Understanding Values & Priorities Phase 2
Community Forum
April 9, 2011

What city services are most important to you?

By-Law

- Public consultation
- Communication 911, 311
- Enforce By-laws (no point having them)
- Free spaying and neutering program for low-income pet owners
- Stop panhandlers walking in traffic at intersections (every day, same locations)
- Skate boarding
- Bike licenses
- Community Standards By-laws

Community Services

- Community links to help most vulnerable e.g. senior
- Children and youth services
- Recreation prevention/future
- Community/neighborhood services
- Programs targeting vulnerable and at-risk youth
- Community youth programs
- Support community associations
- Support local volunteer organizations
- Small operator care facility for seniors
- Access to education
- Arts and culture
- More access to sport programs for low income
- Single parent support
- Seniors support
- Community gardens
- Support local farmers
- Community associations, get rid of community associations
- Get community centers for all ages
- More city partnerships with cultural events and venues

- The health system has to improve
- Housing managing (landlord and tenant)
- More programs for seniors
- Community and protective services
- 911 and Fire
- Graffiti removal and enforcement
- Recreation
- Parks (maintenance and beautification)

Corporate Services
- 311
- Affordable housing
- Direct access to city departments (311 run arounds are frustrating)

Finance and Economic Development
- Lower property taxes for seniors
- Accountability
- Budget discussions
- How the city can help people find jobs in Calgary
- Continue grants to assist Business Revitalization (BRZs) to help city keep BRZs
- Clean, safe shopping/living/working areas
- Improve our city to other places inside the country
- Sad to say, this process has cost far more than the value it gives. Only about 1% of people have been involved
- Lower taxes for seniors
- Supports for community associations and groups that provide services at relatively low cost
- How to help single people to live in the city by improving the tax
- Remember a penny earned is a dollar saved
- Less money on roads, more money on people

Infrastructure
- Street lights always out of order
- Assistance on provision for persons experiencing tree root problems
- Upgrades to aging recreation centers
- Heritage - city needs to maintain city-owned heritage buildings
- Sustainable building technology
- Repair inner-city public realm (crumbling sidewalks, rusted out bases on street lamps)
- Proper lighting
- Sidewalks - more people friendly
- Sidewalks
- Infrastructure - All

Parks and Recreation and Planning

- Parks
- Support for free events for all Calgarians
- Street festivals
- Free road closure, free police, free by-law
- Urban agriculture development
- Ignoring older neighborhoods
- Affordable and accessible health and fitness programs at city recreation facilities
- Parks and pathways
- Plan-it Calgary
- Improvements on sports/recreation facilities
- Recreation center in the inner-city
- Consult with residents before associations - when ideas are put out
- Complete new communities (do not need to travel by car - more walking)
- Planning development and assessment (support for BRZs)
- Long term planning - (Imagine Calgary and Plan-it)

Public Safety

- Police (safe city)
- Public safety (police, fire)
- Police services
- Safe city - crime, personal, injury, violence, built environment, natural environment
- Policing - crime has increased outside downtown since pressure was put there
- Fire and police need increase in outer inner-city area
- Better lighting in residential areas
- Youth probation programs are important, the cycle needs to be interrupted early

Transportation Transit Roads

- Winter road maintenance (using snow for water)
- Public transit
- Public transportation
- Parking
- Better public transit (people friendly, reliable, convenient)
- Bike lanes
- Better bus service more often
- Smaller busses only
- 2 car LRT during off-hours
- Bus lanes
- More trains, more buses (posted schedules at bus and LRT stops)
- Fix the website, it sucks!
- More efficient transit, both inner and outlying areas

- Transportation transit public realm
- Street cleaning winter
- Snow removal and road maintenance
- Remove snow plowed into banks at edge of sidewalks in shopping districts - people park on street then climb over snow banks to get to sidewalk to shop
- Bike paths
- Transit - reduce travel times
- Transit safety
- We need road maintenance to be improved
- A train needs to run later (Thursday, Friday, Saturday) to encourage youth not to drink and drive. Trains stop at 12:30. Bars close at 2:30
- Pot holes
- Traffic light coordination
- Left and right hand turns
- No parking on major roads
- With every new street, we need a bus lane
- Bike friendly streets

Waste/Recycling/Energy/Utilities
- Recycling and compost for apartments, buildings, etc.
- Clean water
- Waste disposal
- There needs to be recycle and organic waste (compost) bins next to all garbage cans on sidewalks. Make it easy for people
- Too many garbage pick-ups. Try every other week
- Access to alternative energy sources
- Turn off lights in downtown office buildings at night whenever possible
- Anti-idling
- Recycling - reduced packaging, reuse
- Pick up of compostable materials
- Improved recycling and garbage collection
- Recycling services for multi-family buildings

What do you really value about this service?

By-Law
- Graffiti abatement
- Stop the pan-handling in intersections
- Issues with by-law officers not looking at more than one issue
- Not having synergies between areas of by-laws
- Could do cross-training of by-law officers
- Community standards/CPTED property standards
- Makes notes/notices of issues that are in surrounding areas

- Value brings value of home up
- Neighborhood have to become whistle blowers, want citizen and employee participation
- Improved/expand education to citizens, match tools to community
- How much education is too much, personal responsibilities
- More by-law officers, resolutions come early, people not as frustrated
- Same properties always have the same problems
- Opportunity to read flag
- Properties,- zero tolerance
- Good job of animal services. Known world-wide. Licensing of animals. Investing in less costs down the road (staff/taking care of animals)

Community Services
- Library services
- Important to create vibrant city
- Connect with others, how people connect with each other
- Community centers for all ages (connect youth and seniors), citywide
- Have in place, but need dollars and co-ordination
- Aging population, many live on own
- Remain in home
- Need some place to go/something to do
- Fee - do great job, but could use more dollars
- Link seniors to youth
- Youth - more Outreach programs. Tell directly and get involved
- Senior nursing/dementia care needs to be smaller, more personal care, smaller facilities versus larger, tap into senior recreation/programming care
- Local produce - community gardens, encourage awareness growing/buying local, licensing farmers markets
- Connect people with ideas and those who can implement, do paperwork
- Assist/support with accountability
- Concern regarding conflict of interest, city does this
- Could offer training regarding what is needed and how to
- Awareness by city regarding how people can help
- Youth programs e.g. 3-6 pm, key youth crime times, get them involved in programs
- Operating service hours of libraries, art galleries, etc.

Priorities
- Building awareness (outreach to all groups regarding visibility of programs) (youth, seniors)
- Youth programs (support and awareness of after school, vulnerable youth prevention)
- Senior support (family awareness) language, information, access
- Affordable housing/subsidized housing

- Support funding regarding arts and culture (organize, host)

Corporate Services
- 311 is very cumbersome
- Would rather not pass problems along
- Work as a fire-wall
- Just passing pieces of paper
- Good luck with 3-1-1
- Not sure how information is used
- Do council members receive information/data from topics at 3-1-1
- 3-1-1 is supposed to report back on solving/dealing with issues
- Website should show if you have issues where to call, who to call
- Would like to use website to voice issues/concerns and get response back
- Website not overly user-friendly e.g. finding this meeting was very difficult
- City should not look at themselves as "business"
- They provide services to citizens
- Impacts the way the employees think
- Need to provide services cost-effectively
- Finding balance for whole city of Calgary
- Equitable treatment that is provided cost effectively

Finance and Economic Development
- Taxes for seniors keep going up. Fixed income. Applies to all. Not everyone is making 80,000 graduated taxes according to income
- Because of lack of improvement, taxes do not improve over years
- Living is not improving over the years
- Provide your income statements
- BRZ's. 10 zones in city. Provide services to clean sidewalks, graffiti, etc. We can work cheaper than the city can do it. Clean the core was started by BRZ's. Small businesses pay a levy on top of taxes in order to be a BRZ
- Fee events are part of what makes Calgary great
- Should encourage more of these BRZ's throughout the city
- Support community
- Police service should be cut in half, speeding tickets
- City should provide services related to employment, help people find jobs
- City needs to look at what is needed before they start adding
- City should spend focus on tourism and image, use resources to improve whole city
- In older neighborhoods houses are over-valued and houses are not really worth that
- Impact of condos and apartment development in inner-city areas
- Build affordable homes, have developers encouraged to do this
- Developers encouraged to build low income houses, work together to do this
- Amount of affordable housing should be higher

- Seniors being forced out of their homes because of cost
- Need supporting community services and centers in inner city too, to go along with condo development
- Could School Board be using closed schools for other purposes (still our taxes)
- Couldn't the city put in programs into closed schools, they could be affordable
- Social problems created by people having to access programs and shelters
- Make things more affordable in the first place so we do not need so many social programs - buss passes, recreation programs
- Our taxes should include access to recreation programs
- No further increases for 10 years, cut things and not add them
- Once you have made the budget, add 40% to address problems

Top Things
- Property taxes should not increase every year, live within their means, no tax increase is necessary
- Property taxes could be based on taxable income, people cannot afford to pay higher taxes
- Affordable programs
- Affordable housing (not subsidized but built by developers)
- Infrastructure up to par before any new development
- Assessment - people should be accountable, fair and responsible

Infrastructure
- Business putting up their own money to keep areas looking good
- They organize free events for Calgarians
- Dollars to spend doing this
- When not revitalizing older areas - people move and leave to newer areas, then the newer areas do not have, and then ask for
- Want transit orientated development
- Increase densification
- Encourage people to live in inner city
- Stop making the city bigger
- Make smaller/units/affordable homes (good for young people starting out)
- Look at goals in Imagine Calgary and Plan-it
- These have terrific ideas and need to see some implementation
- Width of sidewalks
- More than one person can walk
- Sidewalks to be more "walkable"
- Someone has to get off sidewalk in order to pass
- In new communities, look at width of the roads, this encourages speed, has impact on safety of residents
- Vibrant downtown creates a great city

- New recreation facilities are less expensive and, therefore, people are going there
- Houses are not built to standards as they should be
- Codes should be increased
- People live in houses that use less energy
- Spend less on utilities
- Expand the life expectancy/usability of the home
- Develop/revitalize library, how changes
- More people could use it
- New Canadian could get more serious there
- Good facility to bring people together
- Can increase literacy
- Dis-service to neighbors, you are a poor neighborhood (who cares?). Makes me sad to see community crumbling
- Feels cyclic
- Old building being torn down, give idea that people do not really care
- Look of neighborhoods makes a difference e.g. Kensington looks shabby
- These areas create vibrancy
- Outdoor shopping districts can make the city great
- People do not want to hang out in malls
- Inner city suffering because of work done in outlying
- Sidewalk crumbling/lamp post falling
- Businesses paying into a fund to maintain
- Value infrastructure brings people together
- Think of roads/sidewalks
- Too much dollars spent on roadways, not enough on ways that bring people together
- Really concerned about inner city/older neighborhoods
- Buildings aging
- Dollars to revitalize recreations in these communities
- This is a great disappointment
- Accessibility and scaled user fees, vital for great city and inclusive
- Infrastructure lacking
- Need to walk and ride a bike, good lifestyle
- Do not need multi-million dollar facility to maintain healthy lifestyle
- Older buildings/recreation centers becoming an eyesore
- When looking un-inviting, people do not want to be part of it
- This causes resentment in the community/people living there
- Feels like city does not care about them
- Feels like and becomes, we do not have enough income for city to pay attention
- Roots of trees, damaging homes, puts one department against each other, it is "their" tree and your expense

Key Points
- Fix public realm (maintenance program) rusted/aging infrastructure
- Appropriate care/attention/resources to older neighborhoods in order to maintain vibrant communities
- Want to be free and equitable between neighborhoods
- Make desirable/attractive/place to live in older neighborhoods
- City departments to work together in older neighborhood to solve problems (regarding trees)

Parks and Recreation and/or Planning
- Important to sit, relax
- Casual sports
- Fields and rinks etc. available for low cost
- Rinks/facilities/library at Cardel Place
- Festivals we do have are awesome
- Arts and culture scene
- Great job of providing green space and comments from visitors
- Enjoy trees, enjoy natural environment rather than built space
- Need a stronger, livelier core - more vibrant, more affordable
- Older neighborhood needs revitalization library, recreation center, schools are closing
- Older buildings are eyesores - starting to look like ghetto

Key Points
- City services need to drive communities towards supporting revitalization of older neighborhoods. Involve communities and encourage them to bring ideas forward
- Urban agriculture growing in city - many benefits for health, fitness, nutrition
- Improve awareness of seniors facilities, pool to avoid closure
- Continuing support for existing new city's subsidy to offer free festivals and events i.e. road closure, permits. Most run by BRZ's /business owners
- Recreation facilities are affordable, less than $5.00/class and subsidy for low income families. Need for awareness that is available (that are for Inglewood)
- Planned communities - services and facilities in the neighborhood so you do not have to depend on your car (make them more walkable)

Public Safety
- Makes me feel safe and secure
- Want to be able to go out at all times e.g. at night
- Make an assumption that our homes are fire safe when they are built
- Concern about icy sidewalks in front of people's houses
- Point of contact for any contentious issues
- Feeling that if something happens, the city will look after you
- Not moving the crime around

- Police officers are more crime fighters, but would rather see them focus on preventive services
- Resources spent on issues may not be warranted
- Not communicating to neighbors what is happening
- More police officers and firefighters living in the community, actively participate in neighborhoods
- One-on-one relationship between police officers and youth and community, focus on building relationships
- Value and expand the role of community police officers instead of going from crisis to crisis
- Expand bike patrol
- Figure out a way to have police really know what is happening right in the community
- More officers in High Schools, actively involved with you
- Use resources of fire to close down illegal and unsafe suites, homes, apartments. They have the ability to do that. They become unsafe for neighborhoods. Too many people in a home
- Illegal suites can be a wonderful thing, but cannot always determine who owns house
- Per capita police per citizen low, but high cost per officer
- Very cost inefficient
- However, focus on crisis versus prevention and policing
- Fire - high level of response in non-critical situations, better deployment of resources, public safety, cost effectiveness
- Performance measurement, what are they responding to?
- Number of calls, but what kind of calls?
- Education component, they go door to door, preventive e.g. police and fire cars idling, now cost effective is that?
- Attitude that those who deliver essential services should not be questioned
- Police should be valued based on time actually spent policing, how would we gauge effectiveness, different priorities in different districts
- Attitude of police services is a concern, public dictators, District 4, peace officers need to like people
- Prevention - work with 12 communities safety initiatives, more police presence, more accessible e.g. funding for Power Play 1 x week, hockey program with volunteers
- Not in cars, in the community e.g. role of the police education tool, "You and the Law" is very police-sided. Should be plus the community
- Parent involvement more important
- Civic government has most impact on our lives and get value for my tax dollar

Transportation Transit Roads
- Transit very important. Helps get cars off the road, reduce pollution, etc.
- Do not have car prefer transit
- Real bike lanes not shared with cars and buses

- Train is improving
- Transit important for youth choice
- More money on people, not roads
- Snow removal is good but road maintenance is poor
- Make transit more friendly, more attractive to use
- Design new communities to more transit oriented versus car oriented
- Extend to bedroom communities to alleviate Park and Ride congestion
- Poor transit service does not encourage use
- Spider web versus spoke and wheel type design
- Run C-Trains later (before 1:00 a.m. is too soon, run later)
- Vancouver (other towns) late night service
- Turnstiles paid for riders at C-Trains
- Why free fare downtown?
- Signage so we would know when to expect next bus's GPS stop information on bus (see Vancouver, Ottawa)
- TTC dark between stop, drop off service to improve safety
- Street lights too dark, poor safety 224 and 88 street SE
- Traffic light coordination poor e.g. Northmount Drive/Northland Drive, particularly Saturday
- Airport tunnel not necessary Metis Trail etc. maintenance problems how can you maintain a tunnel?
- Bike land operation problem on Home Road
- Support free fare downtown
- Main arteries should have bus lanes and all new roads so equipped
- Snow clearing and street cleaning in communities needs improvements
- Pothole complaints need to be fixed in 24 hours

Waste/Recycling/Energy/Utilities
- Environment protection crucial to healthy city. Waste reduction/recycling. Are we doing enough with waste collection? e.g. sorting, distributing
- Company's who make plastics etc. should be accountable, help regarding recycling
- Business, apartments not necessarily recycling, how to entice to do, incentives, bounty, dollar value for efforts
- Compost bins, need bins, collection, concern regarding increase in costs, trucks
- Increase education regarding cost of landfills, benefit of recycling, show real costs, decrease use of landfills
- City put recycling bins beside every garbage can, needs to be sorted, increase awareness, make it easy to recycle
- Garbage trucks need blades for show clearing at same time
- Protect waterways, stop building along rivers, wetlands
- Education regarding waste management/recycling through parks, community centers. Mandatory waste reduction

- Need compliance, sort at source e.g. Dubai
- Flush out compliance issues, legislation and enforcement
- Education/incentive, do not charge for waste management/recycling. Youth seem to be more aware
- Keep utilities as publicly-owned services
- Need to build more sustainability, more to code, longer life expectancy, inspection
- Easier to implement alternative energy (solar panels on houses)
- Policy and incentives regarding developing/using alternative energy sources, garbage into energy
- Anti-idling by-laws
- Pollution control equipment installed at source level to help insure compliance. Needs to be in place before licensing

Priorities
- Recycling - incentives, education/awareness, accountability
- Alternative energy - policy, incentives, education
- Protect waterways - no development by rivers/streams, education
- Sustainable development - building codes, policy/by-laws, inspection
- Keep publicly-owned utilities

What questions or comments do you have?
- What support is available to assist with creation of affordable housing?
- What is philosophy regarding city wanting to keep senior people in own homes, but raising taxes, service fees, etc.?
- Should be able to deal with city at City Hall and not in NE Calgary (e.g. tax assessment appeals). Why are not city services available at City Hall?
- Why are we talking about adding services when we should be cutting spending?

What stood out for you?

- Red flag of properties
- More pro-active work by by-law officers
- Crossing training of by-law officers
- Maintain pro-active approach to animal services
- Corporate services - user-friendly
- Accountable of what was said from public
- 311 user friendly, not have to adopt to bureaucratic processes