



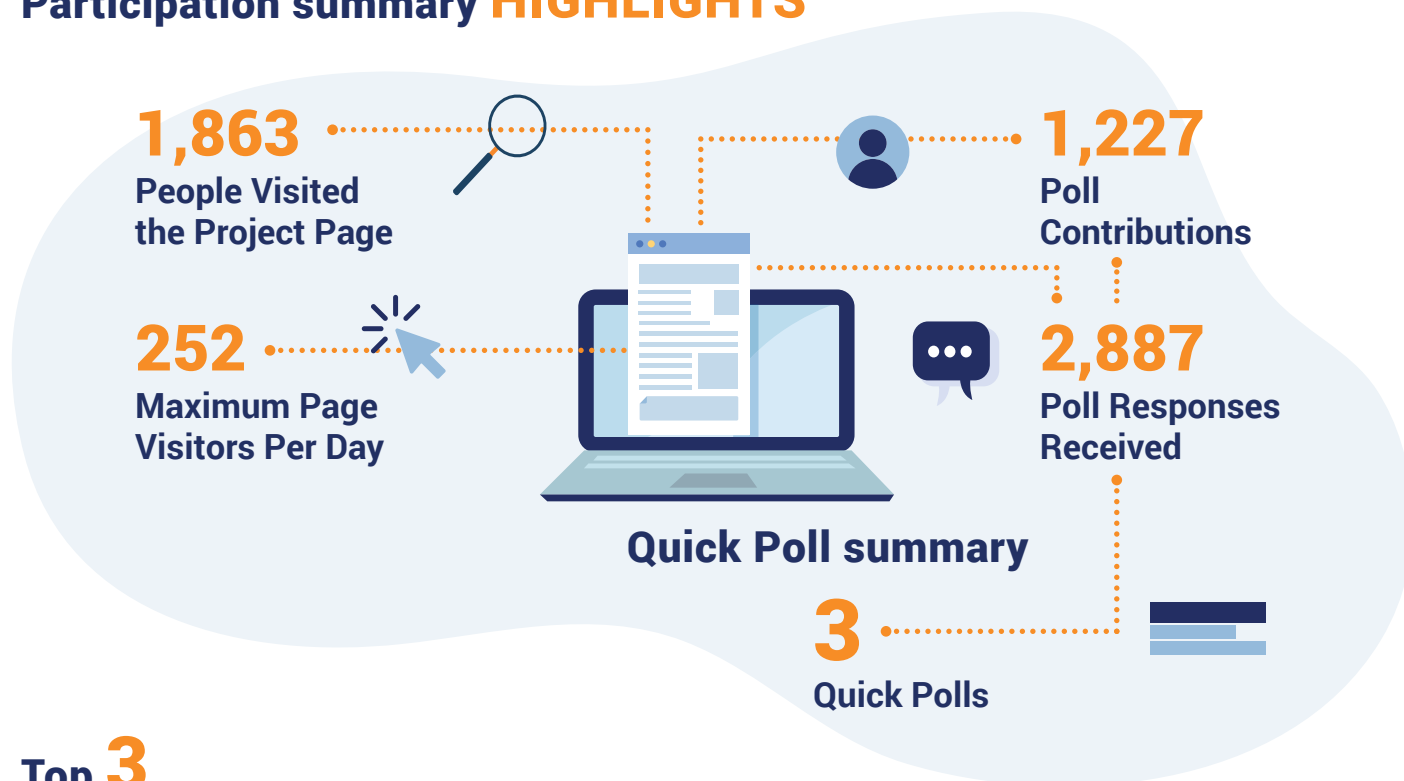
Hamilton

# Public Engagement During COVID-19



## **QUICK POLL SUMMARY REPORT**

## Participation summary **HIGHLIGHTS**



### Top 3 Quick Polls Based on Contributors

**1,176**

Contributors to:

Before COVID-19, had you ever participated in a face-to-face public engagement activity led by the City of Hamilton?

**869**

Contributors to:

How likely are you to participate in City-led public engagement using Engage.Hamilton.ca or other online tools during COVID-19?

**842**

Contributors to:

How likely are you to participate in a face-to-face public engagement activity led by the City of Hamilton once in-person public engagement can resume?

### Background Overview

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the delivery of many City of Hamilton services, including public engagement. Community engagement is a key direction of the City's Strategic Plan, 25-year Community Vision, and Term of Council Priorities as a way to build transparency, trust, and confidence in local government through increased public access to City information and participation in decision-making processes that effect residents and their community.

All City-led public engagement was suspended on March 13, 2020 along with the closure of City facilities and restrictions on in-person gatherings in accordance with provincial and federal physical distancing guidelines and limits on social gatherings at that time.

Although in-person public engagement activities continue to be on hold, the City remains committed to seeking feedback from the community and will resume face-to-face public engagement when it is safe to do so. In order to better understand the public's interest in resuming in-person public engagement and to help inform COVID-19 recovery and reopening efforts, the City launched an online Public Engagement During COVID-19 poll on October 26, 2020.

## Public Engagement Poll: Promotion and Participation



**3,868**  
Newsletter  
Recipients



**234,000**  
Print Advertising  
Reach



**50,619**  
Social Media  
Interactions



**286,200**  
Digital Advertising  
Reach

The Public Engagement During COVID-19 poll was open for public input from October 26 – November 23, 2020. A project page was created on [engage.hamilton.ca](https://engage.hamilton.ca) which included three short poll questions. Participants could also email [engage.hamilton@hamilton.ca](mailto:engage.hamilton@hamilton.ca) or contact the City's Senior Project Manager for Community Engagement. The project used a combination of targeted communication strategies to raise public awareness of the initiative.

### Digital Communication

The engagement opportunity was promoted through the City of Hamilton's various communication channels including: Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Facebook, and City website, along with digital signs at City Hall and the Farmer's Market. A newsletter was sent to more than 2,775 Our Future Hamilton subscribers, 643 Engage Hamilton registered users and 450 Youth Network Newsletter recipients. Additional online promotion included digital ads to zoned postal codes, theSpec.com weather banner, local neighbourhood online newspapers and their social media channels; in total, achieving a combined readership reach of over 286,200.

### Print Promotion

Print advertisements were featured in seven local newspapers with a city-wide total distribution reach of over 234,000, including the Ancaster, Binbrook, Dundas, Flamborough, Hamilton Mountain, and Stoney Creek communities. The poll also coincided with efforts to promote the City's new online engagement site [engage.hamilton.ca](https://engage.hamilton.ca). Awareness tactics included city-wide promotion in the City of Hamilton's Winter Recreation Guide and Hamilton Community Guide, along with printed posters for display in all Hamilton Public Library locations, recreation centres, municipal service centres, and senior's centres, achieving a combined distribution reach of over 90,000.

### Project Participation

During the four-week period, the project page received 1,863 visitors. 1,252 participants actively engaged on the site by contributing to the poll questions and visiting multiple project pages on [engage.hamilton.ca](https://engage.hamilton.ca). A total of 1,227 people contributed to the poll, with 2,887 responses received for the three poll questions combined.

## What You Told Us

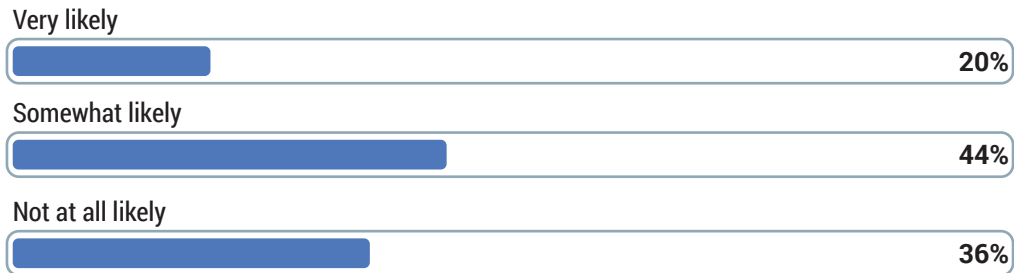
### Poll Question 1:

**Before COVID-19, had you ever participated in a face-to-face public engagement activity led by the City of Hamilton? (examples: in-person public meetings, workshop, presentation, summit, special event)**



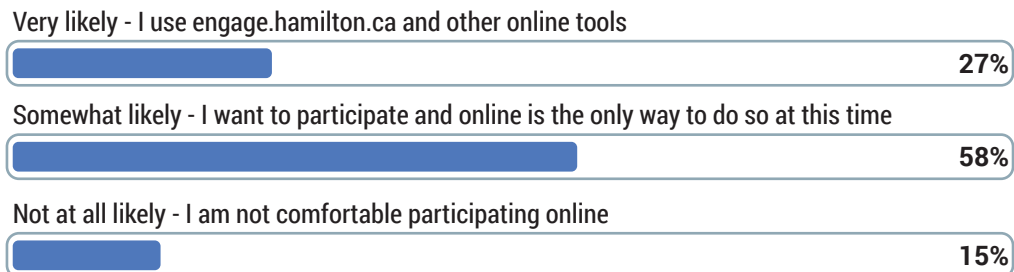
### Poll Question 2:

**How likely are you to participate in face-to-face public engagement activity led by the City of Hamilton once in-person public engagement can resume?**



### Poll Question 3:

**How likely are you to participate in City-led public engagement activities using Engage.Hamilton.ca or other online tools during COVID-19?**



## **What this Means**

Based on what we heard, 64% of respondents indicated some level of interest participating in face-to-face City-led public engagement activities when it is safe to do so. Most people who participated in the poll were agreeable to participating online, with a combined total of 85% of participants indicating they were very likely or somewhat likely to use [engage.hamilton.ca](https://engage.hamilton.ca) or other online tools during COVID-19. It is important to note that participation in this engagement process was online.

While [engage.hamilton.ca](https://engage.hamilton.ca) is a centralized online site for residents to share their feedback on important City projects, policies and initiatives, it cannot be the only way that people participate. We recognize that some audiences do not use or do not have access to the internet, and that some individuals may not be comfortable engaging via digital methods. It is important to use multiple public engagement methods, tools, and tactics to ensure a broader reach and eliminate barriers to active participation.

## **Next Steps**

In 2021, City staff will continue leading efforts to improve public engagement practices and outcomes for both residents and staff practitioners. As part of this process, the City will seek public feedback to develop a new Public Engagement Policy and supporting Public Engagement Framework. We look forward to sharing more details shortly and hearing from you!