



City Looks to Improve Public Participation to Inform Decision-Making

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For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC – Victoria will be one of the few municipalities in Canada to develop a public engagement policy and tool kit to guide how the organization engages the community in decision-making. This fall, the City of Victoria will be working with the community to identify how to best communicate and connect with citizens.

“The City of Victoria is committed to public engagement as key to successful and effective governance and planning,” said Councillor Sonya Chandler. “This process will help us understand and respond to how our community wants to be involved with civic issues and how we, as a municipality, can best support this involvement.”

The City will be consulting with the community to ensure that a broad range of feedback is solicited. Some of the activities will include an online discussion at www.victoria.ideascale.com, where residents can provide their top suggestions on how the City can engage residents; a Public Ideas Forum in late October, designed as a family-friendly event to gather input through a range of games and interactive stations; consultation with stakeholder groups; a discussion board on Facebook; and more. These activities will be conducted between October and December 2009.

The ultimate goal is to improve civic decision-making, make information for citizens easier to access, and offer more – and more varied – opportunities for citizens to have input in City matters. The City is exploring a spectrum of public engagement from providing information to residents, to community empowerment.

Enhancing two-way communications with citizens and community organizations and improving communications tools was one of seven priorities outlined by City Council in March and was recommended within the Governance Review conducted by consultant George Cuff.

For more information visit www.victoria.ca and click on *Engaging our Citizens*.

— 30 —

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