

Making Choices That Matter Phase 3 Community Conversation Cafes May 2012 Planning, Development and Assessment

Total Number of Participants: 203

Note: Not all respondents answered ALL of the questions.

ASSESSMENT	Increases: 3	Decreases: 4	Leave as Is: -	Eliminate: -	N/A: 3
COMMENTS RELATED TO INCREASES:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The assessment function relates to every homeowner in the city and they probably have more work after assessments are sent out in the spring then they can handle. Hire an ombudsman person and a couple of investigators to move things along more quickly. 					
COMMENTS RELATED TO DECREASES:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Assessment Division is very unorganized. This leads to significant losses each year in assessment appeals. Hire proper, experienced people and force inspections rather than load the department with IT people doing computer modeling. Assessment can be done more efficiently. 					
DEVELOPMENT & BUILDING APPROVALS	Increases: 5	Decreases: 7	Leave as Is: -	Eliminate: -	N/A: 8
COMMENTS RELATED TO INCREASES:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We need better codes (yes, province I know) but, if the city is to agree to approve developers' requests to build new communities, they have the right to ensure developers "exceed" standard. Cut red tape in building industry. Calgary Growth is very significant. A lack of planning re: road construction. A lack of planning in connecting linear parks in neighbourhoods. The development & building approvals is very cumbersome & is a lengthy process. Calgary is a dynamic innovative city and this department seems to thwart innovation by its cumbersome policies & paperwork. They should encourage & support community development and work with these entrepreneurs instead of working against them. If this budget needs to be increased in order to encourage a shift in philosophy so be it. 					
COMMENTS RELATED TO DECREASES:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seems to be a lot of duplication - surely efficiencies could be found. Development and Building Approvals could eliminate its net budget with minimal effect, especially if fees can be increased to compensate. Industry can put up with reduced expectations. If Development and Building Approvals can increase fees it receives, this could offset reductions in net dollar allocations. Increase emphasis on - empowering citizen & developers, customer service. Decrease emphasis on controlling customers to comply with regulations. 					

- Increase costs for permits but allow businesses to pay longer or in installments as work is completed.
- Should be break even. Development permit area should be breakeven or better with surplus to cover costs in assessment area. The net decrease could come from - land use & planning. If we stop urban sprawl and focus on current community then this department could be more efficient & more focused. ie: 100 Neighbourhoods not 120 neighbourhoods (with new development.)
- Increase user fees with developers.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

- Charge a big fee for a development permit, if the development permit for a house in an RR-1 or R1 area is not design compatible with the existing street scape (outside view only). Far too many "in your face" designs are allowed to be built in neighbourhoods. i.e. the vertical match box on Spiller Road or the monster homes in Mt. Royal whose designs do not fit in. Since the right to ownership of property is included in the Canadian Charter of Freedoms, the owner/architect could find another site for an incompatible site. Other houses are allowed to expand their driveways behind the line already existing on the street since there are architectural controls not necessarily aesthetic ones in new communities. Why can they not exist in established communities?

LAND USE PLANNING	Increases:	Decreases:	Leave as Is:	Eliminate:	N/A:
	27	6	1	1	3

COMMENTS RELATED TO INCREASES:

- Develop policy to create complete communities. (Example - McKenzie Town, Garrison Woods) so all amenities are accessible.
- It seems strange that new communities have houses so close together. It would be better to have more "garden space" between houses.
- Plan It Calgary was a much-needed report. We need smart development like East Village that promotes inner-city redevelopment and revitalization. We need to quit spending money on suburban developments and focus on the original inner-city neighbourhoods that have been neglected. We need a smart plan for development. Example - Why does Lilydale exist adjacent to a residential zoned community?
- Transfer 100% of transportation budget to Planning. Put planning in charge of implementing Plan It with the budget power to do it.
- I am concerned with neighbourhoods having a higher density and encouraging great communities that are pedestrian friendly, etc.
- To realize a 5% increase is small in scale, so I would also consider a larger increase but am hesitant to increase taxes. I think it is important for us to focus on forward thinking planning for our urban development and land use, especially with regard to cultural, ecological and fiscal success. I think excellence in planning and integration can lead to greater efficiency and viability across most areas of civic responsibility. Thank you.
- Intensification/redevelopment of existing communities is critical under Plan It. Funding for community intensification planning needs to be increased.
- Having been part of Imagine Calgary and somewhat informed of Plan It, I really appreciate the efforts the city has made to engage citizens in land use planning. I can't emphasize enough the importance of places of historical significance Reader Rock Garden, Central Park and East Village (especially St. Patrick's Island) is fabulous. The more effort that can be put into preserving our heritage and beautifying our city the better. i.e. the improvements along memorial drive are lovely.
- To facilitate implementation of the MDP and realign the processes for the land use by-law so that local area plans (ARP) can best reflect the need for "objective-based standards" for development/re-development? LUPP needs significant increases in its budget to facilitate a 2 to 3 year process to reformulate and roll out the redesign of planning a approved process.
- I chose this because I believe planning and community living are integrated for a successful city.
- All citizens need place to live, work and play. More dollars are needed for city planning. Urban sprawl is unsustainable and creates isolated communities.
- More money for land use planning to develop more stringent development guidelines. No more sprawl!
- City expansion has generally been very poorly planned.

- LUPP (to a lesser degree) . As levies have increased on development industry & justifiably so - the turn around time on permits must decrease. Also there should be more uniform standards across community associations. More efficiencies means quicker start to build means quicker increase in tax revenues.
- 1 - To learn from other established cities say: Seattle, Vancouver. 2 - A better prediction for the next twenty years makes wiser planning.
- I strongly believe the city needs to be working more proactively with community associations to assist with life-cycling issues, which are becoming a major burden for these facility based NPOs who sit on city land and are all facing challenges in this area of need (at least older facilities are). Provincial grants are not enough to support the whole picture.
- Initiate study re: implementing the Calgary Heritage Foundation. Provide seed money for the Calgary Heritage Foundation 1/2/0 \$500K
- More substantive community planning - overhaul the bylaw to have less discretion & more objective dev. standards - follow clarion report!!
- More affordable housing. Greater focus on preserving heritage. Greater Density. More seniors housing.
- To keep the city aware of demographic trends. To inform the city of the increase in immigrants to Canada and refugees. Plan communities to facilitate engagement and participation.
- Could tax assessments be every 2 years? Land use planning: would like to see collaboration with infrastructure & info services as well as transportation and environmental management. Development has continued to sprawl, with constantly increasing need for more roads, sewer, electrical, etc. While aiming towards more density & increased use of transit has been discussed for year, this does not happen. I would like to see more \$ put into planning to develop & carry out a more sustainable growth pattern.
- Walkable communities. Planning for space for community to develop.
- The dynamics of a growing and changing city demands good management, which can only be attained when proactivity, is present. In other words, the LUPP needs more money to allow itself to gather more and relevant data in order to design a better city for us.

COMMENTS RELATED TO DECREASES:

- Land Use Planning and Policy could standardize new community plans (ASP's, etc.) and redevelopment plans for similar areas. Engage the public more to individualize them on a community-by-community basis.
- I weigh this against three dept. in one sector and perhaps there could be two sectors doing the work. In times of fiscal restraints we ask the people to do this let`s now ask the city to consider this too if we all can`t have what we want.
- Based on user fees. Developers to pay actual costs for roads, schools, etc.
- 1 - need to be more cost recovery and fee for service. 2 - land developers need to be more responsible for paying the initial infrastructure costs related to land development - roads, overpasses, sewer/water
- We have ugly subdivisions; monster homes in older established neighbourhoods. This dept. has not helped create an imaginative and beautiful city. So no more increased funds for a dept. that hasn't used them to do better.
- Unbelievable levels of bureaucracy, drowning in policy, still a killer of trees with paperwork.

COMMENTS REALTED TO STATUS QUO:

- Land Planning should reduce its budget. When they have had open houses, I see a lot spent on billboards. I also think they are there to tell us what they are going to do and not interested in changing their opinions after talking with citizens.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

- The development levy agreement. Development on the margins of the city should pay for itself - new levy agreement must address this.
- Balance smart planning implementation with needs to generate revenues.
- Allocate resources to providing online access to electronic documents of Development Permit Application and supporting plans and materials. Allocate resources to more community planning.

GENERAL COMMENTS (PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND ASSESSMENT)

Increases: 1

- To increase inner-city community planning Ensure that infrastructure in these communities are supported and developed properly with long term sustainability in mind.

Decreases: 4

- Too much administration in this Department. We don't need social media focused tools in this Department. We have many other Departments with this.
- This department needs major overhaul to be more responsive and more effective. The assessments are based on questionable information and based on unrealistic goals. How can a department be fair when it wants to expropriate houses for a fraction of the price it assessed on its own tax bill?
- Improve IT & process engineering (ie: empowerment of staff to make decisions). Should improve efficiencies & decrease costs.

Leave As Is: 3

- These above areas are important for any city to function.
- They are essential services that should not reduce budget.
- Remove Red Tape

N/A: 7

- Development process is one size fits all and way too bureaucratic. Do not listen/engage citizens throughout process. Too much red tape and paid employee hours. New development process is necessary - teach staff how to do charettes, work with communities in a much more integrative way. Assessment does a good job.
- The city needs to be better at encouraging local businesses and storefront businesses. Better/easier parking relaxation. Less red tape. More facilitation and help with applications.
- I am satisfied with the PDA department. I don't think it needs either increase or decrease.
- How can we better equip land use to allow for this development? Someone talking about electrical power transport. It's good combination between has power turbine & wind power energy. Need for both (gas & wind power). Good for us to plan wisely: when we make decision want to make an informed decision. Want to look at future trends /understand how things are going. There are NO silly ideas. More accurate predication, inline w/trends. Suggest seeing what other cities are doing & find best practices. e.g.: look at neighbours in Vancouver. We've been around Plan-it, we come out with plan & then we outgrow it - feeling cynical. Feel like we talk about it a lot but then don't follow up on the plans. We would make a huge change by getting something built together (work tog in depart) and look at combining. How do we get past special interest groups & start working together, all about compromise. Can eliminate planning but need to know better where are we going. More established community planning by ARP's are outdated and Seattle model - focus on development permit end-shift. Less silo working. Communication planning more substantive: build strong communities (trains/police); want to "not putting out fires". How much staff focused on planning new communication to balance resources. Change in organizational structure of how elect officials representatives.
- New Community Planning - Spend time & resources in existing communities to improve them - area redevelopment plans should be substantive to guide transit, trans, parks, etc. - for overall city budget.