



# Burlington Ontario

## Feeding Frenzy: How Burlington, Ontario Used Food to Engage its Diverse Community



2,000+

attendees to Food for Feedback

100+

new portal registrations each event

50,000

responses to fireworks survey



Increased inclusivity and diversity of engagement

### OVERVIEW

Burlington, Ontario, hosted Food for Feedback, where residents got a free meal in exchange for their feedback on government programs and get introduced to **Let's Talk Burlington**, the city's online engagement portal.

### SITUATION | BRINGING A COMMUNITY TOGETHER

How can you make a great idea even better? The town struck gold with its annual Food for Feedback event, but Burlington continually sought ways to engage its community further, especially for the one out of every five residents for whom English is a second language.

### SOLUTION | AN OPEN PLACE FOR COMMUNICATION

Burlington turned to EngagementHQ to organize and promote Food for Feedback. Residents could receive information on the portal in various ways, including informational pages in more than 13 languages. The city also ensured that on-site food trucks can accommodate dietary needs, such as vegan, gluten-free, dairy-free, vegetarian, and halal options. There was also an audit to ensure all event areas were accessible for those with any mobility issues.

### RESULTS | A HEATED DEBATE OVER ... FIREWORKS?

In 2023, more than 2,000 people attended, and each event brings in more than 100 new registrants to the EngagementHQ portal. The portal also continues to take on a life of its own. A discussion over the use of fireworks exploded with 50,000 responses.

"It was split 50-50," Dwyer said. "We never expected fireworks to become such a polarizing topic, but residents could voice their opinion."

### MUST HAVE SOLUTION

EngagementHQ

“With a range of ages, diverse backgrounds, and ethnicities, we wanted to reach out to everyone in our community, so they felt welcome and included.”

Michelle Dwyer,  
Burlington Manager of  
Engagement and Volunteers