Appendix C3

Inclusive Engagement: Discussions

THE CITY OF CALGARY

Action Plan

2015 – 2018

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THE CITY OF CALGARY

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1.1 engage! Policy

The engage! Policy CS009 states, in part: "*The City of Calgary (Council and Administration) recognizes that decisions are improved by engaging citizens and other stakeholder groups, and commits to conduct transparent and inclusive engagement processes that are responsive and accountable.*"

1.1 Council Direction

On Nov. 18th 2013, Council, in line with the engage! Policy, provided direction for the development of an engagement strategy to contribute to upcoming budget planning for 2015-2018 stating, "The inclusion of stakeholder input as a component of the multi-year [business planning and budgeting coordination] process enhances the quality of Council Priorities, Departmental Business Plans, Budgets, and ultimately, the services delivered to Calgarians." The resulting project, *Action* Plan 2015-2018, and its component engagement was designed to enable Calgarians the opportunity to provide their input on how The City should prioritize spending to continue to move The City towards achievement of long-term goals.
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2.1 Engagement Goals

The overarching goal of *Action* Plan 2015-2018 engagement was to, "Gather insights from citizens on Council approved tax rate scenarios, City services and priorities; and from staff on efficiencies and collaboration in order to inform Council decisions on indicative tax rates and Council Priorities; and, to inform Administration in the development of departmental business plans."

2.2 Challenge of Scale

One of the primary challenges of the *Action* Plan 2015-2018 engagement involved the sheer scale of the input required. Consultation would be sought on priorities and spending that would in some way impact virtually every City department. Furthermore, virtually every Calgary citizen was considered a stakeholder.

2.3 Engagement Strategy

Given the challenge of the wide scope of the project, both in terms of business operations impact and widespread stakeholder involvement, it was determined early on that no single engagement tactic on its own could provide enough input to support Council decision making. As a result, the *Action* Plan 2015-2018 engagement strategy sought feedback across distinct streams, using multiple channels and a variety of methods in order to best gather the breadth of input required to span the Action Planning process.

2.4 Summary of Engagement Streams

Action Plan engagement was first grouped into three primary streams:

- Representative Engagement:
  Qualitative research focused on service and spending priorities with a group of citizen representatives (Appendix B1), business /business agency representatives (Appendix B2) and social agency and community group representatives (Appendix B3). Representative engagement was planned and executed in conjunction with an outside research vendor (Ipsos Reid).
- Internal Engagement:
  Focused on identifying emergent themes and collaborative opportunities with City employees (Appendix D2) and civic partners (Appendix D1). City employee engagement was planned and executed in-house by the Engage Resource Unit. Civic Partner engagement was planned and executed in conjunction with an outside vendor (Ipsos Reid).
- Inclusive Engagement:
  Focused on service and spending priorities with on-line and in-person activities and events open to all Calgary citizens. The input collected was organized by three primary groups: Budget Tools (Appendix C1), Priority Tools (Appendix C2), and Discussion Tools (Appendix C3). Inclusive engagement was planned and executed in-house by the Engage Resource Unit

2.5 Summary of Inclusive Engagement

Inclusive Engagement was designed to be open and available to all citizens in Calgary. These engagement activities were structured to be interactive, maximize learning about how City budgets and plans impact citizens, and minimize the need for pre-existing specialized knowledge of municipal processes and corporate finance.

Each of the primary engagement groups – Spending and Services, Priorities for Community Vision, and Discussions – utilized a combination of on-line and in-person activities, as well as a combination of structured and open-ended input modes, to encourage input from a wide range of Calgarians.

2.5.1 Spending and Services

Provided citizens with an opportunity to compare how service level changes and budget allocation affect their property tax bill and then submit a budget allocation based on their preference of service and cost. Please see appendix C1 for a detailed overview.

2.5.2 Priorities for Community Vision

Provided citizens with an opportunity to share what ideas or priorities they think The City should focus its resources on over the next four years. A detailed overview of this engagement is included in this document.

2.5.3 Discussions

Provided citizens with an open forum to share ideas, concerns, or suggestions about priorities, spending, or any other related topics. A detailed overview of this engagement is included in this document.

In-person engagement was conducted at over 21 sessions throughout the city, ensuring at least one in-person event in each ward. Sessions were conducted using either a mobile booth setup or traveling engagement bus, and were planned for public spaces that received significant traffic within the community (such as shopping malls, grocery stores, leisure centers, and libraries). Activities at the in-person events collected input for each of the three inclusive engagement groups noted above.

On-line engagement was conducted through the period of March 3rd to 21st, 2014. Three online tools were developed and launched to capture input mirroring the three engagement groups – Spending and Services, Priorities for Community Vision, and Discussions – noted above.
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3.1 Purpose of Tools

Action Plan 2015-2018 Discussion Tools were developed to provide citizens with a chance to share wide-ranging ideas about City priorities, spending, or potential innovation. An online discussion tool was launched to facilitate these conversations over the web, and a large-scale idea collection board was used at in-person events.

3.2 Engagement Approach

On-line and in-person engagement activities were designed in tandem to provide input into common streams. Idea and conversations were solicited focusing on six categories: Community & Safety, Environment, Business & Technology, Organization, Mobility, and Places.

3.2.1   In-Person Implementation

4   Building on the lessons learned from prior engagements, in-person engagement was designed to be eye-catching, easy to interact with, and located/scheduled to capitalize on existing community gatherings. 21 individual events were planned between March 3rd and 20th, distributed throughout the city at a variety of existing community meeting places (malls, libraries, leisure centers and LRT stations). In-person events were facilitated by 63 city staff from across the corporation, and based out of either an *Action* Plan 2015-2018 engagement booth or the mobile *Action* Plan 201-2018 engagement bus.

In order to capture idea submissions in person, citizens were invited to share their ideas, suggestions, or comments on sticky notes that could be attached to large-format recording sheets (see Figure 1 on following page)

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> DISCUSSIONS   In each category post comments that you think we would benefit from hearing.
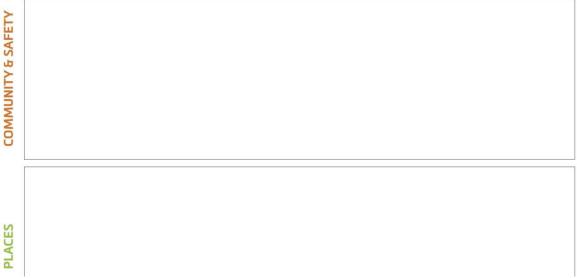
COMMUNITY & SAFETY

PLACES

Figure 1: Idea Recording Sheet

Staff facilitators recorded the number of citizens who were engaged at each session and participants were encouraged to note where they lived on a large-format city map. Action Plan post-cards that included the URL for the Action Plan online tools were handed out to citizens who did not have time to complete the in-person activities.

In person engagement sessions were scheduled for the following 21 locations:

Stephen Avenue Mall	March 3	10:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Westbrook LRT	March 3	3-7 p.m.
Southland Leisure Centre	March 4	4 - 8 p.m.
Southcentre Mall	March 4	10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Chinese Cultural Center	March 5	9 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Calgary International Women's Day	March 6	10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Market Mall	March 7	4 - 8 p.m.
County Hills Library	March 8	12 - 4 p.m.
Beddington Safeway	March 8	10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Crowfoot Library	March 9	12:30 - 4:30 p.m.
Signal Hills Center	March 9	12 - 4 p.m.

Table 1: In-Person Engagement Locations (continued on next page)

Marlborough LRT	March 11	3 - 7 p.m.
Northland Village Mall	March 11	10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Peace Bridge	March 13	3 - 7 p.m.
Crossroads Farmers Market	March 15	10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Sue Higgins off leash park	March 15	9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Village Square Leisure Centre	March 16	12 - 4 p.m.
McKenzie Towne Sobeys	March 16	12 - 4 p.m.
Banker Hall +15	March 17	10:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Stephen Ave	March 17	10:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
South Fish Creek Recreation Centre	March 20	5 - 9 p.m.

Table 2: In-Person Engagement Locations (continued from previous page)

3367 participants were counted over the course of the 21 in-person events. Participants were also encouraged to note their home location on a large city map. 683 dots were placed, indicating participation from each of Calgary's 14 wards.

4.2.1   On-Line Implementation

CityTalk is a web-based, online application that allowed citizens to discuss ideas, present priorities, and ask questions about Action Plan on-line.

Six sub-discussion pages were set-up that focused conversation on the same six areas noted on the idea sheets above: Community & Safety, Environment, Business & Technology, Organization, Mobility, and Places

Participants could log into CityTalk using a pre-existing social media account (Twitter, Facebook, or Google) to ask or answer questions, or vote questions and responses up. No log-in was required to read or view topics on CityTalk.

The online discussion tool was available to the public for 19 days, from the morning of March 3rd until midnight on March 21st. The tool was hosted at www.calgarycitytalk.com/actionplan and was also linked to from the *Action* Plan 2015-2018 webpage at www.calgary.ca/actionplan.

Over the 19 days the discussion tool received 1489 unique visitors, who submitted 34 conversations with 78 responses. None of these submissions included geographic location.

4.1 What Input Did We Collect?

4.1.1   In-Person
The in-person discussion submissions were collected via sticky-note on large sheets. All submissions were transcribed by Engage Resource Unit staff immediately following the event.

4.1.2   On-Line
On-line discussions submissions were downloaded as a spreadsheet file following the completion of the engagement period.

4.2 What Can the Results Tell Us?
The input from the discussion tools, much like the input from any of the other streams of engagement, must be considered within the context it was collected. The discussion tool results are a useful snapshot of citizens' ideas and preferences regarding a range of budget and service topics; however, important contextual considerations to keep in mind are:

- Like all the inclusive engagement streams, participants in this engagement were self-selected. While that has the benefit of making participation accessible to any citizens who would like to provide input, it means that we can make no guarantees as to the demographic makeup of respondents.
- Discussion comments are not intended to be taken as representative or comprehensive. Rather, these results should be taken as one method of input into a larger suite of engagement inputs and results.

4.2.1   Discussion Tool Open-ended Comments
5.0 All open-ended comments captured via the discussion tools were collated and delivered to an outside research vendor (Ipsos Reid) for organization and coding, they have been included in appendix C4