

Municipality Of Chatham-Kent
Chief Administrative Office
Corporate Initiatives - Communications
Information Report

To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Amy Wilcox, FCPA, FCMA, PMP - Manager, Corporate Initiatives
Date: January 5, 2021
Subject: Let's Talk Chatham-Kent - Annual Report 2020

This report is for the information of Council.

Background

In April 2015, a motion brought forth by Councillor Brock McGregor and seconded by Councillor Doug Sulman was unanimously approved. It called for:

“A social media strategy for communication of municipal governance issues prior to, during, and after council meetings. An ongoing plan to re-evaluate and modify communication strategy, including opportunities for community input.”

In January 2017, Council approved the community strategic plan, CK Plan 2035. One of the critical success factors of the corporation is to operate in an “open and transparent” manner. Corporate Communications determined that an online community engagement tool would assist in this endeavor.

In October 2017, Council approved a sole source purchase of an online community engagement tool provided by Bang the Table to be used as a pilot project.

That year, the project was funded from the Strategic Planning budget using a positive variance due to the vacant Coordinator of Strategic Planning position. Subsequent years are funded using the positive variance from the Project Management Office from the discontinued use of the project portfolio management software.

Comments

Software

Bang the Table's mission is to enable public participation as a fundamental pillar of well-functioning 21st century democracies by forging constructive relationships between communities and the institutions of government.

The online community engagement tool, Let's Talk Chatham-Kent, gives the municipality the opportunity to inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower residents and allows administration the ability to obtain feedback from residents. The tool allows business units the opportunity to provide information to citizens through "widgets", such as a document library, important project dates, project life cycle updates, and a news feed "tool" that can be used to keep the community updated. These tools allow administration to consult, involve and engage residents by providing them the ability to collaborate using surveys, forums, and questionnaires.

Software Statistics 2020

As of December 31, 2020, there are 2,038 registered participants - an increase of more than 25% from 2019. This tool gives administration the ability to obtain feedback from users with or without the users registering and providing their email address.

During 2020, there were 15 projects hosted on the Let's Talk Chatham-Kent tool with over 30,000 views of the site.

A list of 2020 projects and the number of visitors and surveys completed for each project are listed below.

Project Name	Department	Project Published	Number of Visitors	Number of Surveys Completed
Community Engagement Survey	Chief Administrative Office	Nov. 26, 2020	545	140
Chatham-Kent Immigration Survey	Community Development	Nov. 3, 2020	754	115
CK Food Strategy Consultation	Community Human Services	Oct. 15, 2020	0	0
EarlyON Survey	Community Human Services	Jun. 23, 2020	120	86
EarlyON Professional Survey	Community Human Services	Jun. 2, 2020	122	79
Renaming Baseball Fields	Corporate Services	Jun. 22, 2020	247	175
Have Your Say, Municipal Budget 2021	Finance, Budget, Information Technology & Transformation	Oct. 7, 2020	1,781	1,266
Tax Rate Modernization Survey	Finance, Budget, Information Technology & Transformation	Oct. 27, 2020	843	566
Charing Cross Road/Queen Street Road Diet	Infrastructure & Engineering Services	Sep. 23, 2020	106	45

Chatham Street North and South Road Reconfiguration	Infrastructure & Engineering Services	Sep. 23, 2020	40	17
Elizabeth Street Sewer Separation	Infrastructure & Engineering Services	Dec. 4, 2020	32	No survey
Ridgetown Flooding Survey	Infrastructure & Engineering Services	Aug. 4, 2020	24	8
Rose Beach Line Slope Environmental Assessment	Infrastructure & Engineering Services	Dec. 10, 2020	319	No survey
Tilbury Stormwater Master Plan	Infrastructure & Engineering Services	Dec. 21, 2020	35	No survey
Victoria Ave. Construction Project	Infrastructure & Engineering Services	Jun. 15, 2020	313	No survey

Versatility

The Let's Talk Chatham-Kent tool is very versatile for the needs of Council and administration. Examples of non-engagement uses of the tool this year include:

Grant Applications: In the fall, the tool was used by Partnership Development for participants to complete applications for the Together CK Municipal Grant.

COVID-19 Response: As part of the municipal COVID-19 response, the tool was used for COVID Response Check-In in the arenas. As of January 5, 6,025 health reviews have been completed.

Community Pride: In December, the tool was used for the community wide, Light Up Chatham-Kent map where individuals could place a "pin" on a map of Chatham-Kent to identify a light display. This project was in collaboration with Blenheim's Light Up Our Neighbourhood Committee, Christmas Lights Tour in Wallaceburg and Dresden Shines. The map received over 5,400 views.

New Look for 2021

With the scheduled launch of the new corporate website in 2021, in December 2020 the Let's Talk Chatham-Kent website was updated to match the new municipal website look and branding.

Consultation

Worked with several business units on the launch of their individual projects on the tool.

Financial Implications

The annual subscription for the software is \$25,425 including HST. To better align with Council Priorities, the funds from the Project Management Office project management software has been reallocated to cover this expense.

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