



The Durham Meadowway

CITYSTUDIO

DURHAM

Project Summary:

This collaborative capstone project between Durham Region and Trent University's Communications program concerns the engagement of the public regarding the planning of the Durham Meadowway, a linear park and active transportation corridor that will stretch from Pickering to Oshawa. The Communications students were tasked with identifying relevant demographic groups within the broader public and developing strategic plans to effectively connect with them regarding the proposed Durham Meadowway initiative. The students identified five target groups – active transportation enthusiasts, arts producers and patrons, the local Indigenous population, Secondary school students, and young families – and developed strategic communications plans to help the region engage them.

Project Goals:

Our project had three primary goals. First, it worked to develop an understanding of the project and the Durham Region in order to develop a communication strategy for our campaign. Second, it sought to identify relevant groups in the region that may not have been reached by the Region's broader engagement tactics. Third, the project's ultimate goal was to produce practical and cost-effective engagement plans to target these groups.

Methods:

This project required participants to research similar initiatives in other places, to learn about the Durham Region and its people, and to become adept at strategic communications for the purpose of civic engagement. Students met these requirements by studying scholarly literature and case studies, examining public data, and consulting with experts.

Outcomes:

The project's ultimate culmination is a final report that presents the overall strategy and the specific approaches for each group in question. The report also addresses potential civic engagement principles for the Durham Region that might help to orient its future strategic communication campaigns.

Why is this important?:

Our hope is that our report will arrive in sufficient time for its plans and recommendations to be applied to the Durham Meadowway project should the Region see fit to do so. Beyond that, we hope that its discussion concerning engagement principles, its overall strategy, and its specific tactics will prove useful to the Region in its future civic engagement endeavours.

