'Digital Strategy Writing Phase' – engagement summary report

April-May 2014

Background: A main objective of City of Calgary's Digital Strategy was for it to be a collaboration. The eGovernment Committee (made up for Calgary citizens and City of Calgary staff) sparked the idea of making a Digital Strategy and wanted it to reflect the whole community. There are two phases of engagement: *Phase 1* – Writing the Strategy and *Phase 2* – Implementing the Strategy. We recognize (and so did many of you who provided input) the implementation of these goals will affect a much wider population. In Phase 2 we will provide other opportunities for others to be involved. There will also be specific opportunities to collect and use the ideas of those who might consider themselves to have barriers to access digital technology and services. Non-digital engagement will happen to make sure their voices and ideas are heard.

This report is all about the engagement of Phase 1.

Drafting – the first draft of Digital Strategy's Vision, Mission and Goals were created by the eGovernment committee (through meetings and an online tool called Trello) and a diverse group of City of Calgary staff from different work areas that we will call the 'Staff Team'. The Staff Team also had regular meetings, conducted research, used Trello and had a 1.50-day workshop to build upon the eGovernment committee's work over the past two years.

General Feedback (April 14-24) – we showed a large number of people our first draft. Our target audience was those who are very interested or involved in some aspect of digital technology in their personal or professional roles. We had an online feedback form to collect input on the goals, strategies, direction and implementation of the plan. Over 270 people completed some of the feedback form and not all people completed all questions. We had 132 complete forms, but used the input of all (full or partial) responses as all of the input was important.

Some of the key themes were:

You wanted to understand the Digital Strategy better:

- with clear, plain language
- with specific goals
- with examples of how we might measure success or "temperature checks" on its progress

You agreed with most of the strategic themes:
These were: *Transparency, E-Services (Design & Access), City Workplace, Engagement and Participatory Government, Responsiveness* and *Partnerships.* When you got the chance to tell us how important these Themes were most people agreed *Transparency, E-Services, City Workplace, Engagement and Participatory Government, Responsiveness* were "Very Important" and *Partnerships* was "Somewhat Important."

We won't ignore that some participants did say some of the themes were "Very Unimportant" but most of the themes that had the most "Very Unimportant" ratings were the same as the ones that had the most "Very Important" (*Transparency*, *City Workplace*, *E-Services* and *Responsiveness*). However, these different opinions make it even more important for us to make sure we are checking back in with you as we implement the Digital Strategy (Phase 2, as mentioned above).

You told us:

- the top three roles of the City in a Digital Strategy should be
- "improving Citizen's access to City services digitally"
- "improving the City's own digital technology"
- "improving Citizen's access to digital technology"

- the City's role cannot *only* be to interact with citizens digitally as many Citizens have significant barriers to access digital services.

- when considering the City's own technological needs the importance of:
- information security
- innovation
- more and better collaboration between City employees

You overwhelmingly (120/132) felt the Digital Strategy *would* be of benefit to Calgarians. The top five reasons were:
-Providing better information
-Providing better government operation
-Empowering citizens
-Providing lower cost services
-Encouraging innovation

and others you added:
-Making things easier and more convenient
-Making it easier for City employees to do their job of serving Citizens

You also gave us suggestions of programs, systems, resources, and even books of how we might make this Digital Strategy even more useful.* These initiatives and strategies were built upon in our Staff Engagement Session.

*Please note, because of some of the feedback we got, and to make the Digital Strategy clearer some of our headings changed. Some of the ideas we received for one heading in the first draft have been moved to another heading in the final draft of the Digital Strategy to make best use of the idea. Please see the 'verbatim report' attachment for all the exact comments we received.

City Staff Engagement Session (May 7) – we asked more people to join the Staff Team. The eGovernment committee wanted to make sure we checked in with a larger group of City of Calgary staff who work with different aspect of digital technology to see what was already happening and see what needed to be done. The 59 people who attended the session were asked to help us add to the strategy and improve the goals of the Digital Strategy. They told us what would need to be done to achieve the Vision of the Digital Strategy.

City Staff told us some things need improvement:

- user experience
- information management systems
- ability to collaborate with one another (internally and externally)
- data collection and measurement
- digital tools to allow public to provide feedback

City Staff told us some things are very important:

- protect secure information and keep that information safe from hacking
- find the right balance between trying new technology, doing things right and spending resources wisely ("pick new technology based on need, not modifying needs to suit selected technology")
- making citizen-driven choices and decisions
- recognizing and celebrating innovation
- ensure data quality is high

City Staff told us some great ideas that would make things easier:

- plain language in all digital channels
- one-stop-shop for citizens to access all City services (self-service)
- "Less *can't* more *how*"
- guidelines and clear policies about open data, mobile apps, social media and other digital technology aspects so things can be done consistently
- setting organization-wide goals that all staff are motivated to achieve

Next Steps:

The Staff Team is taking all of this feedback and writing the final draft of the Digital Strategy. This will be presented to City Council for approval in June 2014, but will still be a *living* document – open to new ideas, open to change. An implementation "First 90 Days" plan will also be developed to show how we will be taking action and how we will keep asking for and collecting your input. Information will be posted online as it is available - http://calgary.ca/engage/Pages/eGov-Digital-Strategy.aspx