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# 2015 Plain Language Survey



Prepared for The City of Calgary by:



**Ipsos Reid**

**Contact:**

Jamie Duncan  
Vice President  
Ipsos Reid Public Affairs  
587.952.4863  
email: [jamie.duncan@ipsos.com](mailto:jamie.duncan@ipsos.com)  
700 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. SW, Suite 1950  
Calgary, AB T2P 0T8

Sheela Das  
Director  
Ipsos Reid Public Affairs  
587.952.4874  
email: [sheela.das@ipsos.com](mailto:sheela.das@ipsos.com)  
700 6<sup>th</sup> Ave SW, Suite 1950  
Calgary, AB T2P 0T8

[calgary.ca](http://calgary.ca) | contact 311



THE CITY OF  
**CALGARY**

## Survey Highlights

### In general, citizens feel that City of Calgary information is easy to understand.

- ◆ Nine-in-ten respondents (88%) think, in general, the information that The City of Calgary provides is 'easy to understand', with one-third (33%) saying it is '*very* easy to understand'.
- ◆ Just 12% say City information is 'difficult to understand' (1% *very* difficult).
  - ❖ When asked why they think City information is difficult to understand, difficulties *finding* or *accessing* information – rather than understanding – are cited by many respondents; particularly finding information on calgary.ca.
  - ❖ A handful of respondents do point to the terminology or lack of plain language.

### Still, one-quarter have seen or read City information that was difficult to understand.

- ◆ When asked if, in the past 12 months, they had seen or read information from The City of Calgary that was difficult to understand, the majority (74%) had not.
- ◆ However, a sizeable minority (26%) had come across City information that was difficult to understand.
  - ❖ When asked to detail what specifically was difficult to understand, the most frequent mentions were about planning/development information or documents, tax/tax assessment information, and bylaws. There were also several mentions about information being hard to find, in general or specifically on The City's website, as well as calgary.ca being difficult to navigate.

UCS2015-0531 File: 2015 Plain Language Survey – Attachment 3.docx

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## Survey Highlights

**By and large, examples of City information reviewed were deemed easy to understand.**

- ◆ Of ten specific examples of City information reviewed, nine were rated as 'easy to understand' by the majority of respondents.
- ◆ In fact, for four pieces of information, 'easy to understand' ratings topped the 90 percent mark, while more than seven-in-ten rated them 'very easy to understand':
  - ❖ calgary.ca childcare information (97% easy, 78% *very easy*);
  - ❖ Multi-Family recycling video (95% easy, 72% *very easy*);
  - ❖ Snow Removal from Pathways video (94% easy, 76% *very easy*); and,
  - ❖ Aboriginal Young Adults public display (93% easy, 72% *very easy*).
- ◆ The one piece of information that was considered 'difficult to understand' was the Public Notice from The City.
  - ❖ Six-in-ten (59%) respondents rated it 'difficult to understand' with 31% saying it was 'very difficult to understand'.
  - ❖ It is notable that 'very difficult to understand' ratings were below the ten percent mark for all other information examples reviewed.