OPEN GUELPH MEETUP TOOLKIT

SECTION A: INTRODUCTION

Open Government is about big change... It is about:

- Changing the role of government and improving the relationship it has with the people it serves
- Working differently with others to plan and deliver public services
- Removing barriers that make it hard for local people to help make decisions that affect them

Why the Change?

Some key benefits of Open Government are:

- Establishing greater trust in the City
- Ensuring better outcomes at less cost
- Ensuring equity of access to public policy making
- Fostering innovation and new economic activity
- Enhancing effectiveness by leveraging community knowledge and resources
- To become a FAST organization (flatter, more agile, streamlined and tech enabled)

What Supports the Change?

To support the transformation to Open Government, the City of Guelph has developed an Open Government Framework built on four key principles: participation, innovation, transparency, and accountability. These principles will be carried out through four directions shaping the development of Guelph's Open Government Action Plan (OGAP).

Open Participation is an important part of opening up government. A successful open government depends on regular engagement from the community! It focuses on engaging with local residents, businesses, and community groups to plan together and take action together. Some of this engagement might happen online or through social media, but other opportunities will continue to be traditional ways of taking part (i.e. town hall meetings).

Open Data is one part of open government. It involves making government sources of data publicly available, in practical formats, so that creative thinkers, innovators and entrepreneurs can develop applications that may improve city services. For example, data could be used to build mobile apps to alert you to changes in city transit schedules or make it easier for you to report emergencies or other events that need attention from city staff.

Access to Information is also about making information more accessible to everyone. This means making more information collected by the City of Guelph available through more and different channels. It also means making the information readily available before someone asks to see it, rather than after. This helps to improves transparency and increases the ability of residents to become informed on issues or matters that interest them.

Open Governance is about to working together to identify goals and make it easier for the community to hold government to account as we work toward reaching those goals. Open government makes it easier for residents to track the effectiveness of local government (i.e. to view government spending online) and hold the government to account for the decisions it makes and the actions it takes.

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Open Government Action Plan (OGAP)

The OGAP will be a number of initiatives which can be phased in over the next five years, and beyond, to meet the overall vision of open government as defined by the City's Open Government Framework. Initiatives may be led solely by community stakeholders, with the City acting as a platform to provide support, or by the City in partnership with community stakeholders. One of the main objectives of the OGAP is to provide better access to civic information through an Open Data program. This will strengthen transparency, and accountability, and drive social and economic innovation.

OGAP Co-Production

To achieve the vision of an Open Government, the City of Guelph is working with interested community members and partner organizations to co-produce the OGAP. This co-production exercise is will be carried out through a number of initiatives as depicted below:

FEB
- Open data catalogue
- Hackathon
- Experiential online survey starts

MAR
- Ideas and feedback online tool
- Sector-specific roundtable discussions
- Ideas camp series for City of Guelph staff kicks off
- Community-led meet ups begin

APR
- Open Government Action Plan draft 1 available
- Experiential online survey closes

MAY
- Open Government Change Camp
- Community-led meet ups wrap up

JUN
- Open Government Action Plan draft 2 available
- Workshop for community champions

JUL
- Open Government Action Plan final draft presented to City Council

Over the duration of the co-production process, the City will host an online ideation tool called MindMixer (http://cityofguelph.mindmixer.com/) which will serve to consolidate all forms of input in respect to the development of the OGAP. The public will have an opportunity to vote, comment and iterate from Open Government actions proposed through any one of the various initiatives noted above. It is also hoped that the community will complete the OpenUp Guelph online experiential survey available by visiting www.guelph.ca/opengov.

For further information on ways to participate, visit www.guelph.ca/opengov.

Open Government Definitions…

Co-Production

Co-production happens when governments, organizations and the public make better use of each other's assets and resources, to get better results, and save everyone time and money.

Ideation

This is the creative process of idea generation. Ideation includes all stages from innovation to development and actualization.

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SECTION B: MEETUP OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Meet Ups are twofold:

1. Generate and provide opinions with respect your views on Open Government in general. This information will be used to frame the context to support the recommended actions of the OGAP. The following questions can be used to facilitate this discussion portion.

   - What does Open Government mean to you?
   - Have you heard of any Open Government initiatives that sparked your interest? What were they?
   - How do you plan to participate as part of an Open Government?
   - How can the City be more open to innovative ideas to resolve problems facing the community?
   - How do you see Open Government impacting your community?
   - How would you measure the success of an Open Government?

2. The second objective is to generate action initiatives for the OGAP. Use the **Action Initiative Template in Appendix B** to capture the following information about each action idea generated during this meet up:

   - Action Name ……………………… (Choose a name for your action initiative)
   - Action Description ………………(Provide a high level description)
   - Timeframe…………………………. (When could it start? How long would it last?)
   - Resources………………………….. (Who would do this? What would they need?)
   - Measurement…………………….. (What would success look like?)

   Action Initiative ideas can also be filled out directly on the City of Guelph MindMixer web page: http://cityofguelph.mindmixer.com/

Facilitator:

Use the questions in **Section B 1** to start the conversation.

Recorder:

Keep track of all Action initiatives that come out of the conversation.

Action Initiatives

After discussing the challenge questions in **Section D,** take some time to flush out ideas for Action Initiatives. You can use the **template in Appendix B** OR you can go directly to the **City of Guelph MindMixer** web page to submit your ideas!

SECTION C: TOOLKIT INSTRUCTIONS

This meet up tool kit has been designed for groups of 3 - 20 participants. If this group is larger, the facilitator may want to break the group into two or three groups each with their own facilitator.

Preparing for the Meet-Up:

1. Set aside approximately 2 hours for this conversation. Less than 2 hours might not be enough to get the best out of this meet up. Be sure to leave 30 minutes to detail action initiatives at the end of the meet up.

2. Make sure there is paper to record conversations and ideas. Flip charts are great for this. Don't have flip charts? It's OK to record the conversations on any paper or virtual document

3. Set up a space that will make it easy to have a group discussion. A circle of comfortable chairs in a home or everyone seated around a cafe table or in a meeting room works well. Pick the one that is best for the group size and dynamics

4. Assign a facilitator and a recorder. The facilitator asks the questions, keeps the conversation on track and makes sure everyone gets a chance to speak. The recorder will record the conversations and the ideas for action initiatives.

Starting the Meet-Up:

5. Start with an ice breaker. Sample ice breakers are at the back of this tool kit. Ice breakers are important to get everyone introduced and comfortable with speaking.

6. Ask the group to read *Section A*.

7. **Facilitator(s)**, start asking the questions in *Section B*. Make sure to encourage everyone's input. Remember that the facilitator can get involved in the discussion too.

8. **Recorder(s)**, take notes of this conversation. Ideation can happen at any time, so be sure to catch action initiatives when they come up. The group will need to review them at the end of the meeting.

9. When the group finishes discussing Section B, pick one of the directions in Section D: <u>Participation, Innovation, Transparency or Accountability to talk about</u>. Begin with that principle and discuss those questions. Go where the interest is. Discuss as many key principles as time allows.

10. Once the discussion of Sections B and C is over, take 30 minutes to review all the action initiative ideas that came up. Fill out an Action Initiative Template for each idea!

11. Send all notes and completed Action Initiative Templates to opengov@guelph.ca or drop off handwritten notes at Service Guelph, Attn: Blair Labelle.
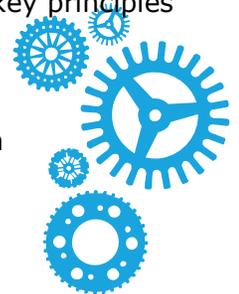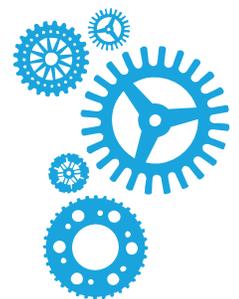
SECTION D: CHALLENGE QUESTIONS

How might the City enhance its approach to public consultation to better engage, collaborate and partner with the community?

The manner in which governments engage in public consultation needs to change. Legal mandates which compel public sector agencies to seek public input in respect to decision making are well below the community's expectations. In response to these changing expectations, some organizations are seeking-out alternative modes of dialogue with their constituencies. Ways that support more open and honest discussion about matters that impact them. The proliferation of new collaborative technologies can enhance shared knowledge creation, deliver real-time, relevant information and support the crowdsourcing of solutions. These opportunities for community engagement have been embraced as the new standard to gather public input and opinion.

1. *How can the City continue to transform the traditional approach to public consultation to better engage stakeholders in matters which directly affect them? How else can we support open, two-way dialogue between the City and the community?*

2. *How can technology improve the way people access City services and provide the necessary feedback to support continuous improvements?*

3. *How can the City better establish collaboration as a way to manage and implement projects that have significant implications for the community? What mechanisms can be employed to create opportunities for the public to provide ongoing feedback to support the continuous improvement of City services?*

4. *What new partnership models could be developed to support social innovation and economic development?*

SECTION D: CHALLENGE QUESTIONS

How might the City identify and make available civic data to support greater transparency and drive innovation?

The open data movement has grown quickly over the last 5-7 years. Government-held information is now seen as an important public resource that can help community members understand the way the municipality works, so they can influence and contribute to government decisions. Developers, entrepreneurs, and other stakeholders can use this information and other municipal data as the raw material for creating new insights, businesses, services and applications. Events such as application ("Apps") development challenges and Hackathons focus on promoting the use of open data to generate and develop benefits for the community at large.

1. *What processes, tools or partnerships could assist the City in identifying the most useful data?*

2. *What other mechanisms could the City use to encourage the use of open data?*

3. *How could these mechanisms be focused or positioned to extract the most value?*

4. *What could be done to better leverage the City's ability to adopt open source solutions?*

5. *What City data could be used to help support business and social innovation?*

6. *How could the City create opportunities to get developers, non-profits and other social agencies together around data, to find solutions for community and organization's issues?*

SECTION D: CHALLENGE QUESTIONS

TRANSPARENCY
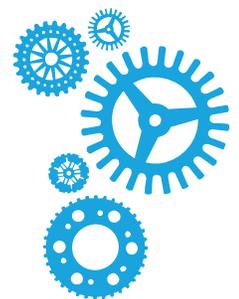
Access to information

How might the City improve access to information?

Accessing government-held information is dictated by the Freedom of Information (FOI) legislation. There is a new focus on municipal information, given the emerging benefits of community access to big data, business intelligence and predictive analytics. Information management (IM) is identified as a key initiative of the City of Guelph's Corporate Technology Strategy and is essential for the implementation of Open Government. IM will help us move toward efficient and cost effective delivery of public services.

1. How can the City begin to locate, index and provide access to civic information?

2. What resources, platforms or processes already exist to support moving forward with IM as a standardized City practice?

3. What options can be explored to overcome resistance to changes that would occur to support IM?

4. How can the City move from a document management mindset to an information-centric approach?

5. What options exist for the City to become more proactive with respect to the methods in which information is disseminated?

6. What can be done to supplement the current FOI process in order to better exploit the process for the benefit of the community?

7. What disruptive technologies can the City consider to better address the challenges of re-implementing and or transitioning from legacy information systems?

SECTION D: CHALLENGE QUESTIONS

How might the City enhance the transparency and accountability of decision making and measure performance?

The principles and objectives of Open Government could become integrated within the City's policy framework. There are many existing oversight and control functions which provide for accountability in relation to the legislative process, however, enhanced transparency with respect to the City's decision making process increase community engagement. Some jurisdictions have implemented new opportunities for the public to play a more direct role in how decisions are made such as frequent referenda and participatory budgeting.

1. *What are some ways to increase transparency and better involve the public in the decision making process?*

2. How can the City enhance *participation with respect to policy development and City planning?*

3. *What are opportunities to build and effectively communicate on performance measures in relation to the City's operational and strategic effectiveness?*

4. *How can we best review and confirm the effectiveness of the City's governance policies and framework?*
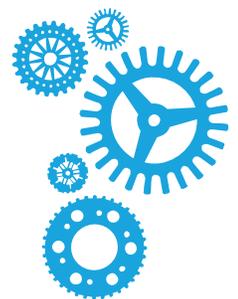
APPENDIX A: ICE BREAKERS

1) Seven Things in Common

Ask the group to come up with 7 things they have in common. Tell them they have 10 minutes to come up with all seven things.

To encourage introductions, suggest going around the group and have them introduce themselves and say the thing they think they have in common with the group. Explain that they cannot pick the obvious (e.g. we are all wearing shoes or we all have two eyes...). After the initial go around, if there are not yet seven common things ask for random things they think they have in common with the others or something they want to know if they have in common and look for agreement. After ten minutes, if you don't have all seven stop the ice breaker and see how many you have. Not meeting the goal of 7 is OK.

This ice breaker is easy, takes very little time and builds connections to help set the stage for working together.

2) Topic Related Introductions

This is the most common ice breaker but with a creative twist. Commonly each participant is asked to introduce themselves, what they do for a living and why they are here or what they hope to achieve. To add an open government context ask each person to introduce themselves by their name and then a few more interesting tidbits such as:

- ➢ The last thing you posted on social media
- ➢ The one technology you thought as a child would exist today but doesn't (yet)
- ➢ The one area of society or piece of data you think needs to be "hacked" the most
- ➢ One word that sums up how you feel about open government

Pick one to three in addition to names depending on the size of your group.

This icebreaker is fun and can start to get the topic and ideas flowing. It should take about 2 minutes per person for timing.

3) King of the World

Ask the group to think for a minute about the three things they think are missing in Guelph. Tell them they are now the King or Queen of Guelph and can "make it so". Ask everyone to introduce themselves and then tell the group the three things that are missing that they can now make happen.

This icebreaker is playful and encourages the group to start thinking about change in the local context. It should take 1 -2 minutes for the thinking and 1 – 2 minutes per person to share.
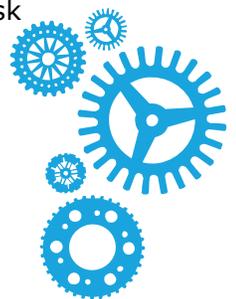
APPENDIX B: ACTION INITIATIVE TEMPLATE

Submit all Action Initiatives in three ways:
1) Online in the City of Guelph Open Government MindMixer web page, or
2) Via email to opengov@guelph.ca
3) Paper copies dropped off at Service Guelph, 1 Carden Street, Guelph, ON **ATT: Blair Labelle**

Name of Action Initiative

Description (high level)

Timeframe (for development and implementation)

Resources (people, materials, data, etc.)

Measurement (what a successful action initiative looks like)

Contact Information (Optional: If you would like to be contacted about this idea, please include your contact information – name, email and telephone number – below)