



# Public Engagement Plan

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*For the Community Energy Plan*

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## **INTRODUCTION:**

The Stratford Community Energy Plan is meant to help Stratford residents and businesses become more resilient and self-sufficient with the hope of increasing overall well-being and health of the community. This plan will help reduce energy costs, decrease greenhouse gas emissions and increase the use of renewable resources. The Community Energy Plan is meant to make more efficient use of local, non-renewable resources and decrease the energy use of residents and businesses (Hughes, 2015). The Community Energy Plan (CEP) needs high public engagement in order for it to be a success and will need a variety of ways to reach out to local residents and businesses.

The Town of Stratford is an organization that is working consistently to improve its public engagement methods and techniques. The Think Stratford campaign, currently being led by Community Engagement Coordinator Wendy Watts, has had huge success in bringing community members together. Building off of her community engagement techniques, and also using new engagement techniques, this engagement plan will strive to increase public participation from local residents. The Community Energy Plan will be a resource that many people in this town can relate to, as it has a direct effect on how much money they can save. By using less energy or by having certain products that use less energy, local residents will see a direct reflection in their electricity and heating bills and in their property values. Saving money will be a key promotional message in the public engagement plan, with the second highest message being sustainability. This campaign will intertwine sustainability and money-saving principles that will lead to a more resilient community through the implementation of the Community Energy Plan.

There have been successful public interaction events and campaigns that town employees have implemented in the past. Public meetings, local rallies and panel discussions have all been used to engage with local residents. Social media mediums that are currently being used are through Facebook and Twitter, with the Farmers Market organization using some independent communication through Instagram. The Town of Stratford Facebook page is the most popular social media site currently in use by town staff. There are also newsletter emails that are sent out every two weeks letting people know of upcoming events; the Stratford Town Talk Newsletter is released three times a year which promotes activities, organizations and programs throughout the community. There have been many indications that the Town Talk Newsletter is popular among local residents.

## **WEB-BASED ENGAGEMENT**

### **CONTENT STRATEGY:**

The content that will drive this Community Energy Plan (CEP) campaign must be interactive and attract a wide variety of age groups. To appeal to the younger generations, social media, including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, will be used and promoted throughout the web-based engagement process. Key words that will be used to bring in organic google search users will include Community, Energy, Sustainability, Green, Efficiency, Solar, Wind, and Gas. Part of the messaging provided through the main webpage and other public events will be based on widely accepted behavior change techniques. These techniques involve comparing a person to someone else they know who they either look up to or

compete against. A local town such as Summerside may be used to spur more public engagement in the Community Energy Plan. There will be some text based content as well as images, information links and interactive activities. Content will be updated on a weekly basis to ensure that people can get the most up-to-date information. Community events will be promoted as well as community online community surveys.

**SOCIAL MEDIA GOALS:**

There are three main goals that will help guide the social media strategy.

1. to improve awareness of the Community Energy Plan among town residents, businesses and other residents/businesses who are familiar with the Town of Stratford;
2. to improve the overall connection that residents have with town staff; and
3. to increase use of the Community Energy Plan webpage through search engine optimization, link development and social media connections.

**CURRENT SOCIAL MEDIA INVENTORY:**

<b>Social Media Site</b>	<b>URL</b>	<b>Followers /Likes</b>	<b>Last Activity Date</b>
Facebook	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/townofstratford/">https://www.facebook.com/townofstratford/</a>	1575	23/06/2016
Twitter	<a href="https://twitter.com/StratfordPEI?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw">https://twitter.com/StratfordPEI?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw</a>	3264/857	23/06/2016
SAWIG Facebook		391	16/06/2016
SAWIG Twitter	<a href="https://twitter.com/StratfordWater">https://twitter.com/StratfordWater</a>	288	25/06/2016

**COMPETITION ANALYSIS:**

Two cities have each completed a Community Energy Plan, and were used as the Competition for this section. The City of Burlington created a webpage for their Community Energy Plan and used a similar design format as the rest of their website. The webpage was text rich with very little images or links to other sites. There were some document links on the webpage that were included in text paragraphs but on an overall basis the webpage was not very stimulating (Appendix, Figure 1.). The social media links were ideally placed near the top of the webpage and included Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Email. The City of Surrey webpage was much simpler in design compared to the City of Burlington. The webpage was in a similar format to the City of Burlington in that it was text driven; there was an image of energy efficient-looking buildings that may have been located within the City of Surrey (Appendix, Figure 2.). The City of Surrey website does not have any social media links on the Community Energy Plan webpage. Ideally, the Community Energy Plan website for the Town of Stratford will be much more interactive by having links to other websites and more images that people can relate to.

**ANALYTICS:**

The Town of Stratford uses Google Analytics to review website visits for future optimization. The total visits of the Town of Stratford home page this year up to June 22, 2016 is 40, 548 with the total user amount being 27, 452 (Appendix, Image 1.). Considering that the town population is around 10, 000 people with the last Canada Census reading being 8, 574 in 2011, the number of users indicates that there is significant website usage by both residents and non-residents (Statistics Canada, 2016). This could provide a potential boost to the Community Energy Plan campaign if there are more people reviewing website content who are not local residents.

Reviewing user flow mapping, Google Analytics reveals that there is approximately 37 000 users who access the site from Canada while there is a number of international users from the USA, the United Kingdom, India and Brazil (Appendix, Image 2.). There are five towns around the world called Stratford, and many of these international users could be mistakenly accessing the site. High organic search flow also indicates that the Town of Stratford website is very popular, and would come up near the top of the first page of a specific google search; this is a positive factor that can only benefit the Town of Stratford and its online content. The data shows that over 69% of the users that land on the Town of Stratford website do so from a google search engine (Appendix, Image 3). The second most popular method of site acquisition is through typing in the main website address which encompasses over 9% of the website users. This is a good sign that many people are memorizing the Town of Stratford website address because they use the website so often.

Over 60% of the users that use the Town of Stratford website are between the ages of 25 and 54, with youth and senior users being very low (Appendix, Image 4). More than half of the users are male with females making up only 40.4% of the total website user amount. These figures suggests that females are reached less through the Town of Stratford website than males, and that people between the ages of 25-54 are engaged most through the town website. This indicates that any online media that are included in a Community Energy Plan website must appeal to the 25-54 year olds first before other age groups so that the webpage receives the most attention possible.

**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Comments</b>
July 4, 2016	Launch Community Energy Plan Webpage on Town website	Launch date can be flexible and can be released between July 4-8
July 6, 2016	Launch Instagram Account and make announce on Facebook site.	Launch date can be flexible and can be released between July 4-8
July 11, 2016	Start releasing information updates on upcoming events.	Events will be occurring within 2 weeks of this date; the sooner the information is released the better.
August 8, 2016	Announce Launch of Community Energy Champion	Refer to Community Energy Champion Section for more

	program	information.
September 30, 2016	Announce closing of Community Energy Champion program for this year.	Refer to Community Energy Champion Section for more information.
Continuous updates throughout year on online websites and other media.	Continuous updates throughout year on online website and other media. An update on the Wikipedia site will be done to reflect the town's new Community Energy Plan.	A promotional video of the Community Energy Plan in Stratford may be considered depending on the budget.

### **PUBLIC EVENT ENGAGEMENT**

The public event portion of this public engagement plan will be the most important portion of the plan and will involve a diverse set of events that will occur at certain times throughout the year. The key message derived from the Stratford Engagement Guide for this engagement process would be “The Town of Stratford encourages all members of the community to share their views and ideas to help make Stratford the best possible place to live. Imagine that!” Stakeholders that are engaged in this public engagement plan will be encouraged to promote the ideas and events associated with the Community Energy Plan through their own social and professional networks. Extra information pamphlets will be provided to committee members so that they communicate the Community Energy Plan through their own personal informational channels. The events listed below could be changed or cancelled depending on availability and time constraints.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Event Type</b>	<b>Event Description</b>
July 22, 2016 July 29, 2016	-Sobeys -No Frills -Library -Tea Hill Park	Pop-up Booth	Booth will have, -Information Pamphlets -Energy Mapping Exercise -Environmental Technology Idea Board -Comment/Question Board <u>Equipment/Item Cost: \$50</u>
August 6, 2016	Cotton Park	Information Booth at Farmers Market	Booth will have, -Information Pamphlets -Energy Mapping Exercise -Environmental

			Technology Idea Board -Comment/Question Board
August 8, 2016	-most information will begin online but will be advertised through multiple media streams	Community Champion program begins	Refer to Community Champion program section.
August 8, 2016	Southport Room	World Cafe	Similar questions will be used from a gap analysis exercise but will be set up in a world café format with multiple tables for different people. RSVP's may be required for this event to host properly. Equipment/Food - <u>Cost: \$150</u>
August 12, 2016	Recreation Centre	Mid-Morning Movie with Science day-camp	More details will be decided upon meeting with the Day Camp Coordinator.
August 22, 2016	Southport Room	Strategies and Actions Workshop	A more focused workshop/discussion session on what the Strategies and Actions should be for the Community Energy Plan. Equipment/Item - <u>Cost: \$100</u>
September 19, 2016	Stratford Elementary School	School Visit-Visioning Exercise	The children would create a visioning board of what they think a Community Energy Plan for the Town of Stratford should look like. Pamphlets would be given out so that children could take them home to their parents. The Visioning board

			would be semi-permanent so that it could be hung on a town building for future years. <u>Equipment/Item Cost: \$100</u>
Sept. 24, 2016	Stratford Recreation Centre	Stratford Community Expo	Booth will have, -Information Pamphlets -Energy Mapping Exercise -Environmental Technology Idea Board -Comment/Question Board
October 18, 2016	Southport Room	Community Energy Champion Announcement Party	This early evening event will celebrate the selected Community Energy Champion and will have all steering committee members present. This event will be open to the public but will have limited seating and food available. <u>Equipment/Food - Cost: \$100</u>
November 6-12	Various Locations- mostly online interaction and in the Gym Facility	Energy Week Including Energy Fair and another World Café/Brainstorming session	Energy Week will involve activities like an energy reduction challenge, the energy Fair, a movie night Featuring “Carbon Nation” with a discussion afterwards. Energy Fair- Inviting different renewable companies to display their projects and show off what they are doing in PEI. Equipment/Food



			<u>Cost: \$300</u>
January 17, 2017	Southport Room	Panel Discussion	The movie “Switch” can be shown as a public viewing with a panel discussion about the movie topic afterwards by members of the Advisory Committee/Steering Committee
February 17-20, 2017	TBA	Energy Efficient Home Open House	More details will be determined after the initial Winter Carnival meeting in November
March 14, 2017	Southport Room	Public Feedback Session	Give an update on current progress of the Community Energy Plan and give a chance for people to ask questions and provide feedback. <u>Equipment/Food Cost: \$100</u>
May 9, 2017	Southport Room	Visioning Board Reflection Session	This event will help people reflect on what they said and hopefully make active changes in their lives. Questions will be answered concerning the Community Energy Plan with most of the Steering committee members present along with local residents. <u>Equipment/Food Cost: \$100</u>
		<u>Total Equipment/Item Cost:</u>	<u>\$1, 000</u> Note: Other expenses may occur throughout the year from public engagement and will be accounted for in the overall budget.

## **COMMUNITY ENERGY CHAMPION PROGRAM**

This program is meant to recognize the leadership that people in the community already provide in relation to sustainability. The Community Energy Champion Program (CECP) will be in direct relation to the Community Energy Plan and will celebrate a person who portrays leadership in the Community on energy related issues. This program will be used to find a local resident to sit on the Steering Committee for the Community Energy Plan. The CECP will involve a public release of the program description through online and hard copy media with nominations being accepted from August 8-September 30, 2016. The nominations will be accepted in person, by mail or through an online form on the Community Energy Plan webpage. The Steering Committee will review the nominations and based on the amount of nominations for each person and public opinion, will choose a Community Energy Champion (CEC). A celebration will occur to inform the nominated individual that they have been named the CEC and media releases will be prepared to inform the public. The CEC will be invited to be part of the Steering Committee to provide leadership for the Community Energy Plan.

## **PUBLIC MEDIA**

The public will be notified through multiple media streams about Community Energy Plan Events and project developments. The mediums that would be used alongside social media include newsletter emails and article updates in the Town Talk newsletter. Public notices may be sent out by mail for certain events where high attendance would be most beneficial. The newsletter emails will be sent out at least once a month throughout the Community Energy Plan planning process with articles appearing in all three Town Talk Newsletter issues. Some public events such as the community energy week would be announced on local radio to maximize the public awareness. Radio channels that would be used to promote events will include CBC Radio and Ocean 100. The Community Call In program on CBC Radio will be used early in the campaign to make people aware of the Community Energy plan.

## **CONCLUSION:**

The Public Engagement Plan will be a continuing campaign to make people aware of the Community Energy Plan and can extend past the dates planned in this document. There many different components to this plan so that public awareness of the Community Energy Plan is maximized. Constant coordination with other staff and local community groups will be necessary to ensure that this engagement process is a success. By using Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Newsletters, public notices, planned events and programs, public awareness for the Community Energy Plan will be high.

# REFERENCES:

Hughes, R. (2015). *Green Municipal Fund Application Form*. Town of Stratford.

Statistics Canada. (2016, 01 05). *Census Profile*. Retrieved 06 24, 2016, from Statistics Canada: <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E>

# APPENDIX:

Figure 1. Image of City of Burlington Community Energy Plan webpage.



Figure 2. Image of City of Surrey Community Energy Plan webpage.

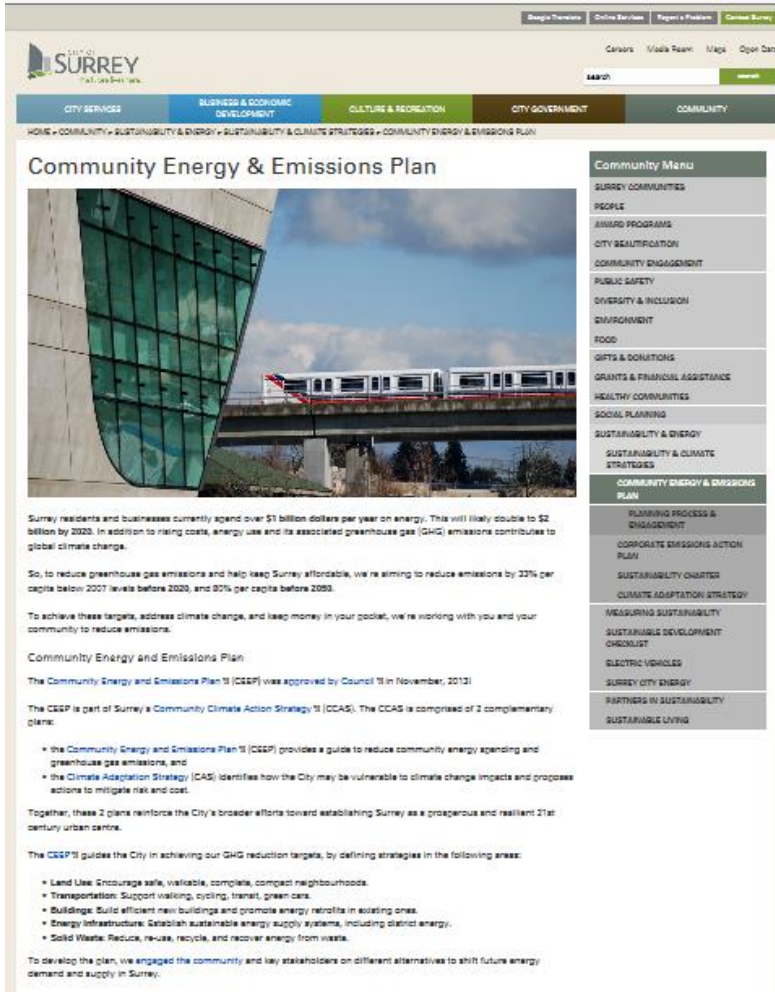


Image 1. Audience Overview from Google Analytics.

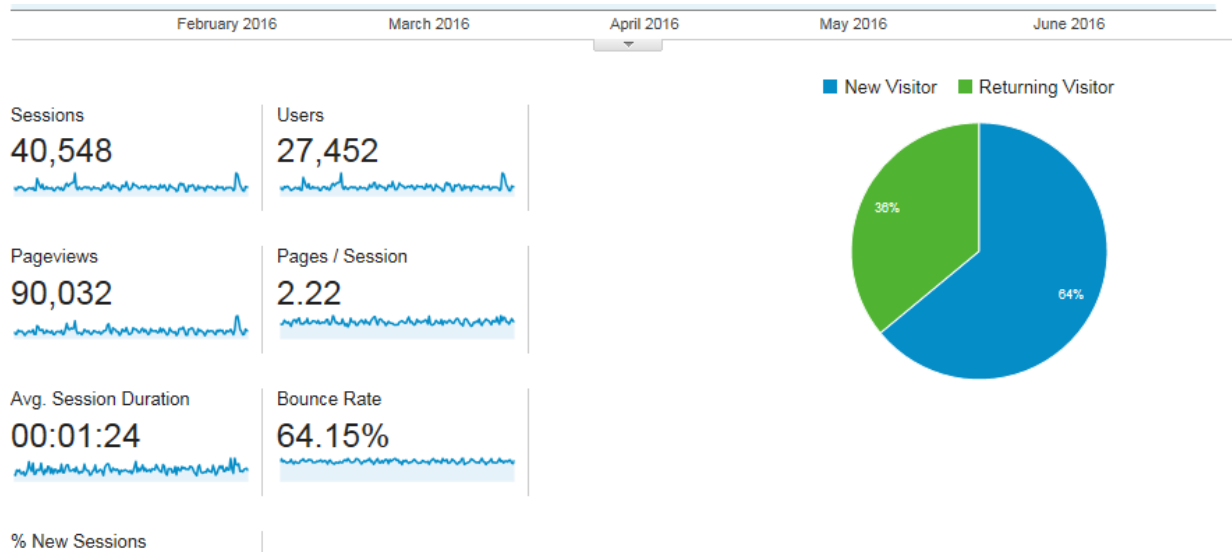


Image 2. Navigation Flow indicating user source countries from Google Analytics.

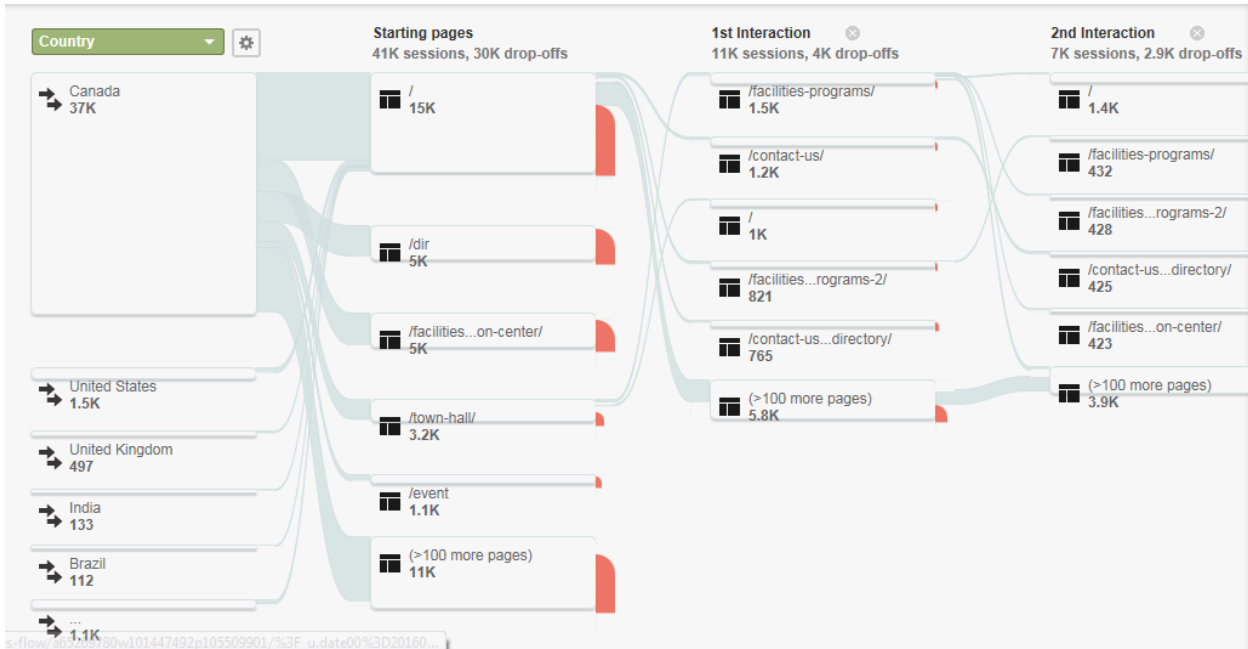


Image 3. Top Source Mediums from Google Analytics.

### Top Sources/Mediums

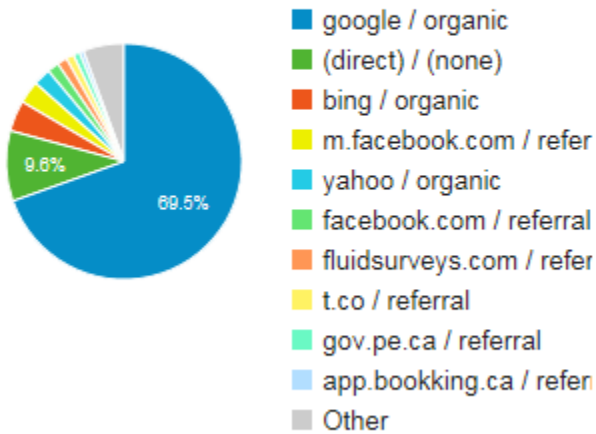
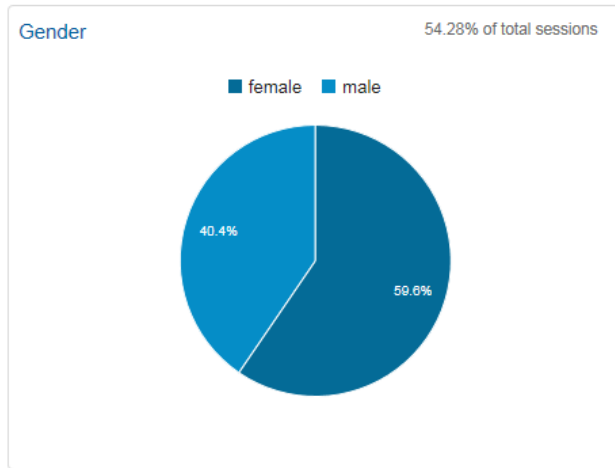
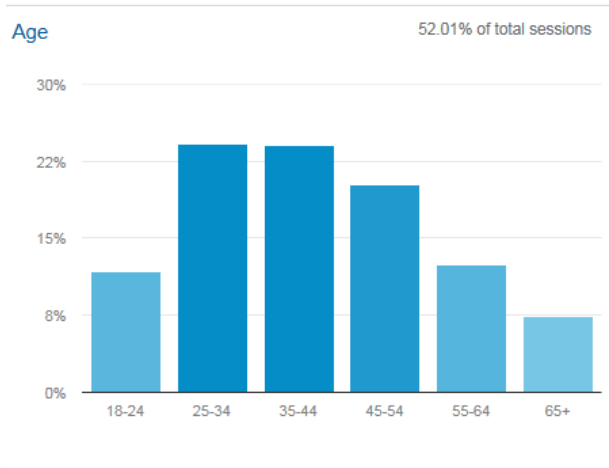


Image 4. Demographic Overview graphs from Google Analytics.



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