

# A New Agenda for Local Democracy: Building Just, Inclusive, and Participatory Cities

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COVID-19 exposed a crisis of growing inequality in Canadian cities. In light of this, governance models must change to allow for greater participation and to expand the role of marginalized communities in decision-making processes. This paper explores how cities can introduce a more inclusive model of governance to improve representation of equity-deserving groups.

[Read the full report: Uoft.me/LocalDemocracy](https://uft.me/LocalDemocracy)

## Recommendations for better public participation:

Introduce high standards for public engagement with inclusivity benchmarks and accountability measures.

Have methods for the public to set the agenda other than through councillors, such as neighbourhood governance structures.

Design consultation for dialogue. Go beyond merely informing the community. Strategize to defuse conflict and encourage listening.

Go where people are through “pop-up” consultations at public markets, libraries, coffee shops, and midnight basketball games.

Ensure accessibility to allow for meaningful inclusion by holding evening meetings with meals and childcare, and providing stipends to stakeholders who are otherwise unrepresented.

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