



Town of Newmarket
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Backflow Prevention Program Information Report

Report Number: 2018-52

Department(s): Public Works Services

Author(s): Manager of Water/Wastewater Services

Date: October 18, 2018

In accordance with the Procedure By-Law, any member of Council may make a request to the Town Clerk that this Report be placed on an upcoming Committee of the Whole agenda for discussion.

Purpose

To inform Council about the proposed By-Law to regulate Cross Connection Control and Backflow Prevention on all Industrial, Commercial, Institutional (ICI) and Multi Residential facilities to protect Newmarket's Drinking Water Distribution System from Contamination through pressure loss or back pressure.

Background

A cross-connection is defined as "any actual or potential connection between a potable water system and any source of possible pollution or contamination". Cross-connections are present in every drinking water supply system. Any cross-connections that are not protected against backflow are potentially a dangerous source of contamination. When backflow occurs due to higher pressures generated on the private side of the water service connection through an unprotected cross-connection, pollutants or contaminants can enter the municipal water system. Due to the resulting health hazards, it is important for the municipality to have an effective program and By-Law in place to control these hazards.

The proposed Backflow Prevention By-Law will regulate the installation, inspection access and testing of backflow prevention devices to prohibit practices and other actions that may place the municipal water distribution system at risk; and to establish a system of recourse and penalties for non-compliance for all new and existing ICI properties as well as multi-residential properties. These requirements are consistent with the Town's Drinking Water Quality Management System (DWQMS) and Quality Management

System (QMS) Policy. It is important to note that the *Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002*, Section 19 requires those with decision-making responsibility for a water system or those with operating authority, to demonstrate a “standard duty of care”. This requirement applies to members of Council and senior municipal officials. In 2011 as part of the Annual Drinking Water Inspection Report, the provincial environment Ministry recommended that “the Town of Newmarket develop a program, policy, or By-Law that requires the installation, inspection, and maintenance of backflow preventers at high hazard facilities (any industrial, commercial, institutional and agricultural facilities)” .

The Town’s Water Distribution System is regulated by the *Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002* and applicable regulations and adheres to the Town’s Quality Management System Policy

The policy states that:

- The Town of Newmarket Water Distribution System is recognized by the Ministry of the Environment Conservation and Parks (MECP) previously known as Ministry of Environment & Climate Change (MOECC) as a Large Municipal Residential Drinking Water System.
- The Town of Newmarket is committed to the consistent delivery of safe drinking water through compliance with applicable legislative and regulatory requirements.
- The Town will strive to achieve this goal through the implementation, maintenance, and continuous improvement of the Quality Management System

The majority of progressive municipalities within Ontario have already established a similar By-Law which includes Markham, Richmond Hill, Vaughan, Guelph, and Grimsby.

Discussion

1. Program Schedule

The proposed Backflow Prevention Program will be broken into four phases.

- Phase 1 - Development of the draft program: July – September 2018
- Phase 2 - Stakeholder and Public Consultation: January 2019
- Phase 3 – Program and By-Law Report to Council: April 2019
- Phase 4 – Implementation and Enforcement: June 2019

2. Program Outline

The Backflow Prevention Program and By-Law will require all connections where backflow may occur to have backflow prevention devices installed and tested annually.

The proposed By-Law is limited to industrial, commercial, institutional, and multi-residential properties only. Several of these properties already meet the requirements of the proposed By-Law and would only be required to perform the survey and submit the information requested.

The facility survey that must be completed by a qualified person will identify any properties that currently meet the proposed By-Law, require retrofitting for the purpose of premise isolation, improper devices, or annual maintenance and testing.

Records of installed backflow preventers have only been compiled with the Building Department since 2016. Consequently the number of properties not meeting the proposed requirements is unclear. Additionally, many properties that are classified under ICI may not require backflow prevention as per the criteria set out in the proposed By-Law.

The survey will identify the manufacturing methods or service the facility provides, level of hazard (severe, moderate, minor) or requirements of backflow protection.

The program and By-Law will require backflow prevention in the form of premise isolation. Premise isolation is achieved through the installation of a backflow prevention device immediately after the water meter. This type of isolation protects the Town's drinking water system from potential backflow contamination.

Part 7 of The Ontario Building Code (OBC) has required the installation of backflow prevention devices since before 2006, however not until 2014 was premise isolation required for Severe and Moderate hazard levels.

The OBC requires that a backflow prevention device be selected and installed in accordance with Canadian Standards Association (CSA) B64 series standards. However, the OBC does not give authority to plumbing inspectors to re-enter a building for the purposes of inspecting their backflow prevention devices to ensure they are being tested annually. It also does not give them the authority to inspect existing buildings to ensure that adequate backflow protection is in place. The Backflow Prevention Bylaw will give the Town this authority.

A backflow prevention By-Law would require the installation and annual maintenance and testing of backflow prevention devices in order to protect the drinking water system from potential contamination.

All applicable facilities would have a cross connection survey completed. The cross connection survey details the hazard level of the facility (minor, moderate, or high/severe) as defined in the CSA B64 series standards and what type of backflow

prevention is required. The Town would distribute surveys to all applicable facilities. The surveys must be completed by a qualified person at the property owner's expense and submitted to the Town within 90 days. Costs will vary subject to facility size and contractor; the average price is expected to be approximately \$500 for large industries. The survey would be good for five years from the anniversary date.

The Town would subsequently distribute a notification of backflow prevention requirements based on the survey information submitted. Backflow prevention devices are to be installed and tested at the property owner's expense. Initial test reports must be submitted to the Town within 6 months. If there is currently no backflow device installed or improper device, installation or upgrades will require a plumbing permit from the Building Department. Confirmation of the work along with the initial test report must be submitted to the Town within 1 year of notification.

Backflow prevention devices must be tested annually thereafter and test reports must be submitted to The Town of Newmarket within 30 days of the test anniversary.

All authorized backflow testers must be certified through the Ontario Water Works Association.

Administration fees for survey processing will be established for the Town's draft 2020 Fees and Charges By-Law.

3. Communications.

This program will affect industrial, commercial, and institutional property owners and operators and multi residential facilities. Collaboration with internal departments is also necessary to ensure smooth implementation.

Both staff and property owners will be engaged in an open and inclusive dialogue about developing a backflow prevention program that will be effective in ensuring safe drinking water and regulatory compliance. Feedback from public outreach will be documented by the project team and utilized to develop recommendations to be presented in a report to Council.

The communications goal for this project is to establish and/or increase stakeholders' awareness, confidence and participation in the backflow prevention program.

To achieve this goal, the following objectives have been established for the engagement program:

- Create early and ongoing opportunities for information exchange and feedback related to a backflow prevention program
- Provide opportunities for exchange of information online and in person at a public information centre.

- Identify questions and concerns as early as possible and respond to them as information becomes available.
- Document all input received and identify how it may affect the recommended course of action.
- Build recommendations that are reflective of stakeholder input and broadly supported.

Conclusion

The Town of Newmarket currently does not have a Backflow Prevention By-Law in place to require and regulate backflow prevention devices, or to control cross connection, all of which support the protection and safety of our drinking water.

The proposed Backflow Prevention By-Law and corresponding Backflow Prevention Program are intended to enforce commitment to the protection of the Town's drinking water thereby reducing risks to public health and increase resident confidence as well as meeting all mandated regulatory requirements.

Business Plan and Strategic Plan Linkages

Focusing on health, safety and the environment to promote activity, innovation and create a truly livable and engaged community means we are: • Ensuring community safety and security • Encouraging environmental protection.

Consultation

Through funding from the Clean Water and Wastewater Fund (CWWF), DFA Infrastructure International Inc. was selected as the consultant to develop the Backflow Prevention Program. The Project Team also includes staff from Public Works Services, Communications, Building, By-Laws and Legal Services.

Best Management Plans were reviewed from several other municipalities, regulatory agencies, and industry leaders.

Future consultation will include staff from Information Technology, Customer Service and Financial Services.

The main goal is to consult all affected and/or interested stakeholders about the new Backflow Prevention Policy, By-Law and supporting procedures to ensure that community input is considered in developing the program.

The consultation will involve the following prior to finalizing the program and By-Law for consideration by Council in April 2019:

- Holding meetings with all internal stakeholders to obtain their input (already underway);

- Hosting a Public Information Centre in January 2019 to obtain feedback;
- Seeking feedback through Newmarket's digital engagement webpage, Hey Newmarket .
- Providing information via the 'get involved' section of the Town Page in the Newmarket Era newspaper every Thursday.
- Utilizing Newmarket's Public Input web page in the 'News and Notices' section of the website
- Issuing Direct Mail pieces to targeted customers.
- Utilizing the Town's social media accounts (Twitter, Facebook and Instagram - @TownofNewmarket).
- Including information in Newmarket Now! – Newmarket's monthly e-newsletter.
- Collaborating with the Economic Development office on how to best target businesses.
- Hosting a Website with a dedicated webpage with more information about the project and By-Law.
- Using Town Central (Intranet) to engage internal audiences and staff members who may be residents of Newmarket.

Human Resource Considerations

Administration of the program will require the addition of 0.5 Full Time Equivalents (FTE) to input data, maintain databases and communicate with the various facility owners. This proposed position will be with Public Works Services and submitted for approval in the draft 2020 Operating Budget.

Budget Impact

The 0.5 FTE will be partially or fully funded by the Administration Fee's collected.

Attachments

Communications Plan

Contact

For more information on this Report please contact Luigi Colangelo at lcolangelo@newmarket.ca or extension 2553.

Approval



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Backflow Prevention Program

Public Engagement and Communications Plan September 2018



Table of Contents

Background	3
Engagement and Communications Goals and Objectives	4
Public Engagement Goal and Objectives	4
Promise to the Community.....	4
Communications Goal and Objective.....	4
Strategy	5
Stakeholder Analysis.....	5
Public Consultation Approach.....	8
Communications Approach.....	9
High Level Key Messages.....	10
Specific Activities and Tactics.....	12
Evaluation.....	13
Attachment 1: IAP2 Spectrum of Participation	
Attachment 2: Community Engagement Policy	

Background

The general scope of this project is to develop a Backflow Prevention Program, By-Law and any Cross-Connection Control related provisions for the Town of Newmarket to support safe and clean water resources. To enable Council to make a decision about a recommended Program, the project team will:

- Review and evaluate the existing backflow prevention programs (including By-Laws, policies, operating procedures, and other relevant materials) at the Town and other similarly sized Ontario municipalities.
- Draft a revised By-Law that will include accounting for current best practices and regulatory compliance, along with standard operating procedures and related forms.
- Design a database and records management system.
- Develop and implement engagement opportunities for Town of Newmarket stakeholders. This will ensure that their input and feedback can be considered in program development.
- Create and implement a meaningful communications plan to support stakeholder understanding of the process and the outcomes, to foster eventual program implementation.
- Develop overall recommendations for Town consideration, approval and implementation.

Effectively engaging with stakeholders will assist in developing recommendations that are supportable by Council and sustainable over time. This Plan has been developed to support sustainable decision making, best practices in public consultation (see attachment 1), as reflected in the Town's Community Engagement Policy (see attachment 2).



Engagement and Communications Goals and Objectives

Public Engagement Goal and Objectives: This program will impact industrial, commercial, and institutional property owners and operators and multi residential facilities. The following goal has been established for the engagement program:

“To consult all affected and/or interested stakeholders about the new Backflow Prevention Policy, By-law and supporting procedures to ensure that community views are considered in developing the program.”

To achieve this goal, the following objectives have been established for the engagement program:

- Create early and ongoing opportunities for information exchange and feedback related to a backflow prevention program
- Provide opportunities for exchange of information online and in person at a public open house.
- Identify questions and concerns as early as possible and respond to them as information becomes available.
- Document all input received and identify how it has affected the recommended course of action.
- Build recommendations that are reflective of stakeholder input and broadly supported.

Collaboration with internal departments is also necessary to ensure acceptability and smooth implementation.

Promise to the Community: Participants will be engaged in an open and inclusive dialogue about developing a backflow prevention program that will be effective in ensuring safe drinking water and regulatory compliance. Feedback will be documented accurately, shared with the project team and with all stakeholders, and utilized to develop the ideas throughout the project and the recommendations at its conclusion.

Communications Goal and Objectives

The communications goal of this project is to establish and/or increase stakeholders' awareness of and confidence and participation in the Town of Newmarket's approach to backflow prevention.

The following objectives have been established to support this goal:

- Identify and gain an understanding of target audiences i.e. the industrial, commercial, institutional and multi-residential organizations.
- Develop a set of key messages including the change to the current situation and the rationale for the change, why is this change happening and the risk of not changing.
- Identify effective communications tactics to support the delivery of key messages, and design creative materials to deliver those messages.
- Raise awareness and educate residents and stakeholders on the importance of the new Backflow Prevention policy and how it affects them

Strategy

These objectives will be met by providing timely, accurate, meaningful and accessible information to all stakeholders.

Stakeholder Analysis

The following table highlights the internal and external stakeholders that could potentially be involved in this project, including a note on their level of engagement and any areas of possible interest, concern, or opportunities to be explored. It is anticipated that all parties will be involved during the design and implementation phases of the project:



	Stakeholder	Level of Engagement	Possible Interest/Concern/Opportunity
Internal	By-Law	Collaborate	Impacts of new By-Law and enforcement.
	Legal	Collaborate	Town's authority related to new By-Law.
	Economic Development	Collaborate	Impacts to property owners and future development.
	Finance and Accounting	Collaborate	Program budgeting, tracking, accounting, and changes to business rules.
	Engineering	Collaborate	Changes to operations and capital planning.
	Utilities and Public Works	Collaborate	Changes to operations, including data management.
	Executive Team	Consult	Determining program needs, public concerns, financial implications and implementation timeframe.
	Town Council	Consult	Confirming program needs, implementation, public perception and acceptability/affordability issues.
External	IC&I owners and operators	Consult	Need for additional information related to the existing system, the impacts of backflow / cross contamination, why they must be addressed, proposed changes embodied in new policies and revised By-Law, implementation plans and timeframe, benefits and impacts/costs, coordination with other policies, roles and responsibilities, cost reduction opportunities, if any, especially for not-for-profit and tax-exempt agencies.
	Multi-Family Residential Buildings (property owners / property managers)	Consult	As above.
	Tenants (Non-Residential)	Consult	As above. Increased rental or

	Stakeholder	Level of Engagement	Possible Interest/Concern/Opportunity
	properties)		leasing charges.
	Chamber of Commerce	Consult	Impact on their members (change to business practices, costs, taxes, fees, etc.)
	Property Developers/Realtors	Consult	Need for additional information about new program.
	Public	Inform	Build general awareness about the system, the impact of backflow / cross contamination, the new backflow prevention program, who it applies to and the benefits of the program.
	Media	Inform	Build general awareness about the system, the impact of backflow / cross contamination, the new backflow prevention program, who it applies to and the benefits of the program.

Public Consultation Approach

The consultation approach will support the goals and objectives outlined earlier in this plan. It is anticipated that the following activities will be undertaken.

1. One public meeting to provide a forum for information and ideas exchange. This will take place after draft project materials have been developed. For this meeting, it may be advantageous to seek out a venue that our target audience (i.e. IC&I and multi-residential owners) typically frequents and find a time when they are most likely to attend. This may include hosting a breakfast or afternoon coffee meeting at the Municipal Offices. Given the subject matter, it has been our experience that traditional evening meetings may not be well attended. During this meeting, general project information will be available on 3-5 poster boards and a project post card. These materials will rely heavily on information graphics to show the process and timelines, how backflow works and its impacts, and key (potential) pieces of a new By-Law and policy. Additional printed resources may also be provided, such as highlights or a draft By-Law. The project team will also make a brief presentation and field questions.
2. It is anticipated that participants will benefit from information about the Town's drinking water system and how backflow of water from a private water system may contaminate the safe, potable water supply. Protection of the Town's drinking water against any form of contamination is the primary driver of this project. The Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002, Section 19 requires that persons with decision-making responsibility for water systems act with a standard duty of care. Therefore, in keeping with this requirement, the Town's Council and Senior Staff are responsible for ensuring that any risk of contamination is mitigated. The Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MOECP) has also recommended to the Town that a backflow prevention program be established. Participants will receive information about the regulatory framework that necessitates the By-Law, specific details about backflow prevention options and the associated costs, obligations of private property owners under the new By-Law, benefits and any penalties associated with non-compliance. Graphics will be created to convey this information. Then, there will be a facilitated casual conversation around a set of guided questions.

Presentation materials will be provided for use on the Town's website. A dedicated project webpage will be developed (by the Town). Content will be provided by the consulting team. All .pdf files will be provided in accessible format.

3. A second meeting may be convened, as needed. As an alternative, our team could also host a "pop up" engagement at a local business event where we can speak to local industry and gain their ideas and sentiments. We will have project post cards to hand out, so that people can visit



the project website at a time that is convenient for them. A second alternative to a (second) public meeting or an addition to the engagement program is a focus group. This technique allows the team to curate a group of participants to represent the target audience and to engage in conversation about specific elements of the proposed Program, and to gain input on potential issues identified during earlier consultations, as well as possibly suitable resolutions. Focus groups are also effective ways to test any Program-related communications tools that are planned for Program roll out.

Communications Approach

Project-related communications tactics will be designed in support of the goals and objectives outlined earlier in this plan. A set of creative and engaging communications assets will be created which can be utilized in both electronic and print formats. The Town has a robust set of methods for communicating with property owners, including:

- seeking feedback through Newmarket's [Public Input Opportunity Forum](#).
 - providing information via the 'get involved' section of the Town Page in the Newmarket Era newspaper every Thursday.
 - Newmarket's [Public Input Opportunity page](#) in the 'News and Notices' section of the website
 - Direct Mail pieces.
 - The Town's [social media accounts](#) (Twitter, Facebook and Instagram - @TownofNewmarket).
 - [Newmarket Now!](#) – Newmarket's monthly e-newsletter.
 - Presence at [community events](#) throughout the year.
 - Collaboration with the Economic Development office on how to best target businesses.
 - Website with a dedicated webpage with more information about the project and By-Law.
 - Media Relations led by the Town/
 - Town Central (Intranet) to engage internal audiences and staff members who may be residents of Newmarket.
4. Existing networks (such as through business associations) will be utilized, as possible, to spread project information as broadly as possible. For example, associates could be asked to distribute meeting invitations and project information so that their members may attend the public meeting or provide ideas electronically at a time that is most convenient.

The following items will be developed and utilized across the mediums noted above, as appropriate.

1. A project visual identity and tag line that will help to build awareness in the community.
2. A project launch postcard, including an informative infographic explaining the “nuts and bolts” of program, and how to gain additional information.

3. Materials, mirroring those produced for the public meeting(s), will be provided to the Town so that a project can be created on the “Hey Newmarket” site (<https://www.heynewmarket.ca/>)
4. At least three, short information “sound bites” will be developed for social media, direct mail (if available to the target audience), the Newmarket Era, Newmarket Today and Newmarket Now! These will be placed at the beginning, mid-point and conclusion of this process. Information will include the project website and team contact information, as well as details of engagement opportunities and outcomes.

Other communications options include:

- o A pop-up display could be designed for use at Town Hall or other community events that engage the target audience.
- o A short, animated information video could be produced to explain the purpose of program, the benefits, and the process for participation. Several municipalities and organizations have videos about backflow prevention which will be reviewed as a starting point. It is our opinion that these can be improved upon through some animation and concise messaging. An example of a recent project-related video developed by our team can be viewed at: www.peterborough.ca/Living/City_Services/Sanitary_and_Stormwater_Systems/Rethink_the_Rain

This video can be embedded within the Town’s social media feeds, on the website and utilized during all project related presentations.

It should be noted that evaluation will be carried out at each step of this process. In the spirit of continuous improvement, any suggestions to improve engagement and communications will be incorporated as the study moves forward.

High Level Key Messages

Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A project has been initiated to design an up-to-date backflow prevention program for the Town of Newmarket. • If private plumbing systems are (cross) connected to the public drinking water system, backflow could carry contaminated water into the public drinking water system. This may occur during period of reduced pressure in the water distribution system e.g. when a watermain break occurs causing water (and potentially contaminants) from private systems to flow back into the municipal water distribution system. • The backflow prevention / cross connection program will help the Town to manage risk, maintain system security and protect drinking water quality. Backflow prevention devices stop water from flowing back into the municipal system, reducing the risk of any contamination. • Program development will support regulatory compliance with the Building Code,
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	<p>Building Code Act, 1992, Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002, and Canadian Standards Association – B64.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The program will involve a new By-Law, policy and standard operating procedures. Implementation will require certain actions be carried out by Industrial, Commercial and Institutional property owners, such as undertaking surveys of the systems to assess risk of contamination, installing and testing backflow prevention devices, and filing information (e.g. test reports) with the Town • The target audiences are IC&I and multi-residential property owners. • Input from departments from the Town will be sought as part of the project. Input will also be sought from the target audiences.
<p>External</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A project has been initiated to design an up-to-date backflow prevention program for the Town of Newmarket. • Description of how the system works, backflow/cross contamination and why it must be addressed (public health and safe drinking water). • If private plumbing systems are (cross) connected to the public drinking water system, backflow could carry contaminated water into the public drinking water system. • The program will help the Town to manage risk, maintain system security and regulatory compliance and protect drinking water quality. • The program will involve a new By-Law, policy and standard operating procedures. This will require certain actions be carried out by Industrial, Commercial and Institutional property owners, undertaking surveys of the systems to assess risk of contamination, installing and testing backflow prevention devices, filing information (e.g. test reports) with the Town • . Residential owners won't be impacted by this new By-Law because homeowner use of potential contaminants (e.g. chemicals) is limited • These new tools will result in heightened protection of public health by ensuring safe, clean drinking water. • The program will affect IC&I and multi-residential property owners (only). • Community engagement is a very important part of this project, we want to hear from you. Here's how. • Feedback received through community engagement will be communicated back to stakeholders to ensure there is an understanding on how their input is being used.

Specific Activities and Tactics

These activities are listed in the order that it is anticipated they will take place. Associated communications tactics follow. All activities have been designed to meet the engagement and communications goals and objectives described in this plan.

Consultation Activity or Communications Tactic (what?)	Audience (who?)	Timing/Project Phase (when?)	Data Tracking/Deliverable (how?)	Lead Responsibility
<p>Project website (Hey Newmarket)</p> <p>(video option)</p> <p>Corporate Website to link people to the project website (a second avenue to get to the Hey Newmarket)</p>	<p>All interested and/or affected members of the community.</p>	<p>In September / October 2018</p>	<p>Project information will be posted on the site as it becomes available.</p>	<p>Hosting/posting – Town.</p> <p>Materials development – collaborative between Town and Consulting team.</p>
<p>Engagement Meeting(s)</p>	<p>All interested and/or affected members of the (IC&I, multi res) community.</p>	<p>Once technical team has carried out background work and developed preliminary ideas about the Program. January 2018</p> <p>Meeting #2 will take place, if needed.</p>	<p>Input received will be documented through a set of notes. Any issues will be highlighted for the project team for discussion and resolution, where possible, and conveyed to participants via the project web page. Results of the engagement including decisions made and how community engagement informed the decisions will be communicated in the reports.</p> <p>Contact information will be collected for anyone wishing to be kept up to date on the project. (Need a registration card compliant with MFIPPA)</p>	<p>Consulting team.</p>
<p>Town page in the Newmarket Now and Newmarket Era advertising (The Town may determine that a separate ad is</p>	<p>All interested and/or affected members of the community.</p>	<p>At least two weeks prior to the engagement meeting(s). January 2018</p>	<p>Ads will be placed in the local paper, via the e-newsletter and/or in libraries, etc.</p>	<p>Content – collaboration between Town and Consulting team.</p> <p>Posting – Town.</p>

Consultation Activity or Communications Tactic (what?)	Audience (who?)	Timing/Project Phase (when?)	Data Tracking/Deliverable (how?)	Lead Responsibility
also warranted.)				
Project Post Card	All interested and/or affected members of the community.	Prior to the first engagement meeting for broad distribution.	A post card (or alternate format) for general distribution at events and as a personal mailing will be sent to anyone who attends relevant public events, and coffee houses, thanking them, providing a summary of what we heard, next steps, welcoming additional input and advising them that information is available on the project website.	Content – collaboration between Town and Consulting team. Post/Circulation – Town.
Sound bites (Social Media campaign)	Media, social media followers, Councillors	At outset of project, prior to engagement meeting, at project conclusion.		Collaboration
Council Presentation	Councillors	Prior to approval of the new By-Law and Program.		Collaboration.

Evaluation

To effectively evaluate the success of the engagement and communications plan, it is important to have baseline measures.

The following key performance measures will be used to evaluate the success of the activities associated with this plan:

- Number of people attending each meeting, with over 80% of participants, by survey, report that the engagement activities meet or exceed their expectations.
- Stakeholder response (positive/negative/neutral) to final recommendations.
- Frequency and type (e.g. positive or negative) of media coverage, specifically about this project.

Submitted by: TE, September 2018



IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation



	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Public participation goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the public	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.



CORPORATE POLICY

Topic: Community Engagement Policy

Policy No.: COMM.2-02

Section: Corporate Communications

Applies to: All Employees and Stakeholders

Council Adoption Date: October 2, 2017

Effective Date: October 2, 2017

Revision No:

Date:

Policy Statement & Strategic Plan Linkages

This policy supports Newmarket's Strategic Plan directions of being 'Well-Equipped & Managed', 'Well-Planned & Connected' and 'Well-Respected', as well as Council's Strategic Priorities of Community Engagement – to align the Town with communication best practices by engaging our changing resident demographics.

Purpose

The Town of Newmarket is committed to providing an inclusive community engagement process to better inform stakeholders about decisions that reflect their interests and concerns through a collaborative approach that focuses on two-way communications.

This policy will act as a guide internally to inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower stakeholders. The policy Aligns with Newmarket's corporate mission of making Newmarket *even* better, with Council's Strategic Priorities and with the principles of the International Association for Public Participation.

The Town is also committed to notifying Newmarket stakeholders on community engagement opportunities. Comprehensive communication plan/strategies will be developed with the leading department and include, goals, objectives, desired outcomes and list of tactics for community engagement. These tools and tactics include, but are not limited to:

- Newmarket Website

- Media Releases/Advisories
- Newmarket Town Page in the local newspaper
- Social Media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram)
- Email Newsletters
- Household Mail-outs
- Council Meetings
- Special Community Events (Farmers' Market etc.)
- Citizen juries, roundtables, focus groups, workshops, open houses
- Surveys and more.

Please note that communication tactics for community engagement will be determined by the organizing department to ensure best practices are aligned with stakeholders.

Definitions

Stakeholders means residents, businesses, municipal neighbours, elected officials, staff, upper tier levels of government, boards and committees, municipal authorities, agencies, associations, and anyone with an interest in the Town's municipal affairs.

Community Engagement means various methods of engaging the public in discussion about civic matters that impact Newmarket stakeholders. The community engagement process is transparent, responsive, inclusive and empowering. It is based on realistic expectations, mutual respect and trust.

Procedures

Organizing departments/commissions will work with their Communications Department liaison to develop a strategic community engagement plan and/or a plan to inform stakeholders about public engagement opportunities through various communication tools and tactics. The communication tools and tactics used may be subject to other statutory, regulatory or municipal standard requirements and will be identified on a case-by-case basis. The Town of Newmarket will:

- Identify the purpose of informing stakeholders
- Determine the best targeted communication tactics for involving stakeholders
- Inform stakeholders of the opportunities for involvement in a timely manner
- Obtain feedback from participating stakeholders
- Report and provide feedback to the appropriate stakeholders
- Provide Council with the results of stakeholder input and feedback for decision making purposes, if requested and as appropriate

- Ensure processes are open, clear, transparent, accountable and operate in a positive atmosphere of good faith and collaboration
- Provide information in an accessible format, using simple, plain language and graphics
- Ensure translation or interpretation services are provided when required
- Ensure facility locations of community engagement events are accessible to all
- Adhere to public notice guidelines set out by legislation, such as the Planning Act.

Following the International Association for Public Participation's values, the Town will also:

- **Inform:** Provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.
- **Consult:** Obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions
- **Involve:** Work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.
- **Collaborate:** Partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.
- **Empower:** Provide the public the opportunity to have an impact in the decision making process.

Cross References

[Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act](#)

[Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation](#)

[Planning Act](#)

[Municipal Act](#)

[Town of Newmarket Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation Policy \(CAO.2.02\)](#)

[Town of Newmarket Notice Policy \(Corp. 1-02\)](#)

[Procedure By-Law 2007-46](#)

[International Association for Public Participation](#)

[Newmarket's Public Information Centre Checklist](#)

[Notice Policy \(to be completed the end of 2017\)](#)