

OCTOBER 5, 2022



ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

TOWNSHIP OF HURON-KINLOSS

Township of Huron-Kinloss Engagement Framework

Introduction

As illustrated through the community member statements interspersed in this Framework, Huron-Kinloss residents care about their community. Many want to take part in making it a great place to live.

This Framework is a guide to inform the Township of Huron-Kinloss' internal and public engagement efforts over the next several years and to demonstrate its commitment to engaging the community in a meaningful and effective way.

I feel it is important to contribute ideas/suggestions to the township. Important to make Huron Kinloss a better place to live. Important for council and elected officials to understand what is wanted/needed in the community.

Effective engagement makes our community better. It builds trust, confidence and transparency in local government decision making. It ensures staff have a voice in and are informed on operational priorities and decisions. It provides Council with an opportunity to strengthen its relationship with the people of Huron-Kinloss, and it is a sound investment in ensuring decisions are informed by community needs and aspirations.

Overall, this Framework aims at developing a consistent approach to engagement, providing guidance on when and how to undertake engagement activities and what steps and processes should be considered. It outlines the Township's goals and guiding principles for community engagement, providing staff with a template to ensure consistent and active participation in the planning, implementation and evaluation of our programs and services.

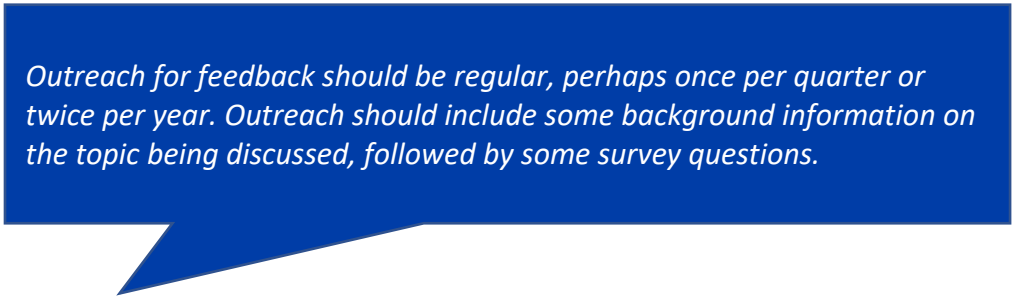
It is based on current municipal and leading industry best practices and trends. It is also informed by input from Township staff and Council, external stakeholders and the Huron-Kinloss community.

What we heard

In the development of this strategy, the Township heard from staff, Council and members of the community. There is a strong desire to take a more proactive approach, clarify roles and processes, develop skills and create stronger connections across the

organization and the entire community on a more regular basis. There is an opportunity for the Township to be more visible in every local community and ensure sufficient notice and information is provided to help attract the highest levels of engagement.

It is also critical to close the loop when feedback is sought: to share a summary of what was heard with a description of how the input is being used or has made an impact, or if not being used, an explanation as to why and next steps. This is an important step in the process to making engagement meaningful to those who take the time to participate.



Outreach for feedback should be regular, perhaps once per quarter or twice per year. Outreach should include some background information on the topic being discussed, followed by some survey questions.

Township Beliefs and Guiding Principles for Engagement

Beliefs

The Township believes and understands that effective engagement with staff and the community can:

- ✓ Help create a better future for the organization and the community
- ✓ Increase community trust/support in local government and value for taxpayer dollars
- ✓ Inform policy, programs and services
- ✓ Build a more informed community and create a shared purpose
- ✓ Reduce the level of misinformation and misconception
- ✓ Empower participants and give greater ownership
- ✓ Provide an opportunity for diverse voices
- ✓ Promote collaboration and cooperation
- ✓ Identifying and addressing potential and existing concerns
- ✓ Improve staff morale

Guiding Principles

The Township commits to the following guiding principles when engaging staff and the community:

- **Engage and empower staff:** The Township will ensure staff across the organization have the information, tools, skills and guidance they need to reach out and listen to each other and the community.
 - **Expectation of respect:** The Township will emphasize and model a welcoming, respectful environment for all engagement.
 - **Transparency and trust:** The decision-making processes will be open and clear to the public and the Township will actively encourage and facilitate citizen and stakeholder participation in them.
 - **Open access to information:** The Township will provide effective widespread or targeted notification to the community and stakeholders about proposed developments, policies, initiatives and municipal projects, offering a variety of ways to provide input.
 - **Inclusion:** Every citizen has the right to participate in community engagement regarding issues of concern to them.
 - **Feedback loop:** The Township will inform the community and stakeholders about how their input was considered and adopted or why it was not adopted.
- Continuous improvement:** The Township is committed to ongoing learning by measuring the success of engagement efforts on an ongoing basis, to learn what worked and where there are opportunities for improvement to enhance future initiatives.

What engagement means

No one knows better what is needed for our community than those of us who live here, work here, and play here. The purpose of engagement is to gather perspectives for decision makers, not to make decisions. It means that the Township of Huron-Kinloss talks to our communities before making decisions. It means that if you have concerns or ideas about improving the quality of life and services in Huron-Kinloss, we want to talk to you about them.

What engagement does not mean

What engagement does not mean is that everyone will always agree on decisions that are made within the Township. The Township of Huron-Kinloss is made up of a diverse population with very different interests and approaches to what the Township is, and how to improve it. What we will do, is listen to all of those different opinions and incorporate them into the decision-making process, in a fair and balanced way.

Who the Township engages

The Township wants to engage all of its staff and diverse stakeholders and residents. This includes individuals, groups and organizations who have an interest in or who are impacted by local decisions and actions.

The Township covers a 440 square-kilometer area, made up of the villages of Lucknow, Point Clark and Ripley, with a population of more than 7,000 people. A significant number of people living in Huron-Kinloss are age 50 or older.

According to the 2021 Census data, Huron-Kinloss has a population of 7,723 people with a median age of 46. Our largest demographic is between the age of 60-64. 56% of our population is considered "working age" between the ages of 15-64. 55% of the population is married and the average household income is above \$79,500/year (after tax).

When to engage

The Township of Huron-Kinloss is committed to proactive engagement in the following situations:

- To help identify community needs and aspirations, and ideas to improve the quality of life in the Township
- To inform a decision, change or action through staff and/or community input
- When several members of the community have raised or expressed an interest
- When there is a high risk of a matter impacting staff and the community
- When required by resolution, law, policy or agreement

In the engagement planning process, consideration is given to the complexity of the decision and the optimal time needed for people to respond. While the *Municipal Act*

sets out minimum requirements for some specific consultations, each engagement process is considered on an individual basis and merit.

To ensure a successful consultation, careful consideration is given to the appropriate tools and timing for the project or decision. Community engagement does not replace the final power of decision-makers, but it is crucial in the way it enhances Council's capacity to make well-informed decisions on behalf of the community.

How to engage

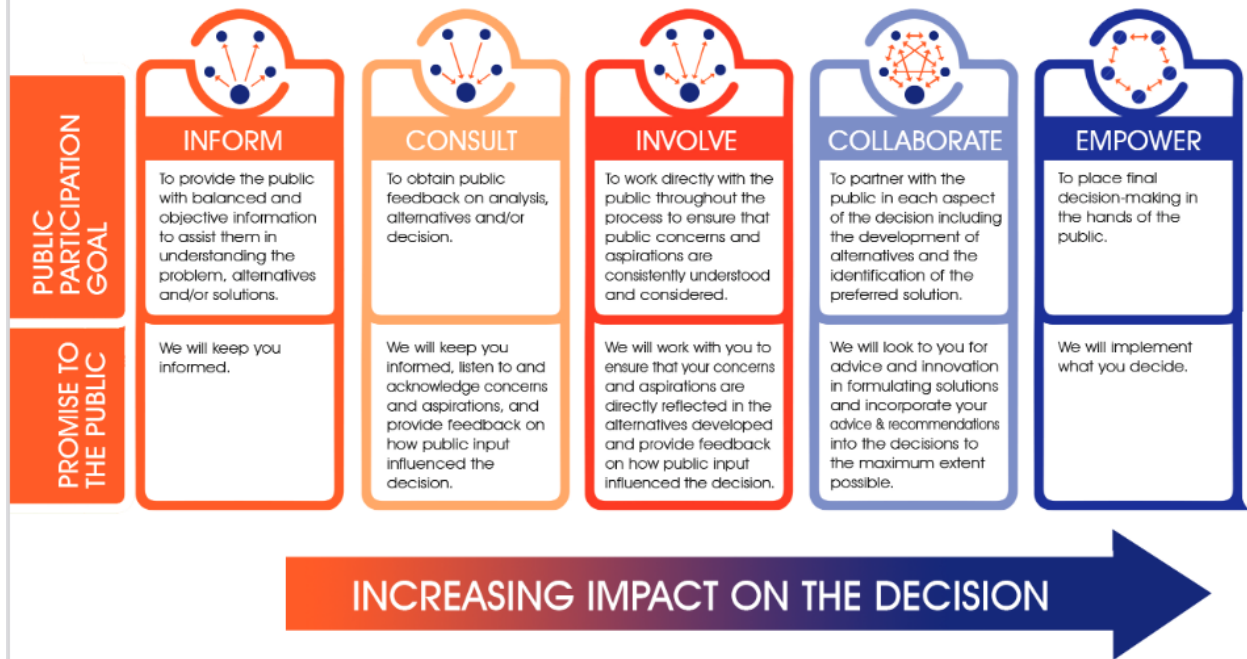
Based on the research and feedback from staff, council and the community, the Township will look at opportunities to increase the number of touchpoints it has with the community, to help keep an "ear to the ground" and become more consistently aware of the pulse of staff and residents. These could be brief, but important options, such as regular polls on social media, attendance at stakeholder meetings, inviting community leaders to round table discussions.



I want to support my community and help make improvements where needed but also reiterate when things are being done well already.

When formal feedback is initiated, the level of engagement will be determined using the [International Association of Public Participation's \(IAP2\)](#) public participation spectrum, which is internationally recognized. The spectrum helps match the engagement objective with the related participation approach. Matching the approach to the objective helps ensure Township staff meets the expectations of the community being engaged. The spectrum illustrates that there are different levels of participation, depending on the public participation goals, promises made to the public, time frames and resources. The Township will consider these levels when planning to initiate a formal public engagement project.

IAP2 Spectrum



© International Association for Public Participation
iap2.org

Measuring success

Taking time to assess the effectiveness of staff and community engagement is a critical step to ongoing success and meeting the goal of a meaningful two-way process, where participants feel their contributions were valued.

Key questions during evaluation include, but are not limited to:

- Did the process make a difference?
- Did the municipality benefit?
- Were participants satisfied with the experience – from initiation to reporting back?
- What worked or didn't work?
- What lessons can be learned for future engagement?

Regardless of the approach, taking time to assess the Township's efforts will help achieve a goal of continuous improvement.

Desired outcomes

1. Consistent use of this Framework and Toolkit by Township staff to proactively plan, implement and evaluate engagement activities; building sustained capacity.
2. Participant satisfaction and the appropriateness and effectiveness of each public involvement process design, implementation.
3. Engagement outcomes from the process: considerations and recommendations made by Council and how effectively the loop is closed, and feedback, process, and end results are communicated.
4. Engagement having a real impact on local decisions, policies and actions (was the ultimate decision different or made better by the input?).
5. The community has the information, trust and increased capacity to participate and be involved: increasing numbers in future engagements, having a strong level of repeat individuals who engage.

OCTOBER 5, 2022



ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

Easy-to-Use Toolkit

This toolkit has been created to ensure each engagement project from the Township of Huron-Kinloss has been thought through and that staff take a consistent approach.

It is simple to use, with checkboxes for each step.

The Engagement Toolkit will:

- ✓ Help you learn about the various components and key steps of engagement processes.
- ✓ Prompt key questions to ask when planning engagement.
- ✓ Encourage you to evaluate your process and continue to learn and improve current engagement efforts.

Steps to planning effective engagement

When planning an engagement initiative, these are the steps to follow using the template.



Define objectives.



Identify audiences and stakeholders based on level of impact and interest.



Plan engagement.



Define how success will be measured.



Plan and roll out promotion and communications.



Conduct engagement.



Consolidate findings and report back.



Evaluate success and identify lessons learned.

Engagement Planning Template

Please complete each of the following sections.



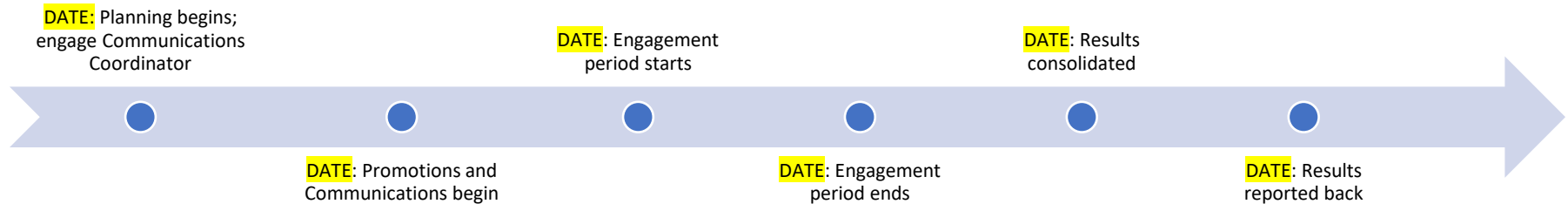
The Communications Coordinator should be engaged at the outset of any engagement planning

Project title: _____

Project lead: _____

Decision statement: *(Clearly define what decision or project you are getting input on. On what part does the public have influence?)*

High-level timeline: *complete at the outset*





Objectives

Check what kind of influence the community can have on this project or decision.

Note: Be clear on what the community cannot influence – what is out of scope.

- Provide feedback on analysis, alternatives or a decision
- Influence a decision or direction
- Provide input into a design
- Choose an alternative
- Work with Township staff to develop alternatives or solutions
- Identify a preferred solution
- Empower the community to make a decision that the Township will implement



Audiences

Check the audiences you need to engage and identify how significant the impact is on each audience.

Audience	Level of impact or interest			Barriers to participation (e.g., technology, conflicts, sensitivity, language)	How barriers will be addressed (solutions to ensure meaningful engagement)
	High	Medium	Low		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entire Township Community					
<input type="checkbox"/> Lucknow residents					
<input type="checkbox"/> Point Clark resident					
<input type="checkbox"/> Ripley residents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Rural residents 					

<input type="checkbox"/> Other local group(s): _____ (name)					
<input type="checkbox"/> Key stakeholder(s) – identify (e.g., conservation authority)					
<input type="checkbox"/> Business community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lucknow ○ Point Clark ○ Ripley 					
<input type="checkbox"/> Seniors					
<input type="checkbox"/> Families					
<input type="checkbox"/> Youth					
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ (name)					



Plan engagement methods and measurements of success

Check all the ways you plan to gather feedback and engage.

Consider what is most convenient for the audience and refer to the IAP2 Engagement Spectrum on page 5 of the *Engagement Framework* to determine the level of engagement needed based on your project or decision.

Engagement method	Rationale	Dates
<input type="checkbox"/> HaveYourSayHK survey		
<input type="checkbox"/> Feedback form or print survey		
<input type="checkbox"/> Suggestion box		
<input type="checkbox"/> Open house <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Virtual ○ In person 		

Engagement method	Rationale	Dates
<input type="checkbox"/> Stakeholder meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Virtual <input type="radio"/> In person 		
<input type="checkbox"/> Information booth at community event <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Event name: _____ 		
<input type="checkbox"/> Public meeting		
<input type="checkbox"/> Informal discussion		
<input type="checkbox"/> Focus group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Virtual <input type="radio"/> In person 		
<input type="checkbox"/> Interactive working session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Virtual <input type="radio"/> In person 		
<input type="checkbox"/> Citizen advisory committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Virtual <input type="radio"/> In person 		
<input type="checkbox"/> Social media poll		
<input type="checkbox"/> Idea board in the community		
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____		

Planning in-person engagement

Choose a location(s)

<input type="checkbox"/> Riley-Huron Community Centre	<input type="checkbox"/> Event location
<input type="checkbox"/> Lucknow and District Sport Complex	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Point Clark Community Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>



Define how you will measure success

Check all the apply.

- Number of participants (overall and by targeted groups)
- Diversity of participants (different voices)
- Participants well informed
- Number of responses
- Audience feedback – positive or negative
- Contribution of feedback to final outcome – positive influence?
- Adequate response based on the level of impact of the program or decision
- Adequate time allotted to ensure effective engagement
- Other: _____



Plan and roll out promotion and communications

Check all the ways you plan to promote and communicate information about the project and engagement.

Refer to [page 12 of the Communications Strategy](#) for the person responsible for each of the below.



Ensure the Communications Coordinator reviews this plan.

<input type="checkbox"/> Direct mailed letter to audience(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> HaveYourSayHK project page
<input type="checkbox"/> Ad mail	<input type="checkbox"/> Media release
<input type="checkbox"/> Promote on social media	<input type="checkbox"/> Paid media ad

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Facebook – Township of Huron-Kinloss ○ Facebook – Do Business ○ Twitter ○ Instagram – Ice Cream Trail ○ Instagram – the Hub ○ LinkedIn 	Print <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Kincardine Independent <input type="checkbox"/> Kincardine News <input type="checkbox"/> Lucknow Sentinel <input type="checkbox"/> Kincardine Record 	Radio <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 101.7 <input type="checkbox"/> 95.5 <input type="checkbox"/> 94.5 <input type="checkbox"/> 104.9 <input type="checkbox"/> Country 93 <input type="checkbox"/> AM 920
<input type="checkbox"/> Paid social media ad	<input type="checkbox"/> Pony Express	
<input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ HK Connects (monthly) ○ Get Moving Huron-Kinloss (quarterly) ○ NWCAC (as needed) ○ Business Banner (quarterly) ○ Property tax bill (bi-annually) 	<input type="checkbox"/> Local Hurontel One Show (weekly)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Discovery Guide / Municipal Guide (annual)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Marketplace Magazine monthly article	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Electronic sign in Point Clark	
<input type="checkbox"/> Posters/flyers/brochures in the community	<input type="checkbox"/> Door hangers in targeted areas	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fact sheet/backgrounder	<input type="checkbox"/> Business Banner	
<input type="checkbox"/> Township website <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ News ○ Webpage ○ Community Events page 	<input type="checkbox"/> Tourist Town websites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Visit ○ Huron-Kinloss ○ Visit Ripley ○ Visit Lucknow ○ Visit Point Clark 	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other? _____		

Key messages: Using the Decision Statement above, develop simple and easy to remember key messages about the project/decision, why you want to hear from the community, what impact they can have and why it matters to them.

Key Message #1:
Key message #2:
Key message #3:
Key message #4:
Key message #5:



Conduct engagement

Please consider the following when planning community engagement and check all the materials needs.

Staff roles

Responsibility	Staff person responsible
Project lead	
Communications	
Creating marketing materials	
Project page on HaveYourSayHK	
Updating Township webpages	

Monitoring questions and comments	
Consolidating responses	
In-person event(s)	
○ Gather and bring materials	
○ Room/booth/table set up	
○ Lead and facilitate	
○ Greet / sign in (count) participants	
○ Collect responses	
○ Take photos and share with Communications	



Consolidate findings and Report back (refer to Report Template in Appendix A)

Targeted members of the community should be able to see the connections between their participation and the outcomes. That is, tell them: "This is what we asked; this is what you said; and this is what we did with what you said."



This is one of the most important steps in the process to building trust and ensuring engagement is meaningful.

Checklist for reporting back.

- Participants are thanked.
- Decision-making process is clear (timelines, next steps).
- Engagement process and number of participants detailed.
- Summary of feedback with key themes identified, along with any responses from the Township.
- How the feedback is being used to influence next steps is clear.

- If community's feedback is not being used, clearly articulate why.
- Responses to outstanding community concerns are being addressed and how
- Report is easy to find, and not simply through a Council report.
- Post all reports on the HaveYourSayHK project page.
- Share link to report on social media or through targeted participant emails, highlighting key themes.



Evaluation and lessons learned

The criteria for judging the overall effectiveness of the engagement process should relate to the objectives identified up front. It should also focus on participant satisfaction with the integrity of the process (i.e., whether interested parties found the process to be meaningful).

Key Performance Indicator	Yes	No	Somewhat	Explanation
The objectives for the engagement process were achieved.				
No interested audiences indicate that they did not have the opportunity to participate.				
The engagement plan was adapted as necessary to match the needs and circumstances of the project and target audiences.				
Audiences indicate that communications and materials were appropriate and effective.				
Audiences indicate that they had fair and reasonable time to evaluate and respond to the information presented.				
Internal management and communication processes were timely and adequate.				

The extent of involvement by the community was deemed to be appropriate by all who are interested in the success of the engagement.				
Participants indicate their input was fairly considered.				
The quality and quantity of input from participants was adequate to improve the quality of the project/decision to be made.				
The people involved and their levels of interest were as you had predicted when you planned your process.				
This public engagement toolkit was useful for managing the process.				

What you will do differently next time

Review each step and list ways you can improve engagement in the future.

Step	Ideas for improvement
1. Defining objectives.	
2. Identifying audiences and stakeholders based on level of impact and interest.	
3. Planning engagement: methods, timelines, staff roles.	
4. Defining success and measurement.	
5. Planning and rolling out promotion and communications.	
6. Conducting engagement.	
7. Consolidating findings and reporting back.	
8. Evaluating success.	