

Making Choices That Matter Phase 3 Community Conversation Cafes May 2012 Corporate Services

Total Number of Participants: 203

Note: Not all respondents answered ALL of the questions.

CORPORATE PROPERTIES AND BUILDINGS	Increases: 3	Decreases: 6	Leave as Is: -	Eliminate: -	N/A: 8
COMMENTS RELATED TO INCREASES:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We need to increase our investment in the preservation and renovation of heritage buildings as well as make sure the new buildings we build are state of the art, innovative and LEED certified. This will launch us into a "world class" city. I love the new Peace Bridge! For on going maintenance & enhancements to Calgary's corporate properties specifically buildings on the heritage inventory. Revenue sources - sale of legally protected heritage properties. Ceasing to subsidize new developments requiring new service infrastructure on the city fringes. Increase property taxes to align with other major Canadian cities. Might be good ideas for help to deliver the services? 					
COMMENTS RELATED TO DECREASES:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Properties is way too top heavy and has people who believe they know more about what a community needs rather than those living in the community. Privatize property management. Corporate properties is drowning in useless paperwork. Customer Service & Communication 311. Human Resources 26.2 Information Technology 52.8 					
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allocate additional resources to maintaining city owned heritage buildings. Allocate resources to improve the city website to make it easier to navigate. Currently if you do a search on a topic you want information on, the list starts with media releases, not the core information on the topic. Allocate additional resources towards affordable housing. Possibly decrease. Have witnessed the Department run numerous assessments - at cost to tax payer on the same bldg. - duplicate work by CNS & Corp Props. Many of the community properties are efficiently run & preserved by Non-Profit Community Groups. In the present system risks taken by community groups at the expense. Duplicate & triplicate work is done with leases & building mgmt. Community groups are partners - should be required to do due diligence - but when they prove themselves should be considered assets not liabilities. 					
CUSTOMER SERVICE AND COMMUNICATION	Increases: 2	Decreases: 8	Leave as Is: -	Eliminate: -	N/A: 2
COMMENTS RELATED TO INCREASES:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide more written (mail out) information and stop telling everyone to use a computer. 311 					
COMMENTS RELATED TO DECREASES:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have way too many "communications" people at the city. What do they do? Why do we need so many? Way too much middle management! 					

- Customer Service and Communications Human Resources Seems excessive for staff services
- Immediately cut communications staff by 50%.
- There are so many information lines in the city - 211, distress centre, etc. It may not need 24 hours 311 unless absolute disaster services. It can be handled on or next business day.
- I tried to imagine what might have the easiest what might have the easiest blow to weather without serious loss to safety and emergency service delivery.
- Specifically, in research. I'd like to see money shifted, wherever possible, from customer service & communication & human resources to increasing housing options.
- Polling people @ our table 1/2 used 311 services. 1 person found service to be not helpful. I myself have worked with clients that have complained about information offered. I believe a quicker response to inquiries does not address the issue of improved service (re: 5% increase)
- As taxpayers, we have so much information. Too much duplication of the same info in different ways. (Radio, newspaper, on line, etc., Enmax bills). Info on how to fix the toilet - I just throw it out. Info from too many departments. Information is too repetitive. I've lived here 20 years I don't need the excess of education. Over-telling people.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

- 311 is great, don't reduce service.
- Keep human resources strong & relevant at the city. Return to a customer service focus. Calgarians deserve answers & service for their tax dollars.

FLEET SERVICES	Increases: 1	Decreases: 1	Leave as Is: -	Eliminate: -	N/A: 2
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COMMENTS RELATED TO INCREASES:

- Given that the city is expanding, more will be needed to keep it clean. It only occurred to me this past Sunday how much garbage there is on the C-train lines.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

HUMAN RESOURCES	Increases: 7	Decreases: 7	Leave as Is: -	Eliminate: -	N/A: 1
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COMMENTS RELATED TO INCREASES:

- The city staff are skilled and incredibly valuable people. They need to get a decent wage increase so we can keep and attract the quality of staff a city of our 1 million requires.
- Increase the budget in these areas - TEMPORARILY - to make city owned buildings and can more energy efficient - so that costs go down over time. In regards to Human Resource - pay particular attention to training and hiring individuals who find it difficult to find/maintain employment.
- To provide core cultural competency training for city staff to facilitate an increase in accessibility of services. To resource the attraction and retention of newcomers and immigrants as employees of City of Calgary.
- Increase \$ to HR to improve leadership enable creativity, Counter bureaucracy and union mentality.

COMMENTS RELATED TO DECREASES:

- 5% target of city's fleet transitioning to green units should be more like 50% or 100%.
- Too much staff is needed to do all your processes.
- More effective use of IT with reasonable (not robust) replacement. Wage freeze union staff. Currently, unskilled union workers are paid more than skilled/trained social agency workers. Less use of recruitment firms & temporary agencies - Huge bleed of available resource. Imagine the fees paid to Davis Park paid in one year VERSUS funding for Emergency Shelter bids & family violence & abuse elimination.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	Increases: 8	Decreases: 6	Leave as Is: -	Eliminate: -	N/A: 4
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COMMENTS RELATED TO INCREASES:

- Information is power and the city could use a stronger foundation to work from, smarter use of resources to save dollars down the road.
- Currently the technology works but this require the latest in technology and skilled workers and become balanced in?
- The FCSS website is not up to par and if there is expectation for agencies to use it I believe it should be more user friendly. Concerns or issues appear to be slow to resolve.
- IT can improve efficiencies across departments both in general operation & identifying redundancies. IT can improve general productivity.

• 311					
COMMENTS RELATED TO DECREASES:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The city's IT Division is oversized and, therefore, have duplication issues where individual divisions have their own IT people. The city is not in the Hi-Tech, information technology business. Hire private sectors to provide IT services to city departments. Is "IT" a need once you have programs in place? Should it not be less to upgrade future programs? If the city adopted an open data policy, information collected can be used by non-city employees and volunteers to create new IT innovations that can be shared by all. 					
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:					
• I'd like to see an improved website. "I'm pretty self sufficient and am happy to look for/research services, but I find the website is really not user friendly.					
INFRASTRUCTURE AND INFORMATION SERVICES	Increases: 1	Decreases: 2	Leave as Is: -	Eliminate: -	N/A: 5
COMMENTS RELATED TO INCREASES:					
• Would like to see more interdependent with planning development, affordable housing.					
COMMENTS RELATED TO DECREASES:					
• Decrease .8					
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:					
• Infrastructure & Information Services - eliminate or put a full stop to the Corporate Project Management Centre. Funding should stop going to very high priced external consultants.					
OFFICE OF LAND SERVICING AND HOUSING	Increases: 8	Decreases: 3	Leave as Is: 1	Eliminate: -	N/A: 7
COMMENTS RELATED TO INCREASES:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transit oriented development is overdue and needs to continue apace. Affordable housing is key. As the homeless are housed and homelessness is prevented, we save a fortune on emergency services, police and homeless shelters. Rent control. Set up more affordable housing. More flexibility to help low income people to rent their residence An increase in affordable housing would definitely help the problem of homelessness. Our homeless population is unacceptable. The recent success of housing first from the 10 Year Plan to end homelessness proves the need for more affordable housing. Studies show it is more economically beneficial to provide housing then to continue with responsive services (emergency shelters, health care, police, etc.) Build more affordable housing complexes. We NEED more affordable housing as our population ages. Continued need to work on plan to end homelessness and create new affordable housing units - weigh kindness/dignity to provide basic needs to our community members. Affordable housing - housing both quantity & quality (old & new) need to be improved. Provincial funding is inadequate on its own, we need to step up & assist. 					
COMMENTS RELATED TO DECREASES:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The city should be doing more to encourage social housing by the private sector and eventually pare down this Division. Get out of land development. Part of budget in this area should be tied to market success of land acquisition & sales. Start to move from a unionized environment to a more flexible & less costly workforce. 					
COMMENTS RELATED TO STATUS QUO:					
• Increase # of Calgary Housing Units - decrease another unit - same suggestion - IT unit					
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office of Land Servicing & Housing - Eliminate Calgary Housing, which will possibly mean a reduction in the cost of operating OLSH (as they provide a great deal of support to Calgary Housing). Need more low cost housing. Rent control cap Increase accessibility but use landlords. Increase # of unit in Calgary housing & improve quality of these units some are not acceptable. Calgary Housing Company. As a social worker, I support many low-income families that have children with disabilities. It is heart breaking to see these families sit on the Calgary housing waitlist for months. Many wait for over a year to be considered for a Calgary Housing placement. One family I work with is approaching the one-year mark on the Calgary Housing waitlist. It is a single mom with 4 young boys (2 have autism). When I call to check here status, I am told that she is not "high priority" because 					

her only source of income is Income Support through the Gov't of AB. Also, because she receives Income Support through the Gov't of AB, she is not eligible for the Rent Supplement Program. I called the Calgary Housing Company to inform them of her eviction notice and impending homelessness, but her status still did not change. Community agencies had to step in to help (Red Cross) or else they would be in a shelter and all the autism-related services (in-home support 5 days/wk, 2.5 hr/day) would fall apart. PLEASE make Calgary housing more accessible!

GENERAL COMMENTS (CORPORATE SERVICES)

Decreases: 7

- The city is running a deficit due to its own management. Bureaucracy should be cut down and its cost should run in tandem with the private sector.
- I cannot see any reason there should be 11 different unions - collective agreements - negotiation costs.
- Decrease all business units and specific services evenly.
- Improve efficiencies!
- If no one shows up to the meeting here - how important are they? You are telling me you are not needed as a no-show.

Leave As Is: 2

- 311 is a great service. These are all critical services for the city to function.
- Leave as is!

Eliminate: 1

- Corporate Services - Housing

N/A: 4

- Land Services and Housing - Illegal Suites. I feel the rules should be changed by the city when landlords with illegal suites are notified. They shouldn't be given 2 weeks notice when the bylaw officer will attend the address or that all they have to do is remove the stove from the suite. Parking becomes a problem when everyone living in the rental unit has a vehicle.
- Charge market level fees to community services renting space in city owned buildings to ensure that cost to maintain are covered, not subsidized by the city and other services.
- More user fees for city services.