

Appendix A Summary: Partnerships and Engagement: From Waste to Well-being

Purpose:

- Conduct engagement and research with residents, community and municipal partners to understand important issues influencing consumer and lifestyle choices
- Explore and recommend novel approaches to inspiring the change needed to reach the goal set out by the SM4RT Living Plan
- Gather insights on successes and challenges from the first five years and build York Region's capacity to support future work

Key Findings:

Research into how best to engage people in the community resulted in several key learnings for SM4RT Living:

- People want to reduce waste, but other goals, like more family time, reducing costs, and finding more social connections, are also important. Events and ideas that combine several goals will be more successful than those that focus on waste management alone.
- People want to get involved in projects not just to meet their needs, but also to learn something new. This gives them a sense of ownership.
- Although many residents' lives are busy and full, others lack social connections. People need ways and means to get to know each other.
- With the right environment and tools, people from all disciplines can co-create dynamic new ideas that tackle significant issues in as little as two hours, and feel a real desire to act on them.
- The Region can strengthen partnerships and drive greater innovation with a mentorship approach that supports and learns from partners rather than taking a leadership role

Recommended Actions:

1. **Innovative research and engagement:** Incorporate ideas from waste and wellbeing into creative engagements that can be used to share the concepts of SM4RT Living and the connection to broader social issues
2. **Stakeholder Advisory Group:** The Stakeholder Advisory Committee that participated in shaping the SM4RT Living Plan provided a diversity of perspectives and expertise to the plan. The review and update identified opportunities to re-establish that group as a vehicle to support implementation in the community.
3. **Strong partnerships:** The Review and Update identified the need to broaden and deepen the range of partnerships supporting the plan. Shifting the Region's role from leading partner into mentoring, facilitating and supporting other groups to develop and delivery projects aligned with SM4RT Living as well as their own priorities is recommended. Internal processes and staff skill development should be aligned to support this shift.

Link to Objectives:

- **Objective 3:** Inspire people across the Region to embrace SM4RT Living and advance the circular economy.