

Attachment-4 Construction Improvement Workshop Backgrounder

Station Name: Customer Service, Communications and Relationship Building

The Customer Service, Communications and Relationship Building station will focus on sharing how staff in Engineering and Transportation Services (E&TS) approach customer service and what plans are in place for making improvements. This will include:

- How we are evolving processes to meet Guelph's Good Service Standards
- How internal staff are collaborating to meet customer service needs; and
- How staff are evaluating tools that could assist in streamlining construction communication to the public.

E&TS is involved in many capital projects yearly that result in road closures and delays in construction zones. To ensure the public is aware of upcoming and current construction work the department must ensure that plans are communicated consistently.

E&TS staff recognized a growing challenge in meeting Guelph's Good Service Standards when communicating about construction impacts. As part of the Construction Improvement (CI) Program, a Project Team was established to address improvements in construction communications. This project was called Operation Communications and Relationship Building (Operation CARB). The project team conducted focus groups, interviews, research, and consultations across City departments to understand how to better communicate in a proactive, efficient, standardized manner. Discussions with many different stakeholders demonstrated that there is a need for projects to have specific, customized approaches developed in partnership with the City's Strategic Communications and Community Engagement (SCCE) team.

Some of the insights/issues identified from Operation CARB and the initiatives moving forward to address them include:

Problem 1: Engineering & Transportation Services were finding it increasingly difficult to maintain Guelph's Good Service Standards in communicating new and ongoing construction work internally and to the public due to limited capacity.

Resulting actions include:

- E&TS Staff have worked with the Strategic Communications and Community Engagement (SCCE) staff to develop a more collaborative approach to communicating construction.
- An updated Standard Operating Procedure was developed to ensure a clear and consistent approach is taken when addressing construction communications.

Problem 2: Planning multiple capital projects, detours and third-party construction projects that span multi-years has become increasingly complex and increasingly time-consuming to avoid overlaps in projects that could result in construction delays and traffic confusion.

Resulting actions include:

- Staff are working with the SCCE team to provide workshops to staff in providing consistent and standardized messaging to the public, and the Mayor and Council.
- The CARB project team will continue to collaborate with internal departments to gauge interest and evaluate the use of tools that could assist in streamlining construction communications.

The project team will be working with the City's Communications and Customer Service Departments as well as other departments to continue to grow our approach to providing good service through the following:

- Building a knowledge bank of information about departmental procedures.
- Establishing and reviewing metrics for customer service requests.
- Building relationships and trust within the community.

At this station, staff will share several improvements currently being implemented and several planned initiatives. Staff will seek to understand from Mayor and Council:

- What is the best way for staff to communicate with you and support your communication efforts with constituents?
- What kind of information about construction is most important for Mayor and Council to receive?

At this station Council will learn more about:

- Communications tactics planned for residents
- Communications tactics planned for businesses
- Communications tactics planned for internal staff
- Staff's approach to customer service and how we are supporting the community during construction
- How staff are streamlining processes and standardizing procedures
- Tools being evaluated that could assist in streamlining construction communications.