



A City that Works

Transparency, accountability and ethics establish public trust.

What strategies are working?

INFORMATION IS MORE EASILY ACCESSIBLE BY AND AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC

- 311 provides a point of contact for information and services City-wide.
- The Financial Transparency Platform allows the public to examine financial data from 2008 to the present.
- Results Minneapolis has historically provided data to the public and City departments.
- Results Minneapolis progress reports help put data and information into context
- Council webpages have been reimaged to make desired information easier to locate. We have an opportunity to do this with more webpages on the City site.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT

- All City Council and committee meetings are publicly broadcasted.
- The revamped open appointment process for boards and commissions coordinates appointments into two time periods each year, making the process more accessible and transparent.
- Elections works with nonprofit partners to effectively educate the public on voting.
- The City has adopted Core Principles of Community Engagement. These principles direct Minneapolis to solicit input and participation from all stakeholders, and inform the public of how their input is used.
- Departments are more interested in and better equipped to undertake community engagement than in the past.

ETHICAL BEHAVIOR IS TAKEN SERIOUSLY

- The Ethics Hotline provides a confidential channel for employees to talk to someone about and report workplace concerns.
- In-house online ethics training makes it easy for employees to take refresher courses every three years; new employees complete ethics training during orientation.

What strategies are not working?

CREATING A CULTURE OF ENGAGEMENT IN THE WORKPLACE IS A PROCESS

- Employees need access to technical tools, such as data visualization and business analytics to communicate effectively with the public and across departments.
- Some departments are actively using the Spectrum of Public Participation while others still need training in it. The spectrum acknowledges that sometimes it's appropriate to simply provide information while, other times, it's necessary to do more participatory engagement work.
- In addition to training on tools, staff need opportunities to build personal and professional relationships with the community.
- Hundreds of City employees work in public spaces every day. Empower them to be ambassadors for the City and not just "stay in their lane." Create a clear process for staff to inform other departments of problems observed in the field.

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- When someone makes a 311 service request, there is no follow up to let the requestor know what actions were taken.

OUR TRANSPARENCY PROCESSES NEED TO BE MORE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT

- Access of information in our cultural communities is still limited. We need to do a better job of making information and data resources available. Responding to data requests is an inefficient, uncoordinated process. Three different departments may invest staff time only to produce three slightly different answers, which erodes public trust. A better system is needed enterprise-wide to provide consistent, accurate, helpful responses.
- Staff is working to improve the Request for Proposal process for development projects. The policy gives staff a lot of discretion which can make the process seem inconsistent, confusing and even inequitable to the public.
- We need to improve the way that Request for Council Actions are written. The purpose of them is to inform the public, so appropriate context needs to be provided in the RCAs. Instead, they are often written with only a council member audience in mind. Designated staff are being trained in each department on how to write RCAs, but there is more work to be done.

Working in partnership, what strategies could we pursue?

IMPROVE COORDINATION ACROSS DEPARTMENTS

- Solutions need champions. Identify one department to take ownership of each cooperative process and ensure follow-through.
- Do more prioritization so that departments can take on new challenges while continuing to perform key functions well. Sometimes this means being willing to let other activities go.
- Establish a data request triage team so that only necessary departments are involved and the message is consistent. This will reduce staff time spent on data requests and build public trust.

PUBLIC AMBASSADORS SURROUND US

- Empower field staff to think beyond the sphere of their department, be public ambassadors for the City as a whole.
- There is an opportunity to train nonprofits to understand our work better.

PROVIDE MORE DATA PUBLICLY

- Continue to make as much data as we can public. This should help reduce the number of data requests the City receives.
- As we put out more data, we need to remember to be thoughtful about placing it into context. A map or chart may be more appropriate than a spreadsheet of raw data.

AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FROM BEGINNING TO END

- Clearly identify stakeholders when beginning projects.
- There are lots more options for engaging the community than hosting public meetings. Go to where people already are, leverage events that are already happening. Work with community partners to reach diverse communities. Make public meetings accessible in terms of language, location, time of day, etc.
- Establish a process for follow-up to 311 calls that puts a human face on the interaction—e.g., someone

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from Public Works notifies the caller when a pothole is filled.

This conversation had representatives from Auditor's office, City Attorney's office, City Clerk's office, City Coordinator's office, Communications, Finance Department, Neighborhood and Community Relations, Minneapolis Police Department, Regulatory Services and 311.