Wilfrid Laurier University

Scholars Commons @ Laurier

2009

Understanding Best Practices for Community Engagement in Municipal Contexts

Sherry McGee
Wilfrid Laurier University

NOTE TO USERS

This reproduction is the best copy available.

UMI®

Canada

Understanding best practices for community engagement in municipal contexts

by

Sherry McGee

Honours BA Psychology, University of Windsor, 2009

THESIS

Submitted to the Department of Psychology

In partial fulfillment of the requirement for

Master of Arts in Community Psychology

Wilfrid Laurier University

2009

"Strong community leaders invite a growing circle of people to act."

Kratzman & McKnight, 1993

Abstract

Engaging citizens in decision making has long been understood as part of the democratic process, most commonly recognized as electoral votership. In recent decades, the benefits of providing citizens a variety of opportunities for community engagement (CE) have been documented. Currently, few studies have explored the role of municipal government in engagement processes, and how engagement should be contextualized within municipal policy structures and practices. The City of Kitchener, located in Ontario, Canada is in the process of formalizing engagement practices through policy. In partnering with the City of Kitchener, five interviews were conducted with four Canadian municipalities and one Region (N = 5), in order to gain a local perspective (City of Cambridge, Region of Waterloo), to explore municipalities with existing CE policies (City of Edmonton and City of Calgary), and to learn more about municipalities with innovative engagement methods (City of Guelph/Participatory Budgeting). The following research identified community engagement principles, strategies and policy structures that have been employed with proven success. The current study found two types of "best practices": 1) theoretical mechanics of change which includes a formalized policy (values, principles, framework) and deliberative attention within the policy to diversity and empowerment; and 2) facilitation processes and resources of implementation that put theory into practice (e.g., community partnerships and champions). These findings inform the work of the City of Kitchener directly and have implications for a model of successful community engagement within municipal settings that articulates how to develop and deliver community engagement.

Acknowledgements

Completing this thesis was a huge undertaking for me and I am certain I would not have seen it through without the support and encouragement of many people. I would like to begin by thanking my advisory committee, Drs. Terry Mitchell and Scot Evans, who offered keen guidance and expertise. I offer a very sincere thank-you to my advisor, Dr. Colleen Loomis, whose support, insights, and experience were fundamental to the success of my research. I would also like to graciously thank my placement supervisor Ms. Abbie Grafstein from the City of Kitchener, for her dedication and passion to this project. I would like to extend my utmost appreciation to the municipalities who agreed to participate in this research. Their insight and enthusiasm for their work was a strong motivating force for gathering further research around the engagement work they do each and every day.

I would like to thank my cohort of community psychology master's students. I was truly fortunate to have met so many wonderful, intelligent and passionate people during my time in the program. I am indebted to so many of them for my intellectual growth as both a student and an individual. Finally, I dedicate this thesis to my family, specifically my mother, father, grandma and grandpa who have supported me since day one, offering continual guidance and encouragement.

Personal Standpoint

In the past, my experiences working in the community have primarily been in grass roots and non-for-profit initiatives, this included working as a leader at a youth centre, as a researcher at a parental support coalition, and as an activist in an environmental initiative. Many of these initiatives were dependent upon government funding in order to be sustainable. Within such settings, the role of government was typically complex and convoluted, and citizens and program operators often articulated a sense of ill trust toward the government. Four years ago, these experiences were countered by an experience I had working in the Social Services department at the City of Brantford. This position allowed me to explore the role of government in a different light. Through this experience I came to the recognition that a collaborative partnership between municipal structures, community-based organizations, and citizens were essential to ensuring government policy was communicated and made transparent to the public. Such transparency would in turn increase the accountability of the government, and even more significant, increase citizens' willingness and desire to become involved in their local communities, specifically those often marginalized from participating in a public domain.

It was these experiences that led me to pursue a Masters in Community Psychology at Wilfrid Laurier University. My recent academic studies in Community Psychology (CP) have strengthened my convictions through CP's operating value structure that includes values of prevention, collaboration, accountability, social justice, and system change. (Nelson and Prilleltensky, 2005). Systemic change involves stakeholders from throughout the system, is cognisant of how change in one area affects an adjoining area, and seeks to coordinate change efforts in order to fulfill shared goals and visions. System change is central to the work of Bronfenbrenner (1979), who describes an Ecological Perspective that allows for the investigation

of individual outcomes within a community (mirco-system), and the economic, cultural and political context or operating (meso-) system. In this model, individual development is examined through a person's experiences in the broader ecology (setting). In my thesis research, community engagement was explored in the context of municipal projects, strategies, and policy (meso-system), while practices for inclusivity, particularly as they pertain to marginalized individuals (micro-system) were also taken into consideration.

A municipal structure represents a powerful operating system within a community. Municipal policy represents a significant type of system change, as it can influence the way municipalities interact and influence communities. When the opportunity arose for me to complete a placement in a municipal structure (City of Kitchener) on a research project that would affect policy, I was excited about the possibility of studying system change in action.

Table of Contents

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS

List of Figures

List of Tables

Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction to Community Engagement Research

Theory and literature surrounding the significance of inclusive, community engagement

has increased radically in the past 20 years. Much of this increase has been seen as the result of

the involvement of feminist and post-colonial theorists who brought attention to the limitations

in previous definitions and methods of engagement (Anthias, 2002). Community engagement

(CE) is referenced and understood using a multitude of names: 'civic engagement', 'political

participation', 'public engagement', 'citizen involvement', 'consumer participation'(Bracht &

Tsouro, 1990). At its core, CE encompasses the concept of public participation. Public

participation refers to different means for individuals to directly engage in political other social

activities and ideally should infer a level of proportional decision making (participatory decision

making) (International Association for Public Participation, 2007). Explored more broadly, CE is

also a subset of community development, which is a "process designed to create conditions of

economic and social progress with the active participation of the whole community and with the

fullest possible reliance on the community" (Bradshaw, 1999; Rothman, 1974; Levine &

Perkins, 1997, as cited in Duffy & Wong, 2003). Bracht & Tsouro (1990) describe this

community develop process as one that involves "engaging networks of governmental (formal)

and non-governmental (voluntary) organizations in coordinated efforts", which allows

communities to better use their own networks and resources to elicit community change.

CE can occur formally and informally, can occur within and among multiple structures of

society (local neighbourhoods, public interest groups, municipalities), and can occur both

individualistically (volunteerism), as well as collectively (organizational involvement and

electoral participation). The Tamarack Institute for Community Engagement defines CE as,

"having people work collaboratively, through action and learning, to realize and create a

common future" (Tamarack Institute for Community Engagement, 2007, pg. 8). Similarly, the

Active Citizen Centre in London, English defines community engagement as, "the opportunity,

capacity, and willingness of individuals to work collectively to shape public life" (Rogers &

Robinson, 2004, p. 434, as cited in Seyfang, 2006). Additional definitions of CE make stronger

associations between CE's relationship with government structures and processes. For example,

according to the World Bank community engagement is "the process by which citizens'

concerns, needs and values are incorporated into governmental decision making; it is a two-way

communication processes with the overall goals of a better decision making, supported by the

public" (as cited in Best & Dustan, 2006, p. 17). Similarly, Frideres (1997) defines CE as a

"synergetic linkage between the individual and the social structure in which [she] operates"

(section Civic Involvement, para. 5). This "synergistic linkage" can be operationalized further by

way of the assertion by Ketter et al (2002) that community engagement processes can serve three

key purposes 1) efforts to directly address an issue; 2) collaborations in the community to solve a

problem; or 3) interactions with the institutions of representative democracy. Although the

definitions of CE are abundant there appears to be themes common to most definitions; these

themes include: recognition and attention to issues of public concern, collaboration, learning,

capacity building, and the generation of action to create a shared future.

Ongoing citizen disengagement often prevents successful community development and

engagement efforts in Canada. Two rising social trends appear to propel disengagement: first,

changes to the primary social networks used by communities and second, the growing diversity

of communities. Families and religious institutions have long represented two of the most

primary social networks available within communities (Tossutti, 2003). However, families have

been fundamentally transformed by divorce and declining fertility rates (Baker, 2008;

Kowaleski-Jones & Wolfinger, 2006), and religious institutions by declining attendance rates

and growing agnostic beliefs (Nevitte, 2002, as cited in Tossutti, 2003). Research indicates that

strong connections to family and religious institutions have the ability to help immigrants gather

information about their new place of residence (Burnet, 1988; Boyd, 1989, as cited in Tossutti,

2003). Empirical studies have shown that people who are strongly connected with family and

religious networks are more likely than those not connected, to vote and participate in voluntary

organizations (Cento Bull, 2000, as cited in Tossutti). Consequently, such changes have a strong

impact on the way networks are created within communities, on the manner in which social

capital is generated, and on the reasons behind why people become involved in their

communities.

A second social trend that propels disengagement is communities' failure to meet or

address the large number of needs diverse communities can create. As Canadian communities

grow increasing diverse, individuals become or feel removed from government, which results in

lower levels of trust and confidence in government processes. In many cities, public or civic life

is a "hostile environment for the average person, ruled by cynicism, distrust, and division, and

dominated by entrenched habits of isolation and detachment" (Traynor & Andors, 2005, para.

1). Currently in Canada there is a clear democratic deficit; voter turnout is declining and

becoming increasingly representative of the elderly, the university-educated, the wealthy, long-

term residents of Canada, and non-visible minorities of Canada (Black, 1991; Black, 1982;

Curtis, Grabb & Guppy, 1988, as cited in Tossutti, 2003). Similarly, Canadian volunteerism is

also on the decline, particularly among visible minority groups and immigrants. In the 2006

federal election, approximately 65 percent of registered voters cast a ballot, down from an average 75 percent in the mid-1980s, and between 1997 and 2000 the number of Canadians who volunteered for a voluntary organization declined from 31 to 27 percent (Hall et al., 2006). In 2000, 51 percent of Canadians reported membership in at least one voluntary organization (McKeown et al., 2004); a significant decline from the early 1990s at which time it was 65 percent (Curtis, Grabb, & Chui, 1999). Community engagement is significant in that it involves those who might not always be included in community affairs. CE can provide opportunities for marginalized residents to develop the skills and networks that can enable them to tackle social exclusion (Kagan, 2008). The ability of CE to help marginalized populations connect to community networks proves significant; over the last 20 years more than a dozen large studies have shown that "people who are socially disconnected are between two and five times more likely to die from all causes, compared with matched individuals who have close ties with family, friends, and the community" (Putman, 2000, p.13).

Conceptual Frameworks

CE conceptual frameworks are used to theoretically illustrate differentiating level of participation, power, and/or influence. Such frameworks are often represented by a continuum or spectrum. More concretely, these frameworks can be used to provide a greater understanding of CE practices or greater consistency within the implementation of CE practices. Sherry Arnstein (1969) was one of the first theorists to create a conceptual representation for community engagement (Figure 1). Arnstein explores CE in terms of citizen power orientations, describing the model as, "the redistribution of power that enables the 'have-nots' citizens, presently

excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future"

(Arnstein, 1969, p. 220).

Figure 1. Ladder of Citizen Participation (Arnstein, 1969).
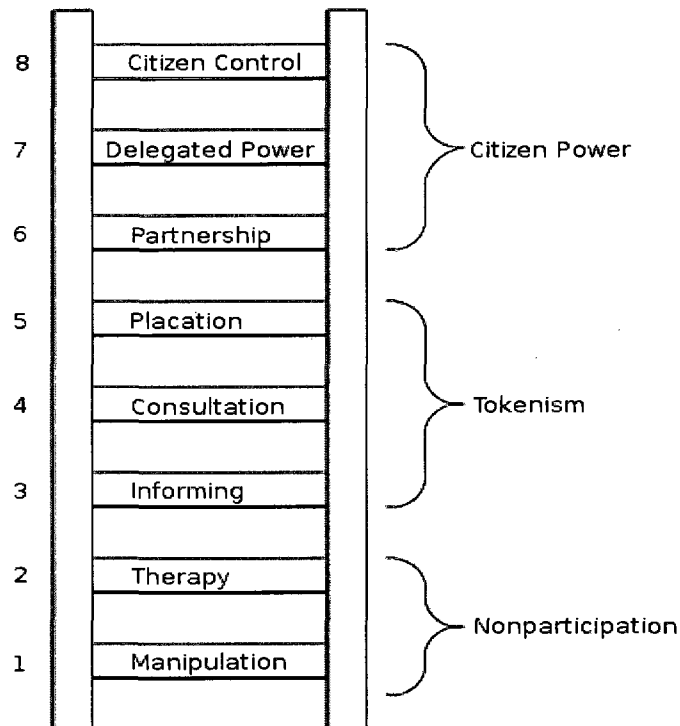
Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation illustrates levels of citizen involvement in planning

processes and the degree of control a community citizen has over a particular initiative.

Participation levels on the ladder are represented by 'rungs.' Arnstein identifies the first two

rungs as manipulation and therapy, which are described as non-participatory in nature. The third,

fourth, and fifth rungs of participation are informing, consultation, and placation, which have the

possibility of eliciting tokenism. The last three rungs: partnership, delegated power, and citizen

control, offer higher degrees of citizen power (Arnstein, 1969). The fundamental belief of this

model revolves around the use of participation to enhance citizen power.

Wiedemann and Femers (1993) present an alternative ladder of citizen participation

(Figure 2). Wiedemann and Femers differ from Arnstein in that their focus is strongly associated

with public participation, specifically, participation found within larger government mandates. In

this ladder, at the lowest level the public's "right to know" is described, while at the highest

level, public participation is granted in the final decision making.

Figure 2. The Public Participation Ladder (Wiedemann & Femers, 1993)
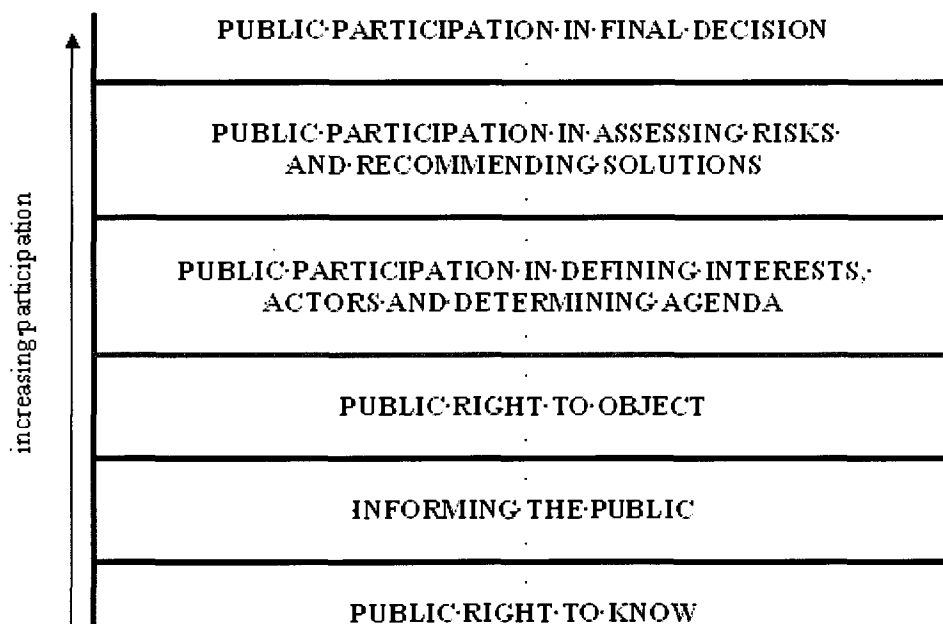
Within this ladder, public participation ranges from general education that involves a small

degree of direct influence on decision making, to public collaborations in the final decision-

making processes, which involves a significant degree of influence in decision making and can

imply empowerment.

Conner (1988)'s New Ladder of Citizen Participation, frames public participation in

terms of 'preventing and resolving public controversy' (p. 250). In this ladder, Conner offers a

range of public participation techniques used to achieve resolution, from public education to

leaders involvement preventative-based activities (Figure 3).

Figure 3. The New Ladder of Citizen Participation (Connor, 1988)
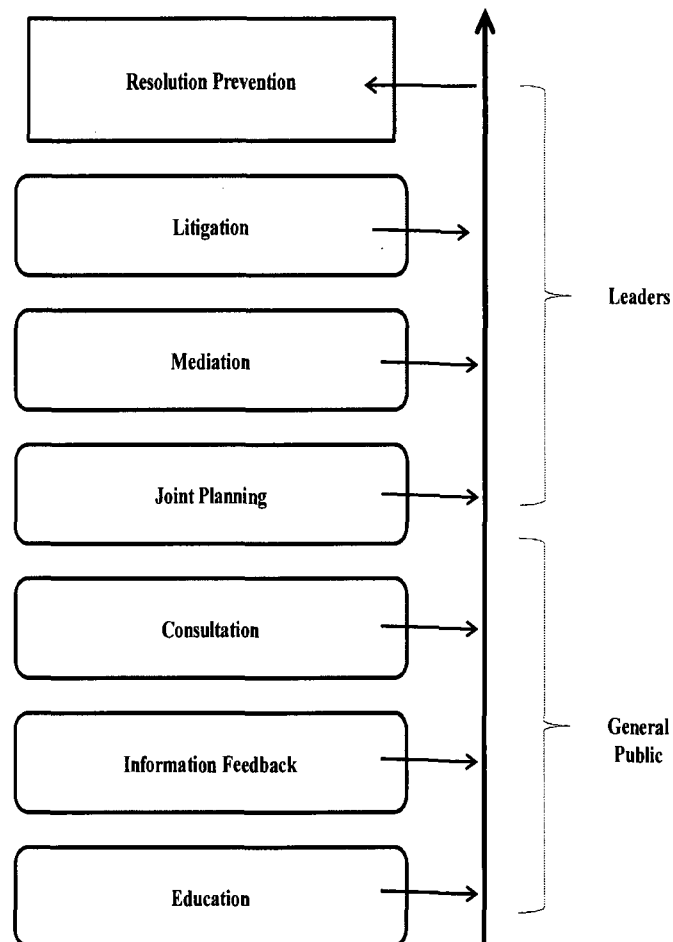
Different than Arnstein's exploration of citizen power and empowerment and Wiedemann and

Femers' government-oriented frame of public participation, Conner's theory explores citizen

management. Conner explores participation in terms of avoiding or resolving disputes that arise in the public decision-making process. Other rungs along the ladder include consultation, mediation, and litigation, implying that "decision making is inherently confrontational" (Schlossberg & Shuford, 2005, p.17).

Rocha (1997) conceptualizes different levels of public participation using levels of empowerment. This model describes a shift in types of power using a series, of levels that are described as rungs, moving from Rung 1 where power is individually based, through to Rung 5 where power is community-based. Rocha notes the importance in acknowledging that various rungs or power typologies are not evaluatively arranged to indicate one as less beneficial and one as more beneficial; rather, "they are arranged on the ladder based on the intended locus of their outcomes: from individual to community empowerment" (Rocha, 1997, p. 35).

Figure 4. Ladder of Empowerment (Rocha, 1997).

| **Community involvement** |
| **Rung 5** Political empowerment |
| **Rung 4** Socio-political empowerment |
| **Rung 3** Mediated empowerment |
| **Rung 2** Embedded individual empowerment |
| **Rung 1** Atomistic individual empowerment |
| **Individual involvement** |
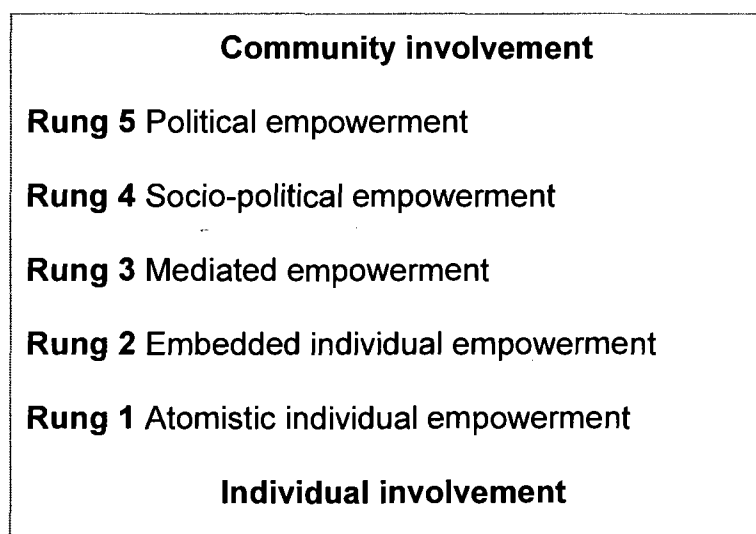
Rocha is similar to Arnstein (1969) in that she describes different notions of power. However, where Arnstein aims to create a purposeful way to address power differentials, Rocha develops a

typology, a ladder of empowerment, so that planners and others may gain a clearer understanding

of empowerment and its varied potential (Schlossberg & Shuford, 2005).

A framework that has most notably been applied in the public sector is the Spectrum for

Public Participation created by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)

(Figure 5). IAP2 is an international association of members who seek to promote and improve

the practice of public participation in relation to individuals, governments, institutions, and other

entities (International Association for Public Participation, 2007). This framework was

developed out of an identified need to have consistency in language and practice within the field

of public participation.

Figure 5: Spectrum for Public Participation (International Association for Public Participation, 2007) [1]

IAP2 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SPECTRUM

INCREASING LEVEL OF PUBLIC IMPACT

INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
Public Participation Goal:	**Public Participation Goal:**	**Public Participation Goal:**	**Public Participation Goal:**	**Public Participation Goal:**
To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the Public:	**Promise to the Public:**	**Promise to the Public:**	**Promise to the Public:**	**Promise to the Public:**
We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
Example Tools:	**Example Tools:**	**Example Tools:**	**Example Tools:**	**Example Tools:**
• fact sheets • web sites • open houses.	• public comment • focus groups • surveys • public meetings.	• workshops • deliberate polling.	• citizen advisory committees • consensus-building • participatory decision-making.	• citizen juries • ballots • delegated decisions.

---

[1] Permission granted from the International Association for Public Participation via email correspondence

IAP2's spectrum has 5 components: Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, and Empower (International Association for Public Participation, 2007). The Inform level should be used to "provides the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives, and/or solutions" (International Association for Public Participation, 2007, para. 4). Consult is intended "to obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives, and/or decisions," while Involvement is understood as, "to work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered" (International Association for Public Participation, 2007, para. 4). Collaboration is necessary "to partner with the public on each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution" and at the last level empower is, "to place the decision-making power in the hands of the public" (International Association for Public Participation, 2007, para.4). These components operate within a system in which as you move from Inform to Empower (Left to Right) the level of public power in decision-making increases, as indicated by the arrow. This spectrum also includes Tools for completing each level of community engagement on the spectrum, in addition to a Promise to the Public that acts as an accountability check for the group implementing the engagement spectrum.

Empowerment

Empowerment is an area of great complexity in the articulation and implementation of community engagement, and has also been referred to as: community control, citizen control, deliberative democracy, discursive democracy, supported delegation, shared power, autonomy, community control, entrusted community, along with other terms. Community empowerment has grown over the last decade in industrialized countries as governments enter a new paradigm, one

in which the value of empowering people is recognized as not only for the benefit of communities and citizens, but for local governments as well. Within the field of community psychology, Rappaport (1984) defines empowerment "as a process; the mechanism by which people, organizations, and communities gain mastery over their lives" (p.3). In the same way, in describing factors that contribute to successful citizen participation, Voth & Jackson (1981) describe empowerment as a process in which citizens must not only "create and maintain an initiative", but also have control (p.56). Citizens are more likely to get involved if they feel as though they have influence and can make meaningful contributions (Meehan, 1996; Bracht & Tsouro, 1990). However, what is considered to a *meaningful contribution* varies within the literature. Some literature identifies empowerment as increasing individuals' and communities' awareness of their capacities. Popular education campaigns promote community empowerment by increasing individual and community awareness of their own capacities (Wiggins et al, 2009). Additional research suggests empowerment is more of a consultation process that seeks to build and strengthen networks, and improve access to resources and services (Dongier, 2004). Further literature still articulates empowerment as being a collaborative process in which communities are given skills and capacities to resolve issues on their own. Despite these variations in meaning, as well as critics (Riger, 1993), a degree of consistency around the denotation of the term has been established in CE literature and practice. Empowerment is commonly referenced in engagement frameworks and policy, and is often articulated as the highest level of power or facet of engagement within communities or amongst individuals. Most definitions of empowerment involve a process that involves giving greater decision-making power to its citizens, the notion that communities must shape their own directions, and have control over the issues (Bracht & Tsouro, 1990).

Empowerment also has ties to "asset-based" community development frameworks. The term "asset-based" refers to a positive, capacity-driven approach that encourages citizens to make gains for themselves, as opposed to a traditional "needs-driven approach" that ultimately make citizens/communities government-dependant (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). An asset-based approach promotes the use of strengths and skills that are already established within communities, rather than obtaining external help. This model presumes that by strengthening social capital, participation in local government will be improved (Jorgenson & Van Domelen, 2001). Further, this kind of understanding of empowerment is based on a model of "bottom-up development". Under this model, empowerment initiatives draw and grow based on existing stocks of social capital (Dongier, 2008). In other words, an initiative would build and strengthen networks within the across communities by means of empowering people, as seen through improving access to resources and services. Both the bottom-up development models and asset-based approaches empowerment operates within, presumes that by strengthening social capital, participation in local development will be improved (Jorgenson & Van Domelen, 2001).

Participatory Democracy

The highest form of empowerment can be understood as giving direct power to the people, and is often described as "participatory democracy". The process of participatory democracy (sometimes referred to as Direct Democracy) is a process emphasizing the broad participation (decision-making) of citizens around the direction of political systems. Theoretically, participatory democracy is understood as a "point of leverage from which to achieve a more egalitarian redistribution of power." (Bachrach & Botwinick, 1992, p.1). This "democratization of the entire political process" (Bachrach & Botwinick, 1992, p.1) is not currently reflected in traditional representative democracies, which tend to limit citizen

participation to voting. Central to the concept of participatory democracy is the notion that

government agendas both service and reflect the needs of the people. Pateman (1970) describes

the process of participatory democracy as one that prevents citizen separation from government

structures, while also fostering a concern for community-wide problems. Similarly, Bachrach &

Botwinick (1992) describe participatory democracy as a unique form of democracy in that it

"serves to channel the interests of the people" (p.7), through its ability to have communities

define and their needs and facilitate how such needs will be addressed.

Decentralization is a process that is closely associated with participatory democracy, and

in many cases would be described as operating current to participatory democracy processes.

Decentralization is described as, "the process of dispersing decision-making closer to the citizens

or community" (Sharma, 2005, p. 7). Decentralization is credited with increasing planning and

budgeting; enhancing participation; redistributing power; wealth and resources; improving

administrative performances; decreasing bureaucracy; and responding to the social needs of

citizenships (Sharma, 2008). Political decentralization aims to give citizens or their elected

representatives greater power in public decision-making. Political decentralization operates

under the assumption that decisions made with greater participation will be better informed,

more reflective, and more relevant to a diversified set of interests in society (Sharma, 2005).

Participatory Budgeting

Participatory budgeting represents an example of a participatory democratic process,

through which both decentralization and empowerment can occur. Participatory budgeting,

operates under the notion that all citizens are enabled to collectively decide what community

services their city government provides, through their active role in the allocation of municipal

or public budget (Lerner & Van Wagner, 2006). Participatory budgeting allows citizens "the opportunity to gain firsthand knowledge about government operations, influence government politics, and hold government to account" (Shah, 2007, p.5). Although there are variations in the ways in which participatory budgeting is presented, there appears to be some consistency in the core principles that are found in its processes; these include: "democracy, equity, community, education, and transparency" (Lerner & Van Wagner, 2006, para. 8).

Participatory budgeting originally developed as a democratic process in Porto Alegre, Brazil and since that time it has spread within Latin America and to other continents. In Europe, towns and cities in France, Italy, Germany, Spain and England, as well as India and Africa, have initiated participatory budgeting processes (Lerner, 2005). In recent years, participatory budgeting has been adapted in several Canadian cities: Guelph's Neighbourhood Support Coalition, Toronto Community Housing's Tenant Participation System, and Ridgeview School's participatory budget in Vancouver. Lerner & Van Wagner (2006) identify both the relevance and significance of participatory budgeting within a Canadian context; "increasing inequality and neoliberalism, participatory budgeting has made public participation more powerful, government decision-making more democratic, and public spending more equitable" (para. 2).

Literature and case study research identifies participatory budgeting as an important tool for implementing empowerment-based initiatives, and having inclusive and accountable governance (Shah, 2007). Because citizens "with the greatest needs play a greater role in decision-making, spending decisions tend to redistribute resources to communities in need" (Lerner & Van Wagner, 2006, para. 2). Participatory budgeting offers an attractive incentive for

marganizated or "hard to reach" citizens, through its ability to impact decisions that directly influence their lives.

<center>*Benefits of Community Engagement*</center>

Individuals and Community Benefits

Political scientist and social theorist, Robert Putman describes numerous societal benefits that flow from social participation and networking, such as trust, reciprocity, information and cooperation, all of which result in greater social capital (Putman, 2000). Social capital refers to the connections in and between social relationships and in communities can include social capital resources such as: trust, networks, and bonding (Daniel, Schwier, & McCalla, 2003). Social capital frameworks are strongly associated with community engagement; Woolcock (2001) describe social capital as, "the norms and networks that facilitate collective action" (p.11). In related research, Woolcock highlights the connection between social capital and CE; Woolcock (1998) identifies that levels of social capital are related to a variety of positive, social benefits, including: community engagement, individual, and community well being.

Research by Putman (2000) and Woolcock (2001) indicates that high levels of social capital are beneficial to a community, while low levels of social capital can be harmful to a community. Specifically Woolcock (2001) links low levels of social capital to high levels of ill-health, fatality, crime, unemployment, poverty, unhappiness, voter absenteeism, and poor government. Putman's research showcases the profound influence social capital has on crime. In his research, Putman (2000) explains that social capital is more important than a state's education level, rate of single-parent households, and income inequality in predicting the number

of murders per capita. Additional research by Putman (2000) links strong communities to good health; "of all the domains in which [he has] traced the consequences of social capital, in none is the importance of social capital so well established as the case of health and well being" (p.16). Similarly, other research has linked levels of mortality, morbidity and disease to social capital of various kinds (Hawe & Shiell, 2000), while similar research by Shugurensky (2003) discovered that civic-participation results in increased social connections and higher levels of physical well-being.

Historically, engagement processes were not typically understood or emphasized outside of the electoral participation. Over the last few decades, however, there has been an increased understanding and appreciation for growing potential of CE. CE has been proven to benefit both the community and the individuals living within the community. Research has shown that benefits to individuals who are engaged within their communities include: networking opportunities; access to information and resources; skill enhancement; a sense of contribution and helpfulness in solving community problems (Bracht, Kingsbury, & Rissel, 1999). The article, "Fostering Innovation and Use", describes the concept of "smart communities", which are identified as communities that are "attractive and competitive" (Industry Canada, 2002, para. 5). Such communities are identified as encouraging people to live, invest, and perform business in that area (Industry Canada, 2002). The article later describes community engagement as being central to "launching a smart community" (Industry Canada, 2002, para. 5).

It has also been suggested that community engagement can promote employment and economic growth. An example of this is the Local Exchange Trading Systems (LETS), a community model that aims to increase employment through the promotion of community

participation. The LETS model is based on the notion of creating networks of trust and reciprocity. Through such networks, LETS initiatives are able to create a community environment in which entrepreneurship is promoted and employability rises (Rogers & Robinson, 2004). An evaluation of the LETS model found that as well as building networks and increasing employability, "LETS biggest impact on employability was the creation of passion for self-employed business ventures" (Rogers & Robinson, 2004, p. 5).

Empowerment-based initiatives have shown great success in enhancing community spiritual, political, social, or economic strength (Kagan, 2005). Kegan (2005) understands empowerment initiatives as allowing people to gain confidence and pride from having decision-making power in their communities. Empowerment initiatives undertaken in England, Australia and Chicago have shown that strong communities can help reduce crime through informal social monitoring (community centre police initiatives). Specifically, these initiatives aim to involve local people in developing and implementing policing strategies and are shown to significantly reduce crime (Canadian Community for Dialogue and Deliberation, 2009).

Municipal Benefits

From the wealth of literature on community engagement and social capital it is apparent that involving citizens in decision-making processes has positive benefits on the community (Canadian Community for Dialogue and Deliberation, 2009; Kagan, 2005; Minnesota Department of Health, 2008; Russell, Morrison, & Davidson, 2008; The New South Wales Department of Infrastructure Planning and Natural Resources, 2003), individuals in the community (Woolcock 1998, 2001, 2005; Putman 2000), and the government (Flood & Archibald, 2005; Kegan, 2006; Redburn & Buss, 2006; Tolley, 2003). Increasingly, local

authorities are becoming more receptive to community influence (Audit Commission, 2003; Office of the Deputy Minister, 2002), however, there appears to be a distinct gap between what is acknowledged in theory and done in practice, leading to reduced effectiveness within decision-making processes. A 1983 research report by the World Health Organization, which included representatives from 26 European countries, Canada, and Australia, marked an early acknowledgement of that,

> Local governments too often neglect to obtain the input of its citizens in decision making processes. Community decisions are too readily and too frequently left in the hands of professionals only, with too little attention being given to educating lay people, or allowing them to participate in the creation, treatment, and support for programmes (as cited in Macallan & Narayn, 1994, p. 15).

Additionally, in recent years several Canadian municipalities have sought to create formalized engagement policy, to ensure that CE is occurring in all municipal departments, and is being employed with consistency and transparency. Even still, most often municipal engagement is done in informing or consulting formats, and is completed informally. To illustrate, research carried out in England in 1998 provided a baseline on a variety of initiatives local government had used to engage citizens (Office of the Deputy Minister, 2002). This 1998 survey found that traditional CE methods, such as public meetings, satisfaction surveys, and "complaint and suggestions tools", were well established in local governments. However, only a minority of local authorities performed more deliberative and participatory approaches (e.g., citizen panels). A 2002 update found that since the 1998 survey there had been an increase in the use of innovative and deliberative approaches (Office of the Deputy Minister, 2002). However, the

majority of local authorities did not have a formal strategy surrounding these initiatives, and most often relied on informal networks within communities (e.g., community-driven enterprises, empowerment initiatives run by NGO's), as opposed to municipally-operated CE policy. This informal approach to participation sometimes left initiatives lacking lasting strength and influence (Office of the Deputy Minister, 2002).

As the onus for community engagement has shifted to municipal structures, the benefits that CE has on municipalities have been documented to a greater extent. National and international literature, government reports, and non-government reports identify that when CE processes are embedded in municipal settings CE can produce numerous benefits: 1) enhanced understanding of community needs and strengths; 2) stronger services; 3) greater innovation in problem solving; 4) improved accountability; and 5) more democratic methods. The following section summarizes such observations, and provides categories created by myself.

Enhanced Understanding of Community Needs and Strengths. Community engagement allows municipalities the opportunity to better understand community needs and strengths. Research indicates that municipalities that had strong working relationships with their community were more likely to understand the range of needs of the community and the community vision for the future. (Canadian Community for Dialogue and Deliberation, 2009; Department of Mainroads, 2004; Kagan, 2005; Minnesota Department of Health, 2008; Russell, Morrison, & Davidson, 2008; The New South Wales Department of Infrastructure Planning and Natural Resources, 2003).

Stronger Services. Greater understanding and recognition of community needs also prompts more informed decision making. Community engagement creates an environment in which more informed policy-making decisions can be made. Further, informed decision-making

around policy leads to more effective services that are reflective of the community. (Minnesota Department of Health, 2008; Russell, Morrison, & Davidson, 2008; The Improvement Network, 2008).

Greater Innovation in Problem-Solving. Community engagement involves multiple community stakeholders. Having a diversified set of input provides more opportunities for municipalities to critically reflect on the benefits of community-based knowledge. Unlike input from service providers and policy makers, community wisdom is an important resource that generates greater expertise. This in turn increases the opportunity for more innovative problem solving. (Greet, 2005; Kagan, 2005; Minnesota Department of Health, 2008)

Improved Accountability. Community engagement provides greater opportunity for governments to be open and transparent. Accountability involves an evaluation of municipalities' performance against its intended objectives, and a process for correction or accountability if expectations are not met. At its core, accountability involves being held responsible, and should be based on an open relationship between those who make decisions and those who are affected by those decisions. This type of open relationship-building has been shown to facilitate greater government accountability (Flood & Archibald, 2005; Redburn & Buss, 2006; Tolley, 2003).

More Democratic Methods. Community engagement is essential to improve democratic and service accountability. Additionally, CE can create more innovative relationships, facilitate stronger communication between citizens and municipalities, and allow for the consideration and collaboration of alternative viewpoints. Such relationships, communications, and collaboration can ultimately lead to more participatory methods and a stronger democracy (Flood & Archibald, 2005; Kegan, 2008; Tolley, 2003).

Principles of Effective Municipal Community Engagement

The benefits community engagement has on and within a municipal structure are plentiful (Flood & Archibald, 2005; Kegan, 2006; Redburn & Buss, 2006; Tolley, 2003). Enhancing public involvement proves critical for eliciting: an understanding of community needs and strengths; stronger services; greater innovations in problems-solving; improved government accountability; and ultimately more democratic methods. In order for local governments to enhance these offshoots (benefits) of CE, the literature identifies principles for successful CE implementation and sustainability. A number of these principles draw upon experiential knowledge (case studies), while others arise from more formal research. The following will explore the principles involved in successful CE as articulated by the literature, and as categorized by myself.

Clarity of Purpose and Direction. Bracht and Tsouro (1990) note, "...activities to mobilize citizens begin with the establishment of a structure to elicit coordinate citizen effort" (p.200). Establishing clarity within a CE initiative is a principle for effective CE that was identified throughout the literature (Audit Commission, 2003; Bracht & Tsouro, 1990; Canadian Community for Dialogue and Deliberation, 2009; The New South Wales Department of Infrastructure Planning and Natural Resources, 2003; Woolcock & Brown, 2005). Both the community and municipal staff members benefit from CE clarity, especially those intimately involved in CE processes. The literature describes two key ways clarity can be achieved. The first is through the establishment of a CE strategy or policy, while the second is through the creation of a conceptual framework, which most often operates in conjunction with the CE policy. Both policy and frameworks often encompass values expressed in principles, that is,

fundamental rules that guide engagement decisions (i.e., transparency, inclusivity, accountability, and communication).

The Birmingham City Democracy Commission in England is an example of a government using policy to elicit structure in public participation (Bousetta, 2001). The Birmingham City Counsel launched an engagement initiative that aimed to provide the public with greater authority around addressing and defining community needs. This led to the formation of the "Democracy Commission" (DC). This group is in charge of making recommendations for community participation to Counsel. In an evaluation of this project, one factor identified for ensuring sustainability of the DC was the establishment of a strategic plan, which aimed to give the project direction and ensure internal agendas were consistent and in support of one another (Bousetta, 2001).

Conceptual frameworks are also identified as a tool for eliciting greater structure in CE processes (Bracht & Tsouro, 1990). Such conceptual frameworks provide greater understanding and consistency within community engagement practices and policy development. Frameworks can be represented in two ways. First, frameworks can provide a strategic approach (values and principles) that are intended to guide the CE strategy or the framework. One example of this is the Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP). The MAPP tool was developed by the National Association of County and City health officials in conjunction with the Public Health Practice Program Office, and Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. MAPP is a strategic approach to community development, specially that pertaining to community health (National Association of County and City Health Officials, 2009). MAPP essentially acts as a community development tool to help communities improve health through

community-wide planning. The MAPP approach involves the assessment of needs, the formation of effective partnerships, and the use of strategic use of resources. MAPP includes a series of principles that are intended to guide the projects to ensure success. The clarity provided from this community development health framework, allows for communities to better anticipate and manage change, and to create a stronger public health infrastructure, in addition to enhancing the overall health of the community (National Association of County and City Health Officials, 2009).

Second, frameworks can also be more illustrative or graphic in nature, often represented by a continuum or spectrum, showcasing different levels of citizen participation, principles, and levels of engagement; examples of these types of illustrative frameworks include the ladders and spectrums discussed previously. Illustrative models can include strategically placed arrows to demonstrate increasing levels of citizen power or interplays within the framework. Conceptual frameworks for community engagement are effective to ensure the purpose is established and goals and directions are effectively conceptualized. Much clarity can emerge out of having this type of conceptual framework (in combination with its adjacent set of values), as part of a community engagement proceses (C2D2, 2009).

Overall, the establishment of clarity within a CE initiative can help create a common understanding in the formation of a vision for the initiative. Research notes that informal engagement efforts often leave initiatives short of "legitimacy and lacking robustness" (Enhancing Public Participation in Local Government, 1998, p.12), while a commitment to a shared vision can increase effectiveness (The New Department of Infrastructure Planning & Natural Resources, 2003).

Inclusivity. Inclusivity is one of the fundamental principles of community engagement practices. Inclusivity in government has been described as both theoretically fundamental, but is also an essential part of practice. Theoretically inclusiveness can be understood as ensuring representativeness in informing decision-making (The New South Wales Department of Infrastructure Planning and Natural Resources, 2003; Woolcock & Brown, 2005). In practice inclusivity requires the use of multiple engagement strategies, acknowledging and addressing barriers to engagement, relationship building, and listening to the community members (Woolcock & Brown, 2005).

Research indicates that levels of social interaction and trust are often lowest among socially excluded groups, where arguably they are needed most (Putman, 2000; Woolcock & Brown, 2005). Sherry Arnstein's Ladder of Participation (1969) was the first model that explored the issues of power differentials between what she referred to as society's "haves" and "have-nots". Such "have-nots" can be operationalized according to economic, education, employment, and health status as well as to diversities in cultures, language, age, mobility, and interests. Additionally, marginalized populations' difficulty in engaging in communities is often tied to a subset of barriers, both individual and intuitional; this can include: lack of self-esteem and confidence, language/cultural barriers, issues around safety, disability-based barriers, lack of diversity among municipal staff, or previously failed promises or unmet community needs (Russell, Morrison, & Davidson, 2008). Overall, all aspect of community engagement must recognize diversity within the community, seek to address its multifaceted challenges, and embrace the strength it can create.

Transparency and Accountability. Transparency and accountability are two principles that represent best practices for community engagement practices, as identified by the literature. The concepts of transparency and accountability are inherently linked, as transparency elicits greater accountability (Redburn & Buss, 2006). Transparency implies being open, honest, and having clear communication. Literature on CE and community development case studies speaks to the importance of being as open as possible about all decision and actions, this involves providing reasons as to how issues are prioritized and how final decisions are made (The National Centre for Involvement, 2008).

Similarly, accountability involves taking time to explain to citizens what is being done, and why it is being done. Schedler, Diamond, & Plattner (1999) describe accountability as "the acknowledgment and assumption of responsibility for actions, decisions ... [and the willingness to] explain and be answerable for resulting consequences" (p.73). Research stresses the importance of establishing accountability from the onset of the CE process, "making 'accountability to local communities' a cornerstone of procedures and processes should be one of the first things that counsel considers" (The National Centre for Involvement, 2008, p. 2; Woolcock & Brown, 2005). There is evidence that where local government effectively implement participation strategies that are open, communities are more likely to get involved in decision-making processes (C2D2, 2009). Lowndes & Stoker (1992) note that although other factors, such as socio-economic status, are important in explaining overall patterns of public engagement, variations in local governments' openness appear to be critical (Lowndes & Stoker, 1992).

Collaborative Community Partnerships. Forming collaborative partnerships in the community is recognized within the literature as a fundamental principle to successful community engagement (Bracht & Tsouros, 1990). Literature describes partnerships as being not only helpful, but "necessary" for community change (Maton, 2000). Further, Russell et al (2008) indentified the establishment of effective engagement partnerships as helpful to guide community leaders in designing, implementing, and evaluating community engagement efforts.

The importance of ensuring partnerships are mutually beneficial was also described. Individuals and groups involved in a partnership must feel that they each have something to contribute and something to gain (Maton, 2000). Similarly, Woolcock and Brown (2005) describe the importance of bringing a variety of stakeholders to ensure the needs and voices of the entire community are represented, otherwise partnerships can become biased. Another suggestion for the creation of successful partnership is to build on and strengthen existing social structures (Bousetta, 2001). This often includes the use of community groups or the use of "local champions" who have greater access to the resources and internal networks in which they live or are affiliated with.

Champions. Literature suggests numerous benefits to using local champions. First, champions can act as a stable contact between the community and the local government or group. This in turn helps to build trust, which can increase openness and communication between communities and local government. (New South Wales Government, 2009; Minnesota Department of Health, 2008). Trust and communication can also allow champions the opportunity to outreach and demonstrate to the community that their participation is valued (Minnesota Department of Health, 2008). The literature also describes the use "formalized

champions". Such champions may be paid, municipal staff, or may work with a community group/organization. An example of a formalized champion can be found in an England case study. In this example, local authorities across the country were mandated by the government to appoint an officer to act as a "champion" in the community. Their aim was to help individuals and groups play a greater role in shaping their communities by engaging communities in the planning process. The overarching aim of the initiative was to strengthen community involvement (Government Office for the North East England, 2006).

Partnerships with Community Groups. Partnerships with community groups were also identified as important mechanism to create collaborative partnerships. Community groups can include neighbourhood associations, community associations, coalitions, cultural groups, religious groups, as well as other interest groups. Members of such community groups represent some of the best resources to help initiate change (Bakajanian, 1993), as they can create an organized, unified voice. Further, similar to the use of champions, community groups allow for communities to share concerns, needs and/or interests. This communication process can in turn lead to more efficient, collaborative problem-solving. Community groups also hold greater permanency than local champions (i.e., individuals), and as a result can represent a great resource in completing long-range initiatives (Maton, 2000).

Relationship-Building. Relationship building is seen as central to developing collaborative community partnerships, both with champions and community groups. Kagan (2008) identifies that community engagement efforts often neglect to see relationship building as vital to success and " will often proceed too rapidly, missing the preliminary stages of listening to local people, or failing to build in ways for people to discuss and develop their own awareness

and ideas" (p.15). When successful rapport is established, relationships in the community can snowball into an ongoing and substantive partnership. Similarly, Diamond (2004) indicates that "successful co-operation and performance can help create expectations that future behaviour will be positively rewarded," which encourages future collaborative efforts in new areas" (p.195). Relationship building also creates greater community trust; Kammersgaard (1999) as cited in Hawe and Shiell (2000), notes that "frequent interactions among community members and positive problem-solving experiences can reinforce and cultivate norms of trust" (p. 23). Hawe & Sheill (2000) note that a relationship of trust and reciprocity "oils the wheels of social and economic exchange, reducing transaction costs, allowing for group members to draw on favours, circulate privileged information, and gain better access to opportunities" (p. 872).

Final Reflections on Literature

As communities grow increasingly diverse, governments are faced with the challenge of implementing more inclusive, "synergetic linkages" between individuals and the social structures in which they operate. Ongoing citizen disengagement has prompted governments to approach community engagement in innovative ways, abandoning traditional approaches that focused solely on election voting processes. This new community engagement paradigm operates under the notion that both governments and citizens can benefit from community engagement efforts, and in mutually reinforcing ways.

Increasingly, governments are also recognizing that to facilitate stronger community engagement efforts, empowerment initiatives need to be pursued. Such initiatives allow greater opportunity for more participatory democratic methods to occur (i.e., participatory budgeting), which ultimately promotes the decentralization of government decision making processes. Although some gains have been made at the government level, there is a clear gap in the

literature around what constitutes as best practices in implementing community engagement within Canadian municipalities, and at multiple levels of engagement. As a result of the changing nature of social networks, the increasingly diverse nature of the communities, and profound benefits of CE, it is fundamental for municipal governments to acknowledge both their changing role in the process of public engagement and the significant impacts of creating inclusive, community engagement policies.

Chapter 2: Research Context

Introduction to Research Context

Prior to the research pertaining specifically to my thesis, I was extensively involved in

two preliminary research projects at the City of Kitchener, the first being the Conceptual

Framework Development Project, and the second being the Internal Inventory Research Project.

These research projects were done collaboratively through the development of the City of

Kitchener Community Engagement Strategy Working Group. This group included myself, a

representative from Wilfrid Laurier University (academia), one representative from Compass

Kitchener (representing the community), and five City of Kitchener staff (See Appendix A for a

complete list of the City of Kitchener Community Engagement Strategy Working Group

[CESWG]. Appendix B outlines additional information regarding the formation of the CESWG.

The data collected from these two research projects has both informed and shaped my thesis

research.

The City of Kitchener is a city in southwest Ontario, Canada and is part of a metropolitan

Region that includes the adjacent cities of Waterloo and Cambridge. The City of Kitchener is

part of the Region of Waterloo, which is the eleventh largest Census Metropolitan Area (CMA)

in Ontario. Kitchener and Waterloo are often referred to jointly as "Kitchener-Waterloo" (K-W)

because of their close proximity, however each operates under separate municipal governments

(Statistics Canada, 2001). According to 2006 Census data, the City of Kitchener had a

population of approximately 204,668, which grew by 8.2%, compared with an increase of 6.1%

within the province of Ontario (Statistics Canada, 2001). Comparable Census data indicates that

the average age of Kitchener residents was 35.3 years, compared to the 37.6 year national

average. Approximately 10% of the population is a visible minority, and are primarily represented by people of Asian (2.73%) and Black Caribbean (1.79%) decent (Statistics Canada, 2001).

In recent years, the City of Kitchener expressed the desire to institutionalize effective community engagement practices into current municipal practices and policy. In 2007 the City of Kitchener conducted an extensive series of public consultations, in which the public indicated the desire to be involved to a greater extent in the municipal decision-making processes that were affecting them, and the future of their municipality. Such consultations also indicated a citizen desire (and need) to have more inclusive, municipal practices. Secondary to these requests (among others) made by Kitchener citizens, the City of Kitchener developed a strategic plan to fulfill the municipal needs as recognized by its citizens, with the intention of ultimately building a stronger community. One component of this strategy is a plan to develop and implement inclusive community engagement processes, practices, and tools within municipal policy. Currently the City of Kitchener incorporates engagement processes in their work through various forms of informing the public, public consultations, community forums, and through the utilization of partnerships with neighbourhood associations. So while the City of Kitchener "has a history of an 'informal policy' around public engagement and participation, it has not as yet cemented its commitment through formal policy and procedures" (City of Kitchener, 2008, p.18). The purpose of my research has been to inform the development of a CE policy for the City of Kitchener.

Community engagement emerged as a strategic direction for the City of Kitchener through broad community consultation, as identified in the Plan for Health Kitchener (P4HK).

The P4HK is the result of one of the most extensive and inclusive consultation processes in the City of Kitchener's history (City of Kitchener, 2006). In 2000, Compass Kitchener initiated conversations with the community to develop a vision for the future of the City of Kitchener. Compass Kitchener is a group of citizens who represent a link between the local community and City Council. Specifically, Compass Kitchener is mandated "to better engage community members and to assist in building a positive community identity" (Compass Kitchener, 2007, p. 8). In this project Compass Kitchener invited local citizens to talk specifically about their vision for Kitchener, projecting 20 years into the future (Compass Kitchener, 2007). The vision, values and directions citizens articulated were in turn adopted by Kitchener City Council in June 2000.

Six years later, Compass Kitchener developed the "Who-are-you-Kitchener?" campaign. The first phase of the Who-Are-you-Kitchener? campaign involved over 2, 000 public consultations (City of Kitchener, 2006). Such consultations acted as a follow-up to the surveys completed by Compass Kitchener in 2000. , and were accomplished through focus groups, and a city-wide survey, in an attempt to re-evaluate the vision and directions against current, community satisfaction, priorities, and values. Questions included general likes and dislikes identified by residents, as well as what residents believed the municipalities' priorities should be for the future, and where tax money should be allocated (City of Kitchener, 2006). This study also resulted in the production of a City Report Card based entirely on citizen input that allowed City Council to investigate the municipalities' performance as seen from a citizen perspective.

The second phase of Who-Are-You-Kitchener? campaign included an Environics Study, which was also completed in 2006. This study involved a survey of over 300 questions, all of which attempted to seek a better understanding of local citizens' "social values " that included:

world view, expectancies, perceptions, habits of thought, and general attitudes (City of

Kitchener, 2006). In addition to values, this survey also probed residents about their familiarity

with municipal services, usage of services, and satisfaction with services (City of Kitchener,

2006). Ultimately this study allowed Compass Kitchener to identify citizen's values and

priorities and track social trends with the intention of predicting the direction Kitchener would be

moving in as a community over the next 20 years, based on community input. Occurring

simultaneous to Who- Are-You-Kitchener? was the City of Kitchener's "First Steps Toward a

Healthy Community Plan" that was created by the City of Kitchener Healthy Community

Working Group. The Plan highlights priorities identified by more than 3,000 citizens including

issues surrounding: quality of life, leadership and community engagement, diversity, downtown

development and the environment (City of Kitchener, 2006). Additionally the Plan includes

recommendations for action surrounding each of the key priority areas. Many synergetic linkages

were identified between Who-Are-You-Kitchener? and the First Steps Toward a Healthy

Community Plan, in both thematic output and strategic directions, as well the prevailing values

from which they operated. As such, the City of Kitchener utilized the results and

recommendations for both studies to create The Plan for a Healthy Kitchener Report (P4HK).

The P4HK report provides a summary of citizen's visions through the articulation of common

themes and the actions that will be taken in order to achieve this collective vision of a healthy,

Kitchener community. P4HK provides a unified strategic approach to the key areas essential to

the health and vitality of the City of Kitchener. Five priority areas were identified in the

consultation with the community, quality of life, leadership and community engagement,

diversity, downtown development, and the environment. High level recommendations for action

in each of these areas were provided and set to be completed over the next four years (2007-2010).

Community Engagement Strategy Working Group

In 2007, the City of Kitchener selected staff members to work on the specific strategic areas of P4HK (City of Kitchener, 2008). Staff leads would be in charge of creating mechanisms for change for each component for the strategic plan. This thesis research is related to the P4HK's Leadership and Engagement strategic area. Specifically, the P4HK report articulates community engagement as "keeping local government connected to the community by fostering, "an open and understandable decision-making process and a commitment to two-way communication with the community" (City of Kitchener, 2006, p.7). P4HK further communicates that this process will be completed through regularly engaging citizens through the sharing of information, through citizen consultation on specifics projects, and "through the active and ongoing participation of citizens, business and community organizations in the development of municipal polices, strategies, and plans for strategic invents" (City of Kitchener, 2006, p.7).

In June of 2007, City of Kitchener staff, Abbie Grafstein was placed in a secondment at the City of Kitchener and chosen to lead the diversity and leadership and engagement strategic components of the Plan for a Healthy Kitchener report. The P4HK recommends that the City of Kitchener's efforts to engage the public include communication and outreach appropriate for, and accessible to, diverse audiences. Consequently, the engagement and diversity components of the P4HK would strategically overlap to create an inclusive, community engagement policy. In October of 2007, Abbie Grafstein facilitated the development of the City of Kitchener

Community Engagement Strategy Working Group (CESWG) that included City of Kitchener staff members from a variety of departments, academics, and representatives from various community organizations. This enabled the CESWG to offer a diversified set of perceptions based on each group members' experiences and position within the Kitchener community.

The CESWG was committed to drafting a Community Engagement policy that would confirm the municipality's commitment to involve the public by ensuring best practices are consistently applied and that roles in decision-making are more clearly defined, and by bringing in shared understanding and values to community engagement (City of Kitchener, 2008). The first step in this process was the creation of a term of reference, as well as a number of themes to guide the strategy. The following six principles were developed from the CESWG themes and affirm that Community Engagement at the City of Kitchener will be guided by: Communication, Inclusivity, Transparency and Accountability, Continuous Improvement, Resources, and Engaging Partners. As presented in Appendix C, the principles in full provide a strong foundation for how the City of Kitchener will engage the community and clear direction for the development of tools and techniques to support community involvement in decision-making processes.

Community Engagement Framework. The central task of the Conceptual Framework Development Project was to develop a framework that will be used to conceptualize community engagement processes at the municipal-level, to be specifically used within the City of Kitchener as part of a community engagement policy. Early in the process, CESWG identified a conceptual framework for community engagement that described a continuum of strategies for involving the public in decision-making from passive to more active approaches that also included associated

promises related to reaching and involving stakeholders at each specific engagement level. Within this framework it is understood that whenever the municipality embarks on an engagement process, the purpose of the engagement and the 'promise' will be clarified at the beginning of the process. (See Appendix D for complete Framework.)

Figure 6: Community Engagement Continuum (City Kitchener, 2008)

INFORM	CONSULT	COLLABORATE	ENTRUST
To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternative, or solutions.	To obtain public input into priorities or decisions, usually at one point in the project planning or implementation process.	To partner with the public in various aspects of the planning and decision-making process usually including the development of alternatives and identification of the preferred solution.	To respond to needs of the public and place the final decision in their hands.

City of Kitchener activities that focus on 'informing' as key outcomes include communications tools such as "Your Kitchener" and media releases. For example, in the context of policy and strategy development, these tools are used to raise awareness about the municipal intentions to, for example, develop a new policy. These tools are also used to notify the public how they might get more actively involved in the development of a policy by participating in a survey or focus group (consult), or by applying to be part of a working group that will be exploring an issue (collaborate). 'Entrust' suggests that Council may put decision making in the hands of the community.

Diversity and Inclusion. Barriers to community engagement include anything that prevents a person from fully participating because of his/her age, language, ability, creed, etc, and may include a physical barrier, an informational or communications barriers, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice. As such, it is critical to determine the most effective best practices for inclusive engagement. Inclusivity was identified as a foundational guiding principle, and to begin to understand how the City of Kitchener can be more inclusive in its engagement initiatives, a diversity lens/tool was created for the continuum. This includes a checklist of inclusive practices that provides staff with tangible examples of how to practice community engagement at each level of the continuum in an inclusive manner (See Appendix D for a draft lens at the 'Inform' level of engagement). Concurrent to this research project, a "Diversity Tools Action Group" was developed. This group recognized the need for community coalition, municipal committees with public involvement, and other groups in the community to have more inclusive membership (City of Kitchener, 2008). The action group developed a draft "Inclusive Committee Checklist" that included concrete steps that can be taken to assist coalitions, committees, and other interest groups in their recruitment and operations. As such, this checklist compliments the work being done on the community engagement strategy, particularly at the collaborative level of engagement. Both checklists can be reviewed against current practices to identify where gaps are found to allow for new approaches to be incorporated into community engagement processes. These checklists are important tools that support the implementation of the policy my research informs.

Internal Inventory Research Project. To gain a stronger understanding of engagement in

the City of Kitchener, the CESWG oversaw a series of 15 interviews with staff leads that have

responsibility around community engagement. Findings were generated and compared to the

draft principles and continuum developed by the CESWG. Staff were asked questions about the

benefits of community engagement, who in the community should be engaged, challenges of

community engagement strategies and techniques that have worked in the past, and what

typology (in reference to the CE continuum) is most often used. Appendix B provides a more

detailed summary of this research project and a detailed overview its results.

Overall interviews indicated that staff perspectives and activities around CE are in

agreement with the principles articulated by P4HK, which include: inclusivity, communications,

transparency and accountability, engaging partners, and resources. Similarly, staff members

articulated the benefits of community engagement in much the same way the community did in

P4HK. This included an increase in public knowledge about government practices and

procedures, having more transparent government process, promoting greater

communication/relationship building between the municipality and the community, and stronger

decision-making, among others.

When reflecting on the question of who should be involved, interviewees identified that

the target audience for CE depends on the project. Several interviewees identified that it is

important to involve the people who were most affected by the decisions. Engaging all

stakeholders affected by a decision also represented a challenge within CE. Interviewees

specifically identified the engagement of diverse/marginalized populations as being a challenge.

Staff members also indicated the desire to adapt better engagement practices for marginalized

groups, and also identified resources (time, financial, human resources), as a significant

challenge to community engagement.

Staff members also provided their perspective on what types of tools work best in CE

practices. Broadly, staff members talk about ensuring all stakeholders are represented, ensuring

the engagement method is appropriate for the target audience, engaging and educating citizens

early in the process, and educating the public on the benefits of community engagement. More

specifically, staff members also identified specific techniques for community engagement:

feedback forms, web surveys (especially when targeting younger populations), focus groups, and

personal interviews. Staff members identified that on many projects more than one level of CE is

used throughout a project. Staff members also articulated that most often their engagement

efforts would be in the inform or consult areas of the model; however, staff members did indicate

an interest in learning methods to support them in moving along the Community Engagement

Continuum to the collaborative and entrust areas of the model. Overall, findings for the Internal

Inventory Research Project supported the direction of the CESWG, regarding the principles and

continuum. Where applicable, the draft principles were adapted to reflect findings.

Draft Policy. As of June 2008, the City of Kitchener Community Engagement Strategy

Working Group submitted a draft policy to Council. This draft policy contained a preamble,

guiding principles, and the Community Engagement Continuum. The preamble was adapted

from A Plan for A Healthy Kitchener: the birthplace of the community engagement strategy. It

identified a) the corporate recognition of the benefits of community engagement, and b) the

corporate commitment to engagement, and c) the processes to which this policy applies

(development of municipal policies, specific projects, strategies and plans for strategic

investments).

The second section identified the six principles that were developed from the CESWG themes and affirms that community engagement at the City of Kitchener should be guided by six themes or principles: communication, inclusivity, transparency and accountability, continuous improvement, resources, and engaging partners. These principles represent a strong foundation for how the municipality will engage the community and clear direction for the development of tools and techniques to support community engagement (See Appendix C for the list of principles in full). The third section of the draft policy included the continuum of four engagement strategies, and their associated promises to the stakeholders involved in specific engagement initiatives.

The City of Kitchener draft policy was clear in identifying that all levels of engagement have value and it is important to select the right approach for the question posed. Furthermore, it indicated that it is more than likely that multiple levels of engagement will be used in a given project. The submission of a draft policy represents one of the final stages in the formation the City of Kitchener's CE policy. The following chart outlines the stages the City of Kitchener has gone through in the formation of their engagement policy to date. This chart begins at idea conception (community and municipal-based research), and moves to future questions around policy formalization and implementation (implementation by whom, and how?), which this thesis research sought to gain insight around.

Figure 7: City of Kitchener Community Engagement Strategy Phases of Research
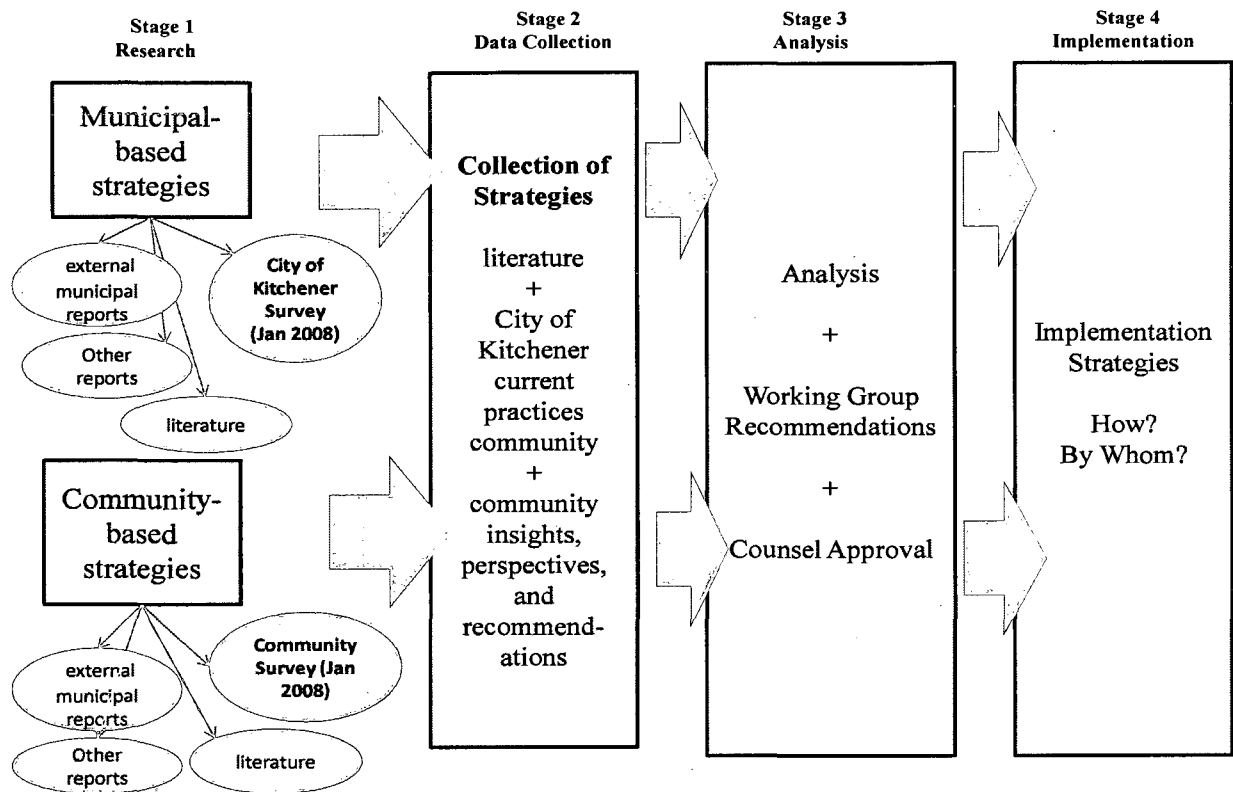
(McGee, S. & Loomis, C., 2008)

Research Questions

To reiterate, community engagement emerged as a strategic direction for the City of Kitchener through broad community consultation, and is so identified in the Plan for Health Kitchener (P4HK). The motivation behind this research was to improve citizenship engagement through the exploration of effective strategies and the integration of such strategies into City of Kitchener community engagement policy and practice. An inventory of current engagement practices within the City of Kitchener was first identified in recent research completed by the City of Kitchener, in which staff members acknowledged current practices, areas of difficulties, recommendations based on experiential knowledge, and overall best practices. Such research was advanced through a multidisciplinary examination of literature on community engagement, community development and empowerment, and through the explorations of CE in four Canadian municipalities and one Region. The purpose of this research was to identify community engagement strategies that have been employed in municipal settings with proven success. Such approaches would inform the City of Kitchener's community engagement policy and practices, with the larger intention of enhancing engagement within Canadian municipalities and abroad. To determine what is necessary (best practices) to enhance community engagement practices and policy, a number of exploratory questions were proposed; they are as follows:

1. What are the best practices around implementing Community Engagement practices/policy?

2. What values should be associated with Community Engagement practices and Community Engagement practices/policy?

3. How is the concept of inclusivity articulated in Community Engagement practices/policy?

4. How is the concept of 'empowerment' articulated in Community Engagement practices/policy?

The first research question was open-ended and was designed to prompt participants to reflect thoroughly about their insights and experiences around CE (Posavac & Carey, 2003). It was intended to capture general information about CE within their municipalities and the history of their policy, if they had one. The second research question explored what values representatives from the Canadian municipalities perceived as necessary for CE to be most effective. For those municipalities that did have a formalized policy in place, it attempted to identify specific value sets affiliated with their policy. For those who did not have formal policies it could include values they identified as informally guiding their interactions with the public. The third research question examined issues related to inclusivity and how inclusivity was being reflected in their policy. This included the exploration of how issues related to diverse populations were carried out, and what they identified as best practices for being inclusive, and for those municipalities that do have a formal policy in place, this question specifically explored how inclusivity is reflected within their policy structure. The fourth and final research question examined the concept of empowerment. For municipalities that did have a formal policy this question asked how "empowerment" was articulated within their policy structure and the manner in which it is carried out. For those municipalities that do not have a formal policy in place, this question explored whether municipalities perform empowerment initiatives in their work, and if yes, the ways in which such processes were completed, and stories of success and challenge.

Chapter 3: Method

Community Entry

The interviews for this research predominately took place at the City of Kitchener's City

Hall in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada. City Hall was chosen as the research setting, due to the fact

that this is where the Community Engagement Strategy Working Group, of which the principle

researcher was a member operated. Interviews with additional Canadian municipalities were

completed over the telephone.

Community engagement emerged as a strategic direction for the City of Kitchener

through broad community consultation, and is so identified in the Plan for a Healthy Kitchener

(P4HK). In June of 2007, Abbie Grafstein was placed in a secondment at the City of Kitchener

and chosen to lead the diversity and engagement components of the P4HK. In October of 2007,

Abbie Grafstein facilitated the development of the City of Kitchener Community Engagement

Strategy Working Group (CESWG) that included City of Kitchener staff from a variety of

departments and representatives from various community organizations and institutions. Dr.

Colleen Loomis of Wilfrid Laurier University was approached to act as a representative on this

Working Group. Because of the synergy between my own research interests and the research

being undertaken at the City of Kitchener, Dr. Loomis opted to act as a peripheral member of the

team, while I took an active role in the CESWG. My role involved attending regular CESWG

meetings, performing administrative-based duties for the CESGW (minutes, agendas), co-leading

the Internal Inventory research project (conducting interviews, data analysis, report writing),

conducting presentations to the CESWG surrounding preliminary findings, and finally leading

the research specific to Canadian municipalities (Guelph, Edmonton, Cambridge, Calgary, and

the Region of Waterloo). As a result my roles within the City of Kitchener included: a

placement student, a CESWG member, a researcher, and eventually an informant through my

thesis research.

Research Approach

Epistemologies operate under the assumption that the researcher and the research object

are assumed to be unified and value laden, as research findings are "medicated through the

values of the researcher and the participants" (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005, p. 246). As a

researcher, I epistemologically position myself within the critical, constructivist paradigms.

The constructivist paradigm focuses on understanding why people experience the world

in the manner they do. Within this paradigm, there is a recognition that human experiences are

socially constructed and are experienced individually (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005).

Community engagement is complex and conceptualized differently in different contexts. As a

result, within this paradigm, it is impossible to understand empowerment, inclusivity or

engagement without being cognisant of the social construction of these concepts and the systems

in which they operate (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005).

Research undertaken within a critical, constructivist paradigm requires an

acknowledgement of the concept of reflexivity. Because the values of the researcher shape the

research, "it is important for researchers to be self-reflexively aware of their values and position

in society (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005, p. 246). Although the constructivist methodology often

assumes there is no universal truth; there are instead multiple voices, realties and systems (Kirby,

Greaves, & Reid, 2006). I entered this research using a critical paradigm standpoint in which it is acknowledged that because,

> [t]here is an external reality that is shaped by competing values, the critical researcher is morally obligated to use the transformative values that he/she shares with the oppressed group to guide the research towards the goal of social change (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005, p. 240)

As such, this research operated under the assumption that CE is a positive, meaningful process, which is of benefit to both the municipality and the community. This notion was supported by myself, the community and acknowledged by the City of Kitchener, through their commitment to CE policy.

There is limited research examining the best practices for the development and implementation of community engagement policy within Canadian municipalities. As a result, in determining which methods are best suited in my approach to this research and its goals, I elected to focus on qualitative data, which is well suited for exploratory research where little is known (Crosby, DiClementre, & Salazar, 2006). Conducting research using this approach allowed me to gather rich, in-depth, qualitative data, in addition to becoming aware of the fact that community engagement is conceptualized, valued, and implemented differently among cities and between staff members operating within each municipality.

Research Design and Sampling

The current research explores CE policy within the City of Kitchener and utilized key informant interviews (N = 5) with participants from four Canadian municipalities and one. There were a total of five representatives from four identified Canadian municipalities and one region that were interviewed. Because of the geographical distance of some of the municipalities all interviews were completed as telephone interviews. Purposeful, sampling was used to recruit participants. Patton (1990) identifies purposeful sampling as sampling that occurs when the participants are selected because of a particular characteristic. The municipalities (and the one region) have been selected based on their current engagement policy/practices, the presence of an innovative community engagement technique(s), and/or their proximity to the City of Kitchener (localized context).

A total of five interviews were conducted. These five were chosen from a pool of nine potential municipalities in Canada. Sampling was set up to use replacement sampling; that is, if a municipality chose not to participate another municipality would be chosen from the 9 potentials. In this research, the first 5 municipalities and one region were successfully selected. As a result, replacement sampling was not used.

Participants. The total sample size for the research was 5 participants. The demographics of the participants were not a factor in sampling, as participants are selected based on their affiliation with specific municipal engagement processes. A number of participants were directly affiliated with a community engagement unit or department (i.e., Manger of the Office of Public Involvement, Manger of Engagement, Research and Development, and Manger of Community Neighbourhood Engagement). Within the municipalities that did not have units or departments

specific to community engagement, participants with jobs that involved community consultation or community planning were selected (i.e., Director of Communications and Marketing, and the Director of Community Recreation Services). Participants were of working age, although they were not asked to identify their age or gender at any time, as it was not relevant to the project. Interviews took place by telephone with municipal staff from the following municipalities: City of Guelph, City of Cambridge, City of Calgary, the City of Edmonton, and the Region of Waterloo.

Interview Protocol. Telephone interviews were chosen as the data collection method because they represent a way to obtain detailed information about a key informant's personal feelings, perceptions, and insights in a reasonably short amount of time, and did not incur travel costs. Unlike surveys, interviews also allow for more detailed questions to be asked, while ambiguities can be clarified and incomplete answers followed with probes. An interview guideline (Appendix E) was provided to the participants prior to the interview date and time. Interviews were open-ended and semi-structured in nature (Appendix E). An interview guide including probes was used through the interview process; however, questions were ultimately flexible and responsive in nature. To explain further, if a question in the interview guide proved irrelevant to a particular municipality/region because of the stage in which they were at in their policy development that question would be skipped. Similarly, if a participant began speaking to something that was not anticipated (reflected in the interview guide) questions would be generated on the spot.

Procedure

Invitation to Participate. Canadian municipalities were recruited to voluntarily participate in the research through an email invitation (Appendix G). The participant selected to be interviewed was based on knowledge held by the City of Kitchener through their experience working with other municipalities or through contacting municipalities directly (through telephone or email) and asking them the staff best suited for this research. Four municipalities (City of Guelph, City of Cambridge, City of Edmonton and City of Calgary) and one Region (Region of Waterloo) were initially asked to participant in the research. If participants responded to the email and indicated they were interested in participating they were sent more detailed information about the project and an informed consent form (Appendix F), which communicated the opportunity to participate in research examining best practices for community engagement policy and practices within municipal settings. It also communicated to participants that this thesis research was associated with the City of Kitchener and Wilfrid Laurier University. All of those initially asked to participate agreed to participate.

An interview guide (Appendix E) was also provided in order to give participants the opportunity to reflect on their experiences with CE before the actual interview. This was intended to make participants feel more comfortable at the time of the interview and to enrich the answers. Completed consent forms were faxed to Wilfrid Laurier University prior to the interview being conducted. Once all potential participants had been invited and had indicated their willingness to participate in the research dates and times for individual interviews were arranged through correspondence with the participants. Correspondence with the participant was done through email or telephone dependant on the preference of participant.

Steering Committee Involvement. For the duration of the current research project, the principal investigator and thesis supervisor were members of the City of Kitchener Community Engagement Strategy Working Group (CESWG) that consisted of City of Kitchener staff, Wilfrid Laurier academics, and community partners. The function of the CESWG was to act as a body who could guide the research from the initial design to final implementation.

Conducting Interviews. Interviews were employed as the primary method of data collection and were conducted by the principal investigator. Interviews were done over the telephone, and lasted between 20-40 minutes. Before the interview began, participants were reminded of the research project and its focus over the telephone. Questions were asked in accordance to the interview guide that included questions about the types of challenges encountered in engaging the public; who they intended to better engage, the benefits of using engagement, staff training they would find useful in regards to engagement, and how they conceptualized concepts like diversity and empowerment within community engagement (CE).

Interviews were recorded using a digital recording device. These audio recordings were then transcribed. Transcriptions were analyzed and used as the primary data for this research. Participants were informed that because data specific to some municipalities would be obvious, their anonymity would not be entirely assured. This did not pose a threat of emotional discomfort to participants as the information collected was professional, information-based data, as opposed to personal or emotionally-charged data. This project was approved by the institutional review board. A final copy of the thesis will be given to the City of Kitchener, and an executive summary report will be made available for participants from each municipality that participated in the study.

Approach to Analysis

Qualitative Analysis. The qualitative data were analyzed in Microsoft Word and coded manually by myself the principal investigator. The data analyzed in this research was from interview transcripts. There were several key analytic strategies used in this research. Coding, a process for categorizing qualitative data was utilized. Initially, a priori codes were utilized to create a provisional start list of codes, as described by Miles & Huberman (1994). This provisional start list included codes that captured the overarching research questions and the themes gathered from the principles of CE and CE continuum established by the CESWG, as well as themes and insights generated from the City of Kitchener Internal Research project. After transcripts were read for a priori codes, inductive coding was utilized. Inductive coding involves the creation of categories that emerge out of the transcripts that could not be foreseen, and specifically involved labelling individual sentences or ideas from the transcript with a code name in order to explore links between different ideas within the data (Willig, 2003).

A second analytic strategy that was used was memoing. Memoing serves to "assist the researcher in making conceptual leaps from raw data to those abstractions that explain research phenomena in the context in which it is examined" (Birks, Chapmen, & Francis, 2008, p. 69). Similar to the process of coding, initially memos were very open, while later memos tended to be increasingly focused on core concepts. Integrative diagrams, diagrams that use illustrations in theory development, were used to pull all of the data together, which are. In this research this process helped to make sense of the data in relation to the emerging theory, and included a combination of concept maps, charts, models, and logic models.

A final analytic strategy that was used was theory application (Kirby, Greaves, and Reid, 2006). In this process, new observation leads to new linkages that in turn lead to revisions in the theory and more data collection. In this case, the analysis began by examining the data in relation to the research questions, the pre-established principles and continuum, and data gathered from the internal research project, followed by a specific focus on the questions asked in the interview process. The data were then re-read for themes and insights related to the emerging theory that were not developed within the original scan. This process guided the principal investigator in linking all observable themes together and creating commonalities amongst the data (Kirby, Greaves, and Reid, 2006).

Verification and Trustworthiness of Data. To assess the trustworthiness of qualitative data, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest four criteria to judge the trustworthiness and plausibility of the interpretations: credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability. Credibility concerns whether the research findings accurately reflect the reality of the phenomenon under study. In other words, credibility refers to the truth value of the findings of a certain investigations. Prolonged engagement and persistent observation are methods of achieving credibility. This was achieved through the researcher's extended time, a period of 8 months, spent in the research setting through active participation within the City of Kitchener Community Engagement Strategy Working Group and through the researcher's time as a practicum student at the City of Kitchener.

Transferability refers to the extent to which research finding can be applied to similar settings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In the present study, transferability was achieved through the use of thick description in describing the research process and the research context, in order to

provide adequate information for readers to critique the degree of transferability. Thick description allows independent readers to determine whether the results are transferable to different settings, similar in context.

Dependability is the ability to produce consistent research results, and confirmability is the ability to demonstrate that the study's rationale and methodology were able to account for its results (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This process was achieved through the use of an audit trail. An audit trail is a systematic method of recording exactly from where each quotation was obtained; this includes the raw data, data reduction and analysis products, and researcher process notes (Willig, 2001). Consequently, the research was designed to meet Lincoln and Guba's four criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability.

Chapter 4: Descriptive and Interpretive Findings

This research contributed to formalizing the City of Kitchener's commitment to citizen

engagement. This commitment stemmed from the community's expressed desire to be more

involved in municipal affairs, as expressed in the Plan For A Healthy Kitchener report.

Specifically, the City of Kitchener was interested in exploring best practices for CE policy

development and implementation from other Canadian municipalities in order to study what

implications these practices could have in focusing the City of Kitchener's CE planning and

informing policy implementation. Staff members from four municipalities and one region from

across Canada were interviewed, including the City of Edmonton, the City of Calgary, the City

of Guelph, the City of Cambridge, and the Region of Waterloo. Municipalities appeared to be in

different stages of policy implementation, with some having established policies around CE,

while others have completed more informal processes around CE within their municipalities.

Those with formalized policies appeared to have frameworks from which they operated. Such

frameworks included a conceptual continuum for CE, value frameworks and CE toolkits, which

aimed to direct and support CE, municipal processes. Municipalities' purposes for performing

CE appeared to be linked to themes of transparency, accountability, efficiency and the ability to

create a more diversified input. Participants spoke to the necessity of being inclusive, as well as

the challenges in engaging increasingly diverse communities. Finally, participants articulated an

understanding and appreciation of the concept of empowerment, while others expressed the need

to move empowerment from merely a conceptual representation to more "participatory

processes". In this section the results of the interviews are described, along with some

preliminary interpretive results. Appendix E contains the interview questions used for this study,

while Appendix I provides a chart, which outlines how each interview question corresponds to

each research question that guided this study. The following descriptive and interpretive findings are categorized into headings that reflect the a priori and emergent codes they were assigned.

Municipal Context for Community Engagement

To gain a clear understanding of how community engagement operated in each municipality/region, participants were asked how their community engagement strategies and/or policies were developed. Each municipality/region was at a different stage in the development of their CE strategy and/or policy. Two of five municipalities/region had a CE policy in place, and an additional two of the five had no policy in place; while one of the five municipalities/region was in the preliminary stages for formalizing a policy. Although each municipality/region was selected based on their varying stages of CE policy development, it did make findings amongst the four municipalities and one region diverse. In spite of these variations between municipalities/region in regards to CE policy implementation, there were several CE "standards" that were formalized at Federal and municipal levels. At the Federal level, the "Municipal Government Act" includes minimal requirements ("standards") concerning public notification and input within Canadian municipalities (See Appendix J for a brief overview of the Municipal Government Act). At the municipal level, standards were formalized in municipal departments, municipal advisory committees, and municipally-run neighbourhood associations. Within municipal departments, there were specific policies that provide departments' instruction on how and when to engage the public around certain decisions; most often such policies involved informing the public about an issue. In some cases, department policy was federally mandated; for example, planning departments had specifications about how the public should be informed or involved in decisions made around zoning or new developments.

Municipal advisory committees, which involved participation from the community, had Terms of References that they were required to adhere to as directed by Council; "the majority [of community engagement] is through a term of reference for Advisory Committees; advertising through the paper in terms of whose interested" (City of Cambridge). In municipalities where CE policy was not formalized, participants indicated that CE is often done inconsistently and guidelines are unclear. As an example, the City of Cambridge indicated, "every department does their own engagement practise..." and although the City of Cambridge did indicate having policy around their advisory committees, it was noted that "the direction was pretty vague" and that "moving beyond these basic forms of CE, it does not usually occur, not unless it is driven by other policy". Policies were also in place to mandate the ways municipally-led neighbour associations should engage citizens, as described by the City of Cambridge, "there is neighbourhood association policy, which outlines the responsibilities of staff and how we are to engage the neighbourhood associations".

Purpose of Community Engagement. To gain additional contextual knowledge, participants were asked about the purpose or intention of CE process and/or policy within their municipality. There was a distinct shift within several municipalities (3 of 5) from old assumptions about CE to a new appreciation for what CE can offer municipalities and communities. This new shift included the beliefs that CE allows for an improved ability to: obtain a diversified (stronger) input; better contextualize community problems, and improve decision making, as described below by the municipalities of Cambridge, Calgary and Edmonton.

Some could say it slows down the process, but I do not think that is terribly bad because if you arbitrarily go ahead and make decisions that do not address community needs, the decisions are likely bad decisions to begin with. So you might as well take your time and do it right. I certainly got to listen to what they've got to say and get their opinions on what their potential solutions are because we certainly do not have all the answers. (City of Cambridge)

If you are going to impact their families, their lives- why wouldn't you talk to them about what the true issues are, because it varies by community, it varies by demographics. I think all of these pieces really come into play when you actually look at an overall assessment of the public input; you really have to understand who it's going to impact. (City of Calgary)

Intuitively you have to know that if you are going to use tax payers money and you are going to do something in their neighbourhood, or close to their neighbourhood that is going to impact where they live, how they get there, how they play, or they worship –you better be asking them. That doesn't mean you have to agree with them, but you better know what they are thinking. And most often it will give you some clues to improve whatever it is that you are working on. (City of Edmonton)

The purpose of CE was explicitly described in several ways. The City of Calgary and the City of Edmonton both described a growing accountability in their municipalities to do CE, due to growing public expectations to be involved in government decision-making.

There were some major decision or even major initiatives that were being

undertaken and citizens were starting to talk back if you will or voice their

dissatisfaction with not being asked. So people were more and more starting to

voice these opinions. I think frankly in society there are a lot of changes too,

where people are becoming more involved, so it was a combination of a variety of

drivers. (City of Calgary)

We have a history of great volunteerism, both in terms of community celebration

and community doing it for themselves. This has created a growing expectation

by our community (the collective) to be involved; and they have every right and

expect to be involved in decisions that impact them. So I think it was a

combination of Public pressure recognized by some people internally, and

political pressure to get us to a point where we are now. (City of Edmonton)

The Region of Waterloo, City of Edmonton, and City of Guelph described the purpose for

performing CE as being linked to the well-known benefits CE could elicit (e.g., "we perform

engagement because it can lead to..."). While the Region of Waterloo and the City of Cambridge

described the purpose as linking to their overall strategic direction (i.e., their purpose was linked

to a larger, municipal strategy); "we developed a strategic plan...we wanted input around what

level we thought different people need to be involved for the engagement piece of our strategic

plan" (Region of Waterloo).

Research Question 1: Best Practices

The central question of this research asked, what are the best practices for implementing

Community Engagement practices/policy within municipal settings? This question generated a

collection of best practices that were explicitly and implicitly referenced throughout the interview process. This collection of best practices appeared to be generated from three sources by participants: 1) insights grounded in policy; 2) insights gained through experiential knowledge; and/or 3) knowledge gained from other external sources. Best practices for implementing CE in municipal settings included: conceptual framework, and training and toolkits specific to CE.

Conceptual Framework. Conceptual frameworks were used by three of the five municipalities/region interviewed. The frameworks used by the City of Cambridge and the City of Guelph were not conceptual but instead reflected the informal processes that guided the way CE was implemented in each community, most often defined by what was federally or municipally regulated ("standards"). The frameworks used by the City of Calgary, the City of Edmonton, and the Region of Waterloo are all based on the International Association of Public Participation's Spectrum of community engagement *(International Association for Public Participation.* 2007).

> Our framework is not identical to the International Association of Public
>
> Participation (IAPP) model because it was obviously customized to some of the
>
> specific needs of the City of Calgary....but there's only so many ways to deviate
>
> from what you're going to do from a public consultation and I think this was a
>
> format that seemed to work. (City of Calgary)

Further, the City of Edmonton noted, "some of our staff were part of the IAPP, so we had an informal partnership, so our framework stemmed from their model as a result." As described previously, this framework describes different typologies of community engagement in a

continuum that illustrates how engagement can move through passive approaches to more

proactive empowerment approaches. It also includes the concept of "promises to the public" that

ensures accountability to the public by those delivering the engagement initiative or project. For

the City of Calgary and the City of Edmonton, the concept of a framework was concrete, as both

municipalities were already a community engagement framework within their work. For the

Region of Waterloo, the framework was more ambiguous because the region was still in the

preliminary stages of developing their community engagement strategy.

> We asked senior management around how/what level they thought different
>
> people needed to be involved at and that's how we got input around the
>
> engagement piece for our strategic plan; like how involved we want the public,
>
> how involved we want staff, and at which level. (Region of Waterloo)

The Region's Public Health department did have a CE framework they used within their work.

> Our Public Health at the region currently has one [a framework] in place. Public Health is
>
> much more advanced...but they're doing it specifically for the work that they're doing for
>
> health promotion and their intervention services. (Region of Waterloo)

As part of this strategy development the region utilized a CE framework created by the Region's

Public Health department. The Region of Waterloo described the way in which they "borrowed"

the CE continuum as part of their strategic planning:

> we informally used it, we developed our strategic plan, we needed some kind of
>
> way of articulating what our scope was going to be on our public involvement in
>
> our planning process so that's where I used the continuum and sort of looked at

the range of how we wanted the public and also all of our stakeholders to be

involved. (Region of Waterloo)

Part of this strategic planning process also involved consulting with the public. The region also

identified utilizing the continuum created by their Public Health department in this public

consultation process:

> We did involve the public at the different level of involvement [from the
>
> continuum]. Typically the strategic plan has been more of a council-driven
>
> document, and this time we wanted to find out what people thought we should be
>
> getting input from, and that's why we used the continuum [from Pubic Health] to
>
> help us figure that out. (Region of Waterloo)

Despite not yet formally adapting this framework as part of their policy structure, the Region of

Waterloo had a clear understanding of community engagement frameworks, had experience in

using the framework, and indicated the desire to eventually develop their own framework as part

of their strategic planning; "[In terms of a continuum] we never formally adopted it [the

continuum]. We did though identify that we need to get something like that in place for our [CE]

strategy" (Region of Waterloo).

Three of the five municipalities/region identified the use of a conceptual framework as a

best practice for CE implementation. The City of Edmonton said that "getting a framework and

the approval of the policy was a key step in [their] evolution". While the City of Calgary

described the framework as allowing for "consistency, and being open and transparent, and

inclusive". Further, for two of the three municipalities that utilized a conceptual framework

(continuum), the framework was embedded within their CE policy, as described by the City of

Calgary, "the continuum is part of our policy structure". They noted that the framework

enhanced staff members' understanding of CE, created a method for staff members and

departments to better conceptualize what engagement looks like, and represented a tool to reflect

on the ways/levels in which they are currently engaging citizens. It also helped staff members to

understand what types of citizens should be engaged, and at what level; "a community

engagement policy allows us to have a consistent City-wide application," said the City of

Edmonton,"[it] also ensures that the appropriate level of engagement is utilized on different

projects, and with different populations." These municipalities also noted that all levels of

engagement have value and it is important to acknowledge that the right approach is often

dependent upon the questions posed or project being implemented. Furthermore, they indicated

that it is likely that multiple levels of engagement (e.g., inform, consult, collaborate) will be

used in any given project.

   Community Engagement Training and Toolkits. Community Engagement Training and

Toolkits were used by two of the five municipalities/region interviewed. The City of Calgary and

the City of Edmonton conducted staff training and both used CE toolkits. The City of Edmonton

described their training as involving "an overview of what the policy is, and what some of the

tools that can assist you in doing it," and went on to describe the specifics of their training

process:

> For two years we been training every six weeks, well I call it more of an
>
> orientation. So we do two half day orientations to the policy and framework, and
>
> then in the follow-up we provide critic of their "Public Involvement Plans". I
>
> think we provide a large amount of training initially just saying that it is what it is;
>
> this is what it is not. (City of Calgary)

The City of Edmonton outlined a similar training process:

> The initial training is more of an information session, but at least it gets into: here
>
> is the policy, here are the components of it, and here is why it is important, and
>
> here are some toolkits to help you along the way. (City of Edmonton)

Further the City of Calgary describes training as also encompassing a supportive component, "if

they are unsure how to develop an engagement strategy, we'll walk them through that or even

lead them through that process again." Similarly, the City of Edmonton described a similar

supportive process:

> For staff that is unsure how to develop an engagement strategy, we'll do that. If
>
> they want some help, we have training mentors who are pretty experienced
>
> practitioners and we have good mentors and teachers. (City of Edmonton)

Toolkits are intended to be used in conjunction with CE policy, as described by the City of

Calgary, "we have developed a whole toolkit that goes along with the policy (City of Calgary).

Toolkits also offer best practices and practical information for staff members. Both

municipalities' toolkits describe how public input opportunities should be planned and designed

in municipalities, and also provides approaches and techniques to help staff members carry out

public consultation activities. One example of a CE tool used by the City of Calgary is a

"Stakeholder Interest Table", which explores who is involved, what their interest, concerns, or

values might be, and if there are any unique involvement considerations, such as access and

communication that need to be considered. The "Project Definition Tool" helps staff members

identify, prior to engaging the public, the decisions that have been made that are not open to

stakeholder input, any issues of sensitivity (time, political, or resources) and any existing

promises that have been made to stakeholders around this particular project. Finally, the "Reach

and Involve Tool" aids staff members in choosing what technique is best suited to reach different stakeholders. Often municipalities may choose a variety of techniques to reach different stakeholders within the same project. The City of Calgary also describes the use of an "Engagement Calendar" as being extremely important for community engagement within municipalities. The calendar ensures that municipal engagement processes are not in conflict with one another and ensures that communities are not being "over-engaged".

> Calgary is a larger organization. We have the calendar so when we're going out in a
>
> community to actually do an engagement exercise for say 'Department A' with a certain
>
> population, but two days later the same population is set to be consulted on an issue by
>
> 'Department B'. In such cases we look- is there is a better way to do that? A way that is
>
> more efficient and a better use of tax payers' dollars? (City of Calgary)

Question 2: Values of Community Engagement

The second research question in this study directs attention towards the values associated with CE practices/policy. Every municipality (five of five) appeared to have larger, municipal-wide principles or values that both formally and/or informally guided CE processes. In three of the five municipalities values were also made to be CE-specific.

In these circumstances values were connected to strategic plans that encompassed directions specific to community engagement. For example, a strategic direction may describe a commitment to always being inclusive in municipal practices, which would in turn include practices around CE. Similarly, in some municipalities certain departments were mandated to articulate the outcomes of a project to the public, thus indirectly achieving values of transparency and accountability. Such values are useful in implicitly guiding municipal activities, however,

were not specific to CE practices. Overall, municipalities that did not have a policy in place were still able to speak to the values they perceived as being an essential element of CE processes.

Those municipalities with formalized policies (two of five) had a list of values/principles that corresponded with their policy (called "Guiding Principles") by one municipality. Such values/principles helped to facilitate both meaning and guidance to the CE policy. Those with formalized values affiliated with CE also had formally articulated goals, principles, and commitments for community engagement that operated in conjunction to their CE policy. Overall, there was agreement among municipalities that establishing a value structure, was a best practice for community engagement. Further, having a value structure that is embedded within a policy structure appeared to be mutually reinforcing, strengthening both the policy and the value; as described earlier, it appeared that the values/principles guided the actions of the municipalities, produced outcomes that ultimately reinforced values.

There were some values that emerged as predominant themes throughout the municipal interviews. These values appeared to guide the work of municipalities in both formal (for some these values were explicitly referred to in their value structure) and informal ways (they emerged as themes for the way in which municipalities perform and value engagement). Such values are categorized by myself for the purposes of this research and are described further below.

Transparency and Accountability. Transparency was understood by participants as having both staff members and the community a clear understanding of the purpose of engagement strategies and being open about the intention behind an engagement effort. The City of Edmonton noted that transparency has the ability to take away from the "meaningless [nature] of the public process." Three important factors were referenced by respondents around how to be

effective in achieving transparency. First, it was important for the public to know how their input

was being used; as described by the City of Edmonton respondent "it is important to let the

public know when their feedback was being used and how [and] if it wasn't, letting them know

why." Similarly, the City of Calgary respondent reported Calgary's believe in the importance of

listening to what the public has to say, accommodating where possible, and in circumstances

where this is not feasible, informing the public as to why it is unachievable. Second, the Region

of Waterloo indicated the importance of establishing a clear objective;

> Having a good understanding of the purpose and the clear objective for
>
> community engagement before you start is key- because that's where you run into
>
> problems with asking the wrong questions or asking questions that you can't use
>
> the answer on or things like that. (Region of Waterloo)

Third, the Edmonton respondent indicated that policy was a strong method for achieving clarity;

" it [policy] gives us the ability as a municipality to be more open, transparent, and genuine."

Accountability was strongly associated with transparency, and was defined by

participants as being fair, honest and holding responsibility for decisions. Both the City of

Calgary and City of Edmonton respondents also referred to the accountability that comes from a

growing [community] expectation to be involved in decisions that influence them. For the City

of Edmonton, accountability "can increase the public's trust in municipal practices." They also

said, "if we conduct good community engagement we increase credibility, whereas when there is

a lack of CE it results in poor credibility...community engagement also helps to alleviate ill

public perceptions of the meaningless public process" (City of Edmonton).

Diversified Input. All respondents (5 of 5) acknowledged that stronger municipal services and products were dependent upon garnering input from a diverse audience. Further, participants recognized that diversified input leads to municipal services that operate with greater efficiency. "Engaging the public in our processes creates better product," noted the City of Edmonton. The City of Calgary also supported the notion of CEs' ability to create a better product, "if public engagement is done well, you get a better project- no questions asked; absolutely no question- it's been proven over and over and over." Similarly, the City of Cambridge noted that CE creates a more efficient proceses, "making accommodations based on public feedback becomes integrated into the process of how we do work...if we do good public involvement, it results in less time to complete the product, while bad or no CE can result in wasted time, and having to go back and backtrack". In the same way, the City of Edmonton noted that garnering public input can help to support City Council decisions as a result.

> I think the benefits [of CE] are obvious in that you see staff who certainly do not
>
> know all the issues of the community and need to be advised around what these
>
> issues are....I think you've certainly got to listen to what they've got to say and
>
> get their opinions on what their potential solutions are. We certainly don't know
>
> all the answers. (City of Edmonton)

Research Question 3: Diversity and Inclusivity

The third research question in this study called attention to the concept of inclusivity, and asked participants how the concept of inclusivity was articulated in Community Engagement practices/policy? All municipalities/region (five of the five) had an institutional recognition of diversity within engagement practices. The City of Edmonton defined diversity as "the range of

human difference," while defining inclusion as "involving and valuing human differences, and viewing such differences as strengths." Issues related to diversity and inclusivity were also linked to the rationale for performing CE. The City of Edmonton identified "to be more inclusive" as one of the central purposes behind CE. Further, being inclusive also involved being cognisant of the barriers to community engagement (cultural barriers, literacy barriers, and mistrust with the government). The City of Cambridge respondent noted, "we always try to make sure we have a representative group, we don't just want to have older, retired, white males in attendance."

Inclusivity was often included within CE value structure as described previously, and was also connected to large municipality-wide mandated practices and procedures in all of the municipalities. For example, the City of Edmonton had a "Diversity and Inclusion Framework and Implementation Plan" that affects the work of the entire municipality. Similar to having a value structure that was linked to a community engagement policy, having inclusive practices embedded in policy structures was also suggested as a best practice. In some municipalities this "theoretical commitment" to inclusivity was enhanced by having clear guidelines about what constitutes being inclusive, or in having best practices about how to engage specific populations (i.e., youth, seniors, culturally diverse, people with disability, etc.). Municipalities that were in advanced stages of policy implementation often had guidelines for being inclusive and used "diversity tools" to provide staff members with tangible examples of how to practice community engagement at each level in an inclusive manner. The diversity tools were identified as an essential component of the larger community engagement policy as they provided municipal staff concrete tools to ensure their plans are inclusive.

Inclusivity Challenges. Municipalities also identified the challenges of engaging or reaching marginalized populations; "segments of the population that we would like to include more include new Canadians, recent immigrants, youth, seniors, young professionals and young families" (City of Cambridge). However, concurrent to this acknowledgement, was the desire to engage these populations. For example, the City of Calgary respondent promoted the idea of finding the best practices for engaging hard to reach populations, "you need to look at all of the practices that will meet marginalized populations (City of Calgary), while the City of Cambridge respondent said that "outreach to marginalized populations needs to be addressed and I haven't seen anything corporately, recently anyway, that really addresses that void." (City of Cambridge) Immigrant populations and those from ethnically or culturally diverse backgrounds were most commonly identified by participants as representing a challenge for engagement.

Marginalized populations segments; youth, the poor, new immigrants; those three that come to mind are groups that don't get involved in our process, in the interest of being represented we would like them to be, but again it's challenging given the limited time and resources to know to draw those folks in (City of Edmonton).

New Canadians are a difficult group to reach through traditional methods. (City of Cambridge)

We are weak in certain target populations in the community; I don't think we have any strong connections with our ethnic populations, those with diverse backgrounds. (City of Cambridge).

Challenges around engaging youth and seniors were also articulated by participants. The Region of Waterloo respondent indicated that they "talk a lot about engaging youth because they're the community leaders of tomorrow" (Region of Waterloo). While the City of Calgary indicated the importance in considering access, "if you know you have a high component of seniors, if you are doing open houses for example, you may want to have one in a location that is closer to that senior groups of your community (City of Calgary). One solution for addressing diversity challenges was the notion of experimenting or consulting literature around what tools represent best practices for different populations; "what I think is most important is understanding...which techniques reach the different audiences the best" (Region of Waterloo). Several municipalities referenced the effectiveness of relationship building and forming partnerships in the community as a method to address diversity challenges, the City of Edmonton respondent noted that:

> Partnerships with marginalized groups created more inclusive practices, such
> partnerships were not solely dependent on City staff or the marginalized
> populations but rather a partnership. (City of Edmonton)

The City of Cambridge respondent identified relationship building as "having a consistent contact with whatever target groups you're working with and maintaining that relationship" and much like Edmonton, identified relationship building as necessary, but also referenced relationship building as a significant challenge.

The City of Cambridge and Guelph respondents both referenced their use of neighbourhood associations as a method for addressing diversity; "I think what has worked well is the close relationships that we have built with the neighbourhood associations" (City of Cambridge). Further, in Cambridge and Guelph these Neighbourhood Associations worked well

because they were most often situated in high risk communities. The City of Cambridge respondent went on to describe the profound influence of its neighbourhood associations in saying, "where we do not have a strong connection with neighbourhood associations or where neighbourhood associations do not exist at all, there are voids within the city (City of Cambridge).

Research Question 4: Empowerment

The fourth research question directed attention towards the concept of empowerment, and asked how the concept of empowerment was articulated within community engagement practices and/or policy. The language of empowerment was utilized by the City of Calgary in the framework, while "active participation" was the terminology preferred by the City of Edmonton and the Region of Waterloo. All municipalities appeared to have an appreciation and understanding for the concept of empowerment. Within every municipality (5 of 5), there appeared to be a consistency around the understanding that, at minimum, engagement should be informing the public, and only when citizens have final decision-making authority is empowerment truly achieved.

Few municipalities were able to operationalize the term (i.e., find ways to measure whether empowerment has been achieved, and to what degree); "empowerment is seldom used. There are really a few ways that I can think of that probably use the true definition. If you got an election that is a pretty obvious one" (City of Calgary). The City of Calgary respondent went on to explain the typical type of engagement methods they use and described why they are not empowerment:

It [active participation/empowerment] doesn't occur through our typical public

involvement efforts because our typical public involvement efforts often are to

gather the good, the bad, the widest breadth of opinion on particular issues to give

to the decision makers, who then will make the decision. Empowerment is said to

imply the ability to make decisions; in our government structure, we aren't there.

(City of Calgary)

The City of Edmonton described the concept of empowerment as a "horrible word" that was

often "over used, and almost never delivered", and indicated that empowerment can become an

arbitrary concept if only described or conceptualized within the CE continuum. For Edmonton,

in order for "active participation" (their highest level of citizen control on their CE continuum) to

become effective it had to become more of a "participatory process"; "active participation for us

isn't public involvement, its community development". The City of Edmonton had an entire

other set of staff who work specifically with the community to build collaborative solutions

together around local community issues. It such circumstances, "citizens have the ability to make

their own decisions." As such, Edmonton appears to describe the necessity for the concept of

active participation (or empowerment) to move out of a conceptual term, and to become an

active process.

The City of Guelph represents the strongest example of having an "active process of

empowerment", through their use of participatory budgeting. The City of Guelph facilitates

participatory budgeting through the use of their Neighbourhood Support Coalitions (NSCs). The

NSCs are community groups that share and redistribute resources for local community projects,

such as recreation programs, youth services, and physical improvements to community facilities.

The NSCs are operated by both the city and the neighbourhood groups, and their aim is to collectively allocate community funding with the intention of improving community life. The concept of participatory budgeting was thought up by the City of Guelph, but was initiated independent of the municipality. The City of Guelph now offers part of the financial support and also has staff(s) that help to facilitate the PB process. Budgeting is allocated based on the needs of each neighbourhood, as some neighbourhoods are over-resourced, while others are under-resourced. According to the City of Guelph, "it was ultimately decided that funding would be more equitable if the neighbourhood groups deliberated their needs and priorities together."

Within Guelph's participatory budgeting process, residents meet in their local neighbourhood groups to discuss the citywide priorities and deliberate about their local spending priorities. Based on these discussions, each group prepares project proposals, along with a "needs" budget and a "wants" budget for its proposed activities; "the residents elect two delegates to represent their group in the Coalitions Finance Committee." The delegates negotiate and make compromises on the proposed activities, until they are agree by consensus on a budget. From there, neighbourhood groups implement and monitor their projects through the yearlong funding cycle. It is further understood that the NSCs use decreasing amounts of Coalition money for the first three fiscal quarters of their projects, and then raise other funds to finance the fourth quarter. The groups proposed this approach because they thought that established groups would be able to find additional funding sources by their fourth year. This in turn would free up some money for projects.

Emergent Codes

The following emerging themes became apparent after reading through the transcriptions for a priori codes. Definitions were created for new codes, and the transcripts were re-read to conduct explicit analysis of these new codes. These emergent themes include: Partnerships with Neighbourhood Associations and Cultural Communities, Champions, and Resources.

Community Partnerships

Every municipality/region identified the use of relationship building as a best practice for CE regardless of whether or not the municipality had a formalized policy. Most often (4 of 5) respondents identified forming partnerships between municipalities and Neighbourhood Associations (NAs) and/or culture communities.

Neighbourhood Associations. NAs were identified as playing a significant role in the engagement processes in four of the five municipalities/region. Two of the five municipalities/region has more formalized relationships with the NAs, while two other municipalities/region described having informal relationships with the NAs. In the words of Calgary,

Partnerships with neighbourhood associations are not formalized. I mean we used them,   because I think going out cold to a community is not necessarily the best format. (City of Calgary)

Neighbourhood associations also appeared to form the first "point of contact" between the municipality and the community

If we know that you're going to an area, your community association may be your first or one of your first contacts. (City of Calgary)

In Cambridge the neighbourhood associations are staffed, so they, not all, but many of the neighbourhood associations have paid staff that work for them so our involvement is usually, first contact is through those paid staff members, for lack of a better terms their an executive director of that association....they are the ones that have their noses to the ground and know what the issues are. (City of Cambridge)

If issues are coming up in their area the NA to make contact with us and we determine whether or not or how we can assist. Likewise, if we have issues, concerns, whatever, we would usually go through the NA, if not them, whoever is most effective in talking and dealing with those issues. (City of Cambridge)

Several common themes were found amongst each NA identified by municipalities; these included: NAs were neighbourhood based; they were formed with some level of support from the municipality; and they were formed with the purpose of facilitating and supporting inclusion and engagement. Although the municipalities varied greatly in their stage of CE policy implementation, every municipality referenced the significance in utilizing NAs as a best practice in CE.

The City of Cambridge noted that their greatest weaknesses in reaching people are in neighbourhoods where there is no existing NA or in neighbourhoods where relationships have yet to be established with NAs. When municipalities worked with NAs, relationships of trust and transparency were easier to form. NAs also represented an effective method to reach highly

specific, marginalized, or hard to reach populations or neighbourhoods that did not typically participate in city-wide processes. The City of Guelph and the City of Cambridge noted that the majority of their neighbourhood associations are located in high needs areas, and Cambridge noted that their "experience has been that they [NAs] are certainly in a better position to connect with those high needs areas versus some bureaucrat sitting down at City Hall." The Guelph respondent furthered this notion, describing how NAs can create reciprocal benefits, "by working together extensively as equals, staff are gaining a new understanding of the needs of low-income residents, and residents are learning how to work with the city government."

Overall, eliciting the support of cultural community groups or other community/interest groups was referenced by municipalities as a best practice. Specifically, this method of engaging communities is particularly effective in creating relationships with cultural communities, and can represent a bridge between the community and municipalities.

Champions. Four of the five municipalities/region spoke to the use of or need for a "champion". The concept of a champion was fairly consistent across each municipality, and was referenced both explicitly (based on experiences) and implicitly (based on hypothesis of what is needed) in the interviews with staff members. The concepts of "municipal champions" and "community champions" were identified by municipalities in theory, and were named by myself. Municipal champions were described as a staff lead that was responsible for both leading and facilitating CE within the municipality. For example the City of Edmonton articulated, "it is our experience- based on our research and where we have been in our two years that you need a Champion" Three of the five municipalities/region interviewed referenced the use of a champion within the municipality/region (municipal champion). In Guelph, the champion facilitated all

process around Neighbourhood Support Coalitions (participatory budgeting). In Edmonton and

Calgary the champion was the lead around the CE policy. The Edmonton respondent advocated

the use of a champion and offer insights around what they should do, and attributes they should

have:

> A champion should be hired by the City to promote/implement/facilitate the
>
> policy on an ongoing basis. [We] need a champion to implement [our]
>
> policy/framework; this should represent someone who is passionate about public
>
> engagement, and is hired specifically to be dedication to such as cause. (City of
>
> Edmonton)

Further these three municipalities also had the resources to staff an internal champion, so their

understanding of the champion was not an abstract concept, but rather a person and specific

"unit". Specifically, the City of Edmonton, City of Calgary, and the City of Guelph all have

formal, internal structures in place, the Office of Public Involvement and the Public Engagement

Unit, Neighbourhood Engagement Department, respectively. These units offered a way of

"housing" their engagement processes. All units operated using staff ("municipal champions");

as described by the Guelph respondent, "we have this set up for a senior level person to be the

director of the unit, and have a working budget and resources mandated by the City". The City

of Edmonton described this staff as a "high-level champion who pushes the button to get things

moving".

Municipal champions appeared to serve two central purposes. First, they represented a

link to community groups. The City of Edmonton, for example, created positions for Community

Development Workers called "city champions", who are paired with partner organizations.

> We looked to the community, community organizations and asked them 'Would
>
> you be willing to work with City Project Managers to make sure that we involve
>
> your community? Teach us how to work with your community- teach us how to
>
> ask your community. Teach us how to contact your community'. (City of
>
> Edmonton)

Secondly, because these municipal champions were equipped with resources, had an operating

budget, and time, they proved effective in facilitating and providing guidance around municipal

CE practices. For example the use of an "Engagement Calendar", this helps to coordinate all

engagement efforts within the municipality.

> We have an engagement calendar. The City of Calgary is a large organization so
>
> when we're going out to the community for say department 'A' who needs to
>
> engage *this* type of population, but then we see on the calendar two days later the
>
> same group is going to be consulted for department 'B'. So it's the coordination
>
> of it form a corporate perspective, so you know if you are over-engaging or over-
>
> surveying. Also you can look to see if there is a way to better does it, which
>
> allows for a more efficient use of staff and tax payer dollars. (City of Calgary)

"Community champions" were referenced by four of the five municipalities. Similar to

community partnerships, community champions were understood as representing a link between

the municipality and the community. Community champions were understood as representatives

from community groups or organizations that were found outside (external to) the municipality.

Such individuals were often based on a specific project or topic, or were recruited on a regular

basis to connect municipalities with specific populations. These champions could be recruited

based on the CE project's specific target populations, their community of origin, or their relationship with an issue. Some community champions were used for a shorter period of time, while others were more formalized, for example, permanent staff at municipally-run NAs. In some ways, having champions that were staffed within Neighbourhood Associations represented a doubled-edged sword. Although there was a greater degree of stability among these community champions, which allowed for relationship building, utilizing only community champions from associations affiliated with the municipality had the potential of evoking distrust, and could give a limited understanding of the *entire* community's needs.

In the City of Calgary community champions were set up in the community and would be in continuous liaison with the municipality. These champions were described by Calgary as, "champions that will become ambassadors and spread the word for the services we can provide":

> We've got a woman who works on Child-Friendly Edmonton, so she knows about talking to kids. She knows how to get in touch with kids, she knows the kinds of questions we would need to ask. In the same way, we have a seniors advisor. We went to the disabled community to ask them the questions about how to get to the disabled community- and who are the disabled community, and we have an Aboriginal Relations Office. (City of Calgary)

Similarly, in the City of Guelph, as part of their participatory budgeting process "residents get to pick two representatives or 'delegates' from their own community to represent their group in the Coalition's Finance Committee." These representatives were described by Guelph as, "people to "champion" the needs for those communities."

While municipal champions appeared to be designated to enhance internal understanding, capacities and the 'how to' of community engagement implementation, community champions appeared to be selected to gather resources and strengths from the community. Such resources can be understood as community insights, opinions, and access to marginalized populations, among others. The success of community champions appeared to be based on their permanency or consistency, and the relationship-building that was able to occur as a result. As described by Cambridge, communities often had a desire to interact with the same people ("a familiar face").

Resource Challenges

Participants spoke about the resources needed for CE. Participants indicated that the presence or absence of resources played an integral role in community engagement, serving as both a challenge and a necessity for community engagement practices and policy. For this research I categorized the resources described by participants in two ways: 1) monetary resources; and 2) intangible resources such as staff time, tools, training or knowledge that could be used to facilitate community engagement, or the time to implement effective CE practices. The City of Cambridge describes the need for both categorizes of resources:

> [Resources] that come to mind is certainly human resources and some financial
>
> backing from council. You need to have staff, and the time, and the ability, and
>
> skill level to deal with the issues, but beyond that, staff needs to have the financial
>
> resources to address and respond to whatever the needs are. (City of Cambridge).

A lack of resources, specifically staff time and training, were described as effecting the types or quality of CE that could be performed. As describe by the City of Calgary respondent:

Unfortunately, resources are always an issue in terms of going above and beyond,

I mean, it's easy to use the traditional methods, but certain segments of the

population don't respond well to these, and the resources that are required to

research those audiences has been challenging. (City of Calgary)

One [resource] would be training in terms how to identify the best tools for

consultation efforts ...and how to identify what is most effective for specific

issues. (Region of Waterloo)

Despite having such resource challenges there did appear to be a desire for staff to enhance the

quality of CE or their own CE skills. For example, the Region of Waterloo respondent indicated,

"I would love to learn more of how to actually facilitate the empowerment side of it".

A lack of time was identified as a resource that effected CE efforts. The City of Guelph

indicated, "I would say staff time is the biggest [challenge]". Further, staff time also influenced

the quality of relationship building in the community. The City of Cambridge described this

challenge in the following way:

If you had unlimited resources to be able to get information out, to inspire the

public to get involved, to spend lots of time with them, you know, I am sure that

you'd be able to do something even more, but we don't have unlimited time and

unlimited resources. (City of Cambridge)

Overall, resources were named as a challenge most often by municipalities that did *not*

have formalized CE policy in place. What was interesting, in many cases, resources that were

identified as best practices by resource-rich municipalities (staff specific to CE, training) were

the very resources identified as lacking by resource-poor municipalities. This illustrates that even though some municipalities lacked the resources to do engagement, they were cognisant of the resources and tools needed to perform effective community engagement.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The following section is structured to correspond with this research's exploratory research questions (below). Following the interpretation of the results, the implications of this research study for the City of Kitchener will be outlined, as well as implications for future research.

This research was designed to answer the following questions:

1. What are the best practices around implementing Community Engagement practices/policy?

2. What values should be associated with Community Engagement practices/policy?

3. How the concept of 'inclusivity' articulated in Community Engagement practices/policy?

4. How is the concept of 'empowerment' articulated in Community Engagement practices/policy?

Specifically, these research questions were intended to offer insight to the City of Kitchener in the implementation of their community engagement policy. The first research question inquired about best practices for CE. Because this question was extremely open-ended, the types of best practice the respondents choose to speak to varied significantly. For example, best practices for policy development, facilitating internal buy-in, engaging diverse populations, eliciting champions, policy implementation and participatory methods were identified by different participants. Often, best practices specific to CE policy were articulated most often by municipalities with formalized policy, as they were able to speak based on direct experience, while some other municipalities suggested idealized contexts or resources that could be used for successful community engagement, in the opinion of one respondent. Sometimes, even those

individuals from municipalities that did not have a formalized policy in place made suggestions

based on personal experience about which items to include in an ideal CE policy. With that said,

even informal insights offered by respondents based on values or speculation, appeared to have

validity, as they were most often consistent with the best practices being offered by

municipalities that could ground their best practices on real experience.

Specifically, for the purpose of this research, the best practices for successful community

engagement, as outlined above, were explored and categorized in relation to: 1) their influence

on policy sustainability; and 2) their influence or ability to elicit reciprocal benefits

(community/municipality). It is important to note these ways of categorizing the best practices

are interpretations made by myself, based on insights and navigations offered by the

participations and insights provided by the literature. For example, respondents identified

"relationship-building" as a best practice for CE, while I interpreted "relationship-building" as

being a best practice that would help elicit reciprocal benefits (community/municipality). As

such, the following represent best practices for CE, specifically those best practices that speak to

policy sustainability and those that elicit reciprocal benefits (to municipalities and communities).

Policy structure/framework

- A policy structure/framework that includes a value structure

- A policy structure/framework that addresses diversity and inclusivity

- A policy structure/framework that encourages empowerment

Community Partnerships

- Partnerships with cultural/ethic groups and interest groups

- Partnerships with Neighbourhood and Community Associations

Champions

- The use of municipal champions (i.e., paid staff within the initiative)

- Partnering with community champions (people in the community)

Resources

- Generation and use of municipal resources for CE

- Generation and use of community (community-based) resources

Stages of Community Engagement Implementation

Because each municipality/region was at a different stage in the development of their CE strategy and/or policy, findings amongst the four municipalities and one region varied significantly. These variations appeared to be dependent upon where municipalities/regions were in the development and implementation of their policy. The researcher categorized these variations into three stages: 1) policy awareness; 2) policy development; and 3) policy formalization. In Stage 1: Policy Awareness, there was no official strategy or policy, but there was an awareness of informal CE practices occurring within the municipality. In Stage 2: Policy Development, there was a CE strategy but no formalized policy, however, an intention or plan for CE policy was articulated. In Stage 3: Policy Formalization, there was a CE strategy that was supported by a formalized policy, which in all cases included the use of a conceptual model/continuum and guiding values/principles for CE. The following table illustrates these three stages of policy implementation and the ways in which each municipality fits into each stage.

Table 1: Stages of Municipal Community Engagement Policy Implementation (McGee, 2009)

Stages of Community Engagement Policy Implementation		
Stage #1: **Policy Awareness** No formal CE strategy No formal CE policy	**Stage #2:** **Policy Development** CE strategy No formal CE policy	**Stage #3:** **Policy Formalization** CE strategy CE policy
City of Guelph City of Cambridge	**Region of Waterloo**	**City of Calgary City of Edmonton**
-Federally mandated protocol for community engagement within municipalities (e.g., "Municipal Government Act") -municipality-mandated protocol for community engagement (e.g., Terms of References for municipal Advisory Committees) -informal talks around policy specific to CE (e.g., strategic planning, etc.)	-formalized Strategic Plans that encompass CE -public consultations completed around CE policy development	-Municipally-based champion (staff) specific to CE -Conceptual Framework for CE (includes different typologies of CE) -Values or "Guiding Principles" specific to CE -Toolkits that provide strategies for CE (e.g., "Project Definition Tools" & "Stakeholder Interest Table") -Diversity Toolkits for engaging marginalized populations -Staff training specific CE

The City of Cambridge appeared in Stage 1 of policy implementation. This municipality had a strong understanding of what community engagement was, and were able to identify the ways in which the City of Cambridge was informally performing CE in their work. Cambridge had both federally and municipally-mandated protocol around community engagement. Additionally, the City of Cambridge respondent indicated there had been municipal talk around establishing a

policy specific to CE ; "in two years we are going to have more protocol around community engagement, so that will be positive" (City of Cambridge).

The City of Guelph was also in Stage 1 of policy implementation. Guelph, however, was unique in that although they did not have a formalized CE policy, they utilized an advanced, citizen engagement strategy unique to all the municipalities (participatory budgeting). The City of Guelph also had a department and staff that were specific to CE. This theme was found in the City of Edmonton and Calgary both of whom had formalized policies in place. A key difference, however, was while the City of Edmonton and Calgary the staff appeared to be facilitating CE policy, Guelph's staff appeared to be facilitating participatory budgeting (a participatory process).

At the time of the research, the Region of Waterloo was in a transitional mode between Stages 2 and 3, however, predominately fell into Stage 2. The Region had completed consultations with the community, had committed to a Region-wide CE strategy, and was in the process of creating a Region-wide policy specific to CE. Consultations with the public had been completed to garner feedback about what type of engagement should be utilized, how, and when. The Region had informally adapted a CE continuum (borrowed from the Region's Public Health unit) in initial consultations with the community, as a tool for the public to understanding community engagement. The Region indicated there were plans to formally implement a similar framework to guide their engagement processes. It is important to note that in many ways, the information gathered from the Region was divergent from the data collected from the other municipalities. Because the Region's policies facilitated engagement process within the entire Region (Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo, and rural communities), their understanding of CE

was more broadly based. As a result, in contextualizing CE, their CE understanding and actions were more strategically-based then that of the other municipalities interviewed. To provide an explanatory example, the Region of Waterloo respondent did not identify the use of neighbourhood associations. With that said, in most cases neighbourhood association are municipally-run, as opposed to Regionally-operated. As a result, when the Region of Waterloo's CE policy is formalized (Stage 3), it will likely be more theoretically and strategically-based than other municipalities operating within Stage 3.

The City of Calgary and the City of Edmonton were highly developed in their engagement policy. In Stage 3 of policy implementation, both municipalities had engagement strategies that were supported with conceptual frameworks and official policy. Both municipalities also had formalized a policy that had been put into practice within each municipality. Community engagement was a mandatory process that was regulated/supported through departments or "units" that were dedicated to CE. These units had different names within their municipalities (Office of Public Involvement and Public Engagement Unit), but in theory they represented the same thing: a municipally funded unit that acted to support CE within the municipality. When a department in the municipality was beginning a new project, they were required to fill out a mandatory form that included descriptions as to how they were going to engage the public; and who they were going to engage, or if they were not going to engage the public their rationale behind such a decision. If CE staff or Counsel believed a particular project was not engaging the public in a reasonable manner, they had the authority to tell the project lead to revise and resubmit the engagement plan. The staff of these units acted as "coaches", aiding the various departments and programs around the most appropriate level of

CE, as described by the City of Calgary, "I am not seen as the approver, I am the coach. I am the problem-solver".

Exploration of Best Practices

Best practices appeared to fall into two distinctive categories. First, there were methods and strategies that were theoretically grounded. These included: a formalized policy, guiding principles, a diversity strategy, a conceptual model for community engagement and the operationalization of empowerment. Second, there were practices ("drivers") used in the implementation of the theoretical constructs such as the use of community partnerships and champions. Resources proved to be a key factor in ensuring that both theoretical and implementation best practices can be performed. The following table is intended to differentiate between best practices that are theoretical and those which are implementation "drivers".

Table 2: Best Practice Typologies for Community Engagement (McGee, 2009)

Best Practices for Community Engagement	
Theoretical	Implementation "drivers"
Policy structure framework • a policy structure framework that includes guiding principles (i.e., a value structure) • a policy structure framework that address diversity and inclusivity • a policy structure framework that encourages empowerment	Community Partnerships • partnerships with cultural ethnic groups, interest groups, neighbourhood associations, community associations, etc. • champions (municipal and community)
Resources (municipal and community)	

Because different municipalities were at different stages of the implementation of CE policy/practices, different municipalities used a different number and variety of these theoretically-grounded and community-based implementation strategies. Further, as mentioned previously, some best practices were identified by participants based on personal insights (conditions or tools they believed would be ideal for CE).

Policy Framework. Woolcock & Brown (2005) describe the essentiality of having "structure" to guide community engagement processes; "activities to mobilize citizens should begin with the establishment of a structure to elicit and/or coordinate citizen effort." More

specifically, the Canadian Community for Dialogue and Deliberation states that ideally, community engagement should be a core activity in local government; "this means integrating community engagement into planning and management systems" (Audit Commission, 2003; C2D2, 2009). Several participants echoed this notion of establishing a policy structure, which can in some cases include a conceptual framework. Participants also described the strength in having a policy structure that included a value structure, a policy structure/framework that addresses inclusivity, and a policy structure/framework that encourages empowerment.

Having a framework was identified by participants and the literature as being important for several reasons. A framework can guide the engagement process by helping to create clearer aims as to what methods of engagement should be utilized within the community (C2D2, 2009). Literature on community engagement consistently shows that having clarity around the purpose and goals of the community engagement effort is essential to success (C2D2, 2009; Kagan, 2005). CE literature also describes stronger relationships in the community as an outcome of clarity; "being clear about what type of participation is expected or encouraged will help to ensure that people's expectations are not raised falsely, which is important as blocked expectations can be perceived as obstruction and contribute to frustration and stress." (Kagan, 2005, p.17). Additionally, greater clarity of aims helps to decide which approach, or range of approaches, will best meet those aims (C2D2, 2009). Authors Bracht & Tsouros (1990), note the importance of "embracing many forms of citizen action for community problems solving" (p.201), as it is likely that a range of methods and approaches will be required to service the multifaceted nature of communities. (Bracht & Tsouros, 1990, p. 203). There is also evidence that where local government initiates participation strategies and openness successfully communities do respond by getting involved in decision-making (Lowndes, Stroker, & Pratchett,

2002). These points were confirmed by the participants from the Canadian municipalities/Region included in the study.

There was agreement among municipalities that establishing a value structure, often described as "guiding principles," represents a best practice for community engagement. Additionally, having a value structure that is embedded within policy structures was also identified as strengthening the policy. Literature was also consistent in suggesting "a framework of strategies and principles to guide the process of citizen involvement in community development activities" (Bracht & Tsouro, 1990, p.201). Literature on CE also stresses the importance of inclusivity. In a report by the Audit Commission (2003), one measure of successful community engagement was "achieved when it reaches groups that do not normally become involved in local democracy" (Audit Commission, 2003, para. 5). Optimally, inclusivity is included within CE value structures embedded in policy structures, and tied to large municipality-wide mandated practices and procedures.

In this research, empowerment was addressed in two central ways. First, empowerment was articulated as a theoretical principle. This was often expressed through policy and visually conceptualized on a community engagement continuum or spectrum Empowerment was understood as placing final decision-making power in the citizens. Second, empowerment was understood as a best practice for implementing community engagement. Literature illustrates that empowerment is important to community engagement efforts, in that "it is more likely that people will accept institutions and policies if they have had a hand in the making of them or feel that solutions have been devised reasonably and fairly" (Meehan, 1996, para.4).

In addition to theoretical and conceptual best practices, both study participants and CE literature identified practices that could be categorized as being "drivers" for community engagement. For the purpose of this research drivers can be understood as strategies used to implement CE practices. Drivers included the development and utilization of 1) champions, both municipal and community and 2) community partnerships, that included partnerships with Neighbourhood and Community Associations, culture/ethic communities, and other community interest groups.

Community Partnerships. Bracht & Tsouro (1990) describe purposeful, social change interventions as being "organized from within the community by individuals, groups, or organizations in order to attain and eventually sustain community change and new opportunities" (Bracht & Tsouro, 1990, p.201). Participants advocated for the use of relationship building in the community, as a best practice for community engagement. Literature on CE also supports this notion in stating, "collaborative partnerships are the first step in developing the skills and capacity of the community" (Kagan, 2008, p 15). Kagan (2008) goes on to describe this collaborative partnership as one that "pursues techniques that use forms of knowledge that are hybrids between 'expert' and 'local'" (Kagan, 2008, p.15). As described previously, such relationships were articulated by participants in two key ways. First, relationships within the community were represented by champions. Second, relationships with the community were represented by relationships with community-based organizations (neighbourhood associations, community associations, cultural community associations, and interest groups).

Champions were identified as a 'best practice' by participants in two ways: "municipal champions" and "community champions". Municipal champions were understood as dedicated

municipal staff members that were allocated to play a brokering role between different services and programs and the community, a process similarly described in literature (Audit Commission, 2003). While community champions were defined as individuals that were external to the municipality but had an interest, stake, or expertise around a certain engagement project or were a recognized/respected member of a relevant community groups. Community champions are often a central connection in the network of community groups, and can be the key to getting the community groups to take on and support projects or ideas (New South Wales Government, 2009). Champions can build relationships with communities, gather insights and opinions, or to develop skills and capacity of the community. What's more, by enlisting the support of community champions, a voice can be given to those who do not wish or feel able to be directly involved. Consulting with known community leaders of community/cultural groups can also provide vital background information on the community that may influence the methods used in consulting with particular groups. Community champions represent a way of connecting and networking with the particular group that a champion is linked to. Some partnerships may involve collaboration between municipal and external representations, a process described by Kratzmann & McKnight (1993) as "working with formal and informal leadership in the community, and seek[ing] commitment from community organization leaders to create processes for mobilizing the community" (p.8).

More specifically, community partnerships were also identified as relationships formed with neighbourhood associations, community associations, culture/ethnic communities, and other community interest groups. Because there is often mistrust of the government within communities, neighbourhood associations represent a way to bridge this gap of mistrust.

Model for Effective Community Engagement within Municipal Settings

The Model for Effective Community Engagement within Municipal Setting was developed as part of this study and includes two accompanying visuals (Table 3 & Figure 9, respectively), which will explained in full in the accompanying sections. Fundamentally, this model (Figure 8) is built on both theoretical best practices and the best practices identified for implementing and sustaining CE policy. Further, this model theorizes that the interplay between theory and practice must exist in order for community engagement to be successful. As described earlier, for the purposes of this research success is defined in two ways: 1) community engagement practices that are successfully sustained, and 2) CE practices that elicit reciprocal benefits (community and municipality), as referenced by participants, categorized by the researcher of this study, and consistent with previous literature. The Model for Effective Community Engagement within Municipal Setting (Figure 8) primarily focuses on how CE policy is successful sustained. Accompanying visuals (Table 3) are used to explain how the interrelationships within the Model for Effective Community Engagement within Municipal Settings, create conditions that elicit or support policy sustainability. The final visual (Figure 9) takes the components or conditions described as facilitating policy sustainability (Figure 8) and showcases potential reciprocal benefits CE may have on communities and municipalities, as a result of having a sustained policy. There reciprocal benefits are described as projected outcomes (i.e. short-term and long-term).

The Model for Effective Community Engagement within Municipal Setting stems from a community development framework in its utilization of top and bottom down processing, and a strength-based approach, as described by Bracht and Tsouro (1990), Jorgenson and Van

Domelen (1999) and Dongier (2004). Such an approach involves the creation of ideal conditions,

involving governmental, non-governmental and community groups for community engagement

to take place in the most effective manner. In this model we propose that such conditions may be

created through formalizing engagement processes within the government and through

facilitating opportunities to build on community strengths. Further, if this work is done in

reciprocally reinforcing ways, as facilitated through relationship building, conditions for more

empowerment and participatory democratic methods should ensue as a result, and benefits

should flow to both the community and municipality, as depicted in Figure 9.

Figure 8: Model for Effective Municipal Community Engagement Practice
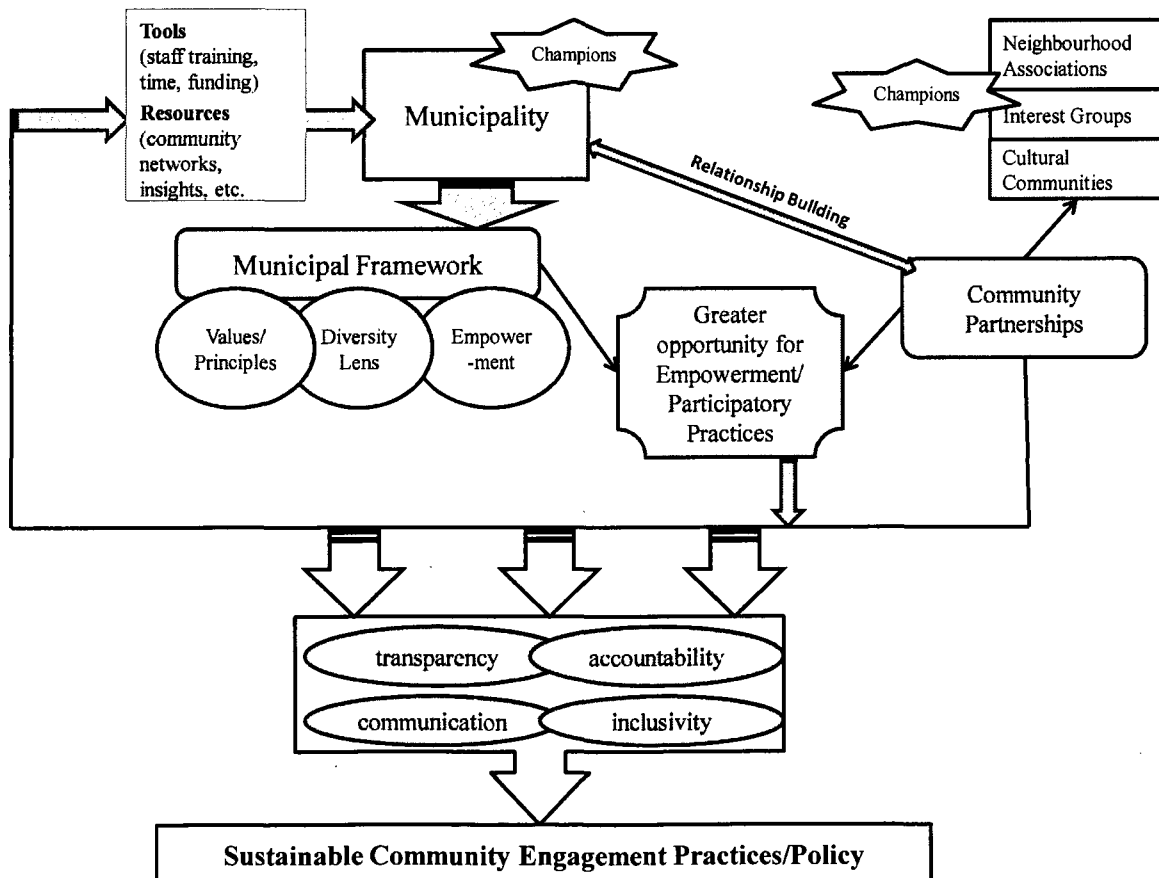
Model Connections

This above model is based on a series of "connections". At its core, the model describes

the relationship between municipalities and their communities, which jointly represent a system.

This research sought to understand how community engagement is done most successfully

within this system. Resources are generated within the system by both the municipality and the

community, and by the interaction between the two. This model (Figure 8) describes the ideal

conditions not only for implementing and performing CE, but the conditions that will elicit

reciprocal benefits (i.e. community and municipality), and ultimately more participatory

processes. Describing CE within municipal contexts using a series of illustrative connections is

unique because they illustrates the multi-facet nature of CE within municipalities showing that

CE is not a "municipally-run show" but rather an partnership with the community that facilitates

an exchange of resources. Such connections prove significant in describing community

engagement within municipalities as they illustrate the *interconnectivity* of the relationships and

components for effective community engagement. As described previously, the following chart

(Table 3) acts as an accompanying visual to the Model for Effective Municipal Community

Engagement Practices (Figure 8) showing visually the connections represented in the Model for

Effective Municipal Community Engagement Practices. This overview chart is followed by a

detailed description of each connection.

Table 3: Overview of Connections within Model for Effective Municipal Community

Engagement Practice

Connections	Description of Connections
Connection 1	Connection between Resources and Policy Formalization
Connection 2	Connection between Theoretical Grounding & Internal Buy-In
Connection 3	Connection between Municipal Buy-in and Municipal Champion
Connection 4	Connection between Municipal Champions, Policy, and Community Partnerships
Connection 5	Connection between Community Partnership and Community Champions
Connection 6	Connection between Community Champion and Community Partnerships
Connection 7	Theoretical Connection between Community Champion/Community Partnerships and Empowerment

Connection 1: Connection between Resources and Policy Formalization. The necessity

for resources occurs throughout the engagement process. In my observations, CE policy and/or

practices were dependent upon resources at three key stages 1) development, 2) implementation,

and 3) formalization or sustainability. When first developing a CE strategy or policy within a

municipality, resources are needed to conduct staff education, training, and to implement

engagement strategies. Once a CE strategy or policy is developed, resources are needed to

implement and sustain CE efforts, such as communication, partnership building, and CE toolkits.

The generation of municipal and community resources is central to establishing and implementing CE practices. Municipal resources can include monetary funds, staff training, CE tools kits/strategies, etc. Resources can also be generated that are also generated through community partnerships. Community champions, NAs, and other groups of interest, represent a fundamental network of community resources. Communities and municipalities should strive to foster these community partnerships through relationship-building. Without resourcing, engagement efforts may be implemented informally, however, run the risk of lacking a sustainable structure; not utilizing the most effective engagement techniques, and not having consistency in techniques. Having a formal structure around engagement practices is important as it improves the clarity around community engagement (Audit Commission, 2003; Bracht & Tsouro, 1990; C2D2, 2009; The New South Wales Department of Infrastructure Planning and Natural Resources, 2003; Woolcock & Brown, 2005).

Connection 2: Connection between Theoretical Grounding & Internal Buy-In. The presence of "theoretical groundings" can help to facilitate municipal staff members understanding of CE processes. Theoretical groundings should ideally include a formal policy that includes a diversity strategy and tools, an operationalization of empowerment, and a policy grounded in values and/or principles. Such preconditions enhance staff members' knowledge and personal capacities around CE, thus enhancing individual, departmental, and municipal buy-in to CE. Staff buy-in also enhances the commitment to a shared vision, which increases CE effectiveness (The New South Wales Department of Infrastructure Planning & Natural Resources, 2003). In specifically exploring values/principles, research finds that policy grounded in principles of transparency and accountability is described as being important for successful

engagement (That National Centre for Involvement, 2008; Woolcock & Brown, 2005), in that

they can enhance citizens' willingness to participate (Lowndes & Stroker, 1992).

Connection 3: Connection between Municipal Buy-in and Municipal Champion. Once

municipal buy-in is achieved, there is a greater likelihood that municipal champions will emerge

(formally or informally). Municipal champions can help to increase municipal knowledge,

increase the capacities of staff around CE and further enhance staff buy-in. Furthermore,

municipal champions represent a source that can connect the municipalities with external

resources (NA/CAs, community champions, as well as other community interest groups).

Ideally, municipal champions are formalized jobs created and funded by the municipality.

Connection 4: Connection between Municipal Champions, Policy, and Community

Partnerships. When the Model for Effective Municipal Community Engagement Practice is

explored, it is apparent that community partnerships represent crucial components of the

equation for CE success; this theme is consistent with findings described in the article Principles

of Community Engagement (1997). Without community partnerships, CE practices are not

equipped to directly influence the community. Therefore, the Connection between municipal

champions and the policy that guides their work is essential to understanding how municipalities

create and maintain the capacity to perform effective community engagement. Part of this

process involves Connection building that can be facilitated by a municipal champion. If

community members and community groups feel they can make contact and maintain contact

with municipal representatives there will be more and stronger community engagement

(Canadian Policy Research Networks, 2004; Redburn & Buss, 2006).

Connection 5: Connection between Community Partnership and Community Champions.
Once community partnerships are established the opportunity to find and build community champions is increased. Community groups and organizations represent a vital resource in both recruiting and maintaining community champions. Many community champions are generated from their connections with community groups and organizations. The concept of "snowballing" on existing partnerships is consistent with the finding described by Bakajanian (1993) & Bousetta (2001), in which small networks of partnership can "snowball" into larger networks. Community champions that are affiliated (formally or informally) with community groups or organizations can represent some of the strongest champions, as they already have an established repertoire and Connection with the community of interest. As such, feelings of trust and community "buy in" are increased, and cooperation enhanced, as similarly described by Hawe & Shiell (2000); Kammersgaard (1999); and Minnesota Department of Health (2008). As a result, community champions act as central liaisons between the community and local governments, a theme consistent with the findings described by the New South Wales Government (2009).

Connection 6: Connection between Community Champion/ Community Partnerships.
Community champions can facilitate new or stronger community partnerships, while community partnerships can elicit new or stronger community champions. Such partnerships (champions/community partnerships) are an essential force with CE; local needs are often defined by professionals who live outside the neighbourhood of interest (Diamond, 2004). However, the best resources are often found in community champions and within community partnerships. Because community groups/community champions are directly situated in the community of interest, they are familiarized with the inter-working and nuances of the community. As a result, community groups/community champions are better equipped to

identify strengths and capacities of communities of interest and better equipped to help communities' self-identify areas of strength.

Observations

As described previously, each component of the Model for Effective Community Engagement within Municipal Setting (Figure 8) is based on best practices of community engagement as defined by key informants, case studies and literature. Specifically, it highlights best practices that contribute to policy sustainability or best practices that elicit community and municipal benefits. The connections within the model, outlined in Table 3, illustrate the connectivity of each of the identified best practices. The following observations look at both the implications of these multifaceted connections and the conditions that drive these connections.

Observation 1: Interconnectivity between Theory and Practice. The Model for Effective Municipal Community Engagement Practice described above is based on the principle that for successful community engagement to take place within a municipality there must be the interplay between theory and practice. This interplay between theory and practice is at the core of the model. It can be presumed that if this interplay does not occur, two things will happen. If only the policy is created (theory), without establishing CP partnerships (practice), the chances of tokenism and mistrust in the community are more likely to occur. On the other hand, CE practices that are implemented using community partnerships, but done informally without having a formalized practices in place, run the risk of having municipal departments unable to formally share best practices; having services that are delivered inconsistently; a lack of alignment within strategic directions, and difficulties in implementing community voice into municipal practice.

Observation 2: Relationship-Building. Earlier in the description of best practices, a series of "drivers" for CE were described. These included best practices used within CE implementation and include: community partnerships (champions/NAs/others), empowerment (theory/practice), and participatory democratic methods. However, these implementation strategies also require relationship building in order to be sustainable or to even exist at all. The themes of relationship building as being a key ingredient for successful partnership is consistent with the findings described in an article by the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (1997). When municipalities establish community partnerships they create both a context and opportunity for relationship building. Municipalities can build community partnerships with local populations or individuals, or with existing organizations within the community. Further, communities are more likely to trust local government that are networked within the community. Additionally, relationships can grow stronger when municipalities engage in more participatory democratic methods, which allow for more municipal-community interaction. Through relationship building, trust and reciprocity are strengthened, knowledge exchange between the two parties becomes more frequent, and co-ownership emerges.

Other best practices established in the model create additional factors within the conception of relationship building. For example, CE policy can facilitate an environment within municipalities, in which staff members are more knowledgeable and can perform CE more often and with more appropriate methods. This in turn creates more idealized conditions for relationship building in the community. Similarly, formalized policy (and framework) can represent a method of establishing both accountability and transparency within the community, all of which help to facilitate better community relationships.

Observation 3: The establishment of municipal CE: Bottom-up vs. top-down approaches

Both theory and practice are needed whether a municipality uses a top-down or a bottom-up approach to implementing CE. For example, Guelph's work around CE focuses on relationship building and empowerment (bottom-up). Other municipalities first established policy (top-down), which relates to an earlier observation that indicated that a key difference between Guelph and the municipalities of Edmonton and Calgary. Guelph's CE-specific staff facilitated participatory budgeting process, while Edmonton and Calgary's CE staff facilitated CE policy. Within CE conceptualizations, bottom-up approaches are often valued more highly than top-down approaches. However, Guelph's bottom-up mode of operation is not without fault. Although they were able to rely on community resources, structures, and networks, eventually a plateau was reached, at which time municipal structures (policy) was needed to more intimately support community structures. As described by the City of Guelph respondent, recently, the City of Guelph has been inundated with "CE requests that extended beyond the work with Neighbourhood Support Coalitions" nor are Guelph staffs formally trained to do CE in their day to day work. Because Guelph's work around CE primarily deals with Neighbourhood Support Coalitions, Guelph does not have the internal mechanisms in place to take CE to a place other than their participatory budgeting processes, nor are they mandated to do so. As a result, the Guelph respondent indicated there is a need to implement a municipal CE policy that could inform staff how to perform and address issues surrounding CE.

As described earlier, The Model for Effective Municipal Community Engagement Practices (Figure 8) suggests that the interplay of theory and practice is required for successful CE to take place. This could further explain why the City of Edmonton and Calgary were unable

to operationalize empowerment within their communities. Although they have a theoretical

commitment/conceptualization of empowerment, in practice they did not have participatory

processes set up in the community to generate community resources (need prioritization, access

to unique networks, social capital). These observations showcases that regardless of the method

for initially establishing CE within municipalities (bottom-up vs. top-down), it is clear that both

theory (policy) and practice (participatory methods) are needed to sustain community

engagement efforts.

Observation 4: "Zone's of Influence" of Community and Municipal Resources

The Model for Effective Municipal Community Engagement proposes that ideally

resources should be generated from the municipality and the community. Examples of municipal

resources include monetary funding, staff training, and tools for engaging diverse populations.

Within communities, relationship building, participatory processes and the use of community

champions all generate social capital. Social capital creates community-based resources such as

community insights, networks and citizens skills. It is important to note that if theory (municipal-

wide policy) and practice (i.e., participatory budgeting) are not synergetic it prevents both kinds

of resources from being utilized to their full extend, resulting in resources having "zones of

influence" (as we name it here) that only extends as far as the municipal structure (policy) or

participatory practices are set to allow. To further illustrate this notion of zones of influence,

Guelph performs participatory budgeting from a bottom-up approach. Using this approach,

Neighbourhood Support Coalitions define their own priorities and all groups define what is

important as an entire community. This allows for community-based problem solving and

strategic resource allocation that cannot be achieved through typical methods of municipal

funding allocation. However, the City of Guelph does not have a CE-specific policy in place; therefore, at the municipal level the community resource generated through Guelph participatory budgeting process are set up to only impact participatory budgeting proceses. Similarly, Guelph's municipal resources for participatory budgeting (staff, funding) are not mandated to be used for CE efforts outside of the participatory budgeting sphere.

In a similarly way, in Edmonton and Calgary the depth of the zone of influence is dependent upon the municipality's decisions to take on participatory methods. If participatory and empowerment-based initiatives are not actively sought out municipal CE resources will illicit less social capital resources from the community. Simply consulting the public around an issue does not allow for the generation of significant community resources (need prioritization, access to unique networks, and social capital), nor does it allow municipalities to tap into unique resources within the community. These observations prove significant for municipalities in two, key ways. First, it is important to understand how policy and practice define the lower and upper boundaries (i.e., scope) of the zones of influence. Second, understanding how seeking out participatory processes influence the depth of the resources and social capital generated is necessary.

Observation 5: More Empowerment, Less Government Influence. A noteworthy connection the Model for Effective Community Engagement makes is the hypothesis that community partnerships and a municipal conceptualization of empowerment can lead to greater empowerment and more participatory democratic methods. Such a connection in turn is proposed to generate community-based resources, which ideally feed back into the municipality (see Figure 8 for Model of Effective Community Engagement Practices). Community partnerships, as

facilitated through relationship building, can lead to both breadth (tapping into community networks) and depth (empowerment) in CE practices (Maxwell, 2007). This proves significant in that more inclusive practices and greater empowerment create meaningful, community participation; as standard consultation processes do not lend themselves in this way. Community partnerships can be used to facilitate empowerment-based initiatives that create meaningful public participation, leading to new civic skills, more social capital and citizen investment (Putnam, 2000).

Exploring further, a great deal of research has shown that community partnerships (particularly that with Neighbourhood Associations) can create more inclusive practices and more opportunities for empowerment initiatives, leading to greater social capital (Maxwell, 2007). The present study asked, what implications does this have for municipalities? Specfically, questioning if people are more are engaged and more people are empowered, what significant CE process is to municipalities? My research discovered as participatory processes are initiated opportunities for empowerment improve, which in turn generates community resources (i.e. social capital), which influences both government and community, ultimately leading to the need for less government influence. The City of Guelph offers an example of this phenomenon. As a result of their participatory budgeting process citizens were empowered; citizens were intimately involved and ultimately in charge of funding allocation proceses. Further, as described previously, Guelph's Neighbourhood Support Coalitions, receive decreasing amounts of Coalition money for the first three fiscal quarters of their projects, and then raise other funds to finance the fourth quarter. This empowerment-based structure proposes that as government influence decreases, social capital and empowerment increase. This proves significant to

municipalities and communities, as it can result in less government time and money and more community empowerment and power.

Reciprocal Benefits of Community Engagement

Best practices are sustaining policy and eliciting community benefits. Again, such best practices were reported by the key informants, highlighted in the literature, and categorized by me. The Model for Effective Municipal Community Engagement Practice, describes the ways in which CE practices (policy) should be sustained (Figure 8). A Logic Model (Figure 9) illustrates how a sustained policy may elicit individual, community and municipal benefits. The core components represented at the top of the logic model represent the best practices that lead to more sustainable practices, described in Figure 8. The next layer refers to projected outcomes that result from these best practices. Outcomes are identified as being either short-term or long-term. A number of outcomes are municipally-based, while others are individually or community based. This logic model also illustrates the interrelations that exist among best practices, which are central to the Model for Effective Community Engagement Practices (Figure 8).

Figure 9: Reciprocal Benefits of Community Engagement
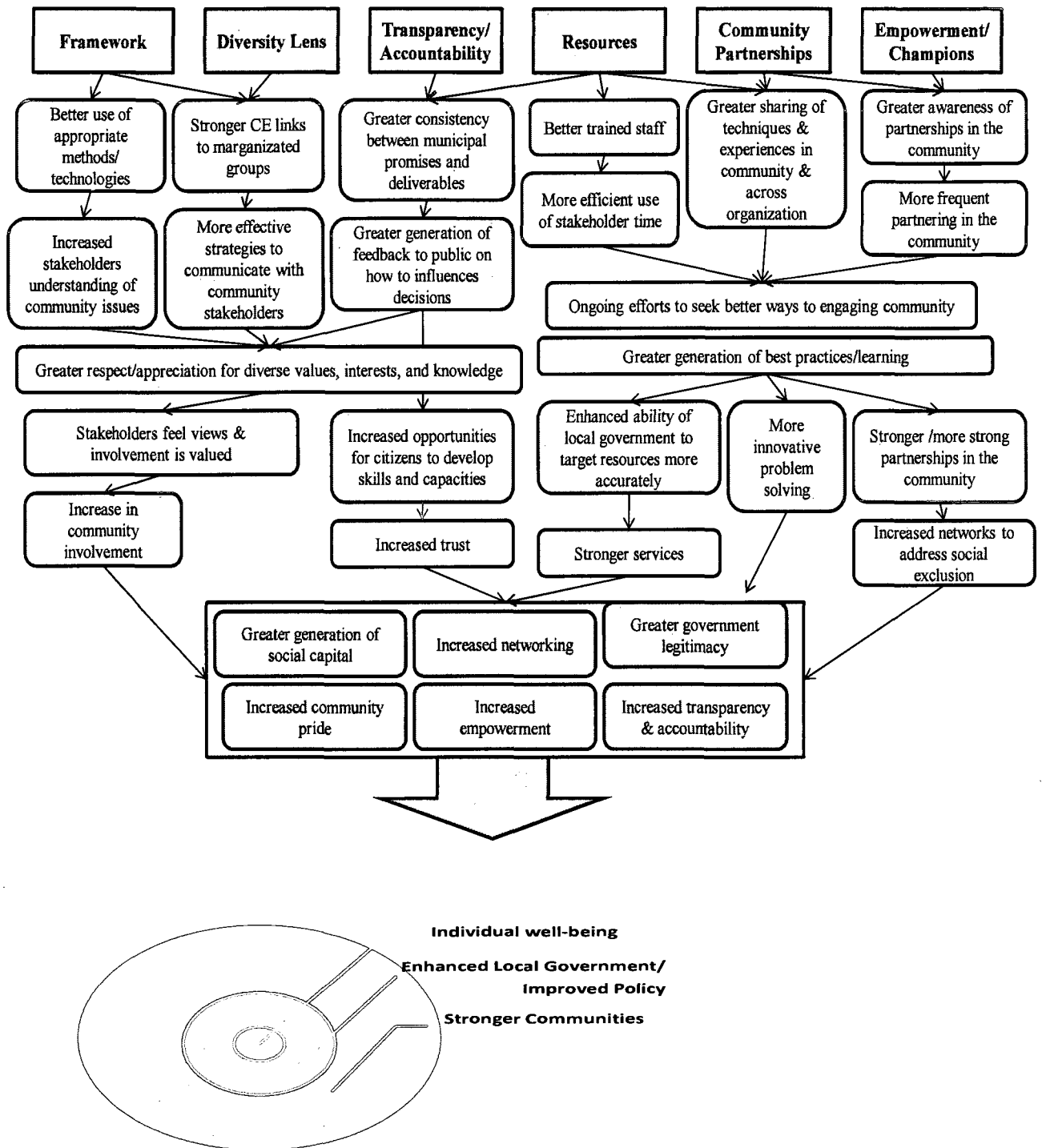
Limitations and Considerations

Research limitations are significant to consider in order to understand why the results may be as they are and to strengthen future research in similar topic areas. Limitations of the present study predominately center on factors associated with time. This thesis research was occurring concurrent to the creation and formalization of Kitchener's CE policy. Because of the timelines set by the City of Kitchener the sample size was limited. Five interviews were conducted with municipalities from across Canada. The sample was selected based on a number of criteria: 1) proximity to the City of Kitchener (localized perspective); 2) presence of innovative CE techniques (participatory budgeting); and 3) the stages at which they were in the development of their CE policy, which ranged from early conception to formalized policy. Although this purposeful sampling strategy did offer a diverse perspective (different stages of policy implementation), the sample size was limited in interviewing only one participant from each municipality. Future research in this area could explore the perspective ranging from the frontline municipal staff that performs CE, representatives from neighbourhood associations, and community members themselves. Additionally, because only one region was part of the sample size, findings specific to a "regional perspective" could not be comparatively explored.

For myself as a researcher there were also limitations in association to power. In my position at the City of Kitchener I was a researcher, as well as a practicum student. This position was non-paid. There were clear power differentials between the paid City of Kitchener staff and me. Further, the City of Kitchener staff was limited by guidelines and timelines set by larger municipal strategic plans. These factors limited my ability to influence the research agenda and

direction in significant ways. For example, expanding the sample structure or impacting the sample selection process (i.e., criteria).

Implications for the City of Kitchener

Community engagement emerged as a strategic direction for the City of Kitchener through broad community consultation, as identified in the Plan for Health Kitchener (P4HK). This process involved the development of a municipal policy specific to community engagement. To gain a better understanding of what is currently being done nationally around CE within municipal settings; staffs from four municipalities across Canada and one Region were interviewed. These cities were selected to gain a local perspective, in addition to gaining a more thorough understanding of cities that are innovative or experienced in engagement policy. Findings from this research included two categorizations of best practices; 1) best practices that involve theoretical mechanics of change that include policy (values, principles, framework), and attention within the policy to diversity and empowerment; and 2) best practices that facilitate the implementation of theory to practice (community partnerships and champions). A Model for Successful Municipal Community Engagement Practices within municipal settings was proposed (Figure 8). General findings were also consistent with CESWG activities that will occur in the next phase of the community engagement strategy (Table 1). These activities include the identification of resources to support community engagement: staff, tools, techniques, etc. The City of Kitchener's Community Engagement draft policy was officially presented to Council on June 23, 2008. The draft policy was presented by a City of Kitchener staff, as well as a community representative who was also a member of the CESWG. Thereafter the policy was approved by Council in principle, but was sent back to staff for the completion of the Tool Box

(tools and strategies for performing CE), and to design an implementation plan. This process has gone slowly due to lack of human resources. The entire policy package is scheduled to go back to Council for final approval in October of 2009.

The brief discussion that follows will identify how this model can be applied to the City of Kitchener, and provides insights around the direction the City of Kitchener currently is in terms of community engagement policy. When reflecting upon the Stages of Community Engagement Policy Implementation (Table 1) the City of Kitchener currently falls in Stage 3: Policy Formalization. This is based on the criteria of having a community engagement policy (draft), a conceptual framework (draft), and an overall municipal strategic direction that includes components of community engagement. With that said, the City of Kitchener represents a municipality in its early stages within Stage 3, as they are still developing specific strategies for engagement populations, as well as the diversity component of their CE policy.

Table 4: Stages of Community Engagement Policy Implementation [Modified]

Stages of Community Engagement Policy Implementation		
Stage #1: **Policy Awareness**	**Stage #2:** **Policy Development**	**Stage #3:** **Policy Formalization**
No formal CE strategy	CE strategy	CE strategy
No formal CE policy	No formal CE policy	CE policy (which includes conceptual framework)
City of Guelph City of Cambridge	Region of Waterloo	**City of Kitchener** City of Edmonton/Calgary

Framework Implications. As mentioned previously, two categorizations of best practices for CE practices were identified through the exploration of research's findings. The first categorization of best practices centered on best practices that involve theoretical "mechanisms of change", including policy (values, principles, framework), and attention within the policy to inclusion, diversity and empowerment. The City of Kitchener fares well in all elements of theoretical best practices. The draft policy, as describe previously, includes the development of values and associated principles for CE, a framework, and a diversity lens/tool.

The City of Edmonton and the City of Calgary both have found success in supporting their policy with theoretical components (values, principles, framework). The City of Kitchener was successful in creating a CE continuum that describes multiple levels of engagement (including empowerment). This continuum is represented by a 5-scale framework that includes methods of engagement that can be utilized at each level. The framework appears to be synergetic with the work being done by both Calgary and Edmonton, through its articulation of engagement typologies, commitment or "promises to the public", use of diversity components, and it's articulation of empowerment ("entrust"). Further, this framework adapted by the City of Kitchener is based on the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) framework, was utilized by both the City of Edmonton and the City of Calgary. Further, a diversity lens/tool is being created, that provides staff members with information and resources around engaging diverse populations.

Moreover, both Edmonton and Calgary offer tools or strategies to be used at each level of engagement, and additionally include a commitment or "Promise to the Public." The City of Kitchener was consistent in this practice offering a "Promise To the Public" that articulates the

City's commitment at each level of engagement that in turn facilitates municipal accountability and transparency. In terms of empowerment, Edmonton, Calgary, and Kitchener, although using slightly different wording (i.e., active participation, empowerment, entrust), were all consistent in their use of a term that sought to articulate the notion of giving citizens a significant level of involvement in municipal decision-making processes.

Inclusivity Implications. Interviews from the Internal Inventory Research project, as described previously, revealed that there was a desire by City of Kitchener staff to engage marginalized populations to a greater extent. Currently the City of Kitchener's draft policy has a diversity lens/tool in place. This provides a checklist for staff members to compare against their engagement efforts when working with diverse populations, and also intends to ultimately provide concrete tools that staff members can use in engaging diverse populations.

Interviews with representatives from Canadian municipalities revealed that it is important to have a diversity component as part of a CE framework (theoretical best practice). Similar to the City of Kitchener's diversity lens/tool, the City of Edmonton and City of Calgary both use a diversity lens/tool in practice that provides them to tools and strategies for effective community engagement with diverse populations. Both these municipalities identified such tools as a best practice in both theoretical conceptualization and its actual implementation. Further, they described the process of collaborative community relationships. This involved partnering through extensive relationship building with various groups in the community, specific to the type of consultation being completed. Specifically, establishing relationships with Neighbourhood Associations can act as an effective method for engaging marginalized

populations as describe in extensively by the municipalities of Guelph, Edmonton, and Cambridge.

First, it is recommended that the City of Kitchener finalize their diversity lens/tool to include strategies for engaging diverse populations comparable to the work of the City of Calgary and the City of Edmonton. Second, it would be beneficial to pilot their diversity lens/tool to ensure that strategies are those that would work effectively within their populations.

The City of Kitchener staff already partners with a wide variety of stakeholders in their engagement processes. However, it is recommended that the City of Kitchener formalize such processes and strategically seek to advance collaborative, community partnerships with NAs or other interest groups that prove representative of diverse populations.

Resource Implications. Interviews from the Internal Inventory Research Project identified that time, financial, and human resources (municipal/community) were challenges to community engagement. Currently the City of Kitchener's draft policy does not identify any financial implications. Rather they indicated that at present, time and financial costs are included in the overall costs of the project, while additional funds for inclusive, engagement practices can be requested through the existing Corporate Accessibility Fund and the Diversity Budget.

Interviews with key informants from Canadian municipalities reveal the importance of having adequate resources provided by municipalities specifically for CE processes. Both the City of Edmonton and the City of Calgary had formalized engagement polices that included having staff members and an municipal unit that were specifically designed to support staff members in their engagement process that also includes training staff members around CE. All engagement projects and processes are to go through a review process conducted by this CE

specific staff member/unit. This acted as a method of ensuring municipal-wide consistency, a way of sharing best practices across the municipality, and a method of encouraging greater departmental collaborations around CE. It is recommended that the City of Kitchener formalize funding so that staff members who wish to engage the public, especially in innovative ways, are able to do so. It is also recommended that the City of Kitchener seek to secure funding in the future to have dedicated staff members specifically in charge of all engagement practices within the City. This staff could be in charge of training municipal staff around how and when to engage the community, how to engage people of different backgrounds, and how to select the most appropriate tool for CE projects. Further, this "municipal champion" could coordinate all community-based municipal projects to ensure the community is not being over-engaged.

   Implications for Participatory Democratic Methods. Interviews from the Internal Inventory Research Project revealed that staff members were eager to engage the community in new ways, especially at the "collaborate" and "entrust" levels. Staff members indicated that lack of resources and understanding most often prevented them from engaging the community at these higher levels of engagement. Interviews with key informants from Canadian municipalities reveal the importance of having adequate resources provided by municipalities specifically for CE processes to allow for empowerment-based initiatives. Both the City of Edmonton and the City of Calgary, whom have formalized engagement polices, indicated that they did not often do engagement efforts that could be defined as "empowerment". In terms of best practices for CE implementation, the City of Guelph, offered the strongest example. Guelph is able to move in the direction of empowerment operationalization through the use of participatory budgeting as facilitated through their NAs. It is recommended that the City of Kitchener continue to strengthen existing relationships with their neighbourhood associations. More specifically, it is

recommended the City of Kitchener pilot a participatory method (example: participatory budgeting) as a means of empowering citizens, generating new community resources, and legitimizing government.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Research Contributions

Community Psychology Reflections

There is a clear democratic deficit present within industrialized societies that has resulted in the need for governments to make local democratic processes more effective. Furthermore, community expectations around government's ability to be responsive, accountable and effective have risen in recent years. Often informal approaches to participation have proven to leave initiatives "short of legitimacy and lacking robustness" (Enhancing Public Participation in Local Government, 1998, p.12). As a result, there is continuing pressure on local government to effectively and formally involve people in local decision-making processes.

Within my exploration of this study, I discovered that the foundation of this research rests on two fundamental acknowledgements. The first acknowledgement is that the contextual environments of communities are changing. Communities are become more diverse in terms of race and ethnicity, in addition to the diversity created from the widening gap between the well-off and well-connected and the socially and economically disadvantaged, and new formations of families are creating further forms of social diversity. Consequently, community engagement requires the use of multiple engagement strategies that are inclusive of an entire community audience. The second acknowledgement is that the government does not have the expertise, resources or influence to solve all issues. As a result, such capacities and resources need to be created by using collaborative partnerships within a community, connecting governments to

community insights and knowledge leads to more informed decision-making. Specifically, this research stemmed from the City of Kitchener, a Canadian municipality's acknowledgement of the benefits of CE, and a desire by their community to be more involved. These factors resulted in Kitchener's desire to formalize and commit to community engagement. The research identified community engagement principles, strategies, and policy structures that have been employed with proven success in other Canadian municipalities. Findings include two categorizations of best practices for CE: 1) best practices that involve theoretical mechanics of change, including policy values, principles, and frameworks, and attention within the policy to diversity and empowerment, and 2) best practices that facilitate the implementation of theory to practice (i.e. community partnerships and champions). These best practices operated under the value assumption that community engagement is positive, ultimately creating conditions for both municipalities and communities to find benefits.

These key findings relate to the field of Community Psychology (CP) in significant ways. CP aims to understand the quality of communities, societies, and the individual lives that operate within these systems. More specifically, through action research community psychologists seek to influence policy processes through the promotional and dissemination of relevant data (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005, p. 171). These processes of research and action were used in this study in seeking to understand best practices for CE policy and ultimately incorporating these best practices into municipal policy. Further, research and action proceses are strongly associated to social justice, a core value of CP. Considering equality and policies that allow for well being of all people, particularly marginalized populations, are central to CP. This research theoretically acknowledged marginalized populations through diversity tools that were directly attached to CE policy. This research also acknowledged the importance of directly

connecting with community groups and neighbourhood associations in practice, as a way of encapsulating diverse and marginalized populations. As a result, this research had the opportunity to influence, to some extent, policies, programs and practices that affect inequality and decision-making proceses.

However, I acknowledged that that policy implementation has significant limitations. Once policy is formalized, there are internal mechanisms, such as staff time and training, that need to operate in order for the policy to be put into action. Further still, there are also community mechanisms (e.g. champions/community partnerships) that need to be utilized to ensure the policy -and CE- is able to reach diverse and marginalized populations. This acknowledgement of the limitations of policy speaks to the central finding that indicates that the interplay of theoretical (e.g, policy) and practical factors, such as community partnerships, need to be in place in order for municipal policy to elicit reciprocal benefits (i.e. municipal/community) and ultimately influence the status quo. As a result of such limitations, future research could involve collaborating with other stakeholders influenced by CE policy (front-line staff operating within neighbourhood associations or community groups, community members, marginalized groups) in municipalities that have formalized CE policies. This research could explore how these stakeholders experience CE, what they see as strengths and weaknesses of CE, and their recommendations around making more equalitarian, municipal decision-making proceses. Further still, because the significance of participatory process/empowerment was acknowledged in this research, future research could explore processes like participatory budgeting to identify best practices, implementation strategies, and determine to what degree these processes facilitate empowerment and decentralize municipal decision-making.

Contributions

Literature on the social, economic and political participation among Canadian citizens is large and rapidly growing with continued introduction of new theoretical concepts, methodological approaches, and research tools. Community engagement is something that has been well-researched and best practices have been articulated. The suggestions made by participants in this research on best practices for community engagement within a municipal settings are consistent with community engagement best practices found in the literature. However, what is unique about this research, compared to other cases, is the acknowledgement of the connections described in the Model for Successful Municipal Community Engagement, which at its core stresses the interplay between theory and practice. The research will contribute to literature as it provides localized research, offers the development of an inclusive, community engagement framework, and ultimately provides greater accessibility of knowledge.

Localized Research. Existing literature on community engagement typically adopts a national scope, often solely exploring national statistics surrounding voting and volunteerism rates and patterns. This research, however, contributed to localized, municipal-specific research and policy development. Localized research in major Canadian cities, such as Kitchener, would aid future research in endorsing the formation of polices intended to promote a consistent community engagement framework, operating under an integrative, inclusive lens.

Model for Effective Municipal Community Engagement Practices. This research contributes to CE framework and policy development. The concept of community engagement as a guide to social policy formation and analysis is still a relatively new idea in Canada. As of now, existing work is fragmentized and lacks an agreed upon model for how community

engagement should be implemented within municipalities and the relationship this should have on communities. This research proposed a Model for Successful Municipal Community Engagement within municipal settings, which provided insights around best practices in developing and implementing community engagement. Key connections within the model include: the importance of balancing CE theory and practice, the importance of relationship building, particularly with NAs, the significance of using participatory methods, and the acknowledgement that resources should be obtained and generated both in the community and the municipality. Additionally, this research offers an enlarged scope of focus by taking into account the inclusion of marginalized groups within the community and by offering a diversity lens/tool. The inclusionary lens promoted by this research includes the utilization of diversity tools that includes concrete tools and strategies for staff members to better implement community engagement.

Accessibility of Knowledge. This research will be used within and toward municipal literature and policy. As a result, this research will help to increase the accessibility of knowledge in the field, for other researchers, policy-makers, and local citizens. Despite the existing large and growing body of literature on the economic, social, and political engagement, this type of knowledge is generally inaccessible within communities, particularly among marginalized groups; to illustrate, in a recent appraisal by the Voluntary Sector Initiative on the information/knowledge available to visible minorities, it was found that, "many of these studies tend to be inaccessible, housed in universities, governmental bodies and libraries, and not user friendly for the common citizen, who often do not have the resources or capacity to make full use of the findings and recommendations (Kagan, 2008). Because this literature is being used

towards municipal publications, it will be made public (via the City of Kitchener website) and

would increase issues of accessibility.

References

Anthias, F. (2002). Beyond feminism and multiculturalism: Locating difference and the politics

of location. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 25(3). Retrieved from PsycINFO

database.

Arnstein, R., S. (1969). A ladder of citizen participation. *Journal of the American Planning

Association*, *35*(4). Retrieved from PsycINFO database.

Audit Commission. (2003). *Community engagement: What does community engagement cover?*

Retrieved from: http://wwww.audit_commission.gov.uk/localgov/goodpractice/

Bachrach, P. & Botwinick A. (1992). *Power and Empowerment: A radical theory of

participatory democracy*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Babajanian, V., B. (1993). Social capital and community participation in Post-Soviet Armenia:

Implications for policy and practice. *Journal of Euro-Asia Studies*, 60(8). Retrieved from

PsycINFO database.

Baker, M. (2008). Restructuring reproduction. Journal of Sociology, 4 (1). Retrieved from

PsycINFO database.

Best, M., & Dustan, L. (2006). Social Planning Council of Ottawa. *The civic participation of

visible minority Canadians: A literature review*. Retrieved from:

http://www.spcottawa.on.ca/Publications_NewPublications.htm

Birks, M., Chapman, Y., Francis, K. (2008). Memoing in qualitative research. Journal of

Research in Nursing 13(1). Retrieved from PsycINFO database.

Black J. H. (1991). Ethnic minorities and mass politics in Canada: Some observations in

Toronto settings. *International Journal of Canadian Studies,* 15 (3). Retrieved from

PsycINFO database.

Black, J. H. (1982). Immigrant political adaptation in Canada: Some tentative findings.
Canadian Journal of Political Science, 27 (3). Retrieved from PsycINFO database.

Bousetta, H. (2001). Centre for the Study of Citizenship and Ethnicity. *Extending democracy:*

Participation, consultation, and representation of ethnic minority people in public life.

Retrieved from: http://www.international.metropolis.net//Rotterdam/Bousetta.pdf

Bracht, N., Kingsbury, L., & Rissel, C. (1999). A five stage community organization model for

health promotion: Empowerment and partnership strategies. In Bracht (Ed.), *Health*

promotion at the community level: Two new advances. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Publications.

Bracht, N., & Tsouro, A. (1990). Principles and strategies of effective community participation.

Health Promotion International, 5(3). Retrieved from PsycINFO database.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard

University Press.

Canadian Community for Dialogue and Deliberation (C2D2). (2009). *Community Engagement*

Strategy. Retrieved from: http://www.C2d2

Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. (1997). Public Health Practice Program Office.

Principles of Community Engagement. Retrieved from: http://www.cdc.gov/phppo/pce/

City of Kitchener (2006). *Kitchener: A view toward the future.* Kitchener, ONT.

City of Kitchener (2008). *Community engagement strategy draft policy.* Kitchener, *ONT.*

Compass Kitchener (2007). *A plan for a healthy Kitchener: Community strategic plan.*

Kitchener, ONT.

Connor, D. M. (1988). A new ladder of citizen participation. *National Civic Review,*

77(3). Retrieved from PsycINFO database.

Crosby, R., DiClementre, J. R., Salazar, F. L. (Eds). (2006). *Research Methods in Health*

Promotion. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Curtis, J., Grabb, E. J., Chui, T. (1999). Public Participation, Protest, and Social Inequality. In J.

Curtis, Grabb and Guppy (Eds.), *Social Inequality in Canada: Patterns, Problems and*

Policies (3rd ed.) (86-125). Scarborough, ON: Prentice-Hall Allyn Bacon.

Daniel, B., Schwier, A. R., & McCalla, G. (2003). Social capital in virtual learning

communities and distributed communities of practice. *Canadian Journal of Learning and*

Technology, 29(3). Retrieved from PsycINFO database.

Department of Mainroads. (2004). *Community Engagement: Policy, principles, standards, &*

guidelines. Retrieved from: http://www.mainroads.gld.gov.au/

Diamond, J. (2004). Local regeneration initiatives and capacity building: Whose 'capacity' and

'building' for what? *Community Development Journal* 39(5). Retrieved from PsycINFO

database.

Dongier, P. (2004). World Bank. *Community-driven development.* Retrieved from:

http://poverty.worldbank.org/files/5805_chap9.pdf

Dongier, P. (2008). World Bank. *The PRSP Sourcebook.* Retrieved from:

http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/.html

Duffy, K.G., Wong, Y. F. (2003). Community Psychology (3rd ed.) Boston, MA: Pearson

Education.

Flick, U., Von Kardorff, E., & Steinke, I. (2004). What is qualitative research? In Flick, von

Kardoff and Steinke. (Eds.), A *Companion to Qualitative Research* (3-13). London: Sage

Flood, C. M., Archibald, T. (2005). Canadian Policy Research Networks. *Hamstrung and*

hogtied: Cascading constraints on citizen governors in Medicare. Retrieved from:

http://www.cprn.org/doc.cfm?doc=1264&l=en.

Frideres, J. S. (1997). Canadian Heritage. *Immigrants and civic participation: Contemporary*

policy and research issues. Retrieved from:

http://canada.metropolis.net/events/civic/jfrideres_e.html.

Greet, P. (2005). Brisbane Region Community Services Unit. *80's, 90's, and now: Sustainable*

core values in community engagement from Blantyre to Brisbane. Retrieved from:

http://www.engagingcommunities2005.org/abstracts/Greet-Pamela-final.pdf

Government Office for the North East England. (2006, April 4). Local authorities urged to Name

community planning champions. *Online News Articles.* Retrieved from:

http://www.gos.gov.uk/gone/news/newsarchive/392428/

Hall, M., Lasby, D., Gumulka, G., & Tryon, C. (2006). Statistics Canada. *Caring Canadians,*

involved Canadians: Highlights from the 2004 Canada survey of giving, volunteering and

participating. Retrieved from: http://www.statcan.gc.ca/bsolc/olc-cel/olc-cel?catno=71-

542-X&CHROPG=1&lang=eng

Hawe, P. & Shiell, A. (2000). Social capital and health promotion: A review. *Social Science*

and Medicine, 51(6). Retrieved from PsycINFO database.

Industry Canada. (2002). *Guide for creating smart community*. Retrieved from:

    http://198.103.246.211/documents/guide_e.asp

International Association for Public Participation. (2007). *Spectrum for public participation*.

    Retrieved February 15, 2008 from: http://iap2.org/associations/IAP2spectrumvertical.pdf

Jorgenson, S., Van Domlen, J. (2001). Helping the poor manage risk better: The role of social

    funds. *Journal of International Development*, 14(5). Retrieved from PsycINFO database.

Kaduuli, S. (2008). Social Science Research Network. *The value of participatory democracy in*

    Uganda. Retrieved from: http://ssrn.com/abstract=1112642.

Kagan, C., Castile, S., & Stewart, A. (2005). Participation: Are some more equal than others?

    Clinical Psychology, 153(3). Retrieved from PsycINFO database.

Kagan C. (2008). Manchester Metropolitan University. *Pillars of support for wellbeing in the*

    community: The role of the public sector. Retrieved from:

    http://www.e-*space.mmu.ac.uk/.../Pillars-of-support-for%20wellbeing.doc*

Ketter, S., Zukin, C., Andolina, M., & Jenkins, K. (2002). Cultural Information and Research

    Centres Liaison in Europe (CIRCLE). The civic and political health of a nation: A

    generational portrait *CIRCLE and the few charitable trusts*. Retrieved from:

    http://www.circle-network.jaaz.pl/index.php?module=articles&action=view&id=145

Kirby, S. L., Greaves, L., & Reid, C. J. (2006). *Experience Research Social Change: Methods*

    Beyond the Mainstream (2nd ed.). Peterborough, ONT: Broadview Press.

Kowaleski-Jones, L., Wolfinger, N. H. (Eds). (2006). *Fragile Families and the Marriage*

    Agenda. US: Springer.

Kratzman, J. P., McKnight, L., J. (1993). *Building communities from the inside out: A path towards finding and mobilizing a community's assets*. Chicago, IL: ACTA Publications.

Lerner, J. (2005). Centre for Community Change. *Let the people decide: Transformative community development through participatory budgeting in Canada.* http://www.communitychange.org/library/let-the-people-decide-

Lerner, J., & Van Wagner, E. (2006). Transnational Institute. *Participatory budgeting in Canada: Democratic innovations in strategic spaces.* Retrieved from: http://www.tni.org/detail_page.phtml?page=newpol-docs_pbcanada

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.

Lowndes, V., & Stoker, G. (1992). An evaluation of neighbourhood decentralization: Staff and councillor perspectives. *Policy and Politics*, 20(2). Retrieved from PsycINFO database.

Macallan, L. & Narayan, V. (1994). Keeping the heart beat in Grampian: A case study in community participation and ownership. *Health Promotion International*, 9(1). Retrieved from PsycINFO database.

Maton, K. I. (2000). Making a difference: The social ecology of social transformation. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 28(5). Retrieved from PsycINFO database.

Maxwell, G. (2007). *Inclusive Cities Canada*. Respect All Voices: Neighbourhood Councils as a Tool for Building Social Inclusion. Retrieved from: http://www.cdhalton.ca/publications/index.htm

Meehan, M. E. (1996). European integration and citizens' rights: A comparative perspective.

Journal of Federalism, 26(4). Retrieved from PsycINFO database.

McGee, S. & Loomis, C. (2008). Notes on the city of Kitchener community engagement strategy phases of research. Sherry McGee Thesis Notes. Department of Psychology, Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, ON.

McKeown, D. McIver, J. Moreton, A., & Rotondo, B. (2004). *Canadian Centre for Philanthropy*. Giving and volunteering: The role of religion. Retrieved from: http://www.independentsector.org/programs/research/GandVReligion.html

Miles, M., B., & Huberman, M. A. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

Minnesota Department of Health. (2008). *Benefits of community engagement.* Retrieved March 15, 2009 from: http://www.health.state.mn.us/community/intro/benefits.html

National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO). (2009). *MAPP basics: Introduction to the MAPP Process.* Retrieved from: http://www.naccho.org/topics/infrastructure/mapp/mappbasics.cfm

Nelson, G. & Prilleltensky, I. (Eds.). (2005). *Community Psychology: In pursuit of liberation and well-being.* New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillian.

New South Wales Government. (2009). Department of Environmental and Climate Change. *Community engagement in developing a plan.* Retrieved from: http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/threatenedspecies/tscominvmanthree.htm

Office of the Deputy Minister for Communities and Local Government. (2002). *Public*

participation in local government: A survey of local authorities. Retrieved from:

http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/research/democ/pubrprt.pdf

Pateman, C. (1970). *Participation and democratic theory.* Cambridge, England: Cambridge

University Press.

Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods* (2nd ed.). Newbury Park,

CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Posavac, E., J., & Carey, R. G. (2003). *Program evaluation: An overview program evaluation of*

methods and case studies. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Putnam, R. (2000). *Bowling alone: the collapse and revival of the American community.* New

York: Touchstone.

Rappaport, J. (1984). Studies in empowerment: Introduction to the issue. *Prevention in human*

Services, 3(1). Retrieved from PsycINFO database.

Redburn, F. S. & Buss, F. T. (2006). National Accountability Strategies for Developing

Countries: Observations on theory and experiences. In, Buss, F. T, Redburn, F. S., Guo,

K. (Eds.), *Modernizing Democracy: Innovations in Citizen Participation* (105-137).

London: M.E. Sharpe, Inc.

Riger, S. (1993). What's wrong with empowerment? *American Journal of Community*

Psychology, 21(3). Retrieved from PsycINFO database.

Rocha, M., A. (1997). A ladder of empowerment. *Journal of Planning Education and Research.*

17(1). Retrieved from PsycINFO database.

Rogers, B., & Robinson, E. (2004). Active Citizenship Centre. *The benefits of community engagement: A review of the evidence*. Retrieved from: http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/benefits

Russell, P., Morrison, A., & Davidson, P. (2008). Effective Interventions Unit. *Effective Engagement: A Guide to principles and practice*. Retrieved from: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2004/05/19355/37072

Schedler, A., Diamond, L., & Plattner, M. (1999). *Conceptualizing accountability: The self-restraining state*. London: Lynn Rienner Publishers.

Schlossberg, M., & Shuford, E. (2005). Delineating 'public and 'participation' in PPGIS. *URISA Journal*, 16(2). Retrieved from PsycINFO database.

Seyfang, G. (2006). Sustainable consumption, the new economics and community currencies: Developing new institutions for environmental governance. *Regional Studies* 40(7). Retrieved from PsycINFO database.

Shah, A. (Eds.). (2007). *Participatory Budgeting*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

Sharma, C. (2008). University of Munich. *Emerging dimensions of decentralization debate in the age of globalization*. Retrieved from: http://ideas.repec.org/p/pra/mprapa/6734.html

Sharma, C., K. (2005). When does decentralization deliver? The dilemma of design. *South Asian Journal of Socio-Political Studies*, 6(1).

Sharma, C., K. (2005). The federal approach to fiscal decentralization: Conceptual contours for policy makers. *Loyola Journal of Social Sciences*, 14(2)

Shugurensky, D. (2003). Civic participation: On active citizenship, social capital and public

policy. *Canadian Diversity*, 2(1).

Stanley, L., & Wise, S. (1990). Method, methodology, and epistemology in feminist research

processes. In, Stanley, L. (Ed.), Feminist praxis: Research, theory, and Epistemology in

Feminist Sociology (20-63). London: Routledge.

Statistics Canada. (2001). *Community highlights for Kitchener.* Retrieved from:

http://www12.statcan.ca/english/profil01/CP01/Details/KitchenerCustom

Tamarack Institute for Community Engagement. (2007). *Our growing understanding of*

community engagement. Retrieved from:
http://tamarackcommunity.ca/downloads/home/ce_report.pdf Vibrant communities:
Calgary.

The Improvement Network. (2008). *Community involvement practices.* Retrieved from:

http://www.improvementnetwork.gov.uk/imp/core/page.do

The National Centre for Involvement. (2008). *Local Involvement Networks: Accountability and*

transparency. Retrieved from: http://ww.hhcentreforinvovlement.nh.uk

The New South Wales Department of Infrastructure Planning and Natural Resources. (2003).

Tool Box 7: Techniques for community engagement. Retrieved from:
http://www.localgovernment.gld.gov.av.docs/corporate/publications/

Tolley, E. (2003). Expressing citizenship through participation: Values and responsibilities.

Canadian Diversity, 2(1). Retrieved from PsycINFO database.

Tossutti, L.S. (2003). Does voluntarism encourage young newcomers to participate in politics?:

An assessment of individual and group-based forms of unpaid service. *Canadian Journal*
of Ethnic Studies, 35(3). Retrieved from PsycINFO database.

Traynor, J. & W., Andors, J. (2005). Network Organizing: A strategy for

building community engagement. *Shelterforce Online*, 140. Retrieved from:
http://heapro.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/content/abstract/5/3/199

Voth, D., E., & Jackson, V., N. (1981). Center for Responsive Governance. *Evaluating Citizen*

Participation: Rural and urban community development. Retrieved from:

http://heapro.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/content/abstract/5/3/199

Wiedemann, P. M., & S. Femers. (1993). Public participation in waste management decision

making: Analysis and management of conflicts. *Journal of Hazardous Materials*, 33(3).

Retrieved from PsycINFO database.

Wiedemann, P. M., & S. Femers. (1993). The public participation ladder. J*ournal of Hazardous*

Materials, 33(3). Retrieved from PsycINFO database.

Wiggins, N., et al. (2009). Using popular Education for CE: Perspectives of Community for

Health Program. *Critical Public Health*, 19(1). Retrieved from PsycINFO database.

Willig, C (2003). *Introducing qualitative research in psychology: adventures in theory and*

method. Berkshire: McGraw-Hill Education.

Woolcock, M. (1998). Social capital and economic development: Toward a theoretical

synthesis and policy framework. *Theory and Society*, 27(2). Retrieved from PsycINFO

database.

Woolcock, M. (2001) The place of social capital in understanding social and economic

outcomes. *Canadian Journal of Policy Research*, 2(1). Retrieved from PsycINFO

database.

Woolcock, M., & Brown, V. (2005). University of Queensland: Australian National University.

Principles of community engagement: from the literatures on natural resources

management, local community development, human services and sustainability.

Retrieved from: http://www.uq.edu.au/boilerhouse/docs/WoolcockBrown2005.pdf

Appendices

Appendix A: Members of Community Engagement Strategy Working Group (CESWG)

Working Group	
Name	Affiliation
Abbie Grafstein	City of Kitchener, *Community and Corporate Planning*
Sherry McGee	Wilfrid Laurier University, *Principal Investigator*
Dr. Colleen Loomis	Wilfrid Laurier University, *Associate Professor of Psychology*
Theron Kramer	Compass Kitchener; Advisory Committee Review
Michael May	City of Kitchener, *Director of Communications*
Jana Miller	City of Kitchener, *Manager of Corporate Communications*
Edwina Weiss	City of Kitchener, *Administrative Support*
Deb Campbell	City of Kitchener, *District Facilitator*
Dan Chapman	City of Kitchener, *Director of Financial Planning and Reporting*
Gabre Berihun	Downtown Community Health Centre, *African-Canadian Association*
Jasminca Klacar	Compass Kitchener

Appendix B: History of Community Engagement Strategy Working Group (CESWG)

In September of 2007, Abbie Grafstein (Community and Corporate Planning Associate) was placed in a secondment at the City of Kitchener. She was chosen to lead the diversity and engagement components of the Plan for a Healthy Kitchener report, in which research with the goal of creating an inclusive, community engagement policy within the City of Kitchener. Such a policy would help the City staff in using best practices for community engagement, a consistent approach to community engagement, approaches specific to the population that is attempting to be engaged, and communication and collaboration amongst departments that ensures the public is not inundated with request for similar input. In October 2007, Abbie Grafstein created a City of Kitchener Community Engagement Strategy Working Group, with the intention of such a group meeting bi-monthly (in some cases monthly) for the entire duration of the project. This Working Group included City of Kitchener staff from a variety of departments, and representatives from various community organizations and institutions. It is the intention of this group to have members that are representative of the community, and of the various departments of the City. In order to formulate an inclusive Working Group, members were stratified according to gender, age, race, ethnicity, and on immigration status. As such, Grafstein's recruitment of Working Group members was by means of purposive, convenience sampling. A purposive sample is one that is selected by the researcher subjectively. The researcher attempts to obtain sample that appears to him/her to be representative of the population (Reichardt & Golub, 1987; 1999). However, this sample was also convenience in that the participants were also selected, in part or in whole, at the convenience of the researcher (City of Kitchener staff, local community members). This enabled the City of Kitchener Community Engagement Strategy Working Group to offer a diversified set of perceptions based on each group

members/stakeholders' experiences and positionality within the Kitchener community (corporate

and community perspectives). These stakeholders include Kitchener/Region of Waterloo

citizens, marginalized citizens, City of Kitchener staff, and members of the City of Kitchener

Community Engagement Working Group. During the formulation of the Working Group,

Grafstein approached Colleen Loomis an Associate Professor at Wilfrid Laurier University,

based on her academic expertise surrounding community engagement. Professor Loomis,

offered to take part in the project and offered one of her graduate students in the Masters of

Community Psychology program to act as a operating member of the Working Group. Thus, for

the purposes of this research, I acted as an active member of the Working Group and completed

research for the project as part of my MA thesis.

Information Sessions

The intention of the 1-hour Information Session was to inform City staffs about the

community engagement project, to introduce them to the Community Engagement Continuum

(Figure 6). These sessions were also intended to provide a more thorough understanding of how

staff members perceive the manner in which they are currently engaging the public, either

through everyday activities, or specific City of Kitchener projects. The recruitment of

Information Session attendees was completed through purposive, convenience sampling.

Attendees will be asked via email, participation was voluntary in nature. A total of thirty staff

members were in attendance at the Information Session. The target population of this component

of the study were staff members currently employed at the City of Kitchener. Gender and age do

not represent relevant factors in this study, as participants are primarily selected based on the job

title they currently hold, or the City project they were affiliated with. Grafstein and I co-

facilitated the Information Session that took place in a boardroom located with the City Hall of

Kitchener. Information Sessions involved presenting a brief overview of the Community

Engagement project, and the continuum that was enlarged and laminated, to the group of

municipal staff. Each staff member received a coloured and numbered sticker; the colour

corresponded to their department, while their number referred to a specific engagement project.

Staff members were asked to place their sticker on the laminated continuum in a position they

felt they typically (most often) engaged the public within the context of the particular project the

Working Group had afflicted with them. As such, these information sessions acted as a way of

the principal investigator to determining which staff members (based on the type of engagement

they are currently, or not currently using) should be selected for an interview. Discussion

followed, in which staff members were free to provide feedback, and ask questions. Questions

will be recorded (hand-written) by an administrative assistant, and attended to by the Grafstein

and I, and further brought to the attention of the Working Group members within the next

meeting. With that said, there will be an opportunity for City of Kitchener information session

attendees to ask questions, and participation in an interactive activity.

Internal Inventory Research Project

The Internal Inventory Research component of the research project involved Information

Sessions and interviews with City of Kitchener staff to increase staff awareness and

understanding of the Community Engagement project, in addition to collecting an inventory of

what was currently being done within the City regarding CE, challenges of CE, benefits of CE,

as well as best practices as identified by staff members.

Before staff interviews were conducted, Information sessions were run, in order to

introduce staff members to the work of the City of Kitchener Community Engagement Strategy

Working Group, as well as outlining the goals, direction, and intended outcome as a Working Group. Additionally, the information sessions represented an effective tool for eliciting staff discussion and thought around how staff members perceive the manner in which they are currently engaging the public, whether through everyday activities, or specific City of Kitchener projects. Staff interviews were completed to collect an municipal inventory of current engagement practices within the City of Kitchener, in addition to areas of difficulty and success, and recommendations based on staff experiential knowledge.

For staff interviews, interviewees were asked to participate via email, and participation was voluntary in nature. Prior to the conduction of staff interviews, the City of Kitchener Community Engagement Strategy Working Group was involved in the development of interview questions. Discussions occurred surrounding the length of the interview questions, which questions are absolutely needed, and most importantly if questions were addressing all the Working Group themes. As a result of limited Working Group time and resources, for the purposes of this research, 15 participants (City of Kitchener staff members) were chosen to complete interviews. A method of shortening the municipal interview list was suggested: referring back to the information workshops; sticker placement along the continuum could be considered in determining where municipal staff members identify their engagement processes at various stages along the continuum. The 15 interviewees were partially selected based on the departments in which they worked and the responsibilities for community engagement they currently have within the City; thus, giving representation to various types, protocols, and levels of engagement currently occurring within each City departments.

Interviews took place at the City of Kitchener's City Hall in Kitchener; interviews were taken place across a variety of City departments. At the convenience of City of Kitchener staff, City Hall was chosen as the setting for staff interviews. Additionally, interviews were conducted in an office space that the interviewee felt comfortable in, which in most cases their own office. Participants involved in the interview process will be asked to reflect on their experiences of their involvement within their project/work, what challenges of engaging the public they encountered, who they aimed to engage, the benefits of using engagement, and staff training they would find useful in regards to engagement. With the written permission of interviewees, interviews were taped-recorded. Interviews were completed by myself, Abbie Grafstein, and three Wilfrid Laurier Master of Social Work (MSW) students; Jessica Soto, Jessica Soto, Stacey Sison, and Tamatha Trenholm, whom were completing practicum placements at the City of Kitchener. Interviews were open-ended, and semi-structured in nature.

An interview guide including probes will be utilized through the interview process; however, questions will be emergent in nature. Participants were also informed that information gathered during the interview would be reported in group format, so that information and quotations will not be identifiable. Interview recordings were transcribed, and eventually coded using NVivo for the purposes of qualitative analysis by myself. The Working Group received a synthesized version of the generated, research findings. Additionally, a one-page summary of the research was made available to City of Kitchener staff who were interviewed, participated in the Information Session, or indicated interest in the project through interoffice email.

Findings

Taking into consideration the community's strong desire to be involved more collaboratively within decision-making process, as identified through P4HK's Environics survey, there is a gap between what is currently being done within the City of Kitchener, and what Kitchener citizen's desire. Optimistically, findings from interviews articulated a desire and willingness by City of Kitchener staff to move farther along the continuum for community engagement; from inform and consult (passive), to more collaborative and empowerment processes (active). Staff members also identified a willingness to be inclusive of all people who will be affected by the decision, and a growing need to do so, given increasingly diverse nature of Kitchener. Subsequently, staff articulated that because target audiences for CE were project-specific, the need for inclusive tools and practices is needed.

The majority of recommendations identified by staff members were resource-based (e.g., time, financial, and human resources) and resources required to implement more collaborative forms of community engagement. Staff members' identification of best practices referred to principles of community engagement (e.g., being inclusive, transparent, and accountable) and provided insight on what tools worked most effectively. Finally, staff members articulated the benefits of community engagement, in much the same way the community did during the P4HK research consultations.

Appendix C: City of Kitchener Community Engagement Policy Guiding Principles

Community Engagement at the City of Kitchener will be guided by the following principles:

Communication: The engagement process and each step of its progress will be communicated to participants and the community at large using appropriate methods and technologies.

- We will provide information that is timely, accurate, objective, easily understood and highly accessible.
- We will work with the community in a co-operative and collaborative way that includes openness, information sharing and a commitment to feedback and the use of plain language.
- We will involve the community as early as possible in the process so that time and opportunity are given for stakeholders to learn about the issue – and so that timely, clear and complete information about the engagement process can be communicated to all stakeholders
- We will remind stakeholders that their views and involvement are always welcome and valued.

Inclusivity: Our engagement processes will be based on building trust and relationships within the community.

- We will develop specific strategies for effective communication and consultation and building stronger links with those members of the community that are often not engaged.
- We will foster respect for the diverse values, interests and knowledge of those involved.
- We will encourage participation by those who will be affected by the decision.

Transparency and Accountability: The city will be transparent and accountable for acting in accordance with its "Commitment to the Public" (see continuum) and will demonstrate that results and outcomes are consistent with the promises it makes:

- Participants will be clear about the reasons why they are being involved, what is expected of them and the range of outcomes their involvement will produce,
- Participants will be provided with feedback as to the results of the process and how their input influences the decisions as they are made
- Engagement processes will be evaluated and outcomes measured.

Continuous Improvement: We will continue to seek better ways of engaging the community at large about complex issues.

- We will share ideas, techniques, knowledge and experience about community engagement across the organization, and seek to learn from, the best practices of other organizations and communities, and share the same as requested.

Resources: The city acknowledges the importance of engaging the community and providing adequate staff, time and funding to do so.

- The city will allocate available resources to support effective community engagement
- Staff will be trained and capable in supporting effective engagement.
- Stakeholder time and resources will also be respected and used effectively.

Engaging Partners: To the best of its ability, the City will work in partnership with individuals, groups and organizations to seek mutually beneficial outcomes.

- We will seek to build our awareness of potential partnerships within our community
- When appropriate, we will partner with community stakeholders in community engagement processes that result in joint recommendations.
- We will encourage community stakeholders to remain involved in the implementation of decisions and future community issues.

Appendix D: City of Kitchener Community Engagement Continuum

This policy includes a continuum of four strategies and associated promises related to reaching and involving stakeholders in specific engagement initiatives regarding policies, projects, strategies and plans for strategic investments. Whenever the City embarks on an engagement process, the purpose of the engagement and the 'promise' will be clarified at the beginning of the process.

INFORM	CONSULT	COLLABORATE	ENTRUST
To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternative, or solutions.	To obtain public input into priorities or decisions, usually at one point in the project planning or implementation process.	To partner with the public in various aspects of the planning and decision-making process usually including the development of alternatives and identification of the preferred solution.	To respond to needs of the public and place the final decision in their hands.

Community Engagement Framework – Commitment to Public

INFORM	CONSULT	COLLABORATE	ENTRUST
Promise to the Public	**Promise to the Public**	**Promise to the Public**	**Promise to the Public**
We will keep you informed.	We will inform you, listen to you, acknowledge your concerns, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions, and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will work with you to reach a final decision and implement what you decide.

Community Engagement Framework – Tools & Techniques

Tools & Techniques INFORM	Tools & Techniques CONSULT	Tools & Techniques COLLABORATE	Tools & Techniques ENTRUST
• Public notices • Websites • Written information • Open houses	• Citizens' panel • Community information & feedback forums • Community research and needs assessments • Networking	• Advisory/steering committees • Policy round table • Consensus-building	• Community coalitions • Partnerships • Participatory decision-making • Citizen committees

Adapted from: The International Association for Public Participation (2007)

Appendix E: Interview Guide

Interview Questions

1. Briefly describe the purpose of your engagement strategy, framework, department and/or policy? What are some of the values associated with it? How did these values come into place?
2. How was your community engagement strategy (framework, department and/or policy) developed?
   - PROBING: What were some of the processes involved in this (i.e., public role, steering committee, consultant)?
3. What types of partnerships have been developed throughout the development and implementation process? (Please clarify what is meant: of the development and implementation of the strategy, or with specific projects?)
   - PROBING: Example: other Cities, non-profit organizations, government agencies (schools)
4. What process is involved in deciding what form(s) of community engagement to utilize throughout your project?
   - PROBING: For example, are there specific framework or strategies that are used for specific departments or projects? (Pause here or you may get only the response to the question about legislated engagement.) Is there legislation that mandates engagement practices in particular departments? (If this is provincially mandated, City of Kitchener would have the same requirements—what are we looking for with this question?)
5. What would you identify as your best practices for engaging citizens in decision-making processes?
6. What kinds of inclusive communication and engagement practices were used throughout your engagement process?
   - Do you find there are challenges engaging certain types of populations?
   - What do you think accounts for these challenges?
   - Are there groups you would have like to engage to a greater extent but are experiencing difficulties?
7. What are some best practices you have found effective in reaching target populations?
8. How was an understanding of community engagement (i.e., your strategy or policy) articulated to City staff?
   - PROBING: What was the response from staff? If negative- how did you help alleviate this?
9. What skill development training has been helpful for staff (related to community engagement)?
10. What kinds of additional resources do you need to effectively do community engagement (staff time, budget resources)?
11. Within your City where does the greatest responsibility lie, in terms of whom facilities community engagement practices or polices?
    - PROBING: Does this role differ than that of other departmental staff?

- Example: In our City (Kitchener) the Communications department consults our internal departments on projects and strategies that involve engaging the public.
12. What obstacles (if any) did you encounter in the implementation of your framework?
    - PROBING: We are looking for things to potentially avoid or minimize within our own implementation.
13. Have you attained public feedback since the implementation of the strategy or project?
    - PROBING (if yes): Does the public feel they have improved City transparency?
14. How has and does your strategy or policy define successful engagement?

Appendix F: Participant Informed Consent Statement

Wilfrid Laurier University Informed Consent Statement

Study Title: City of Kitchener: Development of an Inclusive Policy for Community Engagement

Principal Investigator: Sherry McGee

Advisor: Dr. Colleen Loomis

You are invited to participate in a project being conducted by Wilfrid Laurier University and the City of Kitchener. In partnership with the City of Kitchener Community Engagement Working Group, we are conducting a study entitled "City of Kitchener: Development of an Inclusive Policy for Community Engagement." This study is being conducted by Sherry McGee, MA candidate, Wilfrid Laurier University, in fulfillment of her MA thesis, under the supervision of Dr. Colleen Loomis, Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Wilfrid Laurier University, in partnership with the City of Kitchener.

This study is exploring current practices and experiences surrounding community engagement; the questions that will be asked of you may involve articulating challenges, benefits, and "best practices" surrounding community engagement, as well as challenges and success you have had in engaging marginalized populations. This study and interview process is in no way evaluating you. Would you contribute to this study by participating in an interview?

INFORMATION:

Your participation would consist of completing a telephone interview, lasting approximately 45 minutes. Approximately 6 individuals from 9 identified Canadian Cities/Region are being asked to participate in this study. These Cities/Region are as follows: City of Waterloo, Region of Waterloo, City of Cambridge, City of Guelph, City of Edmonton, City of Calgary, City of Hamilton, City of Vancouver, and City of Ottawa.

Interviews will be audio recorded with participants' (your) consent, and if you, as the participant, do not wish to be tape recorded, you will not be in any way forced to do so. It is important that you know you will not be deceived or tricked at any time during your involvement in this study as a research participant. Please note that the researcher will take written notes if you, the participant, do not consent to being audio recorded.

RISKS:

It may be possible that you have had negative experiences surrounding your work with engagement, either in your job or in previous work/volunteer positions, and such experiences may surface through your participation in this interview

BENEFITS

This study will contribute to current understanding regarding successful community engagement within City contexts .The research findings will also contribute to existing knowledge of "best practices" for developing a framework policy within a City context and have implications for designing and implementing community engagement frameworks and/or policy in other municipalities in Ontario, Canada, and internationally. Such widespread implementation can potentially work towards great, more successful community engagement at a City level.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your responses to the questions will be kept completely confidential. Your name will not be attached in any way to transcriptions or coded materials, and for those of you who agree to the recorded interviews your privacy will be further protected in that data will be reported in an aggregate manner, and no direct quotations will be utilized. You should be aware, however, given the limited number of Cities and staff positions surrounding Community Engagement you (or your City) may be rendered more easily identifiable. The names of the Cities and Region may be used in write-ups, presentations, or academic conferences; however, once again, staff names will not be attached to such documents.

Interviews will be conducted by Sherry McGee. Further, recorded interviews will be uploaded on a computer by Sherry McGee, and only heard by Sherry McGee. Beyond Sherry McGee, transcriptions of recorded interviews will only be made available to Dr. Colleen Loomis (thesis supervisor of Sherry McGee), and Abbie Grafstein Community and Corporate Planning Associate (City of Kitchener), as they are intricately involved in this research process. To further protect your confidentially your recorded interview will be deleted from the recording device within 24 hours, and consequently uploaded on a software program which will be password safe. In keeping with research standards, after completion of the project the data will be moved to secured, long term storage and destroyed January 1, 2016 by Dr. Colleen Loomis.

CONTACT

If you have questions at anytime about the study or your procedures, (or you experience adverse effects as a result of participating in this study,) you may contact the researchers, Sherry McGee in the Department of Psychology, Wilfrid Laurier University, 75 University Avenue West, Waterloo, Ontario of Psychology, 519-884-0710 ext.2879, mcgee2456@gmail.com, or Dr. Colleen Loomis at Wilfrid Laurier University, (519) 884-0710, ext. 2858, cloomis@wlu.ca. The study has been reviewed and approved by the he University Research Ethics Board. If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions presented to you in this form, or your rights has a participant in research have been violated during the courses of this project, you may contact Dr. Bill Marr, bmarr@wlu.ca, University Research Board, Wilfrid Laurier University, (519) 884-07110, extension 2468.

PARTICIPATION

Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary. You may decline to participate without penalty, and may decline from being recorded. If you choose to participate, you may choose not to respond to any one of the questions, asked the recording to stop at any time, and may also withdraw from the project at any time, without penalty. Further, if you choose to withdraw early from the project, your data will be deleted from the recording device immediately, and will not be uploaded or listened to at any time.

FEEDBACK AND PUBLICATION

This project is the Master's thesis research of Ms. Sherry McGee and is expected to be completed by August 31, 2008 at which time a final summary report of the findings will be sent to employees through interoffice mail; such employees include staff that were involved in the City of Kitchener Community Engagement Strategy Working Group, City of Kitchener staff who were interviewed internally and/or attended the Information Sessions, and staff from the External cities that were interview as a direct part of this specific research project. Any addition City of Kitchener staff who is interested in obtaining information about this research project can contact the principal researcher Sherry McGee (mcgee2456@gamil.com). Findings will be used in conjunction with other research being completed at the City of Kitchener, and some of this data will be used as part of a larger City of Kitchener report. Additionally, findings from this research may appear in academic journal articles and at conference presentations. No individually identifying information will be published.

CONSENT

I have read and understand the above information. I have received a copy of this form. I agree to participate in this study.

Participant's signature _____ Date _____

Consent to being tape recorded:

Participant's signature _____ Date _____

Investigator's signature _____ Date _____

Appendix G: Email of Invitation to Potential Participants

TO: *(name), department, City*

FROM: City of Kitchener, Sherry McGee, Community Psychology MA Candidate

DATE:

RE: Invitation to Participate in a Community Engagement Research Project

Dear:

My name is Sherry McGee. I am a student at Wilfrid Laurier University in Kitchener/Waterloo, Ontario. I am currently involved in a research project at the City of Kitchener that is the work for a master's degree in community psychology, entitled: City of Kitchener: Development of an Inclusive Policy for Community Engagement. This research project is being supervised by Dr. Colleen Loomis, Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Wilfrid Laurier University

In October 2006, City of Kitchener Council received and adopted "A Plan for a Healthy Kitchener, 2007-2027" (P4HK) as the community's vision for twenty years into the future. P4HK provided a unified strategic approach to key areas essential to the health and vitality of the City of Kitchener. It articulated priorities identified in consultation with the community – quality of life, leadership and community engagement, diversity, downtown, development, and the environment. And, it also provided high level recommendations for action in each of these areas to be completed over the next 4 years, 2007-2010, the term of the current Mayor and Council.

In October 2007, the City of Kitchener Community Engagement Strategy Working Group was formed to develop a community engagement strategy. Part of our work includes researching different engagement policies, strategies or frameworks that were adopted or implemented by various municipalities across Canada. It is our hope to have an opportunity to interview key stakeholders involved in the development or implementation of these high level strategies to gain greater insight into successful outcomes, as well as challenges that were encountered. Interviews would be completed over the phone and would take approximately 45 minutes, and will be audio taped and transcribed with your permission. Essentially, we are hoping to learn about the process involved in the development and implementation or your strategy or policy as well as collecting what you identify as "best practices" for engagement.

Approximately 6 individuals from 9 identified Canadian Cities/Region are being asked to participate in this study. They are identified (below) as:

- City of Waterloo
- Region of Waterloo
- City of Cambridge
- City of Guelph

- City of Edmonton
- City of Calgary
- City of Hamilton
- City of Vancouver
- City of Ottawa

Please express your interest in participating via email. If I do not hear back with you within the next week, I will be following up with a phone call to confirm/or disconfirm your participation in this research; please be assured that participation is 100% voluntary in nature. This phone call also represents the opportunity for you to ask questions, if you would like to better understand your participation in this research, or if you require more information about the research project.

Thank-you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Sherry McGee, Community Psychology MA Candidate

City of Kitchener in partnership with Wilfrid Laurier University

Email: mcgee2@gmail.com Phone: 519-884-0710 ext.2879

Appendix H: Follow-up Email to Participants

Hello

On behalf of myself, and the City of Kitchener Community Engagement Strategy Working Group, I would like to extend my sincere thanks for expressing an interest in participating in our interview process, as part of the City of Kitchener: Development of an Inclusive Policy for Community Engagement research project.

To help you know more about our project I would like to share our Working Group's Terms of Reference.

Community engagement emerged as a strategic direction for the City of Kitchener through broad community consultation and is so identified in the Plan for Healthy Kitchener (P4HK). P4HK articulates that community engagement and involvement is about keeping local government, the City of Kitchener, connected to the community by fostering "an open and understandable decision-making process and a commitment to two-way communication with the community...(by) regularly engaging citizens through the sharing of information; through citizen consultation on specific projects; and through the active and ongoing participation of citizens, businesses and community organizations in the development of city policies, strategies and plans for strategic investments".

Additionally, I have sent you an email attachment of the City of Kitchener Community Engagement Working Group's Community Engagement Continuum, which is a framework from which we will be basing our research on. I have attached the questions that will be asked in the interview. I encourage you to print off both of these documents, as you may want to use them as a reference point during the interview. Additionally, feel free to use notes during the interview. Lastly, I have attached the consent form; this consent form (if signed) indicates that you are consenting to have our phone interview tape recorded. If you agree to participate and be recorded, I ask you to read over, sign, and have faxed to Wilfrid Laurier University at the following fax number (519) 746-7605. Please be sure to address the fax to myself, Sherry McGee. Please keep a copy of this consent form for your own records (which includes my complete contact information), as you may wish to reference it in the future.

Please get back to me at your earliest convenience. Also, please provide me with a date/time that would be most convenient for me to call you in order to conduct our phone interview.

Best,

Sherry McGee, Community Psychology MA Candidate
City of Kitchener in partnership with Wilfrid Laurier University
Email: mcgee2@gmail.com, Phone: 519-884-0710 ext.2879

Appendix I: Interview and Research Questions Relationship Guide

Interview Questions	Corresponding Research Questions	
Briefly describe the purpose of your engagement strategy, framework, department, and/or policy?	-General Understanding (Process)	What values should be associated with CE practices and/policy?
How was your community engagement strategy developed?		
What obstacles did you encounter in the implementation of your framework?		What are the best practices around implementing Community Engagement practices/policy?
Have you attained public feedback since the implementation of the strategy or project?		
What would you identify as your best practices for engaging citizens in decision-making processes?	-What are the best practices around implementing Community Engagement practices/policy?	
What types of partnerships have been developed throughout the development and implementation process?		
How was an understanding of community engagement (i.e., your strategy or policy) articulated to City staff?		
What skill development training has been helpful for staff (related to community engagement)?		
What kind of additional resources do you need to effectively do community engagement?		

Within your City where does the greatest responsibility lie, in terms of who facilitates community engagement practices or polices?		
What are some best practices you have found in effective in reaching target populations?	How is the concept of inclusivity articulated in Community Engagement practices/policy?	What are the best practices around implementing Community Engagement practices/policy?
What process is involved in deciding what form(s) of community engagement is utilized throughout your project?	What values should be associated with CE practices/policy? How is the concept of 'empowerment' articulated in CE practices/policy?	What are the best practices around implementing Community Engagement practices/policy?

Appendix J: Summary of Municipal Government Engagement Directions

197 Councils and Council committees must conduct meetings in public, unless section 2 or 2.1 applies.

227 If Council calls a meeting with the public, notice of it must be advertised and everyone is entitled to attend.

230 Describes when Council is required to hold a public hearing before second reading of the bylaw, or before Council votes on the resolution.

251 (3) A borrowing bylaw must be advertised.

606 Describes the requirements for public advertising. Notice must be advertised at least once a week for two consecutive weeks or delivered to every residence in the area affected. Describes what a notice must contain.

636 Describes notification and public input requirements related to preparation of a statutory plan.

640 (2) (d) Land use bylaw must provide for how and to whom notice of the issuance of a development permit is given.

692 Council must hold a public hearing (section **230**) and give notice (section

606 before giving second reading to adopt or amend a land use bylaw or statutory plan, i.e.
a. an inter-municipal development plan,
b. a municipal development plan,
c. an area structure plan, or
d. an area redevelopment plan.

There are other sections of the MGA that describe public input requirements. For instance, if a municipality initiates an annexation proposal, then section 122 describes the notification and public hearing requirements. These sections are not described here because they do not directly affect the situations described in the Public Input Toolkit.