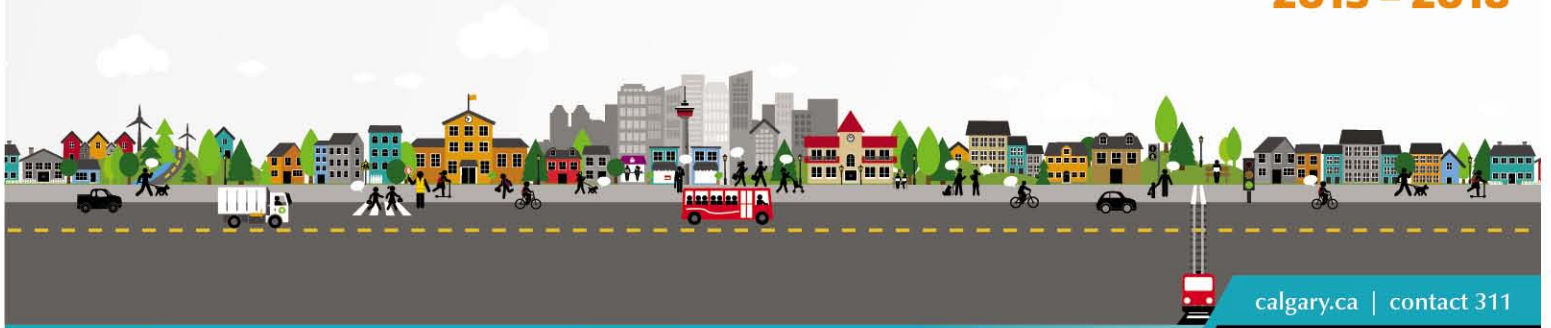# Appendix C4

Inclusive Engagement:
Open-ended Comments

THE CITY OF CALGARY

Action Plan

2015 – 2018

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Table of Contents

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.

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

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.

2.4.1 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.

2.4.2 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. Please see appendix C2 for a detailed overview.

2.4.3 Discussions
Provided citizens with an open forum to share ideas, concerns, or suggestions about priorities, spending, or any other related topics. Please see appendix C3 for a detailed overview.

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.

The verbatim comments that were collected for each of the above groups were analysed by a third party vendor (Ipsos Reid) to ensure a useable format for both City Council and City Administration in the development of the 2015 – 2018 Business Plans and Budget.

3.1 Budget Simulator

Upon completion of a budget and service level set, respondents were asked if they would like to submit final comments along with their budget. Submitted comments have been cleaned and coded by our research partner, Ipsos Reid, and are presented organized according to theme.

3.2 Priority Tools

Online comments were collected in two places in the online priority tool; individual priority suggestions were collected for each category areas, as well as a final comment submission on the last page. In-person priority comments were transcribed from submitted My Priority is cards, and have been included as a separate set of inputs. Submitted comments have been cleaned and coded by our research partner, Ipsos Reid, and are presented organized according to theme.

3.3 Discussion tools

Online discussion comments were from all Action Plan conversations on CalgaryCitytalk.ca. In-person idea comments were transcribed from discussion sticky-notes, and have been included as a separate set of inputs. Submitted comments have been cleaned and coded by our research partner, Ipsos Reid, and are presented organized according to theme.