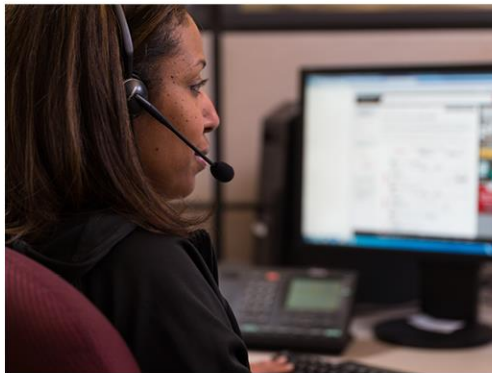




One Calgary

2019-2022 Service Plans and Budgets



Results of October Citizen Research and Engagement

2019-2022 Service Plans and Budgets

November 2018



Summary

This latest round of citizen focus groups and online and in person engagement supports and confirms the insights and what we have heard about service and service value gathered through our research and engagement over the past year. The previous engagement and research results, presented to Council on 2018 October 11 (C2018-1150), provided insights from a blend of net new engagement and research activities as well as tactics above and beyond those initiated by the One Calgary process.

Regarding importance of services and opportunities for investment, citizens continue to remain focused on essential services and those that they or members of their household utilize. Knowledge in other services is limited, although interest in social services is growing. Citizens would like to see the investment levels stay the same or increase for most services.

Despite concerns about the economy, citizens are overall quite favourable to the level of service they are receiving, although businesses slightly less so. Citizens expect transparency and want to see efficient and effective operations at The City. Calgarians want to be provided with opportunities to give meaningful input into decision making, and they also seek to better understand what Administration and Council are doing and the decisions being made.

This report will provide insights gleaned from citizens during October engagement and research and represents input into service delivery, service lines and budgets.

Process

Phase 4 included presenting new content to participants on public facing service lines to solicit detailed responses on investment strategies and service drivers through in-person and online engagement as well as through focus groups. The responses expanded on and validated previous insights that have been presented to Council. Although similar material was presented, the approach and methodology differs for engagement and research; engagement and research results are presented separately to accurately reflect the difference in corresponding methodologies.



Methodology

Throughout the One Calgary process our approach has been to leverage existing feedback, not only as an input to Council, but also to inform service owners as they developed their service plans and budgets. As new information emerged from the One Calgary process, like the service line characteristics, the Corporate Research and Engage teams conducted net new research and engagement to gather specific citizen input. This approach enabled us to pull from thousands of pieces of citizen input received on our services, not just specific to budget, and target our “net new” research, like these most recent focus groups, to fill in the gaps.

Our approach to engagement and research in the One Calgary process has been different than any other budget cycle previous. Existing feedback and citizen inputs has been leveraged throughout the progression of One Calgary, not only as an input to Council, but also to inform Service Owners as they developed their service lines. This has resulted in significant cost savings for the organization, as instead of conducting this exclusively as a net new exercise we have relied on what citizens have already told us.

As new information emerged from the One Calgary process, such as the service line characteristics and value dimensions, we conducted net new engagement and research to gather specific citizen input. This approach enabled us to pull from thousands of pieces of citizen input received on our services, not just those specific to budget, and target our “net new” research and engagement to fill in the gaps.

This report provides insights from research and engagement conducted in October. These efforts build on an ongoing process of engagement and research as part of the One Calgary process going back to late 2017. The strategy has been to primarily utilize existing research and engagement insights from citizens gathered through other efforts and viewed through the service delivery and budget lens. This process has been delivered over 4 phases:

- Phase 1: Public input used to set Council Directives (Nov-Dec 2017) through consideration of existing insights.
- Phase 2: Public input used to set value characteristics, service targets & refine services (Mar-Sep 2018) through new research and engagement efforts with citizens and the business community.
- Phase 3: 2018 September Service Plan Previews enabled citizens to provide their input at Committee meetings.
- Phase 4: new engagement and research.
 - This report provides the findings from Phase 4, included presenting new content to participants on public facing service lines to solicit detailed responses on investment strategies and service drivers. The responses expanded on and validated previous insights that have been presented to Council.



- Phase 4 consists of three distinct activities:
 - **Online engagement:** through the Engagement Portal, individual service lines were presented to citizens for feedback. 522 pieces of input were collected online, providing insight on the strategies and drivers presented by service owners.
 - **In person engagement:** through Pop-up events in each ward, 14 in person events were held, resulting in 727 conversations about City services and their alignment to Citizen Priorities.
 - **Research focus groups:** five focus groups each one focused on a different citizen priority, provided the opportunity for 115 citizens to provide input on service delivery.



Engagement Results

Summary of Input

The table below is a summary of what we heard in Phase 4 of the engagement. Please visit the project website for all other phases of engagement. All verbatim comments and the What We Heard report in its entirety are included in separate documents that can be found at www.engage.calgary.ca/yourservices.

The table is divided into 4 parts. We have provided Administration's current service level recommendation followed by suggested service level changes/agreements driven by the sentiment we garnered from Calgarians' input. In instances where we were unable to garner an overall sentiment and therefore a suggested service level change, we have left the box blank. Each service also has a more detailed explanation of the sentiment.

The online feedback form promoted interaction of Calgarians with each other by allowing participants to give a thumbs up or thumbs down to comments that were shared. This tool was used to help guide our understanding of general sentiment though we could not interpret a participant's intent on why they disliked a comment in the going down or staying the same comments. We were unable to attribute that to liking or disliking the proposal, but rather liking or disliking the comment.

Summary of Input Table

Service	Current Service Level Recommendation	Sentiment we heard through engagement	Detailed explanation
Environmental Management	↑		Not many people selected this service, however those that did indicated suggestions they felt could improve the service. This included a no car idling bylaw, prorated fees, reducing GHG emissions, and working with external partners to promote renewable resources.
Sidewalks and Pathways	↑	↑	Of the people that suggested that this service level should increase, most were referencing pedestrian safety, especially snow clearing by Calgarians and The City. There was some mention of cycling, bike lanes and Main Streets program funding, specifically to the effect of getting around safely besides driving. People indicated that it was misleading to include cuts to Main Streets and Complete Streets in the increased service level tab. Of the people who wrote about Main Streets, there was a concern



Service	Current Service Level Recommendation	Sentiment we heard through engagement	Detailed explanation
			that the proposed service level was going back on pre-existing policy (MDP), past promises or Council Direction. Plus 15's and connections were other matters that respondents disagreed with as many valued more reliable service. There appeared to be disagreement between those who support cycling infrastructure and those who do not. Those who do support it want to see the network extended and better connections and safety. Those who don't support it want to see better bylaw enforcement and challenge the need for it.
Specialized Transit	↑	↑	Of the people that agreed with the proposal in the comments on specialized transit there was strong support for this service to increase. Few people indicated that there is not a need for the service. The value indicators were improved quality of life for themselves and their family. There was an interesting discrepancy between in-person and online comments because many people at in-person/accessible facilities indicated support, whereas, online there was lower support for an increase in this service.
Taxi, Limousine and Vehicles-for-Hire	↑	↔	Most people that responded to this service sought additional insight into The City's role in the service. In general, comments demonstrated agreement to redefine the industry's regulations. Overall, comments referred to accessibility and affordability when referencing this service.
City Planning & Policy	↑	↑	People shared that they believe increased density is more cost-effective and as a result, we should be investing more in increased density and supporting infrastructure. Investing in heritage is considered to be a positive. Some responses indicated that they want Area Redevelopment Plans to be respected.
Pet Ownership & Licensing	↑	↑	Concern about whether pet licensing fees are increasing was identified. Of the comments supporting increased service level, there was a



Service	Current Service Level Recommendation	Sentiment we heard through engagement	Detailed explanation
			desire for improved enforcement of bylaw infractions and more education on responsible pet ownership.
Affordable Housing	↑	↑	There was significant support for this service level increasing, however there was misunderstanding as to the delineation of roles and responsibilities between the City and the Province in relation to this service. General comments around housing types, maintenance of facilities, safety, income levels and subsidized housing were shared.
Arts & Culture	↑	↓ or ↔	This service proposal was significantly divided when considering both comments made and likes/dislikes of those comments. Many of the comments were about Public Art rather than the proposed service level. Generally the comments and sentiments indicate a division between the service level staying the same or decreasing for economic development purposes, beautification/ community pride or for perceived cost-efficiencies or spending trade-offs with other services.
Business Licensing	↑		Responses indicate that people want to see less business tax, making business licenses easier to get and some specific preferences about cannabis legalization/regulation.
Community Strategies	↑	↑	Generally we heard agreement with the recommendation for a service level increase. People expressed value of the equity and accessibility this service provides. However, there was some disagreement with these comments and concerns that some of the service level was out of scope of municipal government or should be a service on their own.
City Auditor's Office	↑		This service was not often commented on so a summary of the overall sentiment isn't possible. However, those who commented said that transparency and accountability are valued and perceived to come from this service, and some



Service	Current Service Level Recommendation	Sentiment we heard through engagement	Detailed explanation
			participants indicate that if citizens are currently satisfied then no increase is necessary or that an increase is only warranted if more of the audits are made publicly available. Others indicated there are higher priorities than this service.
Council & Committee Support	↑	↓	Generally we heard this service should go down, not increase. There were concerns that this would be an increase to bureaucracy. Concerns were also raised that Council meetings should not be in-camera and that participants wanted more information on this service and its service level.
Municipal Elections	↑		This service was not often commented on so a summary of the overall sentiment isn't possible. Generally we heard suggestions or preferences in service that were beyond the service level description that was provided. People shared that the additional priorities they identified would be good to increase, but not necessarily the service level that was provided.
Records Management, Access & Privacy	↑		This service was not often commented on so a summary of the overall sentiment isn't possible. However, those who commented said that transparency was important.
Parks & Open Spaces	↔	↑	Generally we heard a preference for this service level to increase because it would help ensure good maintenance and provides good opportunity for social and recreational activities. Some comments indicate a desire for playgrounds for a wider age range and increased focus on safety.
Recreation Opportunities	↔	↔ or ↑	Generally we heard people say this service level should go up or stay as proposed. People shared they value this service and wanted it to be equitable and wanted to ensure that facilities were well maintained. There were many suggestions for specific additional activities or facilities (i.e. programs) while others noted another priority (i.e. streets) was more important



Service	Current Service Level Recommendation	Sentiment we heard through engagement	Detailed explanation
			and should have an increased service level instead of this service.
Stormwater Management	↔		This service was not often commented on so a summary of the overall sentiment isn't possible. The comments mentioned things that are a part of other services and are captured in those service summaries.
Waste & Recycling	↔		There were very few comments that had to do with the service proposal so it's not possible to provide a summary on the overall sentiment. The reliability of this service was considered important. Many people suggested and supported a "pay by use" strategy of user fees or were concerned about costs of the service and size of bins. Other comments were about preferences for pick-up schedule.
Wastewater Collection & Treatment	↔		This service was not often commented on so a summary of the overall sentiment isn't possible. The comments mentioned were mostly concerns about fees.
Water Treatment & Supply	↔		This service was not often commented on so a summary of the overall sentiment isn't possible. There were some comments about fluoride in water (to have and not have) or concerns about fees.
Parking	↔		There were very few comments that had to do with the service proposal so it's not possible to provide a summary on the overall sentiment. There were suggestions that parking revenues should subsidize transit but also concerns that parking user rates should be more affordable/lower cost.
Public Transit	↔	↑	Generally we heard people say this service level should go up. Reasons focused on increased reliability and equitable service, improved safety and maintenance, and improved accessibility by improving snow clearing at transit stops/stations. We also heard specific comments about cost of service, specific routes and desire for electronic



Service	Current Service Level Recommendation	Sentiment we heard through engagement	Detailed explanation
			payment cards. Specific to the service level, there were concerns about not having 4-car trains and timely replacement of fleet.
Building Safety	↔		This service was not often commented on so a summary of the overall sentiment isn't possible. There were some comments about safety and accessibility being important.
Bylaw Education & Compliance	↔		This service was not often commented on so a summary of the overall sentiment isn't possible. Generally, there were suggestions relating to specific bylaws that should have increased enforcement and reliability in this service is valued.
Calgary 9-1-1	↔		This service was not often commented on so a summary of the overall sentiment isn't possible. Generally people note concerns about or appreciation for shorter response times. Some suggestions were provided to have a text-based service.
City Cemeteries	↔		This service was not often commented on so a summary of the overall sentiment isn't possible. Some suggestion to have less or privatize this service were received.
Development Approvals	↔		This service was not often commented on so a summary of the overall sentiment isn't possible. However comment themes included topics related to City Planning & Policy and indicated a lack of clarity between City and private responsibility.
Emergency Management & Business Continuity	↔		This service was not often commented on so a summary of the overall sentiment isn't possible.
Fire & Emergency Response	↔		This service was not often commented on but there were mostly comments in agreement with the proposal or to increase this service. Reliability was indicated as a value for this service.
Fire Inspection & Enforcement	↔		This service was not often commented on so a summary of the overall sentiment isn't possible.



Service	Current Service Level Recommendation	Sentiment we heard through engagement	Detailed explanation
Fire Safety Education	↔		This service was not often commented on so a summary of the overall sentiment isn't possible. People commented about specific concerns or topics of fire safety education.
Neighbourhood Support	↔		This service was not often commented on so a summary of the overall sentiment isn't possible. However, few comments provided specific examples of where more support from this service may be needed.
Police Services	↔	↑	Generally we heard that people wanted to see an increase to this service. Specifically people mentioned increased staffing and training.
Economic Development & Tourism	↔		This service was not often commented on so a summary of the overall sentiment isn't possible. We did hear that people valued stimulating the economy and some comments were received about the relationship of sport to tourism.
Land Development & Sales	↔		No comments were received on this service.
Library Services	↔	↑ or ↓	Opinions on this service were conflicted. We heard that people felt this service should both increase and decrease, but also some agreement with the proposal of staying the same. Where people suggested an increase they suggested locations for new libraries or programs. When people indicated decrease they wanted to save money from being spent. Those who agreed with the proposal agreed indicated services they liked/used.
Social Programs	↔	↔ or ↑	Generally we heard that people thought this service should go up and some agreed it could stay the same. Values about this service included equity and comments about the positive impact this service has on individuals using it. Some suggestions were made about specific or new programs.
Executive Leadership	↔		This service was not often commented on so a summary of the overall sentiment isn't possible. Some comments were made about



Service	Current Service Level Recommendation	Sentiment we heard through engagement	Detailed explanation
			organizational structure and wage related cost-savings.
Appeals & Tribunals	↔		No comments were received on this service.
Citizen Engagement & Insights	↔		This service was not often commented on so a summary of the overall sentiment isn't possible. People suggested that engagement is important but that data should be used better in decisions. Additionally, equitable service is valued.
Citizen Information & Services	↔		This service was not often commented on so a summary of the overall sentiment isn't possible.
Corporate Governance	↔		This service was not often commented on so a summary of the overall sentiment isn't possible.
Taxation	↔		This service was not often commented on so a summary of the overall sentiment isn't possible. Many comments understood this service to mean tax rates as opposed the service level that was described.
Urban Forestry	↓	↑	Those who found this important indicated that trees improved quality of life, environmental value, and beautification. People supported the maintenance of old trees and supported watering of young trees so they take better. People did not support the reduction in planting new trees. They wanted to see more trees planted especially since they felt the tree canopy has not yet recovered from past weather events.
Streets	↓	↑	Maintenance, especially snow clearing and surface maintenance was identified as top concerns for this service. Similar to Sidewalks & Pathways, there were many comments regarding Main Streets, and it appeared there was a lack of understanding of where this program would fit. Another main theme is that people identified specific problem areas which are captured in the verbatim comments. There were also competing interests for snow clearing between downtown and suburban areas. There was a general theme regarding the conditions of the interface between Streets, Sidewalks & Pathways, and



Service	Current Service Level Recommendation	Sentiment we heard through engagement	Detailed explanation
			Transit for people not in vehicles (e.g. wheelchairs, bikes, pedestrian, etc.). Interestingly there were a handful of comments that asked for a reduction in snow clearing. They indicated that if a trade-off needed to be made, essential services should be prioritized over snow clearing.
Property Assessment	↓		General comments suggested that people wanted to see a change from the proposed recommendation but were unclear what this change should be. Equitable service was identified as an area of importance.

Research Results

Objectives

In response to a request for further engagement and research in October 2018, the objective of this focus group research was to revisit and reaffirm findings from past research and provide another avenue for further input by citizens into the One Calgary process.

Methodology

Ipsos facilitated a total of five discussion sessions with Calgarians aged 18 years and older between October 11 and 16, 2018. Each session lasted for a total of three-hours.

- Groups represented a broad spectrum of citizens based on diverse cultural backgrounds, age, income, perspectives on The City of Calgary, as well as other socio-demographics.
- In total, 115 Calgarians participated in the five sessions. City representatives were present to view all sessions.
- Participants were provided with the service one pagers that included the drivers, proposed plans, preliminary service levels, and other details to help frame the discussions about service plans and investment levels.



High-Level Themes

1. Discussions About Services

City services continue to be seen as essential to a good quality of life in Calgary.

Along with other contributors like Calgary's natural setting, the friendly community-minded people, educational opportunities, entrepreneurial spirit and access to health care, City services were viewed as playing a critical role in Calgarians' quality of life.

Essential services (e.g. Police, Fire, 911, Water Services) were considered to be very important, but so were services like parks, pathways, recreation facilities and programs, transit, roads, and social programs.

Almost all City Services presented in focus groups were viewed as important and valued in some manner; overall, participants struggled to identify any services for reduced investment.

Understanding about City services varies with degree of visibility and usage

Participant confidence with discussing City services was stronger for those that are more high profile or accessed on a regular basis, such as Transit or Recreation. As previous research has shown us, all City services are important to citizens in some way, but the most important services to individual citizens are the services that they or someone in their household directly use as well as essential services. As City research continues to show, essential services like the Calgary Fire Department and Police Services are seen as being highly visible and covered by local media, which increases their familiarity.

Participants also had an easier time talking about the value they place on more familiar services; as with precious research, many participants say they get value from the services they use and tend to want to see more investment as well as the same or increased service levels in these services.

Overall, citizens tend to not want service cuts to any of the services they use. When asked about this during focus groups, there are only a few services that most in the group agree should see decreased service levels (such as parking for example).

2. Knowledge and Interest in The City's Business Planning and Budgeting Process

Awareness and understanding about The City's business planning and budgeting

On the whole, awareness and understanding about The City's overall business planning and budgeting processes is very low. Most participants had not heard about The City's process this year or in previous years, though most assume that a plan is in place and that information is available on Calgary.ca.

There was no understanding of the four-year frequency and annual budget adjustments. Among the very few participants aware of the process, several said information can be difficult to find and sometimes confusing to understand (e.g. not presented using plain language or in a format that is accessible to the average



Calgarian). Very few participants had heard specifically of One Calgary, or had heard information about this year's process and opportunities to provide input.

Many believe The City can be doing more to involve the public in the business planning and budgeting process.

In line with Citizen Satisfaction Survey results, participants in these sessions express a general interest in knowing or "finding out more" about the process, but the level of commitment to finding out more is mixed.

Moreover, many felt that The City has not been doing enough in communicating with residents about public engagement opportunities for the budget; those who are interested in knowing more are eager to find ways to do so and get involved.

Perception of operating and capital budgets

Most participants were unclear about the differences between the operating and capital budgets or the source of funds for each budget type.

3. Confidence in Council & Administration: Business Planning and Budgeting Process

Accountability During the Budget Process

There were mixed views from participants about their own levels of trust and confidence in The City to be transparent and accountable during the budget process. Those who said that they do trust Council and Administration believe that there haven't been significant issues to raise doubts and they say that The City is on the right track delivering the critical services and infrastructure Calgary needs.

They also spoke to the complexities of a large-scale budget and the decision-making required by City Hall and Council to allocate tax dollars effectively. Some of these participants also said that citizens should have more confidence in their elected officials, commenting on a broader sense of skepticism about politicians these days.

Trust in Process is Low

Several participants suggested that City Administration and City Council are not being transparent, with some suggesting that they are purposely hiding or leaving information out of public documents. This view has been fueled in part by recent media reports about "closed-door meetings" rather than any specific references to issues with budget and business planning related information.

Service-Specific Discussions

A City That Moves

When it comes to this priority, services related to **safety** are critically important to citizens. Whether it is public transit, streets, or taxis, safety is top-of-mind, as are those services related to moving around the city **easily** and **efficiently** (i.e. transit, roads).



Overall, participants say they get value from the services they use in this priority and tend to want to see the same or more investment as well as the same or increased service levels in these services in this priority.

A Well-Run City

When it comes to this priority, most participants see the importance of services that directly affect citizens such as elections, citizen information, taxation, and property assessment. For this priority, citizens are most concerned about **transparency, clarity** of information, and **efficiency**.

When it comes to overall themes, participants say they get value from the services they use in this priority and tend to want to see the same or more investment as well as the same or increased service levels in these services in this priority.

A Prosperous City

For A Prosperous City, most participants clearly understand the value of many services in this priority, especially Affordable Housing, Library Services, Social programs and Arts & Culture. In most cases conversations were centered on the importance of community and community building and supporting those in need. Efficiency and effectiveness were areas of importance when it came to this priority.

Participants say they get value from most of the services they use in A Prosperous City and tend to want to see the same or more investment as well as the same or increased service levels in these services in this priority. Some services however did confuse them, such as Land Development and Sales and Economic Development and Tourism, where they were unsure what levels of investment and service delivery should be. Additionally, some believed that there was duplication of Provincial services and responsibilities in this Priority. Some thought The City should not be investing in these areas.

A Healthy & Green City

When it comes to the priority A Healthy & Green City, most participants see the importance of services that directly affect citizens such as parks, recreation opportunities, urban forestry, water treatment, and waste and recycling. For this priority, citizens are most concerned about **safety, efficiency, and effectiveness of service delivery**.

Participants say they get great value from almost all the services they use in A Healthy & Green City and want to see the same or more investment as well as the same or increased service levels across services in this priority.

A City of Safe & Inspiring Neighbourhoods

For A City of Safe & Inspiring Neighbourhoods, most participants clearly understand the great value of almost all services in this priority, especially Police, Fire, 9-1-1, Bylaw Compliance, and others. In many cases **safety** was a primary focus for participants, as was **transparency, efficiency, and effectiveness** of service delivery.

Participants say they get great value from most services they use in A City of Safe and Inspiring Neighbourhoods, and want to see the same or more investment in most services, as well as the same or increased service levels across services in this priority. The few exceptions include Cemeteries, where some are unsure of The City's role in this service and whether or not the same levels of service should continue. City Planning was another service area participants were unclear about, not understanding what it was or why it should receive increased levels.