedback Form
After meeting with or working alongside the community, to have your participants measure what went well, what could be improved, and how the meeting was received from their perspective - p.36.

Stakeholder Engagement Pinwheel
What is this tool used for?

This tool will help facilitate a discussion with participants at a meeting, workshop, or focus group to quickly and easily provide you with their own desired level of involvement. Once participants have had the chance to learn about different projects and opportunities, they will likely feel more comfortable mapping out what they would like to contribute to in the future. Simply have participants place dots on certain arcs to indicate the level of involvement they wish to have in that topic. You can then utilize this feedback to align the skills and interests of individuals with where they will have the greatest impact.

How to identify your audience's ideas, interests, and desired level of involvement.
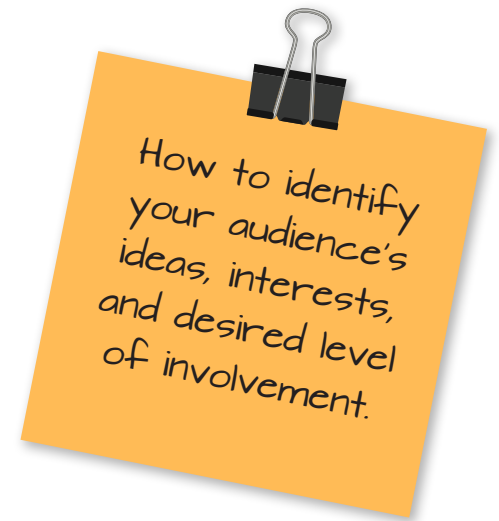
Who should use this tool?

Use this tool if you want to…

· Recognize who is integral to developing the project.

· Identify who has a stake in the project and to what degree.

· Understand what topics on the wheel are of the most interest.

· Match an individual's skillset and interest to opportunities.

Topics:
Example: Placemaking

INTERESTED
SUPPORTIVE
INVOLVED
CORE
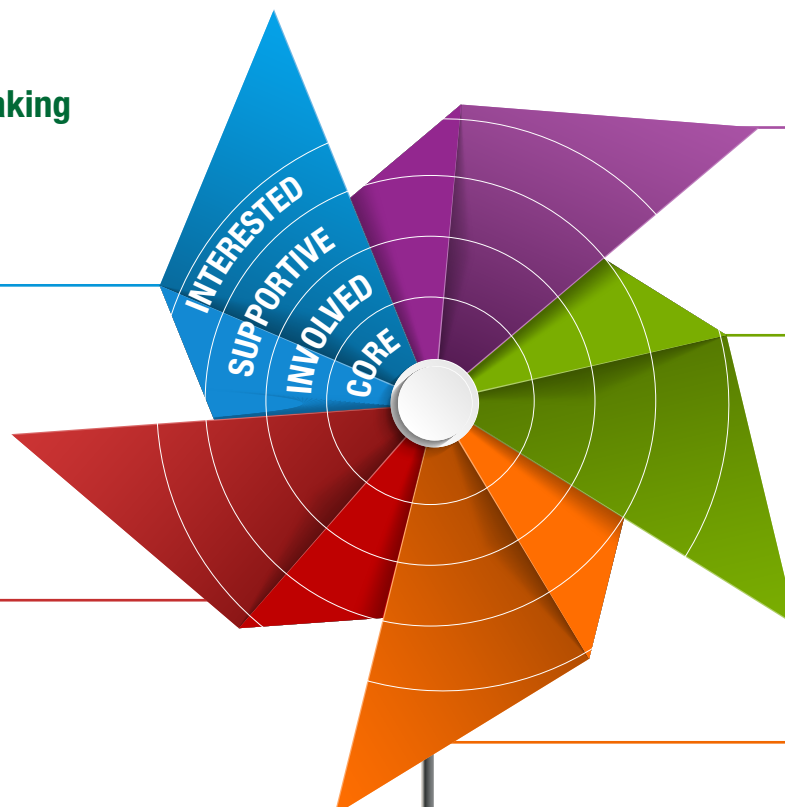
Stakeholder Mapping

Identifying your stakeholders will allow you to determine which individuals should be involved in your project and in what capacity they will contribute. Mapping out potential participants and adopting their perspective is important in determining how their input will be used. Ensuring an eclectic and representative range of stakeholders is vital to developing an inclusive audience that will bring diverse ideas to the table.

AUDIENCES TO CONSIDER

General public, volunteers, staff, civic leaders, art and historical committees, faith leaders, & aboriginal communities

Who will be directly affected by the project goal?

_____

Who will be indirectly affected?

_____

Who are the required stakeholders?

_____

Who is already engaged?

_____

Who wants to be involved?

_____

Who has unique skills to offer to the project?

_____

STAKEHOLDER NAME Who is your audience?	INSPIRE Why do they care?	IMPACT How will they benefit from participating?	INFLUENCE What unique contributions can they make?

You're Invited to

_____
Date of Event

☐ Invite Only
☐ Drop-In

_____
Who's Invited

_____
Time & Location

_____
RSVP Contact & Date

☐ Room Booking   ☐ Other
☐ Set-Up   _____
☐ Food & Beverages   _____
☐ Sign-In Pages   _____

Get the Word Out!
☐ Email
☐ Phone Call
☐ Mail Out
☐ In-Person

Empathy Mapping

Before reaching out to your stakeholders, imagine the persona of an individual involved and how they might receive your project or initiative.

Think

- What will they think about what we want to offer?
- What is really important to them?

See

- How do they see us?
- What do they see us do with them?
- What problems do they encounter?

Hear

- What do they hear from us and from others?
- Do they feel that their voice is heard?

Say

- What do they say to us and how do they act around us?
- What is their attitude?

Feel

- What are their hopes?
- What are their fears?

Put yourself in their shoes!

Tips for Engaging With Your Community

Whether you're looking to hold an open house, workshop or focus group, there are various considerations that will ensure you and your audience have a valuable experience.

Identify & Articulate a Clear Objective
Write and share a concise summary of the purpose for coming together and what you hope to achieve. Emphasize what's in it for your audience, as well as what they will help contribute to and how.

Arrange a Diverse Audience to Participate
The broader the range of people that you engage, the broader the range of experience and perspectives they will bring with them. To target a new group of individuals, reach out to 10 of the most active community members you know of and have them refer one person that they believe would make a valuable contribution.

Set the Tone at the Start of the Session
Everyone should feel comfortable to share their opinions without fear of disagreement. Emphasizing that there is no wrong answer and ensuring that no one dominates the discussion will help to keep the conversation fair.

Supply the Questions, Not the Answers
Do not lead your audience to conclusions or impose your ideas on others, in search of validation. Instead, ask open-ended questions that people may feel differently about. You are a guide, but also a listener, which means enabling others to feel that they can make a valuable contribution to the discussion.

Make Participants Feel Comfortable
When introductions begin, use icebreaker questions that level power dynamics rather than asking for their title, education, or experience. Examples include: "tell us one positive thing in your life right now," and "what's one word that comes to your mind when you think of this project?" or "why is it important to you that you're here today?"

Capture Your Findings
Record your meeting and summarize the discussion to share with your audience after the fact. Reiterate how you will use their input and reaffirm confidentiality to build trust with your participants. Summarize your findings and share this with your audience after the session.
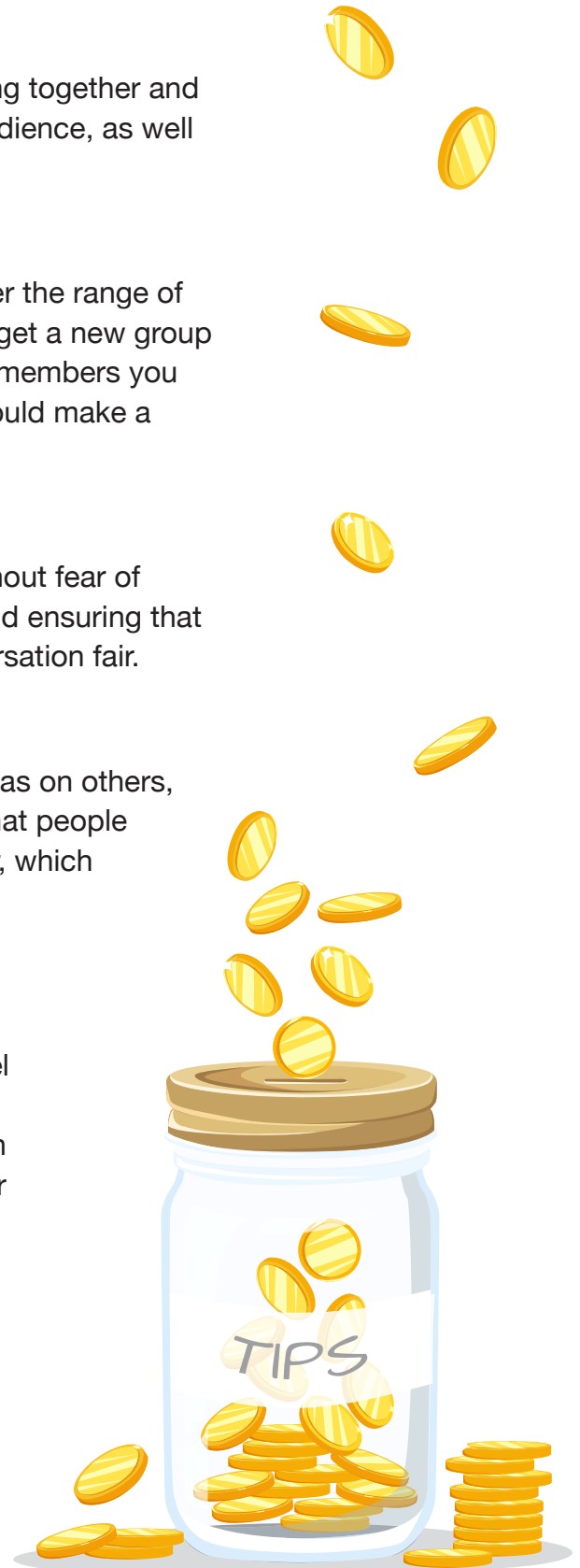
Participant Feedback Form

What is the Purpose of this Tool?
We want to continuously do better, which means gathering your feedback to stimulate change and help us the next time around!

Being evaluated by participants allows us to understand how the process was perceived on the other end, including what went well and what could be improved in the future.

Tell us how you felt about the session.	🙂	🙂	😐	🙁	😠
The objectives of the session were clear.	✓				
I had the information I needed to participate in the discussion.					
The presentation made by the Town staff was clear.					
There were many opportunities for me to provide input.					
I understand how my feedback will be used.					
The next steps of the project are clear.					

Your Final Thoughts: ⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐

Never doubt that
a small group of
thoughtful, committed
citizens can change the
world; indeed, it's the
only thing that ever has.

-Margaret Mead

LET THE ADVENTURE BEGIN!