

***“What Was Said” Report***  
**Community Workshop**  
February 23, 2011  
7:00 – 9:30pm  
Number of participants: 27

## INTRODUCTION

### How you feel about the start of the process?

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- Open minded
- Timing issue; found out about session at 3:30 today
- Quite excited, but it is pathetic that so few people are here
- I'm with her
- Soccer coach, huge focus on hockey vs. soccer in city
- Canadian Soccer Association, kick some butt re: facilities; coaching extraordinary athletes in poor facilities
- Calgary Soccer Club, curious to hear what said; trying to find out why focus on indoor fields is miles behind Ontario
- Calgary Minor Soccer, 109,000 people play soccer; soccer vs. hockey facilities
- Evergreen Theatre, Youth centres, lack funding for youth that sing and dance; here to get feel for what can do
- Representing self, retired; want vibrant, well run, safe city; no increase in taxes, especially for fixed income people; should benefit all city
- Citizen, first time involved
- Soccer player, youth
- Father of 2 soccer players; disappointed with facilities; hard to believe Calgary rated as 5<sup>th</sup> most livable city
- LRT, transit
- Semi retired citizen, former oil patch; frustrated with City re: services; taxes; need sustainable budget and city; City rejects seniors
- Taking notes (from Alderman's office)
- Interest, hear what is said
- Urban Calgary Student Association (3); not just student interests; infrastructure
- Curious re: process; excited about number of soccer people here
- Interest in public engagement; referenced celltower.ca
- Hope this is a constructive dialogue

## QUESTION 1

Think of the best public engagement experience you have been involved in.  
What made it meaningful?

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- Provide info on how decision was made. Why something is funded and others not
- We need to know HOW decisions are made
- Values on which decisions are made must be known (what are the sacred cows)
- How do strategic plans for organizations fit into the City budget
- City Council meetings – process was unfair, time limits imposed
- Brentwood TOD process – process clarification, not clearly communicated led to anger and frustration
- House of Commons question period – Experienced MPs can publicly present information very efficiently or very poorly
- Last mini-election
  - Many forums, social media activity
  - Advertising all sorts a lot more attention.
  - Feeling involved was much higher and the turn out was better
  - Amazing engagement process
- Plan It Calgary
  - Large group session at Round-Up Centre
  - Multi-stakeholder range of interests
- Cross-section
  - downside was cost - \$250K
  - Facebook page not set up
- Learning and developing youth
  - going away with skills
- Other people engaged (adult/volunteers)
- Resolution seriously considered
  - democratic approach
  - leadership to really listen- minds aren't made up
- Being able to listen to both sides
  - people feel listened to
- Having programs that are rewarding and contributing to society
- Going the distance people will contribute
  - leading by example
  - taking control of own actions
- Leaders need to be trusted and respected
  - back to listening
- Leaders need to be honest
- Everything treated equally
  - not deciding before meeting happened
- Decision-making process needs to be democratic. Not being democratic leads to frustration
- Little more open-door policies
  - be heard by the public and making it accessible to citizens
- Have leadership of city attended sessions and be willing to answer questions

- Council session – had information needed to make informed commentary (did homework, had information to be informed)
- People doing backyard research, information exchanged, people changing stances based on informed input
- Adequate time for discussion that is needed
- Being clear re: limitations, parameters
- Public participation where decisions aren't already made
- Tap people's creativity, brainstorming
  - building relationships first, opportunity to find common ground, opportunities to talk to others with different viewpoints (may take longer, but better in the end)
- Be sensitive to time constraints
- Use volunteers
- Alderman meetings
  - helps facilitate action
  - results
- Listen to people
- Get a feel for what is going on
- Leaders come out to events
- Social media may not be for everyone
- Act quickly on input
- Synthesize input into actionable items

## QUESTION 2

### What has been your experience with City of Calgary engagement activities in the past?

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- Participant in Plan It
  - received no information on how or what decision was made
  - no direct communication (via email would be best)
  - don't know how input was used
- Certain expectations from the process were not met
- Direct experience was great
  - attended City Hall with daughter
  - good attendance from Alderman
  - some dialogue was effective
- Direct communication with citizens (assessment process) was effective for providing information and answering questions
- Process after process – nothing is done then new issues come up and get priority (airport tunnel)
- Generally good mixed, depends on Alderman. With Administration, it's been very good
- Plan It Calgary
  - very negative, contrary views were ignored, they degenerated and vanished
- Social engineering rather than meeting the desires of the citizens
- With Plan It, it felt guided, but I appreciated the opportunity
- Heavy-handed on preconceived notions

- Facility discussions
  - Follow-up/explanation was poor with regards to results and recommendations put forward
- Disappointed with turnout. People feel turned off
- Need feedback and documentation of sessions
- Difficult to engage in cell phone tower location issues
  - because economics differ
  - who to talk to
  - how to have not circular discussions
- Not having enough knowledge on topics or trust (Alderman's)
- Demanding citizens/don't raise taxes (balance)
- Feel like the City doesn't listen about spending (bridge example)
  - some things on really firm agenda
- Don't understand how budget dollars are allocated and spent
  - don't understand silos in budgets
- Communication issues
  - people not attending events (not advertising)
  - not listening to people
- Sometimes things need to be done for the greater good
- Very easy to email people and get a response (email, twitter)
- For years I thought I couldn't go talk to the Alderman. They don't always remember people. Experienced that Aldermen are really passionate about issues
- Generally ignore input
- Felt discussion had been made
- Got good information on path forward
- Senior people attended and heard comments. This added credibility. They must be serious
- Could have focused sessions instead of just general public
- Need to publicize
- Phone survey – kept to time
- Community centres bad, didn't follow mandate
  - kicked singing group out and increased rent
  - no consultation, no support from City councilors
- City doesn't involve public enough; would like to see more use of things like e-voting, plebiscites that are easier to use; smaller, ongoing vs. major long-term process
  - continuous cycle; have people ready at time want to do public participation
  - may not be aware, now know what can provide
  - not enough lead time now; if regular routine process can be better prepared (polarized, i.e. Fluoride – only hear from people who are upset; not like how handled
- Process great in theory, but new Council and Mayor have done opposite (i.e. Tunnel information not available – not transparent!)

### QUESTION 3

**What 'ground rules' for participation would you suggest for participants in this conversation over the next few months?**

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- No name calling
- Don't focus on computer related tools
- Look at principles and concepts – step back from positions
- Look for common ground
- Keep in mind the parameters when considering your wish list
- Release the result. You come with your wish list. What is decision? Result.
- Come with solutions
- Come prepared
- Make the budget easier and more simple to understand and make it available
- Be innovative and creative – get out of the box and break the rules
- Be aware of economic constraints and the limitations
- Stay involved
- Look for what's good for the whole city
- Invite others to get involved
- Stay on Twitter
- Always pull back to see why we are funding certain things
- Think long-term
- Be cognizant of special interest groups and lobbyists
- Invite under represented groups
- Respectful participants should identify themselves, anonymous input are not accepted
- Platform should be clear, timelines to be expected
- Find more focus group for major issues i.e. Seniors, arts, soccer to stress top priorities they have
- People need to show why their priorities should be at the top
- Vision of what the City should look like in 10 years. Other cities like Chicago are very impressive in terms of vibrancy and cooperation to grow
- Provide constructive feedback and solutions
- 'Board' system would be best
- Not a fiefdom for anyone person with their own agenda
- Friction can be good as can dissenting views
- Focus group can provide more detail
- People need to have done homework to have an informed comment – it's work
- The City can help with this – information all in one place
- Good facilitation
  - participant can't hijack meetings
  - limitation on speaking (time limits)
- Respect and openness for multiple viewpoints
- Believe in hiring outside of the City (auditing). All departments audited for best practices
- Keep it from being overly simplistic
- Keep the participation meaningful
- Important to bridge the gap of knowledge. You don't want to exclude. You want to bring people up to speed
- Graduated process to bring people through
  - help develop understanding, looking to find out more
  - education process that moves people through
- Need to come to meetings prepared to listen and not just wait until they stop talking

- Bring out as much information that you feel is important
  - sometimes people hold back
  - find out what people are feeling
- Want to debate instead of argue
- Want feelings tempered with good facilitation
- Reasonable expectation on the part of the participants
  - just showing up doesn't mean that you're ideas are the only ones that are important
- People come in being reasonable with the expectations of outcomes
- Focus on a topic
- Respectful conversation
- Everyone can have a voice
- Open minded
- Decision has not already been made
- Diversity of opinion makes it interesting
- Need to have respectful conversation without polarizing people and issues
- Skilled facilitation is important
- Democracy is messy
- Not a destructive process
- Don't simplify positions
- OK to disagree
- Outcome – plan it in place
- Input used
- No fist fights
- Be open minded
- Commitment has to be followed through on. Timelines have to be established
- If the City has committed to seriously consider input and will advise how input will be weighted in decision-making, then the City needs to act on it; clear understanding of what commitment needs; accountability
- Respect for others
- Communication has to be 2-way and timely (re: answers from City on questions raised)
- Direct answers needed, not politically correct ones
- Need clear reasons, response re: why funding proposals are not accepted so that any concerns can be addressed

#### QUESTION 4

Please rate the importance of the following engagement goals on a scale of zero to five.  
Zero: low importance – Five: high importance

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NOTE: Listed below are the Engagement goals were participants were asked to rank:

- 1) Gathering values-based input that will be used and considered in decision-making on the trade-offs and priorities for City services and budget.**
- 2) Providing multiple meaningful and appropriate opportunities to engage staff, citizens and Council in constructive dialogue about issues, priorities and ideas that are important to them.**

- 3) **Delivering a transparent, accountable and inclusive engagement process that builds relationships, trust and credibility with stakeholders.**
- 4) **Raising awareness and understanding of City services and budget allocation.**
- 5) **Building capacity, skills and knowledge of citizens, staff and Council to engage and participate in dialogue about important issues.**
- 6) **Building relationships and partnerships with organizations, stakeholders and citizens and creating an increased feeling of involvement on important issues.**
- 7) **Providing all participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.**
- 8) **Building understanding of the foundation and vision of Imagine CALGARY and the context of this conversation as the path towards beginning the journey of implementation towards that vision.**

### **Group 1**

*Most important engagement goals:*

- 1) 17/20
- 2) 18/20
- 3) 14/20
- 4) 15/20
- 5) 20/20
- 6) 16/20
- 7) 17/20
- 8) 5/20

### ***How do we make these goals a reality?***

- Provide useful information, not data
- Provide education to help understand information
- Reach everyone – media, social network
- Available to everyone – increased awareness of process
- International outreach
- Make people aware of civic duties and opportunities
- Clear, concise information (summary and detail)
- Encourage working as a group

### **Group 2**

*Most important engagement goals:*

- 1) 13/25
- 2) 20/25
- 3) 16/25
- 4) 16/25
- 5) 16/25

- 6) 19/25
- 7) 22/25
- 8) 17/25

***How do we make these goals a reality?***

***#7 – Providing information to people***

- Send information out to citizens about what is the ImagineCalgary findings
- Get website address out to people
  - through bills
  - news, TV, newspaper
  - use existing means of communication
  - use Metro
  - use transit advertising
- People need to understand which services the City is responsible for

***#2 – Multiple opportunities to participate***

- Face to face meetings (not at expensive hotels)
- Website that is easy to navigate
- Communicate through schools

**Group 3**

***Most important engagement goals:***

- 1) 16/30
- 2) 24/30
- 3) 28/20
- 4) 27/30
- 5) 27/30
- 6) 16/30
- 7) 30/30
- 8) 21/30

***How do we make these goals a reality?***

- Open up the books and leave them open
  - stonewalling – airport tunnel, ENMAX
  - cell tower application fees
  - Peace Bridge, Triangle Bridge
  - Eav Claire Ane Hill density are examples
- Council agendas and information more than 2-4 days beforehand. Presenting in City Council not having to hang around all day
- Techniques cannot be novelties
  - every once in a while embed this process in all City projects – it has to be a regular tool
- Participatory democracy with voting technology is there
- Deep pockets can supersede all the good engagement that goes on. Need transparency to keep it accountable and raise awareness
- Notice of Motion – Admin report – report dropped in bureaucrats hands – bureaucrat decides (filters) How/who/what of the report (Flawed – citizens are not involved) – report goes to



supervisor for amending and approval – report presented to committee or council – Citizen can speak to report for 5 minutes only

#### **Group 4**

*Most important engagement goals:*

NOTE: This group chose not to vote on engagement goals

#### ***How do we make these goals a reality?***

- My goal is not on the list
  - I want to see more soccer facilities built
- Will this process be any different? Show me that something will happen this time
- What is the connection to decision-making?
- For this process to be different I need to know what that means for City council to “consider” the input?
- If you ask to provide opinions, get ready to be held accountable
- Chance of being effective – need to participate in the first part and get ready for the next steps
- Don’t see why we need to talk about the process
- Council disregards what they are hearing
- At some point, isolate key groups/special interest
  - one groups’ objectives can’t be overridden by others
  - possibly council meets with different groups
- Process – listening to all citizens as well as listening to specific groups (i.e. Soccer groups)
- What forum will the conversation occur in? There must be multiple opportunities and cater to many different lifestyles

### **QUESTION 5**

#### **What information is critical for consideration in this process?**

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- Define entire revenue stream for YYCCC i.e. Taxes – MST – FEDS. All finances and schemes
- What level of budget detail should be available and who can be trusted to organize it
- Where could the City build soccer fields in the inner city, and could user fees support construction?
- Representative from the City presenting this information from their perspectives
- Reconciliation of budget with actual expenditures and what was achieved
- How are budget priorities set?
- What are the priorities and how were they obtained?
- All income sources declared
- Core essentials and related costs. What is absolutely necessary to run Calgary?
- Details and money associated with all other functions
- Total budget amount
- What has already been committed and what is discretionary? Of the discretionary funding, what areas of expenditure would be considered and how would this process impact these decisions?
- How do councilors decide on what criteria to use to determine what to spend money on?
- How does the work from ImagineCalgary get included?
- Will facilities in Parks and Rec budget dedicated to new facilities be a fixed item into future budgets?

- What is the total income from cell/telecom tower installation and app fees?
- High level budget allocation (i.e. % of available funds for sports and arts)
- MD&A (Management discussion and analysis) giving context to the budget data (i.e. Trends, commitments, risk analysis, etc.)
- Revenue generation and expenditures must be dealt with simultaneously
- Result of budget with long-term estimation of effects on community
- How much money do we have access to for recreational facilities and how many programs and facilities will this be used for?
- Will the budget for facilities be considered outside of other areas such as policing and community services?
- Last budget
- What the budget dollars are
- City initiatives and reasoning
- Where does the money come from, reasoning for each of those parts
- Are there budget sacred cows and how do we find out what they are?
- Crystalize the needs and wants of a specific, but it's ability to function in a greater pool of resources
- What are the political sensitivities that average people don't know (i.e. Agenda of developers etc.)
- What are interests of committees for immediate results and long term accountability
- Will you commit to fixed monetary commitment in your budget plan?
- A comprehensive breakdown of allocated funds!
- Accountability trail. Not just from the top but from the whole process
- Disclose all wages and salaries for everyone!
- What does the City need from an organization to actually make their voice heard?
- Who are 'movers and shakers' in Calgary?
- Better understanding of where funds come from the City Budget
- Short term (1-3 yrs.)
- Mid-term (3-7 yrs.)
- Long-term (7-10 yrs.)
- City vision (city council vision)
- Look at all items on a "full cost/ full cycle" basis

## QUESTION 6

### What can we do to ensure that you continue to participate?

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- Ability to give concrete ideas on how I want the money spent
- I'd like to see an aggregated information site with information posted within 24 hours
- Public commitment from City Council
- To obtain a timely summary report after the quadrant meetings of the stages after two-week period
- Don't over amalgamate feedback and make it meaningless (give credit to various groups and situations)
- Have a solid commitment from the City to address the priorities raised throughout the process have been taken into account (build soccer fields)
- Brevity: one session to get input in effectively with opportunity for continued participation
- Specific forums on specific topics of interest (i.e. Public sports facilities – soccer)
- Good feedback summary

- Lots and lots of appropriately targeted advertising
- True commitment
- Have a City Council or administration rep attend the meeting
- High level involvement
- Councillor participation
- Commitment to action based upon what is heard
- Validation by Council for this process with possible vision of end results
- Break out sessions on session results
- Show that there will be room in future budgets for changes and improvements
- Immediate evidence that ideas are being used
- Innovative support using assets already in place
- Adaptability
- Accountability to the youth of our city (soccer facilities for growth)
- A more specific structure (specific topics with info available ahead of time)
- Action to meet the needs of less fortunate organizations (like soccer)
- Coordination with other organizations
- Participating and advertising
- Quick turn around of our words and “say” being transcribed and posted
- Evidence of where they are, that the decisions have not already been made, that input really is affecting the outcome
- Orientation towards making people think they are actually being heard/making a difference
- Having themed events on particular topics associated with the budget, making it easier to make concrete decisions on that topic
- Reports created as they come from different stakeholders. Don’t over-merge diverse opinions into meaningless data (i.e. Food groups, Oil Barons, Cell Tower people)
- Organigraph
- Visual optics
- Analytics
- Coffee
- Preparation material for each session so people can be prepared to communicate effectively

## QUESTION 7

### What stood out for you?

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- How reasonable everyone was
- We haven’t really discussed why we came
- We share the same views on certain topics about soccer, looked for solutions and have been ignored
- Several people didn’t seem to have a good experience with previous process
  - Would be good to have a more direct voice
- Has to be reasonable expectations on both sides