

**Everybody's Business Phase 1**  
**Electronic Questionnaire Responses**  
**Question 8 - Information Needs**  
**Answers provided during February 18<sup>th</sup>, to March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011.**

Total Number of Opens, 1,456 (responded to the first question).

Not all respondents answered all the questions. The questionnaire page concerning the Calgary Budget Engagement Process had response numbers ranging from 459 to 754 participants. Staff rates ranged from 12 to 27 people.

Page 2 – Question 8: There were 459 responses from the general questionnaire and 12 completed by staff in a separate survey collector created and used by staff who share work stations or the same computer to allow for multiple responses from the same IP address.

**Information and facts concerning City services, the budget and budgeting process, what we have heard from other participants, notices of upcoming meetings, etc., will be shared throughout the public engagement process for Our City. Our Budget. Our Future. Please tell us what type of information and materials you need to help you better understand these important issues and support your participation in the process.**

Being open and transparent. Providing all information to the public rather than something behind closed doors.

Clear outline of budget numbers for the city and by department with some alignment with PLAN IT goals identified.

A glossary of terms.

Seriously? Who designed this survey? How would you expect to get any kind of useful response about information needed to knowledgeably consider a budget by asking Calgarians who are new to considering budgets?

More information about the changes they want to do to give my point of view, what things the city are doing or are considering making

To be informed and an open door policy if I am to be part of the process.

A good website layout with dates and agendas would suffice.

The value to the city (\$/citizen) that each program costs or gives back to citizens. A better understanding of the budgeting process (how is the budget determined). A list of what services the City of Calgary provides and how those link to the quality of life values that the citizens of Calgary have (e.g. safety, education, recreation, etc.)

I would find historical annual spending by department useful for helping determine where Calgary has historically been invested and the size of investments that have been made.

Current budget facts, summary and detail numbers. Cost per household/ and rate base impact of \$10 or \$100 million

projects.

Easy to read - bullet format. Condensed (summarized) at the beginning and background info as background.

Both written and graphic information (text and images), as well as debated subjects demonstrating all perspectives.

Clear, concise information that contains important dates and uses consistent language.

Detailed budget figures.

Matching grants, provincial & federal funding, taxation options, service fees

Provide information as to how participants can influence decisions either directly, or by understanding exactly what is required to gain influence of decisions, (i.e. petitions etc?). The primary obstacle that our community organization has run into is that there are no definitive requirements to satisfy in order to ensure support from an Alderman or from the City on any given issue. All issues seem to remain based on "selling" an idea, and then needing to constantly defend it.

I think the most important is to have access to key performance indicators (see above) and to make sure those are contextualized (compared to other cities, previous years, etc.). Otherwise those are just numbers that do not mean anything and it is very hard to make decisions based on such poor-quality information.

Unbiased reporting. That CBC clip saying that all municipalities were doing budgets and that union wages were costly was biased! How much is the union wage budget compared to the whole salary budget anyway?

Spreadsheets with detailed number breakdowns

How much money is spent on consultants when decisions could and should be made internally?

We need factual information that is timely to allow for time for feedback.

Key Strategic Planning Documents (e.g. access to stated long term, medium term & short term objectives) - This provides context for history, issues and objectives. Helps to weigh priorities. Independent research or Administrative briefing notes that might provide ideas as to best practices in other jurisdictions. Emerging issues.

Demographic/economic trends and pressures.

Budget - please provide the a) detailed / "full text" version for those already familiar and b) the "Coles notes" version for those new to the process. Help the public help administration understand that flexibility / resiliency must be built into the on-going budgeting process. I.e.) Public and civic priorities can shift and change year to year. As a city, to assume that the 10-year budget and planning cycles are set in stone is a mistake. Path-dependant thinking and decision making in budgeting and city planning is a common pitfall that increasingly is cause for unnecessary expenditures in some areas while also cause for gross under-funding in others. The public needs to be fully brought up to speed on the true costs of growth...including in Greenfield, suburban, inner city and in the established urban areas of the city. This information should include the true costs of utility servicing, road / transportation infrastructure, and other accessory development costs.

How are taxes and other revenues assigned to expenditures, and is there a rigid separation of funds? For example, are LRT revenues put into a specific fund for use by Transit only, and are those funds kept segregated by accounting only, or by deposit into separated accounts? Also, how is the Centre City Levy administered, and why are there no funds for sidewalk repair? Finally, what happened to the West End Improvement Fund?

Easy to read! Simple words! Not too much information, make it understandable to your average junior high student!

The public understanding of what is really important and how it works and not cover the actuality of what happens in there city

All of what you outlined above, or at least an abbreviated version. Give me information and facts so I can make an informed and educated decision, and provide a forum in which my voice can be heard.

Accurate and informative budget sheets, as well as a clear plan stretching into the future

Notice of meetings more than 1 to 3 days ahead of time. Online versions of what the meetings will entail.

Easy to read, plain everyday language (no jargon) (maybe grade 5-6?) if written. Radio and TV adds in a few languages even on mainstream local stations (TV and radio)

The process, timing and key decision points. How to influence, with whom and when

I would like a clear outline of the different responsibilities of the municipal government (as opposed to the provincial or federal ones). There is a brief overview on the 'our future' website but it is too brief. A similar but more detailed document would be helpful, as would a more detailed outline and timeline of the budgeting and governing process, detailing the responsibilities of our representatives. Our councilors' contact information should also be clearly posted on the city's website.

Break down of costs per capita. Throwing out estimates like "costs increasing 5%" is meaningless as the City continues to grow. I want to see costs managed on a per capita basis.

See #1 above. Need confidence that this is not just a public relations exercise to justify Nenshi jacking up taxes to force Civic Camp's social engineering on the citizens of Calgary.

Budget docs only show growth requests but do not show baseline funding and existing projects

Which groups of items tie together and require trade-offs e.g. snow removal vs. sprawling growth. Any info has to be received on a timely basis.

Emails pointing to relevant pages on the city website

The issues, the stakeholders, how much is involved

What will we be spending money on over the next 10 years, and what percentage of the total is each category. Be more detailed, for example under what budget is bike path construction?

Info graphics and breakdowns of the various aspects of the budget and its process.

City of Calgary's budget expenditures; and the programs, facilities and services

A fact sheet that lists the actual costs of each of the services that are being provided. The impacts of any decisions and trade-offs that will be made, and the constraints in which we have to work.

Describe the issues factually, the potential solutions factually, and preferred directions, i.e. how they fit in with existing city plans and policies.

All sources of city revenue and growth trending patterns; major sources of city spend and growth trending patterns

High level budget info; percentages of city spending;

Costs Timelines Alternates considered Times and locations of meetings

Information pertaining to both sides of the issues.

I think that people should be informed about the full range of services The City provides not just the traditional services. e.g. roads, parks, police, fire, etc.

Unbiased information that lays out the issues, the costs and the implications of each course of action.

High-level 'departmental' budget sheets, with deeper details available via web.

Total budget, break down distribution by department, spending spelled out for operational requirements (rent, utilities, wages, etc), discretionary budgets, etc.

Essential vs. optional city services, projected costs of city services, budgeting process and how decisions are made.

Any information is better than none, but the city needs to release more and hide less.

What are the processes - key budget issues - how the budget affects me - how I can participate

Better understanding about the role of operating and capital and clear explanations why they are not interchangeable.

Real costs of development and the offsetting revenue from those costs.

Summary document of the contentious issues. Deadlines for decision-making.

All the facts with about the proposed budget and goal, without opinions.

Don't take a lot of my precious time.

Detailed explanation and Definitions of issues or services. Costs, what the impact would be, utilization etc.

Information that is aligned within the theme areas, always and I would like to know the numbers of actual people participating in the process to determine its statistic validity. For example, with a population of 1m+ what is the statistically valid minimum required participation number to ensure that this study is valid? I would like that number shared NOW at this point in the process to help encourage participation.

The fact sheets on how council makes its decisions and what influenced a council member to either vote for or against a given issue.

Costs and benefits of services, rationale for spending, how does spending support long term sustainability

Clear breakdown of options for spending, prior to final decisions being made

I'd like to be presented with ideas and choices, and have enough information to make informed judgments.

Overview + broad financial information and options.

Some facts about what services the city of Calgary is mandated to provide and which are optional. Also some context information about things that can or cannot be done due to legislative requirements.

I would like to see all of it

Just tell me where to be and when...give me the information I need to be an informed participant.

Open communication and a balanced view on all matters - as much as possible.

What decisions need to be made? What are the choices

Budget \$ information and alternatives to consider

A high level looks at the budget. What does it mean to increase/decrease the property tax rate? What is the impact?

I really appreciated the video of the Mayor describing the reasons the airport tunnel was needed. This is the first time I had understood that issue and why it was important - more of these would be very effective.

I need the high level information about what City services will be offered, the costs, and participants think are the priorities.

Summary of key decisions and next action points

Background, scope, objectives, deliverables, results, effective use of funds (accountability).

Charts, graphs, visuals, some context about infrastructure/ vs. program plans/costs.

If you have not been involved in this process, most people wouldn't know where to start. This is a very complex issue.

Diagrams (e.g. pie charts) explaining resources inputs to the budget; diagrams (e.g. bar charts) showing relative distribution of budget over the past 10 years; Summary of infrastructure condition; summary of environmental impact of City operations; detailed AGENDA for meetings provided minimum of one-week in advance

Unsure

What projects are already approved in current budgets?

Showing simplified categorized budget expenditures by percent of total (or similar)

Know what role I am playing and where my feedback will be going and how it will be used. This information must be simple however - which is going to be very difficult considering the complexity of City services and budgets.

An outline of the big picture done in simple terms with basic questions and answers

Things are O.K. as is.

A better understanding of what each business unit does, where it spends its money, whether or not it makes money, etc.

Uncertain. Would depend upon the area that was being discussed

Not sure

I would like to know about decisions made and what engagement was considered. I trust that the professionals employed by the City are able to provide well-researched and accurate information and recommendations for Council to make decisions, while considering the needs and voices of the community.

Easy to follow, less politically based, more need based information in an easy to read format like an e newsletter that can be attached to the website and various articles online.

Just give us everything and we'll sift through it.

Background information on issue at hand

Executive summary (1 pager) with key messaging. Include an action item (for response/and or open-ended feedback line.

Updates to discussions and plans are communicated on time.

All information should be easy to understand. Presently it is very difficult for citizens to understand the budget and budgeting process.

City's costs and expenses

How read budget info how the city prioritizes who gets services like snow clearing, rinks, etc why do things like the peace bridge and the airport tunnel cost so much what do my taxes really support - admin salaries or what

Historical background, including facts and figures. The way forward, the reasons why and a breakdown of cost, implications for the future growth of Calgary

Major discussion items as seen by Council, background on decision making

Not sure

What services do people want us to provide? And what are they willing to pay? Do they hate unions?

What are all the services that The City offers? What are the department names? What kind of budget does each department have? What is the core business of each department? How much is spent on consultants? What must be delivered as a service to citizens? What are the "nice to haves"?

Summarized materials in a fact sheet format should do. Better to keep the information as simple as possible.

Details about the budgeting process and what is entailed in making the decisions and how budgeting conclusions are drawn.

E-mail fact sheet about the process now, flowchart or other graphic. Where in the process the engagement fits and the timelines surrounding the process.

How about a dashboard of "hot items" under discussion, with data including count of interest (e.g., participants, tweets, blog posts). This would foster more engagement on controversial items, providing for a more informed decision process.

Not wordy, simple to understand, straight to the point - summaries of issues - with links that allow me to choose and lead me to more detailed information of issues that are important to me.

Unbiased backgrounders & fact sheets, better-informed media, and full disclosure.

Easy to read and understand summaries

- An overview of the numbers (and % of total budget) for each. - Some direction on what level of feedback you would like from me. I can give my preferences and I rely on The City to be the experts with regard to city business.

I need information that is unvarnished. I've found that too many special interest agendas are tainting the process through their lobbying of aldermen who pressure staff into making various recommendations and not allowing other pieces of information to come to light until well after the fact.

Laymen information to begin with, then an option to look further with links and search options. Too much information at first loses most people.

Community newsletters sent out more regularly that encourage the process. In the news, (TV) and in newspapers.

I'd like to see upcoming meetings, information about issues raised, resolutions to issues raised, and a chance to provide real comments. I'd like an email newsletter - but I also think putting the information on the website is a good idea along with radio ads telling people when information has been updated.

Notification of new information

Likely impacts of proposed action and impact if nothing done; what other progressive municipalities are doing on that area; see answer to question 1 above

Breakdown of budgets to understand what is being spent where.

Where money goes now. What are the trade-offs we need to consider? What are council's priorities?

I need to know what they are about, when they are happening, and where they are happening. I always seem to find out about these things on the news as they are happening or after they happened.

What are the processes now? What do we want them to be? What are the options available to get there and the pro's and con's of each. Keep it simple and use plain language.

Is the average person expected to understand the budgeting process? It seems like a pretty complicated thing. If you think it's important I know what other participants are saying, then their comments should be posted online where I

can read them at any time. Notices of upcoming meetings are scheduled in two ways in my life, outlook meeting invites or facebook events.

To me the information I would need is knowing the areas where my input can actually affect the matter. Knowing that I have both pros and cons laid out for me for the decisions that need to be made, I need to know that my opinion counts for something.

The highlights- key decisions made, or input being solicited from the public to make these important decisions.

Whitepapers and benchmarking studies; statistical data

Don't know never having been given the opportunity to participate in the budgeting process. Is this not what the process has to figure out in order to achieve its ends?

See above regarding content. Provide spreadsheets/PowerPoint materials similar to the 2010 budget process summary to give an overview of budget issues considered and link to additional information for each line item.

I would keep up to date with materials as they are presented back to us...notes from meetings, briefing notes, background material etc.

Fact sheets on website or electronic newsletter

Information on the types of services provided, to whom, to what end and at what cost

Facts, that we can share and use to combat rumors in media.

I am not sure at this point.

High-level summary is fine, also timelines and goals.

I need to understand what impact results from various City services and programs.

As mentioned above Q1 re: a summary; key input dates with enough lead time to provide input; make it easy to provide input; key Council decision dates and follow-up on what was decided; process updates/milestones reached and missed.

I think the specific information needs to be related back to big picture information so participants can see the trade offs being made.

Newsletters, media articles/stories

I need to be informed - educated on this.

What the bottom line is

What programs/services is being considered to be cut or extended or introduced in the future.

I would like to know topics of upcoming meetings, stakeholder engagements, etc. If I have notice that there is an engagement happening near me, I will be likely to attend.

More info surrounding BU's that I am not a part of, other services and programs and budgeting priorities than that of my own BU.

The facts, what the budget is and how people see it being used. How City services are paid for.

What questions are being asked and are open for input. What level of input is City Council asking for. Is this strictly listen and learn and more of a pretend engagement. Or are their opportunities to consult and then show citizens where feedback was used to help guide a decision?! Want to see parameter and information laid out in black and white and not spin doctored and obscured with lots of great sounding words.

General summaries, in plain language, from an unbiased source that clearly outlines both sides of a perspective.

Background information, facts and overviews that are easy to understand and don't contain an overwhelming amount of information. It would be ideal to subscribe to an e-newsletter that features this information and updates, rather than having to actively visit a website or blog.

What items within the budget are up for consideration (i.e. what areas do you want feedback on - every program, discretionary spending)? Clear idea of process from public input to presentation to Council.

Web page/site dedicated to the process.

What you have described will be a good start

Necessity, cost projection - impact if not approved, cost if delayed, etc..

I want information that is based on the reality of the process that is used by Administration - not something that is idealistic and will waste resources. I would like background information; schedule of decisions and process to make decisions on the budget; steps to finalize; and accountability mechanisms.

FAQ's, or bullet points of the status and what's going on.

I would like to see this... Define the issue / problem. Research the problem/issue. Brainstorm for potential solutions. Prototype / pilot the solution(s). Review the objective(s) and select the most powerful ideas / solutions. Implement the solution(s). Learn / measure. Conduct assessment. Start over again... (If any additional issues need to be fixed after assessment)

Keep it simple. What are the issues? What are the pros and cons. Where are we in the process?

It needs to be made clear what the full cost of the services is, and what the sources of revenue for that service are. People need to realize that if they demand a certain service, it will cost them either through higher taxes, rates or user fees as an example. They need to see the full impact of what they are asking.

A clear breakdown of what each division/ business unit/ department does in the City and how the City is structured. Unless the public understands what types of services and programs are offered by the City I don't believe we can make informed decisions about what areas to focus on.

How can I answer this question without knowing what the content will be? Shouldn't the format be linked to the content to some degree? This question is a great example of how city processes can be such a barrier -- such a frustration -- for anyone trying to get a bit of information.

Starting with an overview of city services would be good - understanding the organization and all that it has to do. Then looking at the budget would be better.

Don't Know

I think the biggest break down is not taking ownership to seek out the little of information that is available through various media yet having transparent information is important on all levels.

Need to understand how decisions are really made.

I would like information on all large city contracts with information about the process of how they were given to specific companies

A breakdown of the current budget.

The information and the plan and how you will manage the money, also a plan if unforeseen issues arise such as going over budget.



-Brochures -Documents -Legal agreements -Financial accounting -Terms of Reference

I am confident the administration is best informed and educated to make the decision that is best for the City.

Better website allowing me to express what I think should be on their agenda (Soccer facilities)

Fact sheets. Analysis of key choices.

Emails and links are sufficient, sometimes phone call-outs, if something is more immediate

Issues being studied. Costs. Cash flows.

Commonly brought up issues through the process, as well as priorities as identified by the City

As I stated earlier, comparison analysis of what is done in other Cdn cities? We can cherry pick the best programs from others if need be.

I would say more newsletters delivered via e-mail or post so that more people can get involved and participate.

Enough notice so that one could arrange their lives to attend these things.

I would like all bus units to present zero based budgets and demonstrate realistic reductions to obtain this.

Traditionally bus units will offer up essential business that they know council wouldn't cut (scare tactics). Instead council needs to look at each bus unit budget and determine what non-essential items should be cut. If the city did this exercise for a three-year period, then this would bring the over all city budget down to what is essential businesses (see my comment in item 2). This should leave the city with room to add realistic percent to tax increases (4%) with 2% going to support budget and 2% towards infrastructure gap.

I believe I answered this question already in the previous comments.

Meeting schedules and agendas. Emailed backgrounders and any up-to-date or changed information that would be pertinent. A communication system that works both ways would be nice (it is presently almost impossible to contact ward alderman through the system provided by the city). Enough time between information received and meeting dates to allow for research and preparation by the participants (I'm not nicknamed "Mr. Process" for nothing).

I would like each department in the city to compare their service delivery and budget with 2-3 comparable cities in Canada

Better question, what information is available? Who structures these questions anyways?

Summary of departmental priorities Summary of planned capital expenditures

See #1 above.

Relevant information pertaining to Ward 11.

E-mail

Clear, concise information that gives the highlights of the issues, on both sides, and also links to further information if required or interested.

The methods listed above, mostly verbal but visual as well, (graphs, etc.) seem to be most effective for me.

The City's planning and budgeting process is a complex subject and should be undertaken by people dealing with it on a full time basis, and not by educated to semi-educated amateurs. The City should report audit results on a regular basis to enable people understanding the processes, and listen and act on shortcomings identified in the audits.

See a list of the issues and how they are then categorized in the budgetary process. Open access to information, such as past financial statements, through your website.

A better description of how the administration and council choose one project over another and more concrete long term indications of when plans will be considered in the future (in particular, the SE LRT which seems to have been pushed off till "later" by a series of councils now).

Please use twitter and account for each phase of the process publicly

-Advance notice of meetings, agendas of same. -Commitments that are in place that can not be changed/delayed (and why). -End of life expectations of infrastructure. -Outsourcing opportunities/options. -The facts on each program.

Clear understanding of the different budget areas/buckets that need to be covered off and what area falls into what bucket.

Details as described above. We need to look at revenue and not concentrate on spending. This is setting us up for massive taxation.

An electronic notification by email: 1) who is proposing things 2) what is being considered 3) when the deadlines are 4) where can I give my input (online preferably)

Continue to promote the status of each stage and which stage we are in. If not by chance, I would not have learned of this blog/survey, so continue to promote and let citizens know how and where to participate.

How about something that "normal" people can actually understand. So much babble and very little meat.

My response to questions 1 and 2 outline the type of information I need to better understand and comment on the process. In essence, FACTS.

Facts and concise content regarding current state and plans to change - specifics

All of the above: the budget and process, notice of meetings and their agendas, what programs and ideas are on the table.

Address issues similar to the way the Canadian Federation for Independent Business (CFIB) does. Ask a question, give arguments for and against, and tabulate results.

Budget overviews; accurate, honest newspaper reporting; up-dates by electronic newsletter.

What are the accurate costs? What can we afford on our revenue base. What is actually essential and why. Does the majority support it. How accurate are the long-range growth projections and budget planning.

The simple facts, timelines and priorities.

Fact sheets, high-level summary information, and explanations of why particular decisions are made, using "push-based" electronic communications (e.g. e-mail, Twitter).

I think it is always beneficial to have people understand the process. Many do not know how the process works, when it starts, who's involved, or even what it's objectives are. Once they understand the process and expected outcome, then can determine what information they themselves are missing and ask for it.

Financial documents that state what the proposed budgets are for each department, the % increase or decrease from last year, the level of service to justify the increase or decrease.

See question 1

Fact sheets

Again, past balance sheets, simple fact sheet about the budget process

Access online to budget background so I can dig in where I need to

Just the facts about these subjects without any 'interpretation' from your offices.

Outlines of what potential budgets might look like and what proposals there are for different uses of funds. Having both simple allocation figures and access to more complex and detailed breakdown of the figures.

Please clearly state when public opinion is being sought on an issue/decision and the process to be followed for input to be given.

Facts and figures.

The only way to share information and get feedback is by keeping it simple. Too many issues in too short a period will just confuse people. Dumb it down to one thing at a time.

A breakdown of past expenditures and some evaluation of whether these expenditures are meeting people's needs.

See earlier list -Graphs and summaries. -Proposals/options surrounding an issue, along with background info and possible consequences so that they can be properly weighted. -The process needs to be transparent, and legitimate concerns need to be addressed even though they may go against what may be perceived as a "hidden agenda".

I'd like to see more comparisons with other cities (Edmonton, Vancouver, Toronto, Denver) and also a better explanation of where my property tax dollars go (e.g., how much to the province and what they use the money)

The same information the Mayor and members of Council need; what is needed, why, importance of the issue, estimated cost, alternatives, impacts (both positive and negative) on users, community etc.

Anything visual media...newspaper (but not marketing "hype"), TV, internet/computer.

Challenges - need to balance a budget, critical must haves like legislated requirements, safety in our infrastructure.

Understanding the need to maintain infrastructure and the true cost of that. Everyone is up in arms about a 25M-foot bridge but they need to understand that is what it costs to keep a city going. Promote Calgary - it is fantastic, safe, and vibrant - there is a cost to that. Oh and we have some of the lowest taxes in north America. Raise taxes!

Newspaper, Television news, e-mail, website

A list of the "sticking points" in the issues. I.e. what are the key points of argument, or what is the "opinion slider" of the issue - what is the key argument from each side of the issue.

Per \$ or per \$100 breakdown of where city revenues go. For example, for every \$100 paid in taxes, how much goes to fire dept. vs. recreation. Also a similar picture/ chart for operating vs. capital projects

- Tell me what people are saying. Summarize it into short, easy to read articles, one pages, and give me links to more. But don't tell me in just English or just in written form. Tell people orally, in Somali, Cantonese, and in Saddle Ridge, Taravista, and Albert Park. Our city is being run by a clique of upper-class chattering classes who think everyone's white and lives in the inner city. - Put out some interactive games (e.g., Durham NC playspent.org or NYT federal deficit choices). Let people make choices interactively, but make them realistic (e.g., cut funding to Transit by 15000 hours or cut funding to Fire by 2 fire halls on a rotating basis). - Give us a schedule of meetings right up front. Many of us are busy, and we have to plan our days and evenings and weekends around this stuff. - Make sure that our elected officials and the senior city staff is there. Don't send constituency assistants or planners. Send the people that actually make the decisions.

City reports to standing policy are made available to public more than two days before committee as it does not allow the community sufficient time to organize and present. Ways for community persons to present to council outside of core work hours.

Same answers as #1 I think

Knowing which departments get what in budget and knowing which departments go over budget and why. I am a big fan of transparency, especially now! Even though it's not nice to throw people under the bus, if people are not doing what is in the public's best interests they should be fired. No questions asked.

A clear, high-level breakdown of annual spending allocation to see which areas money is being spent. Also, if an area is generating revenue (not through taxes), a second breakdown, net of revenue should be shown. This way taxpayer can see net spending from taxes. Finally, a percentage breakdown by community of both tax revenue and spending would be very useful.

City planning info. Environmental info. - developments and discussions on the river valleys, rivers and creeks, parks and recreation decisions, potential depletion of greenspaces, actions concerning wildlife in the City.

Information should be clear on the top page and then the details to follow if needed

A few pages of hard facts and a survey works well for me, but this certainly isn't the best solution for everyone. The more venues/vehicles are available to engage and offer feedback, the better.

As noted in question 1 above.

Total budget dollars broken down by expense items sufficient to distinguish between the must have (police, fire, transit, sewer, water, library, etc.) and the want (recreation, fine arts, etc.).

The actual budget document

Detailed funding, project listings and budget information.

IDK

What are the changes happening as far as social, demographic and economic issues.

Information presented in 2 levels of detail is ideal. First a summary of the information and then a detailed report.

How the services/level of services that Calgary provides compare to those provided in other cities. The cost/benefits of various services. How our property tax levels compared to other cities (they are relatively low).

All facts & figures - as much information as possible

Please see my answer to question #1. And I want to be able to participate in sustained online discussions, debates, brainstorming with other informed and passionate citizens. [Please note that you may have an issue with the way Question #6 choices are presented. I believe "Informed" (third button from left) - which is what I answered - should be a higher ranking than "Somewhat Informed" (second button from left.)

Concise summaries

What's the issue? What are some solutions/ suggestions, cost and Timeline?

Topics coverage's, thoughts, questions, concerns, frequently asked questions of sorts.

Fact Sheet is probably best. List key issues. Provide brief background (if the issues has 2 sides, present both). Provide sources for additional information. A forum such as a blog or facebook that allows for comments which can then be reviewed by others is also a good way to become informed and generate new ideas.

I'm a data analyst, so something I can directly manipulate/search summarize would be nice. For the general public, think less in terms of departments and more about service categories. Something like "bike paths" is not always clear what department to look for spend under for example.

Point form lists, visuals

Same as before, background on opposing points of view and implications

Updates on what participants are saying where you're at in the decision-making process what are the important issues being identified are there new issues arising out of the public consultation process

Past years actuals and budgets by department.

Facts surrounding an issue.

What criteria does City apply on decision making for big projects (i.e. bridges, etc)?

Most interested in receiving information about surveys.

See previous question

Place, time and way to be a participant with out actually attending the meeting.

Something that clearly outlines the plans and the proposed funding.

Situational Analysis Information that provides a better understanding of the current situation. Past experiences.

Success stories.

I think social media and relaying info through community groups would be most beneficial and wouldn't cost very much to do it.

What tough budget decisions have been made in the past? What are the basic non-negotiable items (i.e. minimum we need for police, etc.)? What has been cut from and added to the budget in the last five years and why those decisions were made. What other organizations/governments does the City work with to provide services and in what way (i.e. what's the provincial government's role?).

I like to hear the perspective of the people working within the specific City department; they have information and insights I wouldn't otherwise have access to. Their ideas and perspectives could easily be shared with the public through an e-newsletter or on a web site.

The services the city provides and limitations/restrictions on the services the city can provide. Where the money comes from, restrictions on how the city can raise money. Comparison between Calgary's services and similar cities (population, size, etc.) The types of services others are looking for.

Ongoing commitments, priorities, staffing costs, emerging issues that impact costs, status of infrastructure

Past information on Budget allocations; funding schedules from provincial government and long-term goals for budgets.

Honest information.

Major budget categories and explanations of where the funding goes, and impacts to the community of raising or lowering funding to those areas.

How much of the taxes are we left with after they are distributed to the province? New homes = more taxes??

Context! What is the impact of certain decisions over others? I am sick of people being all upset about rather piddle increases to taxes (say under \$100 a year), when the impact of debt and rising costs will have a huge negative impact on our community. Also, I would like to know more about the city's plans for dealing with the future as we move forward past peak oil. Realistically, what are we going to do NOW when there is a chance to prepare that will make our city more viable in the face of soaring energy costs or wild variations in energy costs?

We need the facts on fact sheets widely available to all citizens, electronic and paper newsletters

## Costs and alternatives

I understand the facts; just want to ensure they are valid.

Notices about options for input, questions that are being considered, etc. are important. What you have heard from other participants is less important. What we can do about certain issues (the available options) is very important.

## Disclosure of interest and lobby groups

Summary of the key areas being debated vs. what are 'fixed' costs/ necessary services

Up to date and detailed website and email messages.

I think more transparency about where money goes for certain programs, specifically Transit, are in order. I'm all for spending, but I think it's important to know where we can cut to keep it lean to either improve quality or not limit existing quality of services.

If all information was available to me through the above suggested sources and an article from that source called for action on my part, I would first try to contact my alderman

Whatever is available, written in a clear and concise manner

## Website

As above, clear, straightforward information. Don't hide it, and if it is summarized, put the original information somewhere easy to find. Oh, and no more ugly red bridges.

I'd like to see a list of competing capital projects with costs so I could have input into the priorities.

Information about how the budget process currently works as well as what the vision 3, 5, 10, 20 years out for our City. I'd also like to know how individual departments success is measured when compared to the City's overall mission and vision for the future. How does each individual employee from each department measure their success on the job and how does their work contribute to the organizational goals?

Information on what is required from the public to assist aldermen and the mayor to make decisions that accurately reflect the values of Calgarians.

Costs; dependencies; trade-offs; timetable.

Focused stakeholders or fringe groups will dominate meetings. Unfortunately this leaves individuals with hoping that common sense will prevail

Open communication of the facts and statistics (data) of the responses that have been received from Calgarians regarding the different initiatives.

See question 1.

## E-mail outlining issues with facts

I would like details of the ongoing process; any issues up for debate, etc. I worry that while input is great, projects can stall if the process is not driven by a strong facilitator

What the service is, what is in place now, why there is a concern and why there is a need for other/alternate/changed services, what the benefit is for the city?

Various views of the communities affected by decisions, and the counsel's responses or insights into their reasoning.

I'd like data that the city uses to make the decisions to be open and shared wherever possible (like via Google Fusion Tables, or other accessibly, machine readable methods) so that we can do our own analysis and visualization.

## Website

Isn't this much the same as question 1?

Have the information on the web, organized in a fashion that is accessible to web search services. Maintain blogs with RSS feeds that discuss important events and deadlines.

Access to the data in a use-able format. Think "Hans Rosling" style data availability, interpretation and presentation. Collect data, generate information, structure as knowledge and apply with wisdom.

How the budget is developed. What levels of service we pay for.

Current topics being discussed, costs, and alternatives

Contact and proof that the city has plans to actually act on what the public wants.

Keep it short and simple. Maybe an insert in Avenue magazine would be a nice idea? If there is information that I need to understand and review I prefer printed. If its something I can read, vote, and move on from - short blogs or tweets are just fine.

The budget, fixed costs, and potential projects the city is considering. Also welcome the opportunity to present potential projects not yet considered.

As above - process, dates, times, email communications

Overview of each issue, with links to more detailed information - in some cases a breakdown of costs - who are the most active people and groups on each specific issue

Where funds have been allocated historically and why; the rationale - if any - provided for why new funds are being allocated where they are; any information, if relevant, about a citywide deficit.

I currently have no information. Anything is better than nothing.

Infrastructure expansion, upgrade, and replacement time lines. Information about Technological improvements, which reduce operating, costs (i.e. LED traffic lights, more efficient street and facility lighting). Information about higher productivity labor procedures and organizational improvements.

What services does the City provide? What are costs of providing these services? Should the City be providing existing services? Implications of providing/not providing these services.

FAQ type of document

Information and facts, summaries of discussions, number of participants at each venue, demographics of respondents, past work/reports done by the City on issues identified by engagement process participants. Times/schedules of events and opportunities for engagement. How to engage our friends and family. Venue information/details...transit available etc.

Informed public about upcoming important issues of decisions or choices or options before table issues to meeting process.

Any all issues pertaining to safety, crime, improved lighting, improved pedestrian areas, and ways to create sense of safe and peaceful community. This also includes stronger police presence, better infrastructure, and solutions to traffic and transports

Most importantly is to present BOTH sides of an issue i.e. fluoridation certainly reasons for both decisions, but given all the info that is available citizens can make informed choices

Fact sheets about the budget; panel discussions

Notice of meeting or other engagement has often been short and my schedule is booked more than a month out so I miss opportunities

Most important issue is that you keep us informed,

I think perspective is important. I think this could be achieved by being able to compare the budget's or some expenses in particular from different cities and look at historical spending in the city in relation to changing city assets (i.e. road expenses vs. changes in km of road in the city). I think it is also useful to have information that articulates projected impacts of expenses. For instance, I supported the city's move to provide \$25 million to the Cantos National Music Centre (NMC). I supported this because I like to attend live music shows sometimes, I think there is a shortage of cultural spaces in the city, and I am of the opinion as a Development Economist that this \$25 million (or it could have been more even) is an investment in the city that will make the economy more robust as well, which has implications for the tax payer in the city.

Concise, and easy to access portals such as those suggested above.

I need clear and accessible access to information regarding issues and my ability to participate in the process. If it is easy I, and many others! Will be more likely to provide input.

I'd like to see some more details behind budget estimates and where they came from.

Newsletters...

Upcoming meetings need to be advertised well in advance. We need all the information you and developers are sharing. Do you know how difficult it is to get development plans when your Association doesn't want you to know. We have spent thousands of dollars out of our own pockets and through donations (as have other areas -Valley Ridge e.g.) disseminating information and working on surveys, promised by the city but never done before the projects start. This is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY. That is why you are elected. Several of us have worked on provincial and municipal boards and we were there to serve not employ just our opinion. Neither did we try and divert attention like the latest ones such as lights out on the towers, fluoride (where was the public input, where was the plebiscite to change what had already been decided by plebiscite by residents earlier?) etc.

Notice in advance (via the communication tools above) two weeks in advance with a summary of the topics.

Straight information - not polished by Administration for the use of the citizens. Enough information on major budget items to be able to intelligently chose between options. Enough detail to allow for other ways of provides a service to be brought forward. Information to better understand how much Administration is "protecting" positions, projects and jobs so that again other options can be looked at.

List of issues Pros and Cons from City management perspective

N/a

Description of issues, background information and possible solutions.

Better understanding of the costs involved in "saving money". There is often a high cost to doing nothing. Either that or spend too much time/effort on smaller items, like council trying to find another .02% savings ...

What are the current budgets for various services and departments? What have some historical challenges been for each service/department and how were they dealt with? What is the current condition of this department/service, short term and long-term projected needs/ challenges/goals?

Concise information on how the budget is actually going to impact me and my life, i.e. what this \*means\* is that the



LRT cars maintenance will be put on the back burner, or the new expected completion date for the West LRT extension is 2020, or street parking by-laws will be more heavily enforced - both the good and bad consequences of budgeting in a certain way.

Need to know basics or where, when and why. Provide background material in advance of meetings in order to obtain meaningful feedback. Don't provide information only at the meeting, give people time to digest before asking them for feedback.

Perhaps the council could divide issues into 12 digestible monthly topics to be debated in the media and info on feedback gathered to help guide budgeting process - an evergreen budget discussion. The first few would be the most "visionary" topics and these could dive into the details as the city becomes used to debating topics and finding resolutions...

I do not feel that I have much thought to answer this question

Direct information to households - perhaps include a fact sheet with our utility bills that tells us where to find more information or get involved.

I need to know what options are being considered, along with the advantages and challenges with each one. Essentially a SWOT analysis would be useful. Backgrounders on the problem that is being worked to address would also be beneficial, as often the historical knowledge on a given situation is not available...

Cost, importance, value, usefulness, life cycle costs.

Clear statement of plans.

See first answer, a prioritized list, and a pro and con list.

I would like to see full disclosure where possible without breaking confidentiality. Give me enough info to do my own analysis.

Agenda of what is being discussed

Don't know. Any media access.

Daycare. Transportation

What types of meetings, who can/should participate, date and time. Relevant information pertaining to the discussion - executive summary.

Improvements to web site would be great as it's not always the easiest to follow and our community newsletter does not include community-related items, just things directly affecting the building and its services. If there were a place on the City web site that lists all the current issues from top level (City Hall, or even higher re: City/Provincial items) down to community level, with complete details that would really help.

As above

What are the cities short and long term goals/objectives for things such as sports facilities?

I need to know time lines and the key issue being addressed at the time so that I can decide whether it is of interest to me and whether I have something to contribute.

Mailed or emailed information

Important topics discussed at council meetings. Budget hearings for each department.

A break down of how the budget is currently spent and what services the budget supports

I have called the 311 City Line to obtain information on how we could make our Marda Loop Meet & Greet event on Monday, March 21st another occasion for public engagement so that each individual could complete a feedback form that The City would provide us for the +-35 attendees that we anticipate will attend. I am waiting to hear back from your offices and a form could be sent to [bgeronazzo@shaw.ca](mailto:bgeronazzo@shaw.ca)

Being provided with the \$\$ figures of all the perks given per department

How the process works, when issues will be discussed, what the priorities are and what will happen to those not on the priority list

Priorities to choose from and objective facts on these priorities

Show the historical budgets. Compare our spending & service levels to other cities. Explain the link between spending rate & service levels in different areas.

Handouts, summaries of what has already occurred or feedback gathered.

Fact sheet mail outs with timely links to websites for more details

I am not personally interested in participating so I can't answer this question.

Mandates of departments and budgets and what the line items are actually for. What has been the performance of that department in the area of the line item in the past?

Those listed above

Factual and complete information on issues by electronic newsletter and website.

Clear future plans, design intent

I would like to know what the social return on investment is for various programs and services the City offers.

What the feedback has been. How the budget process works. How our input will be used.

Budget fact sheet, identification of key areas for growth/cuts

The mail outs, etc. for specific open houses are extremely vague and often state to call 311 with no direction on what information to relay to 311 operators

As stated previously

The above

Brief summary explaining how services inter-relate with each other, and what the implications would be of altering or discontinuing certain services.

Jargon-free, succinct information. Tables and graphs are helpful in describing budget breakdowns. Historical trends of costs of services provided cross-tabbed against population. Historical trends for capital spending by department, cross-tabbed against population. Explanation of tax-supported services vs. non tax-supported.

An honest presentation of the facts.

Fact sheets; summary of deliberations and decisions as well as votes of council members

Not sure.

Information not very technical, easy to understand for the public in general

A true understanding of how many departments there are - how many managers there are in each department versus operational front line staff and how many layers within the hierarchy. An understanding of how many levels of

administration, committee and council decisions must go through before approval and the time and cost associated with this hierarchical system. What services The City provides. Life cycle costs of the services provided. What total value these actually provide or could provide i.e. the environmental and social value of these services, not just what they cost in dollar figures. The life cycle cost of sprawl versus good planning (including the environmental and social costs of the build and life cycle and also the costs of completing each area structure plan and review of outline plan and development permit). An understanding of the structures/methodologies/ processes used in decision making - is there a coordinated approach/methodology based upon imagine Calgary and sustainability for all departments - is this based upon global best practice?

I think for the average citizen that this task is too big.... I think macro themes with materials available based on topic (which is easy to find) would suffice.

Who is compiling the material and how will it ultimately be used?

Understanding of how budget is allocated. Is it one big pot of money?

As mentioned in question 1: Clear and concise communications of what is going on and indication of significant project dependencies that impact service delivery.

I would like specific information on what how you plan to: a) incorporate these comments and give them weight b) understand that for many staff, we are unable to publically say these things (i.e. MBA funding above) given the sensitive nature and unpopularity. Allow the employees a confidential method (such as the survey) to continue to offer feedback. c) Get results. It's not enough to talk about these things; you have to achieve results and cost savings.

I prefer to digest information before commenting, so the ability to ask questions or get clarifications after information is released - the website is good, but I would prefer to send my questions and have the answers appear in a FAQ. I will not use social media. I need solid factual information - how much, why, what is the benefit for today, does it address today's issues or is it addressing a future plan. For instance - attracting big business to Calgary is not of high importance to me, but allowing small businesses to grow

Who much do various activities cost? What impact will adding an activity have on the tax rate?

Simple language and basic layouts, if something is for the future better explain why it is so important to spend the money now

As well as what the pinch-points are today, what are the areas of shortfall going to be in 3 years, 5 years, and 10 years?

Access to more detail on what impact the different departments make (not just police and fire propaganda)

Same as above- always within context

Fact sheet continually being updated... via website?

Really not sure - I'm not interested in detailed line-by-line expenditures

Costs of the suburbs. How much are taxpayers subsidizing? What economic incentives are we investigating to encourage changes in people's choices. How do our budget decisions support Plan it Calgary.

Website

Timely postings of the meeting places - so we can plan well in advance to be at the meetings - we have busy lives and scheduling can get hectic

A full disclosure of the demographics that have been engaged and how marginalized populations have been included. Acknowledgement that many citizens are not familiar with many of the services provided by the city so are not in a good position to comment. This could end up being a popularity or 'name' recognition contest.

It would be good to know what the unintended consequences could be if City services that are not well known to the majority of citizens are cut. For example, I do not directly use any of the services of CNS, so it might seem like an area that would be easy to reduce. But I don't have a clear understanding of the implications if an area like that were cut or reduced. This could apply to any service that isn't front-line, visible and aimed at the majority of citizens.

Understanding of how the issues are presented to the public, background information, results and context of the discussion (i.e. any opportunity to identify characteristics of the responders - City staff, seniors, families, income level). Will be difficult for Citizens to engage in meaningful dialogue about all City services -- need a mechanism to filter out voice of special interest groups and guide the discussion.

Key citizen priority areas and concerns

As per #1

As above

Publication of all interest groups invited. Publication of all interest groups included. Publication of all interest groups excluded.

Impacts to cost of projects if delayed and cost benefit analysis of the project.

How much money is needed to keep the existing city infrastructure in the same shape it is in right now? And how does that compare to all the rest of the infrastructure everyone seems to be falling over themselves with eagerness to build?

What information has been collected to date, decision deadlines for Council. More information on budget spending

Show me some previous years breakdown of past budgets, and where the money was actually spent.

Understanding the business process it self. How many levels of approvals, all of the stakeholders involved, timelines. Both operating and capital budgets... and reserve funds available within each business unit.

Facts

An easy and quick way to get information, and a contact for questions if I don't understand something

I like the use of brochures/fact sheets that get right to the point. I would like the guesswork taken out. If I know upfront how this impacts me and what is needed from me I am more likely to buy-in faster and get involved quicker.

Information about the process and how decisions are made. Information on how budgets are linked to programs/projects.

Easy to understand materials explaining all City services that are being delivered and how those services are paid for now (e.g. tax supported vs. user fees)

Fact sheets would be helpful and quick to review

Plain language information

I need clear information not just on what Departments exist but what end use services they actually provide to citizens. Also which services are able to leverage external dollars.

Information on cost of service delivery.

This is too complex a project to really be able to equip folks with the tools to better understand the issues, etc.

Not a sales pitch. Intelligent debate as to the pros and cons is essential. Comparisons to past expenditures and programs are essential for context too.

Concise, simple summary with opportunities/resources for more engagement/information

I think there should be a reason to why something should be done and where the money would be coming from. Therefore it would give us an idea of what might be chopped or unfunded in order to complete a project. Like that Peace Bridge, ya it may be nice, but was it really necessary? NO

Timely updates on what is happening, when and where

Most people are busy. That is why we elect representatives to educate themselves on these issues. I feel this whole survey runs the risk of being hijacked by special interest groups that have more time to attend these survey events. The only time I will have will be to read the occasional newspaper or internet provider news.

Documenting it on website

Simple breakdown of budget, and if possible brief explanations

Newsletters

Very to the point emails or newsletters.

Notification of deadlines and meetings

What the consequences are if something isn't funded - and realistically, not based in scare and blame tactics

Budget, items on the list and future plans

What priority in your eyes.

Spending by sport on a capital and operating basis annually, by season too. How much P3 money is available so organizations can become part of the solution. Participant numbers by sport

Participant survey statistical results, would like to hear about innovative delivery methods and costs of services by category

All of the above

Short, to the point information that keeps us informed and provides access to more detailed information if we wish to know more.

E-mails, tweets with links to blogs, mobile alerts

I like to see actual plans of proposals and I need to know who is impacted by the process.

A FAQ section listing All City services to citizens, business and interest groups. Same for provincial and federal levels

A pyramid that allows me to dig down from highlights to details.

Fact sheets timetables budget spreadsheets

Something that doesn't cost \$2 Million

Accessibility to information that is detailed and fully transparent and easy for the general public to understand VIA the internet and the news (TV). Access to polls to vote online about issues

News e-letter, community newsletters

A simple electronic and hard copy newsletter covering the big ticket items in clear language and costed correctly. Simple revenue breakdowns in most important categories.

See my comments re detail. I want to know exactly where my money is going and not lump sums that muddy the picture. I want more accountability from city staff as well as elected officials. I want to see more productivity where

everyone works smarter, not necessarily harder. Less bureaucracy and more "measure twice, cut once attitude".  
Modern practices - as an example, why does the City not accept Visa/MasterCard for utility payments via phone?

Services delivered by each department and the funding required to meet certain benchmarks.

Balance sheets, utilization rates

Wow I taught we already elected this mayor, what all the propagandas???

Getting more attention through FaceBook ads.

Being a layman in reading and understanding budget spreadsheets, a good description of what is being said in these communications.

Description of City's existing projects and services

Ranking in dollars between soccer, hockey, football, baseball and other sports. Number of related facilities (both indoor and outdoor) to accommodate these supports.

1. A clear, full-disclosure method for understanding the current budget and options. (I'm good with numbers, but I can only make sense of some of the budget documents - and then after spending an inordinate amount of time and effort.)
2. Realistic and transparent information on not just the dollar costs of services but the benefits those services provide and the social and environmental costs that result (Triple Bottom Line) - in sufficient detail for meaningful comparison of benefits and costs to be made.
3. Clear information on who pays the costs, who benefits from the City's services, and to what extent the benefits serve the common good or private interests.
4. Clear analysis of the pros and cons of different ways to raise revenue (e.g., property tax vs. user fees vs. debt vs. tapping into federal & provincial royalty revenues, etc.).
5. A plan for achieving Council's direction (from imagineCalgary) for a) recovering the full cost of services unless there are public benefits and b) basing all general revenues on the principle of progressive taxation - much sooner than the existing timelines.
6. Complete information on the comparative benefits and costs of different styles of development, e.g., the current "sprawl" vs. different levels of "compactness," development in established communities vs. development in "greenfield areas."
7. Performance measures for financial, social, and environmental sustainability that will allow us to evaluate budgetary options.
8. A complete and comparable list of the costs paid for by the City, school boards, Province, and federal government for each type of government service available in the City.
9. Information that will allow Calgarians to evaluate whether the City is receiving effective funding from the provincial and federal governments and a fair share of that funding compared to other municipalities and regions.
10. An efficient way to obtain further information.

I like the short fact sheets without all the added blurbs

Know the budget resource sources and uses.

Previous year comparisons to better understand where we were and where we want to go.

Minutes.

Short documents I can read or easily scan for info that's important to me

Where shortfalls have been in past budgets over 5 years. Also for citizens to determine priorities prior to looking at the numbers.

Twitter links to up to date city blog, with ability to ask questions online

Details of proposed spending cuts and future plans

Post the budget on the web. At least a summary

In a number of places now - can sometimes be overwhelmed with the amount of info

Priority of expenditures, need for expenditure.

Emails

Balance sheets and income statements and projections

Current costs/budget for each BU and details on funding/budget for each major category of service.

Information about what the budget process is all about, who is involved, where to find up to date information

Communication from managers in staff meetings, and reference documents for greater understanding- thus, greater participation.

See above

Factors leading to the decision.

Easy to understand concise information that's easily accessible on calgary.ca with links to more detailed information.

Be more clear and concise

Frontline staffing levels and expectations.

A fact sheet would be great. I can get a quick and dirty sense of what is going on. A website with this fact sheet and a way to click into more detail for each fact would be fantastic

Summary of topics to be discussed - a website address if more detailed information required.

Not just budget - on the ground real services delivered - example only 50% irrigation systems turned on - pruning 5 - 10 - 15 years, keeps stretching farther apart the number of years between pruning - why aren't we able to clear the roads of snow: budget cuts over many years - mismanagement managers - city hall decisions over the years to cut budgets asking business units to find efficiencies - many of your operation supervisors and foremen are fed up of the mismanagement - heads of business units only provide information they want city counsel to see