

# Municipal Youth Engagement Initiative



Independent  
Research  
Economic  
Hands-On  
Data  
Leadership  
**Community**  
**Engagement**  
Municipality  
Education  
Development  
Vision  
Youth  
Study  
Voice



***People will only come back if they  
feel like they've left something behind***

– Jacinda Rudolph, Project Manager at LaunchPad

Process design by:

Vicki Lass & Ryan Deska  
Agriculture and Rural Economic Development Advisors  
Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs

# Municipal Youth Engagement Initiative

## What is the Program?

- Youth driven applied research to solve, address or inform a community issue
- Serves the interests of youth: "By Youth, For Youth"
- Youth have a significant impact on the vitality of their communities, and we are looking for ways to support them to engage in meaningful ways

This Includes:

- Understanding principles of municipal governance
- Gathering data through community consultations
- Identifying community needs and priorities
- Connecting with public partners to identify possible solutions
- Pitching their ideas to local municipal council

\*See process overview included\*

## What are the Anticipated Outcomes?

- Civic Education
  - Building familiarity and confidence with civic engagement
  - Building hands-on skills & familiarity around municipal governance
  - Building independent inquiry, project management and critical thinking skills
- Youth Engagement
  - Engaging and empowering youth in their communities to recognize and solve local issues
  - Providing the opportunity to affect meaningful changes
- Gathering Data
  - By youth, for youth: data will help communities to bring the youth voice to the table in decision making processes.
  - Data can directly support the goals and activities of municipally driven strategic planning projects

## Who are the Partners?

- Local Schoolboard
- Teachers (Independent Study)
- Municipal Staff (EDO's, Planners, CIC's)
- Municipal Council
- OMAFRA (and OPS)
- Other Local Stakeholders

## How will Partners Collaborate?

- Schoolboard
  - Identify teacher champions
  - Identify and communicate alignment with curriculum
- Teachers (Independent Study)
  - Front-line delivery
  - Student support and guidance
  - Liaise with municipal and OMAFRA representatives
  - Evaluation of student performance
  - Not responsible for process design, or building community connections
- Municipal Staff (EDO's, CAO's, Planners, CIC's)
  - Support students in:
    - Understanding principles of municipal governance
    - Identifying community needs and priorities
  - Connect students with community resources
  - Organize delegation to council
- OMAFRA Representative
  - Process design and guidance
  - Building community connections
  - Support students in:
    - Planning for community consultations
    - Identifying community needs and priorities
- Municipal Council
  - Endorse the process and support municipal staff
  - Actively listen and engage in dialogue with youth
  - Discuss possible actions
- Other Local Stakeholders – Engaged where appropriate

## How Does this Project Support Existing Curriculum?

- Students will learn existing principles found within provincial curriculum:
  - The political inquiry process and the concepts of political thinking
  - Principles of citizenship:
    - the rights and responsibilities of citizens,
    - the processes of public decision making, and
    - ways in which citizens can act for the common good
  - Students will learn the process of engagement:
    - Gather, interpret, and analyse data and information relating to issues of civic importance
    - Make informed judgements and draw conclusions around issues
    - Develop plans of actions to address issues

## Project Samples

- LDSS – Outmigration of Rural Youth (Fall 2016)
- LDSS – Development of Youth Programming for Listowel Library (Winter 2016)
- Town of Caledon – Youth Workforce Development (Winter 2017)

## Quotes

*From a curriculum, teaching and evaluation perspective, this project was easily adapted to the collaborative, student interest-driven and inquiry model based nature of the IDC4U course at LDSS. At all stages of the project, the students were able to explore and develop their understanding of the inquiry model. Along the way, I was able to regularly assess their learning by reviewing and providing feedback on their surveys, data analysis and communication products. Regular student-teacher conferencing was a central component of the students' overall evaluation along with assessment of their co-authored research report and presentation to North Perth Municipal Council.*

- Ken Van Osch, Listowel District Secondary School Teacher (full letter of recommendation attached)

*When we started this project, we wondered why we were even doing it – we didn't think anyone was interested in hearing what we had to say*

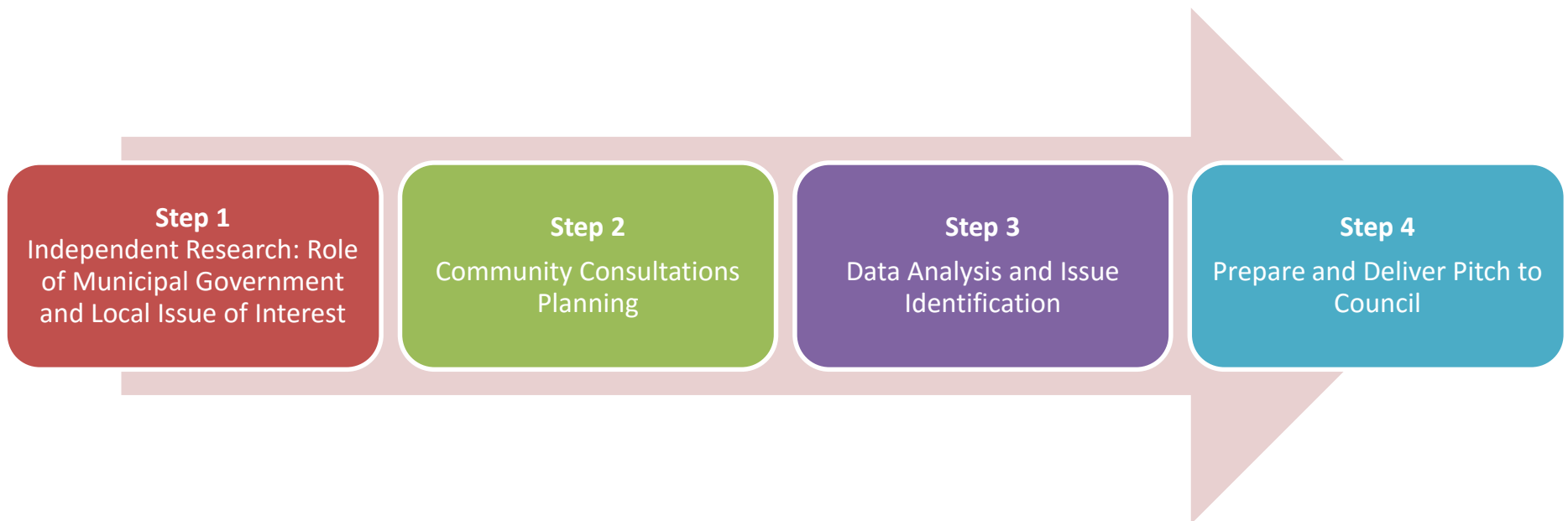
- Sydney, LDSS Student

*It was really cool to have the community feedback. That just doesn't happen for other students. This is something that you carry on, not a report that you hand in and forget about. I think a lot of people think high school students do projects that aren't relevant, but to actually do something that's important is really cool.*

- Wynter, LDSS Student

# Municipal Youth Engagement Initiative

## Process Overview



## Step 1 - Independent Research

### *Improve understanding of the functions municipalities play*

- The types of services/ responsibilities of municipal governments relative to provincial and federal
- The scope/jurisdiction for municipal decision making
- The roles and responsibilities of councillors
- The procedures involved with council meetings

### *Improve understanding on the local issue of interest*

- Examine the issue: Who, What, Where, When, Why, How?
- Access relevant economic development data

## Step 2 – Community Consultations Planning

### *Identify opportunities to engage with peer groups (in school, grades 9-12)*

- Understand fundamental principles of public consultation – what makes for good engagement?
- Identify the various methods for collecting public input/discourse
- Identify those methods appropriate for the audience and in gathering the information being sought
- Develop appropriate questions (for each method), based on project objectives

## Step 3 – Data Analysis and Issue Identification

### *Analyze primary data, and develop strategies for identifying recurring and important issues*

- Analyze data gathered through community consultations
- Identify recurring themes
- Propose strategies for addressing issues or taking advantage of opportunities
- Prepare and deliver a presentation to council

## Step 4 – Prepare and Deliver Pitch to Council

### *Focus on implementing ideas for community betterment*

- Prepare a pitch for municipal council, highlighting your identified strategies for community betterment
- Ideas or strategies should be aware of municipal roles and responsibilities
- Ensure you have a time slot booked on council agenda
- Review procedure and decorum for council procedures – consider attending one or more council meetings to gain familiarity with the process