



# Burlington Community Engagement Charter

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Refreshed for the future

# Background

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## Municipal context

Engagement Charters/Frameworks are common across municipalities

The City of Burlington was an early leader in the creation of an Engagement Charter

The City's current Charter is over 10 years old

Work on the new Charter began on Sept. 16, 2023 at Food for Feedback

# What is the Community Engagement Charter?

The fabric of trust between Council, the City and residents

The City of Burlington Community Engagement Charter is an agreement between Burlington City Council and the residents of Burlington that outlines commitments, responsibilities, and fundamental principles related to resident engagement with City government.

# What to expect with the Charter

## Highlights

Defines proper engagement

Fortifies trust and transparency

Focuses on hearing from all voices

# What's Changed

**2013**

- **Short, plain-language policy document (1.5 pages)**
- **Focused on citizens, rights & responsibilities**
- **10 City commitments**
- **Vision & mission statements**
- **Engagement spectrum**



**2026**

- **Expanded framework with roles, responsibilities & accountability**
- **Added technology options**
- **Resident replaces “citizen” (updated in 14 places)**
- **Land acknowledgement and contributor recognition**
- **Vision & mission updated for inclusivity**
- **Definitions updated (+7 added)**
- **Commitments evolved (11 total, new titles & wording)**
  - **Added Continuous Improvement**
  - **Renamed Building Capacity → Fostering Participation**
  - **Updated Clear Language → Communication & Clear Language**
  - **Delegation Process → Speaking at Council or Committee**
- **New sections: Opening & closing statements, rules of engagement , planning steps**
- **Emphasis on collaboration and transparency**
- **Updated language to increase readability**

# Engagement on the Charter

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## Phase 1

### Five sessions (In-person, virtual)

- Each session had between 5 - 10 people

### Halton Multicultural Council session

- 54 people with 12 languages being translated

# Engagement on the Charter

## Phase 2

Four sessions Five sessions (In-person, virtual)

- Each session had between 5 - 10 people

Halton Multicultural Council session

- 48 people with 12 languages being translated

# Engagement on the Charter

## Food for Feedback

- Both phases of engagement were present at Food for Feedback (2023, 2024)
- Hundreds of residents were engaged each year

## Council

- Engagement staff met with each Advisory Committee
- Individual meetings were held with each Councillor and the Mayor in phase 1

## Staff

- Engagement happened with the original members of the Charter Action Team who helped produce the first Charter
- Staff engagement happened in both phases with 15 - 20 staff participating in each session

# Feedback and Questions