Public Input – Qualitative Methods
Preliminary Results – May 26, 2015
Purpose of Engagement

Provide opportunities:

- To engage in conversations with citizens about the most pressing trends, issues and priorities facing our community.
- Speak with diverse communities through a variety of methods to understand diverse needs.
- Obtain input for other Region of Waterloo initiatives e.g., Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, Service Strategy, Communications Strategy etc.
Public input methods
(See Appendix 1 & 2 for details)

Both qualitative and quantitative methods.

- Statistically Reliable Telephone Survey
- Online/paper survey
- Online discussion forum
- Twitter feed #regionstratchat
- Community Forums (March 26 & 27, May 27)
- Focus groups with diverse & priority specific groups
- Displays at public events ("Strat Chat" Cube)
Methods serve different purposes

Quantitative Input - generalizable

Statistically reliable Telephone survey (predictive)

- Gives a broad, generalizable set of findings about a representative sample of the population.
- Establishes statistically significant set of findings by studying a representative sample of the population.
- Results are broad and generalizable to the larger population.
Methods serve different purposes

Qualitative input – descriptive and detailed

Focus groups and community conversations (descriptive)

• Provides depth and detailed information.

• Provides clarity on issues from groups identified as important trends to consider for the 2015-2018 process e.g. growing aging and immigrant populations.

• Ensures we don't lose the nuances of issues which may get masked in the averages of statistically reliable method.

• Provides supplementary information to the quantitative results which enhances both reliability and validity of the overall results.
Need a balance of both

- Having both provides a thorough and informed way to examine and identify priorities.

- Ensures that we hear from a representative sample of the population as well as those hard to reach.

- Helps us understand the issues from "another set of eyes" or "lived experience" of citizens who are most impacted by the issues identified in the quantitative method.
Participants

- Random sample of citizens (quantitative method).
- Citizens.
- Community partners.
- Community Leaders.
- Customers of our services.
- Diverse communities as they relate to the statistics, trends and issues relevant to the community.
- Groups that work on specific issues identified through the telephone survey results.
Invited participation through:

- Social Media (Region’s Facebook page, LinkedIn, Twitter)
- The Weather Network & Facebook ads
- Regional buses ads
- Bookmarks in all libraries, community & recreation centres, post secondary institutions, community agencies, regional services etc.
- Regional services newsletters
- Regional Advisory Committees
- Displays at rural township recreation centres
- Service First Call Centre (on hold phone message)
- 2 CBC radio interviews (1. Mike Murray  2. Doug Norris - Community forum speaker)
- Events (Conestoga College Capstone project, Tri pride, Ambush the Arts, malls, market etc.)
Overall – Qualitative Results

• This report identifies preliminary results from the qualitative public input process.

• A detailed report will be provided on the Region's website by the end of June 2015.

• There were five priority areas identified through the qualitative input.

• Qualitative conversations reinforce and align with the telephone survey results and they provide more details on priorities.

• The Region is already working on many of the priorities identified.

• Priorities identified could be applicable to Corporate Strategic Plan, Department Strategic Plans, and individual work area plans.

• Some priorities could be used in the next stage of the strategic planning process – action development.
5 areas of priority

- Environment
- Economic Development
- Transportation
- Healthy, Safe and Inclusive Communities
- Responsive and engaging Government Services
Work with the new Waterloo Region Economic Development Corporation to balance business prosperity with social equity, labour and environmental responsibility.

Work with community partners to help existing businesses stay, grow and thrive.

Attract new, high quality organizations, businesses, jobs, investments (domestic and foreign) and people (e.g. youth, immigrants) to Waterloo Region.

Work with community partners to develop jobs and training to address changing workforce composition, e.g., youth, people living with disabilities and those needing retraining after downsizing.

Enhance marketing efforts to increase awareness about the Region of Waterloo International Airport.
Collaboratively work towards building and maintaining the Region's cultural vitality.

- Create vibrant places and spaces that support arts and culture.
- Provide access and promote inclusion in the Region's cultural life e.g. places for youth.

Promote Waterloo Region as a world class community locally and globally.

Preserve heritage and history to contribute to our Region's cultural and economic well-being.
Transportation

- Implement a Light Rail Transit System (ION) fully integrated with an expanded conventional transit system.
- Encourage improvements to inter-city transportation services to and from Waterloo Region.
- Develop, promote and integrate active and safe forms of active transportation (cycling, walking, trails).
- Optimize road safety and awareness to safely manage all forms of traffic on roads and roundabouts.
Transportation

• Work with area municipalities to reduce traffic congestion.
• Improve infrastructure and safety for cyclists and pedestrians.
• Work with area municipalities to improve levels of winter road and sidewalk snow removal in environmentally sustainable ways (less salt).
Reduce the amount of waste going to the landfill. E.g., enhance access to landfill for those who do not have cars (1 – 2 times per year have place to dispose of toxic, e waste etc.

Enhance water conservation and protection efforts.

Reduce emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) and deal with impacts of climate change (improve air quality).

Preserve, protect and enhance environmentally sensitive lands, forests, farm lands and our rivers.

Continue intensification efforts in urban areas to support growth while ensuring a mix of housing types (affordability), availability of green spaces, trails and public common spaces.
• Improve the green bin program by creating awareness and expanding service to multi-unit developments, community housing.

• Support the use of green energy sources in regional facilities and in the community.

• Prepare for critical weather and emergencies.

• Develop a Regional park along the Grand River.
Healthy, Safe and Inclusive Communities

- Work in collaboration with community partners to reduce poverty e.g., develop a Waterloo Region wide strategy and coalition.
- Deliver new affordable and supportive housing opportunities.
- Take action to reduce homelessness in Waterloo Region.
- Promote active lifestyle and healthy local eating initiatives (e.g., walking cycling, bike paths etc.).
Healthy, Safe and Inclusive Communities

- Make the transit system affordable and accessible for people living on a low income and Conestoga College students.
- Increase public awareness of poverty issues and promote local actions to reduce poverty.
- Consider the implications of all policies/decisions that the Region makes, noting the impact on those groups who experience socially determined inequities e.g. people living in low income, newcomers/refugees, people living with disabilities, etc.
Healthy, Safe and Inclusive Communities

• Work with the Province to extend access to oral health care.

• Prevent the displacement of affordable housing in the downtown cores – impact of intensification.

• Collaborate with the community to support services and promote early learning and child development.

• Work with community partners to increase availability and accessibility of treatment and supports for people using substances.
Responsive and Engaging Government Services

- Enhance opportunities for public engagement, input and involvement in Regional programs and decisions.

- Enhance communication and improve awareness of Regional services using plain language.

- Improve the delivery and accessibility of Regional services and facilities to address the diverse and changing community population and needs (e.g., seniors, immigrants, LGBTQ, people living with disabilities, people living in poverty etc.).

- Ensure regional programs and services are efficient, effective and provide value for money (tax dollars).
Work with community partners to develop a "hub" model of service delivery for the rural communities.

Enhance a culture of transparency, accountability and openness.

Train and support staff to effectively engage the public in decision making and how communicate the results of the engagement.

Optimize regional programs and work with area municipalities and community partners to deliver age friendly and coordinated services for seniors.
Already making progress

- The telephone survey results identified the importance of community engagement with the following having the greatest impact on overall satisfaction with the Region of Waterloo:
  - Improved engagement with citizens.
  - Opportunities to get involved in decision-making.
  - Government being in touch with the needs of the community.

Therefore, the Region is already making progress towards public engagement by asking, listening and considering the responses gathered through the Strategic Planning process.
Next steps

- Council report on public input including quantitative and phase 1 qualitative methods – May 26, 2015.
- Community Leader forum – May 27, 2015.
- Phase 2 of public and staff input process
  - Input on Council's draft focus areas and priorities.
  - Develop potential actions to achieve Council's endorsed focus areas and strategic objectives.
  - Identify roles and potential areas of collaboration on actions.
  - Develop progress indicators and tools to monitor and measure performance of the strategic plan.
Appendix 1:

List of Methods & Participants
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group/event</th>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>No# of participants</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Citizens</td>
<td>Online survey – as of April 16, 2015</td>
<td>129</td>
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<tr>
<td>Citizens</td>
<td>Online discussion forum</td>
<td>278</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2,416 unique visitors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Citizens</td>
<td>Community forum - March 26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Citizens</td>
<td>Community Forum - March 27 – Chambers Community Forum - March 27 - Webcast</td>
<td>143</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post secondary students (Kitchener)</td>
<td>Focus group - March 5 Displays and strat chat cube (Capstone Project)</td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employment and Income Support Advisory Committee (Kitchener)</td>
<td>Focus group - March 6</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community organizations (Kitchener)</td>
<td>Focus group - March 9</td>
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<td>Cambridge Advisory groups of Council with City of (Cambridge)</td>
<td>Focus group - March 11</td>
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<td>LGBTQ communities (Waterloo)</td>
<td>Focus group - March 18</td>
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<td>Seniors - Sunnyside Home (Kitchener)</td>
<td>Focus group - March 25</td>
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<td>Alliance against Poverty (Waterloo)</td>
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<td>Crime Prevention Council (Kitchener)</td>
<td>Focus group - April 10</td>
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<td>People with disabilities/GRAAC and Cambridge AAC (Kitchener)</td>
<td>Focus group - April 13</td>
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<td>Active Transportation Advisory Committee (Kitchener)</td>
<td>Focus group - April 21</td>
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<td>Children's planning table (Kitchener)</td>
<td>Focus Group - April 23</td>
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<td>Group/event</td>
<td>Dates</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental focus groups (Topic specific forums)</td>
<td>April 14 (Waterloo)</td>
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<td>April 16 (Kitchener)</td>
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<td>April 27 (Regional EEAC)</td>
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<td>May 4 – (Focus group)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Woolwich – TBD</td>
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<td>Immigration Partnership – pillar working groups</td>
<td>April 27</td>
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<td>Joint groups with City of Cambridge</td>
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<td>Rural Realities</td>
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<td>Joint groups with City of Cambridge</td>
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<td>Waste Management Advisory Group (Waterloo)</td>
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<td>Joint groups with City of Cambridge</td>
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<td>Cambridge Council on Aging</td>
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<td>Waterloo Regional Labour Council</td>
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<td>Participant Advisory Group</td>
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<td>Phase 2 of the Public Input process</td>
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<td>Homelessness Advisory Group – HHUG (Waterloo)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Leader Forum (private and public sectors)</td>
<td>May 27</td>
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<td>Home builders Association (Kitchener)</td>
<td>May 28</td>
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<td>Township Focus groups and community forum</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<td>Homelessness to housing stability advisory committee</td>
<td>June 18</td>
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<td>Priority specific forums</td>
<td>July – August 2015 – Dates TBD</td>
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Appendix 2:

Online Discussion Forum Participants & Traffic
Online discussion forum participants

278 active participants

‘Rewards Store’ has given away 26 items to contributors.
Online Forum Traffic

- 60 to 130 visitors to the site per day

![Graph showing traffic data with peak visits on April 28, 2023, and May 02, 2023.]
Discussion Forum Activity

- With 17,693 pages views, visitors to the site are engaged with the content.

- There have been 2,416 unique visitors to the site, where 1-5 visitors have taken the time to register and participate (a 20% conversion rate, which is considered very high).

- Visitors and participants have shared a link to the site 155 times.

- Participants have rated ideas as “liked or stars” 4,918 times (across all ideas).
Discussion Forum Ideas

- Transportation – 219 ideas
- Service Review/Investment – 46 ideas
- Life in Waterloo Region/Your vision – 30 ideas
- Service Review/Efficiency - 23 ideas
- Service Review/Reducing costs or service – 13 ideas
- Healthy and Inclusive Community - 9 ideas
- Total new ideas to consider = 340
A detailed report of this presentation will be available before the end of June 2015. Questions or comments about this presentation contact:

Lorie Fioze, Manager of Strategic Planning and Strategic Initiatives
Region of Waterloo
Chief Administrator’s Office
150 Frederick Street, Kitchener ON N2G 4J3
Phone: 519-575-4758  TTY:  519-575-4608
Email: lfioze@regionofwaterloo.ca
Join a conversation that matters!
Share your thoughts and ideas to help set the Region of Waterloo’s 2015-2018 priorities.
Go to: http://bit.ly/regionstratchat