WHAT WE HEARD REPORT PHASE 2 ENGAGEMENT CONNECT: CALGARY'S PARKS PLAN

PHASE 2 ENGAGEMENT REPORT BACK

This contains a summary of the engagement process, emergent themes, and verbatim input from Phase 2.



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Executive Summary

By 2024, The City of Calgary will develop and present the Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan to Council for approval. This Plan will replace the original Open Space Plan approved by Council in 2003 and will determine how Calgary's parks are managed, developed, and redeveloped over the next 20 years. The process of creating this Plan includes three phases of engagement. This report summarizes the findings of the second phase of engagement that occurred between October – November 2023.

The Goal

The goal of phase 2 engagement was to collect feedback from Calgarians on potential policy directions for the Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan. Building on the input received in the first phase, four goals—Protect and Enhance, Connect and Grow, Include and Support, and Manage and Maintain—were developed. Participants were then asked to rate these goals and offer insights on considerations for policy development. Additionally, participants were asked to provide feedback on the 10 Guiding Principles and allocate points based on their perceived importance.

Feedback

Feedback on the four goals and guiding principles gave the project team further insight into how respondents envision parks in Calgary. The feedback and considerations provided by respondents will be one input that guides the policies which determine how parks will be developed, redeveloped, and managed over the next 20 years.

Equity

As parks are seen to be a common good, an equity lens was placed on the engagement plan and how the feedback has been reported. Great effort was placed on ensuring that historically equity-denied[1] Calgarians were included in engagement. To effectively gather feedback from a wide variety of interest groups, various methods of engagement were used, and tactics were tailored to overcome potential barriers to participation.

Tactics

Phase 2 engagement included: an online survey for Calgarians on the portal page, which received 17,941 views, 9,937 visitors and 824 contributions. Four virtual information sessions were held; two online coffee and conversation meetings; nine open houses; one pop-up event at Village Square Leisure Centre; six workshops with various industries and community leaders; consultation with five advisory committees; 165 paper questionnaires completed; and partnerships with community organizations. Parks staff also visited 13 parks to have conversations and inform Calgarians of the engagement. Over 1500 promotional business cards were distributed.

Themes

The feedback collected during this phase of engagement reinforced that the four goals and proposed policy directions within matched what previous engagement participants felt were most important for parks. Regardless of age, gender, race, ability, or income, the following themes consistently emerged from what we heard in this engagement.

[1] Equity-denied groups are those who identify barriers to equal access, opportunities and resources due to disadvantage and discrimination and actively seek social justice and reparation. (Source: Glossary, Canada Council for the Arts (external link)).

Presented in no specific order, these key themes are:

- Address safety and security concerns.
- Protect and conserve existing park spaces.
- Prioritize native species and natural spaces.
- Engage with the community to create parks that will meet the community's needs.
- Increase connectivity between parks through pathways and park network.
- Create multi-use spaces with amenities for diverse park users to increase user experience.
- Improve maintenance of park spaces.

Guiding Principles

The majority of respondents agreed that the proposed guiding principles reflected the things most important to them in Calgary's parks. A small number of respondents provided feedback for the guiding principles in which they did not agree, with Economic Resiliency and Cultural Landscapes and Sacred Spaces receiving the most comments. When asked to allot points to the 10 guiding principles, the ones that received the most support were Safety and Security, Conservation and Protection of the Environment and Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing.

Tensions

Respondents identified a tension in the perceived compatibility of the four goals. They pointed out conflicts between Goal 1 and Goal 2, suggesting that naturalization and accessibility were seen as incompatible. Similarly, conflicts were noted between Goal 1 and Goal 3, where amenities and accessibility were seen as conflicting with the naturalization and conservation efforts outlined in Goal 1. Additionally, concerns were raised regarding the prioritization of goals and guiding principles, with participants expressing uncertainty about how The City planned to achieve various elements within the proposed policy directions and guiding principles.

Project background

Calgary's original Parks Plan was referred to as the Open Space Plan (OSP) and was the foundational policy document providing the framework for the future development and management of the city's parks. The OSP was approved by Council in 2002 and amended in 2003 but no review or update has been conducted since that time.

Over the last twenty years Calgary has gone through significant demographic and geographic changes, as well as major provincial regulation changes such as the Municipal Government Act, South Saskatchewan River Regional Plan, and Wetland Policy, as well as corporate policy development including imagineCalgary, the Sustainability Principles for Land Use and Mobility, the City's Municipal Development Plan, and Calgary Transportation Plan. As a result, many policies in the existing OSP are outdated and do not adequately inform and support future park and open space provision and management. Additionally, the existing OSP does not address key issues affecting modern park and open space planning and management, including climate resilience, equitable provision and management, accessibility, reconciliation, and financial sustainability.

A comprehensive review and update of the OSP is therefore necessary and timely. This project is a significant undertaking with a projected three-year time frame for completion. The new updated plan will be referred to as Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan.

Project goals

- Develop modern best practices policy for open space planning and development.
- Develop policy that is proactive and supports imagineCalgary and Municipal Development Plan (MDP) policies in the development of complete communities, responds to Council priorities, and maintains a Calgarian focus.
- Develop policy which can focus on the efficient use of land and resources ensuring an economical parks and open space network that is resilient and accessible for all Calgarians.
- Review and organize existing policy, strategy and plans that will guide the work of the Parks and Open Spaces Department
- Remove redundant documents no longer required and replace them with a clear and up to date Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan.
- Develop a new document that will be easy to use (ex. utilizing plain language and clear visuals) and provide a detailed plan to guide the planning, design, (re)development, and functions of the city's parks and open space for the next 20 years.
- Align and integrate considerations of The City of Calgary's declaration of Climate Emergency and the 2022 Climate Strategy and Action Plans
- Explore all components of the Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan through an equity lens to embed considerations and solutions into the update.

Project decision

By Winter 2025, The City of Calgary will develop and approve Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan which will outline how Calgary develops, redevelops, and manages parks over the next 20 years. The plan will respond to Council Priorities, updated regulations, and requirements, and maintain a focus that reflects the values and priorities of Calgarians.

Engagement overview

The following section provides an overview of the project, and the objectives, strategy, and timeline for engagement process.

Project overview

At The City of Calgary, decisions are made that impact more than one million people. Input from Calgarians and other interested and impacted parties help The City better understand the perspectives, opinions, and concerns of people affected by City decisions. Public input is collected, where appropriate, and considered along with other factors (such as cost, environmental impact, technical limitations, and long-range plans/goals) before decisions are made.

Because of its open and accessible nature, engagement is virtually never positioned as the sole source of input into whether The City should do something but helps to ensure City decision-makers have access to a range of ideas and feedback. This feedback is not statistically representative of all Calgarians, and therefore in this report, participants will be referred to as respondents and not Calgarians. All the input collected for this project should be considered through the lens of what will work best in the Calgary context.

Engagement objectives

The intention for the following list of objectives was to create a foundation to build effective and publicly acceptable policies that balance the needs of Calgarians and Calgary's parks in the Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan.

- To inform Calgarians about how the guiding principles were modified based on their feedback by drawing a clear line of sight between What We Heard and What We Did.
- To understand if the modified Guiding Principles accurately reflect Calgarian values.
- To present the policy direction and draw a clear line of sight between how they were informed by What We Heard in phase 1 engagement and other inputs (i.e., regulations etc.)
- To increase awareness and understanding of all the inputs that informed the policies being presented for feedback.
- To understand if the policy options presented for each direction are acceptable for Calgarians.
- To increase Calgarian's understanding what policy options will mean for them and for the City in practice (trade-offs, knock on effects, impacts, this is what it looks like in reality).
- To explore and understand equity/inequity as they relate to the goals and policy directions.
- To consult with internal City of Calgary Business Units for Capital, Planning and Operations approval.

Objectives for equity and accessibility-focused engagement

Equitable engagement was a priority for the project team, to ensure that we heard from a wide variety of Calgarians, especially those who may not experience the benefits of Calgary's parks equally. The engagement process for this project was designed to better understand:

- Accessibility and inequity issues within the current park systems.
- Which groups of Calgarians are not experiencing the benefits that Calgary Parks provides in the same way as others and why.
- Which groups of Calgarians are experiencing significant barriers or challenges in the current park system.
- What supports need to be provided or changes to policy need to be made to help equity-deserving groups overcome the previous two bullets.

Strategy

Different groups, whether they be contributors, partners, community members (the community), Calgarians, or Rightsholders have specific interests and can be impacted by the Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan to varying degrees. This engagement process acknowledges those differences and creates opportunities for target groups to provide feedback in ways that are sensitive, appropriate, and effective. It recognizes that not all Calgarians or businesses will experience and value Calgary's parks similarly and those most at a disadvantage will have unique insight. Hearing stories of lived experiences will help the project team better understand how to incorporate equity into Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan and the policies associated with the plan.

For this phase of engagement, it was important to examine the proposed policy directions through multiple industry perspectives to get a holistic understanding of the impact and benefits of each. The perspectives gained in this engagement included recreation management, tourism, civic planning, social services, accessibility and development.

Timeline

Spring 2023	Phase 1 Engagement: public feedback on guiding values and priorities for Calgary's parks (April 17-May 19, 2023)
Summer 2023	What We Heard Report for Phase 1 published
Fall 2023	Phase 2 Engagement: Public feedback on park policies (Oct 16–Nov 10, 2023)
Winter 2023	What We Heard Report for Phase 2 engagement published.
September 2024	Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan draft finalized. Phase 3 Engagement: Circulation of draft plan
January 2025	Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan presented to City Council for approval

***Table 1** Engagement timeline*

Communication and advertising

The following section provides an overview of the communications tactics used to get the word out about the project and Phase 2 engagement process.



Digital advertising and communication circulated for 4 weeks and saw a total of 1.4 million impressions. This included:

- Premium banner ads and "In-language" banner ads in Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese, Arabic, Spanish, Punjabi
- YouTube ads

Signage included both Curbex and Bold signs were installed in all quadrants of Calgary, including downtown.

- Curbex signs 17 signs over 4 weeks
- BOLD signs- 16 signs over 2 weeks

Television included 15-second spots on both CTV and OMNI.

Radio spots ran from October 16 – November 10, 2023 on the following stations and languages:

- RED FM – Punjabi/Hindi
- Fairchild – Mandarin/Cantonese

This communications effort resulted in 12,194 visitors to the engagement portal page and 513 contributors leaving feedback on the portal page.

Audience and Methodology

ENGAGEMENT NUMBERS DEFINED

Attendees: people who intentionally attended the event and came specifically to talk to us, provide feedback or gain more information.

Contributors: number of visitors who left feedback

Visitors: number of unique visitors to the portal page

Participants: number of people who engaged in meaningful conversations or left feedback with City staff but may have been part of a larger draw (e.g., Genesis Centre. Village Square Leisure Centre)

Points of Contact: people who did not give feedback but either chatted for a short time or handed a redirection postcard to the engage.calgary.ca/parksplan portal page.

Internal and technical review groups

With the support of the Engage Resource Unit, the project team led engagement with internal business units and technical advisory committees. This report only includes the findings from Engage-led engagement tactics; however, a summary of these activities is included in this report to demonstrate the thorough nature of the engagement process for this project.

City of Calgary staff This audience is defined as cross-corporation staff involved in planning and resource management.	**Virtual workshops and Draft Policy Review** **June to December 2023**
Internal technical advisory groups • Climate Advisory Committee • Biodiversity Advisory Committee • Joint Use Coordinating Committee	**Virtual and in-person workshops** Tuesday, October 17, 2023 Wednesday, October 18, 2023 Thursday, October 19, 2023

Table 2 *Internal Audiences*

External Audiences

To provide equitable engagement, the project team utilized many platforms and tactics to ensure all groups were able to participate and have their voices heard. The questions asked in this engagement process, for all tactics, were customized for each group and the specific objectives of engaging with that group.

External audiences were defined for this project as follows:

Businesses, agencies, and organizations: Members of the business community representing the interests of their business and industry.

Equity-denied Calgarians: Calgarians who may currently experience increased barriers in the current park system and/or could be unfairly impacted by future park policy. This includes but is not limited to: Racialized groups; English language learners; people living with disabilities; seniors; youth; low-income and unhoused individuals.

General public: Calgarians participating in engagement to share their personal interests and ideas.

Key groups: Regional partners, academia, special interest groups, and key industry and business groups.

Young adults: Calgarians 18-24 years of age, who are participating in engagement to share their personal interests and ideas.

Audience and tactic	**Date**	**Participation numbers**
Online portal page (www.engage.calgary.ca/parksplan)		
Calgarians	Oct 13-Nov 12	513
Businesses, agencies, and organizations	Oct 13-Nov 12	9
Open houses: In person		
Rocky Ridge YMCA	Oct 19	164
VIVO for Healthier Generations	Oct 21	211
Southland Leisure Centre	Oct 26	45
Cardel Rec Centre	Oct 28	124
GFL 55+	Oct 31	28
Devonian Gardens	Nov 1	176
Genesis Centre	Nov 2	196
Westbrook Mall	Nov 4	46
Seton YMCA	Nov 9	54
Workshops with key interest groups: Virtual		
Environment workshop #1	Oct 17	3

Environment workshop #2	Oct 24	4
Development and building workshop	Nov 7	12
Community building workshop	Nov 9	7
Equity focused tactics: Various		
Native Information Exchange (Virtual)	Oct 10	8
Group and 1:1 conversation with ethno-cultural communities/ individuals, in collaboration with Action Dignity (In-person and virtual)	Mid-October to end of November	120
Ethno-cultural community leaders in person workshop, in collaboration with Action Dignity	In-person Oct 25	16
Fair Entry applicant survey	In-person Oct 30	29
Safety, Security, and Inclusion in the Community workshop with social services sector (Virtual)	Nov 15	29
Youth (ages 15-24): In-person		
University of Calgary- School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape program	Sept 13 Oct 11	30
Mount Royal University – Ecotourism and Outdoor Leadership and Recreation and Sport Management	Oct 30 Nov 2	23 19
Open Minds City Hall School • Bishop Carol High School students	Oct 12	27
West Island College High School students	Oct 20	13
Park walk-abouts: In-person		
SE Parks - Sue Higgins, Carburn, Quarry	Oct 15	223
SW Parks Griffith Woods and Glenmore	Oct 22	32
NE Parks- Big Marlborough Park, Elliston Park, Prairie Winds and River Walk	Oct 29	86
NW Parks - Nose Hill, Bowness, Bowmont	Nov 5	192
LIVE Open Houses: Virtual		
MS Teams Live Q and A - Session #1	Oct 16 / 12-1:30 p.m.	13
MS Teams Live Q and A - Session #2	Oct 23 / 6-7:30 p.m.	7
MS Teams Live Q and A - Session #3	Oct 30 / 12-1:30 p.m.	3
MS Teams Live Q and A - Session #4	Nov 6 / 6-7:30 p.m.	3
Coffee and conversations: Virtual		
Session #1	Oct 17 / 12-1:00 p.m.	2
Session #2	Oct 24 / 12-1:00 p.m.	3

Session #3		
Static Displays		
Sounding Boards	Oct 25- Nov 10	Est. 1600 points of contact (200/ per site)
Devonian Gardens	Oct 25- Nov 15	Est. 3,000 points of contact (100 / per day)

Table 3 *Engagement audience and tactic summary*

Rightsholders

Also of significance in this engagement plan is the input from Indigenous People, who are important to our local landscape and national and local identity. They bring a level of context that is vital to developing the Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan that reflects our local history and valuable knowledge about park spaces.

The Parks and Open Spaces department has undertaken a comprehensive land use study in collaboration with each Nation that will inform the Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan. Throughout the engagement process, the project team and Engage Resource Unit will continue to work with the Indigenous Relations Office (IRO) to explore additional opportunities and timing for engaging with the Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers to further inform the Plan.

Feedback from urban Indigenous Calgarians was also gathered through all tactics available to the public and incorporated into this report.

The Rightsholders in the Treaty 7 region in southern Alberta includes:

- The Blackfoot Confederacy, made up of the Siksika, Piikani, and Kainai First Nations.
- The Stoney Nakoda First Nations, comprised of the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Goodstoney First Nations.
- The Tsuut'ina First Nation.

The City of Calgary is also homeland to the historic Northwest Métis and to Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3.

Advisory Committees

Committees	Dates	Participant Numbers
Social Wellbeing Committee	Wednesday, October 18, 5-7 pm	9 attendees
Calgary Aboriginal Urban Advisory Council (CAUAC)	Tuesday, Oct 10, 5-7 pm	5 attendees
Anti-Racism Action Committee	Thursday, Oct 12, 4:30-6:30 pm	7 attendees

Table 4 *Engagement with committees*

Racialized Groups and Newcomers

Feedback from Racialized and newcomer communities was collected by Action Dignity on The City's behalf as well as through the portal page Action Dignity staff were first trained by the City's Engage Resource Unit staff to

host groups and 1:1 conversation about the project and ask participants questions in the languages that they felt most comfortable speaking. In discussing these engagement questions with a familiar community member, respondents could speak freely. The engagement questions followed the same structure as the questions posed to the public on the project's online portal page.

Feedback was translated and sent back to The City for coding, theming, and reporting. Feedback collected by Action Dignity has been included in the What We Heard reporting and demographic data.

Low-income Calgarians

Feedback from low income Calgarians was collected in person at the Village Square Fair Entry application desk by Engage Resource Unit staff. A paper questionnaire that followed the same structure as the online portal page questions allowed respondents to complete the engagement questions onsite while having a staff member available to ask questions. By "piggybacking" on an activity that respondents were already doing, this engagement tactic helped to overcome inequities regarding time to participate, language barriers and access to technology.

Feedback collected by Fair Entry applicants through this method has been included in the What We Heard reporting and demographic data.

Youth (ages 15-24)

Feedback from youth was collected in person by Engage Resource Unit staff from students at West Island College High School, Bishop Carol High School and Mount Royal University. Following a presentation on the project, students participated in group discussions to explore similar questions to those on the public online portal. However, the scope and questions were adapted to suit the level of the students being engaged. Where appropriate, the answers to the questions were combined into a general summary of the key themes shared by youth participants. In circumstances where participants were asked different questions, the youth group and accompanying questions were identified in the report.

The team also engaged with students in the University of Calgary's School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape program. These students completed an in-depth analysis of the proposed policy directions and other relevant policy documents over the course of a 6-week program and provided their analysis of the potential implications and considerations. Due to the extensive nature of this engagement and the feedback received, this information is not captured in this What We Heard Report.

What We Asked

Questions asked during Phase 2 Engagement fell into three key areas, and optional demographic questions. The demographic information is summarized in Appendix A.

1. Guiding principles
2. Goals and policy direction
3. Parks, Points and Principles
4. Tell us about yourself (optional)

The main engagement page with the complete list of questions asked is located at www.engage.calgary.ca/parksplan.

Detailed What We Heard

Section 1: Guiding Principles

During Phase 2 Engagement, participants were asked to comment on the proposed Guiding Principles developed for the Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan, which, once approved by Council, would direct future park planning and decision making in Calgary over the next 20 years. The proposed Guiding Principles were developed based on feedback from Calgarians during Phase 1 Engagement, as well as other inputs including best practices, City of Calgary policies, Council priorities, economic considerations, and provincial and federal legislation.

The proposed Guiding Principles presented to the public for feedback are as follows:

- **Climate Resilience:** Build a resilient city that can accommodate drought, flood, extreme heat and cold events to reduce negative impacts to property and Calgarians from such events.
- **Connectivity for People and Wildlife:** Strengthen connection through the park network to support different transportation modes for Calgarians and ensure connectivity through our natural areas to provide space for wildlife movement.
- **Conservation and Protection of the Environment:** Improve, enhance and support nature conservation, wildlife protection and biodiversity by taking a nature-based approach using the best practice of ecological network planning and placing the environment first in city building decisions.
- **Cultural Landscapes and Sacred Spaces:** Preserve and protect cultural landscapes and continue to build relationships with indigenous nations and urban indigenous to incorporate indigenous knowledge, management and places for ceremony in parks.
- **Economic Resiliency:** Pursue financial sustainability by providing high quality parks and open space with multi-functional value and operational efficiency through a standard level of service maintenance.
- **Inclusive and Accessible Parks:** Ensure the park network meets the needs of all Calgarians through park and amenity provision and design that addresses Calgarians who experience barriers to access.
- **Innovation:** Promote forward looking practices and data-based decision-making in urban park provision, design and management.
- **Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing:** Develop and manage parks that support mental and physical health and active lifestyles of Calgarians through active recreation and sports amenities, multi-use passive recreation amenities and access to nature opportunities.
- **Safety and Security:** Reduce user conflicts in parks through education and regulation, and partner with community service groups to address mental health and encampment issues in relation to parks.
- **Supporting Communities:** Support stewardship of parks and provide gathering spaces to bring to foster community and a sense of place and connectedness.

Guiding principles as a reflection of values

Question 1: Are the things most important to you for Calgary's parks reflected in this list?

Portal and Action Dignity

689 participants responded to Question 1. 529 indicated that the proposed Guiding Principles reflected their values. 127 participants indicated that the proposed Guiding Principles partially reflected their values and 33 participants indicated they did not reflect their values.

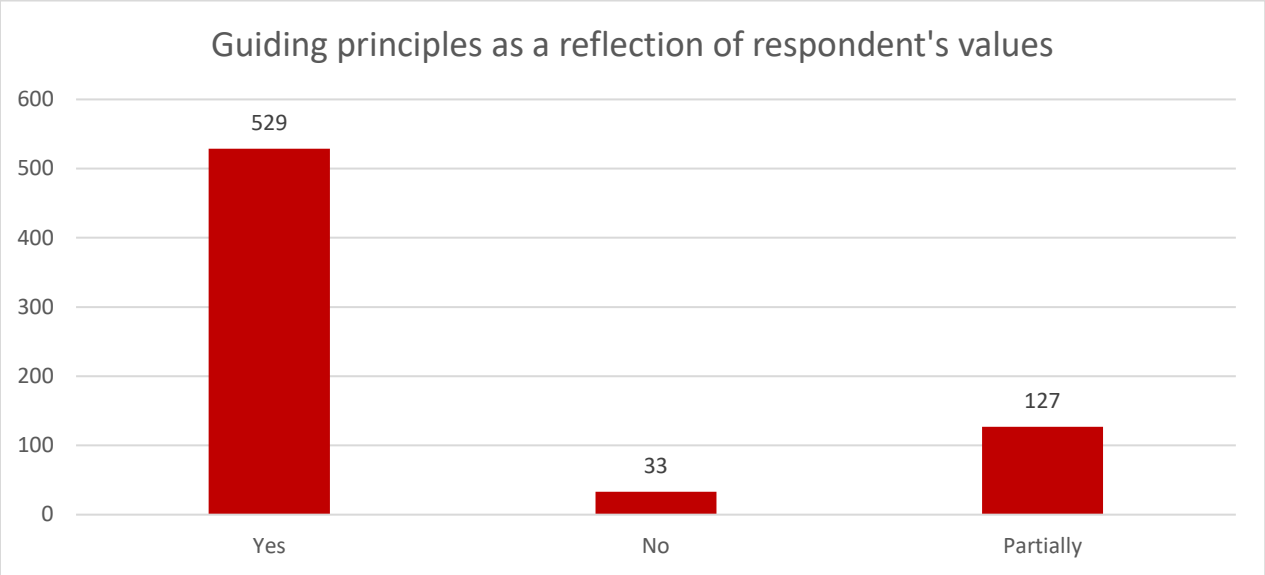


Figure 1 *Are the things most important to you for Calgary's parks reflected in this list?*

Youth

Mount Royal and West Island College students expressed satisfaction with the list of priorities for Calgary's parks, noting the inclusion of environmental protection, inclusive and accessible spaces, safety and security, supporting communities and cultural celebration. While a few respondents highlighted concerns about specific aspects like increased recreational amenities and the possibility of wildlife encounters. However, the majority affirmed that the list comprehensively addresses various issues related to park accessibility, inclusivity, and environmental conservation. One student disagreed, emphasizing that they prefer when green spaces are left completely natural.

Verbatim comments

- *Yes, because it looks at multiple different problems within and surrounding parks and attempts to address them.*
- *Recreation is important - not on the list. Cultural aspect-is on the list, more concern for seniors, people who don't speak English or don't have hobbies, not myself […].. Nature- unsure what to do when animals are around (on the list). Wildlife- what do you do when encountered.*
- *Yes, primarily conservation and protection. Active protection through consistent monitoring, conservation over a longer term plan- data collection and action plan.*

Disagreement with guiding principles

Question 2: For any guiding principle you do not agree with, please tell us why?

Engage Portal

Most respondents chose not to comment on this question. Of those who did respond, many expressed overall agreement with the guiding principles, while some supported all but stressed a need to prioritize a specific principle. Of these responses, 'Safety and Security' received the most support.

Verbatim comments

- *I agree for all the guiding principles listed above. Upon reading the lists I prioritized the Physical and Mental Health, Supporting Communities, Safety and Security especially Kids and Women in need of Shelter, mental health, subatance use and job emp.*
- *Security and safety should be high on the list. Too many parks are turning to encampments and if it is not handled sooner than later it may be too far gone to do anything about it. Making parks presentable makes more people use them and less encampments.*

ECONOMIC RESILIENCY AND CULTURAL LANDSCAPES AND SACRED SPACES

Some participants disagreed with one or more principles, with 'Economic Resiliency' and 'Cultural Landscapes and Sacred Spaces' receiving the most feedback. Most respondents felt that 'Economic Resiliency' would lead to increased vendors in parks, park user fees or increased maintenance costs. Additionally, respondents felt that 'Cultural Landscapes and Sacred Spaces' applied only to Indigenous Peoples and was exclusionary of other groups.

Verbatim comments

- *"Economic Resiliency". Is this code for commercializing the parks? I don't want to see vendor everywhere and lots of places selling items. Parks are one of the few places people can go to get away from the consumer culture and enjoy nature.*
- *the economic resilience one worries me. parks should be free, this makes it sound like we need to start charging admission for the parks. that should never be on our to do list*
- *You seem to be applying "Cultural Landscape and Sacred Spaces" to Indigenous people only. I am not indigenous, but our parks & landscapes are sacred & spiritiual places to me & my family.*

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

A small number of comments expressed overall confusion or concern for the proposed guiding principles as some felt that the language used was unclear and they couldn't leave an effective comment, while others expressed concern over how these principles would be prioritized or implemented. Some respondents felt that there were inherent conflicts between the proposed priorities and believed that focusing on a smaller number or combining priorities would be more effective.

A small number of the comments were considered out of scope, suggesting those responses were not directly related to the guiding principles under consideration and related to park management and maintenance, park development and planning, or user conflict.

Verbatim comments

- *The balance of principles' implementation is not stated. "Sports amenities" can be inimical to climate resilience and environmental protection, as an example.*

- *What I do not agree with is this excess of guiding principles. We need to learn prioritization. It would be rather difficult to achieve all of them.*
- *I feel like some could be combined. (1/2 are similar), 3/4 -people. 6/7, 8-10. Not sure if innovation needs its own?*

Youth

Most respondents generally agreed with the listed principles for Calgary's parks, emphasizing the overall relevance and applicability of these principles to a diverse range of citizens.

Some respondents raised concerns about the implementation of supporting communities and safety and security. Overall, respondents found the principles aligned with their expectations for an ideal park.

Racialized and newcomers (Action Dignity focus groups)

Most participant groups expressed their agreement with the proposed guiding principles and felt that they were holistic, capturing the most important aspects of modern-day parks, although they emphasized the importance of connecting to nature during their discussion.

Question 3: Are there any guiding principles you feel are missing? If yes, would you mind telling us what they are?

Engage Portal

Most respondents chose not to provide comments on this question. Among the responses received, a small number expressed general agreement with the proposed guiding principles or recommended no changes.

MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE

Some respondents suggested the following changes:

For those who suggested changes, the most common theme emphasized the necessity of incorporating better management and maintenance of parks into the guiding principles. This included calls for enhanced amenities, improved infrastructure and heightened safety measures and enforcement. Respondents also provided suggestions for economically sustainable management practices including increased funding of parks and using parks to generate revenue.

Verbatim comments

- *Cleanliness ie litter, flower beds, encampments etc. Timely maintenance and repair of equipment and pathways.*
- *Related to guiding principles 1 & 8 - actual enforcement of related parks and pathway bylaws to deter mis-use is needed. And stronger policies for environmental protection with actual follow through/enforcement for offenders.*
- *Year round public bathrooms, commercial activity in parks (shops and restaurants and carts), planned entertainment and activities to make parks a destination year-round*
- *Economic resiliency maybe covers this somewhat, but it would be good to have a principle acknowledging the importance of our parks network to Calgary's competitiveness as a destination for migration, tourism, and investment.*

PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Another notable theme centered around the need for stronger protection and conservation of Calgary's green spaces and natural features within the proposed guiding principles. Respondents highlighted priorities such as protecting green spaces from sale and development, increasing biodiversity, expanding the tree canopy, and recognizing the role that parks play in fostering a healthy environment for both humans and wildlife and mitigating the impacts of climate change.

Verbatim comments

- *As relates to principle #1, specifically supporting increased biodiversity in our parks environments and green spaces is integral to the long term sustainability of our community.*
- *protect parks in perpetuity: ensuring future generations can enjoy the parks by ensuring park spaces are protected forever*
- *All cities, including Calgary, should have well-vegetated parks which are vital to reduce the impact of urban heat island effects and climate changes . Furthermore, park vegetation acts as carbon sinks, absorbing the smog.*

COMMUNITY ORIENTED APPROACH

Furthermore, respondents emphasized the importance of community involvement, education and support. Recommendations included increasing Calgarians' awareness through campaigns, programs, and signage, along

with fostering collaborative partnerships with interested parties such as Indigenous Peoples, other levels of government, community groups, schools and organizations. The call for inclusive, accessible and multi-use spaces for diverse park users and increased accessibility design measures within parks was also common in the responses.

Verbatim comments

- *Education - what is the strategy with community, responsibilities, stewardship, land acknowledgement and Alberta Education/Alberta Health with environment*
- *Collaboration with external organizations such as other governments, or academic institutions.*
- *This might be under supporting communities, but I'd like to see more options for community groups to be able to rent space for concerts and events at a lower to no price and to have more opportunities for local artists to activate the spaces.*
- *User-focused multi-use design seems to be missing e.g. great to see playgrounds that are accesible, for multi-age/ability but the parents/caregivers seem to be forgotten - no shade, few comfortable sitting spots, few/no tables to eat*

EXPANSION OF GREEN SPACE

Lastly, respondents highlighted the importance of expanding the park network in Calgary, especially in quadrants and communities with limited to no access. The need for enhanced connections both within and between communities through the park network was also expressed by respondents.

Verbatim comments

- *Need to emphasize expansion of natural space and ensure close proximity of natural spaces for all Calgarians.*
- *Equitable Protection and Provision. There is an enormous range of how much and what quality of parks and recreation space exists in each community in Calgary. Publish metrics that include totals and per-capita levels of park resources per community.*
- *Calgary should plan to expand the size of our current park network to accommodate the increasing human population in the city and the increase in human density in existing neighborhoods that is putting more pressure on parks.*
- *There should be a principle that considers adding park space to ensure connectivity and conservation of landscapes and wetlands.*

Racialized and newcomers (Action Dignity focus groups)

When asked if they felt that there was anything missing from the proposed guiding principles, most of the groups did not feel as though there needed to be additional elements. However, two groups felt that there needed to be more spaces for multi-season active recreation facilities, especially in the Northeast.

Section 2: Four Goals

Feedback gathered in the first phase of engagement, in addition to other inputs, informed four main goals that will be the foundation for the Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan. To achieve each goal, four policy directions were developed for each goal.

Goal 1: Protect and Enhance

Goal 1: Protect and Enhance highlights that protection of the environment, biodiversity/wildlife and the tree canopy are a priority. The proposed policy directions for goal 1 are as follows:

Policy direction 1: Ecological network planning will inform the first level of city building decision-making where natural environment components such as wetlands, grasslands, tree stands and other environmentally significant areas are protected and direct the design of developments.
Policy direction 2: Increase naturalization in public boulevards, roadside greenways, some parks and public spaces.
Policy direction 3: Create community-based targets and incentive programs for retention and growth of the urban canopy.
Policy direction 4: Standardize xeriscaping (drought-tolerant species) for both private and public landscaping where recreation are not the primary function.

Question 1: We developed Goal 1 and its associated policy directions based on your feedback. Tell us what you think by rating them 1 - 5, with 5 being the highest.

Most participants indicated support for the proposed Policy Directions, with Policy 1 having the most 'happy' responses (523 participants), followed by Policy Direction 3 (421 participants), Policy Direction 2 (421 participants) and finally Policy Direction 4 (316 participants).

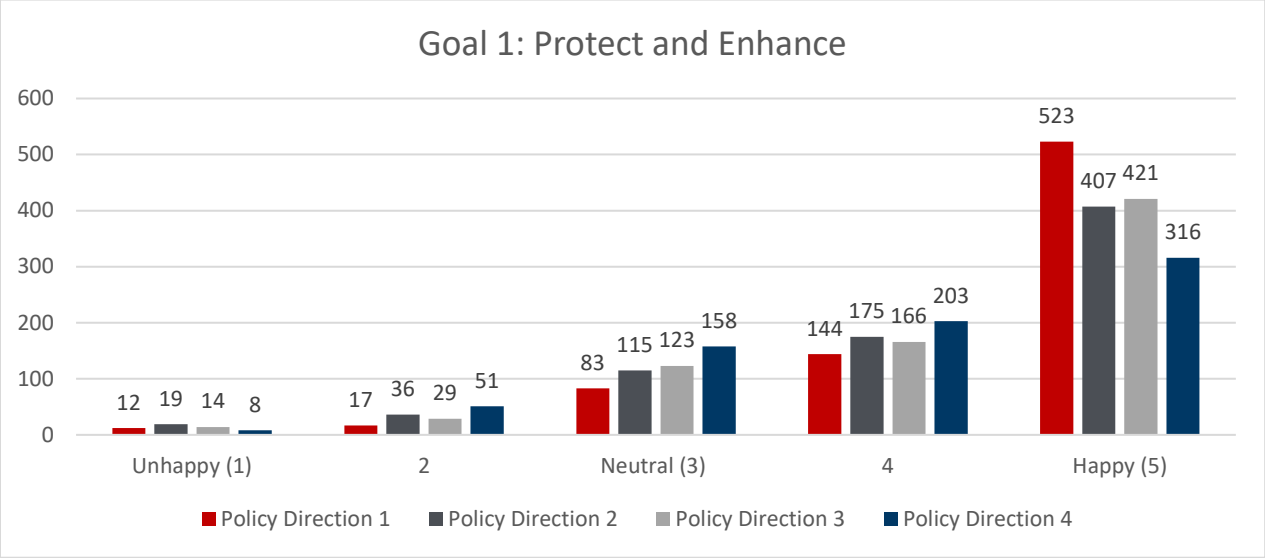


Figure 2 *Support for Goal 1 - Open Houses, Action Dignity, Portal and Fair Entry*



Figure 3-Picture of Genesis Centre participant

Question 2: Please share your thoughts about Goal 1: Protect and Enhance. Do you have any suggestions we should take into consideration when developing this goal?

Engage Portal and Open Houses

ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION

The most common theme from respondents emphasized the importance of environmental preservation and protecting key green areas and corridors in Calgary from threats such as development, sale, human impact, and pets. Specific parks like Nose Creek Park, Glenmore Landing, and Weaselhead were highlighted for protection. Additionally, support was expressed to safeguard and increase the city's tree canopy to address climate change impacts and enhance food security through the use of fruit trees. Some respondents called for prioritizing the environment in city building and development plans and considering the potential impacts of development on surrounding natural areas.

Verbatim comments

- *Doesn't go far enough. Don't just protect significant areas. NO, ZERO, NILCH, development of parks and greenspace. Create a policy to protect greenspace and park space for future generations. Link it to the MDP targets (2 hectares/2000 people I think?).*

- *I like this direction. Having a better tree canopy will reduce the amount of solar radiation hitting absorbing surfaces such as cement and asphalt which could help with temperature reduction*
- *Suggestion would be to plant trees that are more functional than decorative, like apple, pears or some other fruits, that way we can reduce food insecurity by providing accessible food for the community*
- *Protect and enhance what already exists. Development and infrastructure must follow the character and contours that form the harmonious landscape.*

NATURALIZATION AND ECOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT

Respondents emphasized the need for thoughtful ecological management and supported naturalization, planting native species and enhancing biodiversity Calgary's parks. Some respondents felt that naturalization could be applied in all types of parks and expressed their desire to keep park spaces as natural as possible with minimal infrastructure or amenities. Additionally, comments highlighted the importance of considering Calgary's unique climate and ecosystem in developing and implementing these policies, especially in the context of climate change.

However, concerns were raised about the aesthetic appeal of naturalized spaces, the spread of noxious weeds, disagreement over the policy's application to private property, worries about potential poor maintenance by the City, and effectiveness of naturalization in green spaces next to roads that use salt and sand in the winter.

Verbatim comments

- *Native plant material should be more readily available to Calgarians and Parks workers. These species would be tolerant to Calgary's climate and support native insect / wildlife. Parks Gardeners need to be more educated on Calgary's native plants.*
- *I feel that working towards a more drought resistant landscape is very important as our climate continues to change and water becomes more of an issue, which includes things like xeriscaping and naturalization..*
- *Many trees planted by the City of Calgary in its parks are not "native" to the Calgary landscape. (Historically Calgary was part of the Palliser Triangle of grasslands. See earlier policy statements about maintaining landscapes conducive to our locale*
- *I would like to see naturalized areas with trails for walking. These can sometimes be paved for accessibility, but I prefer the more natural trails over dirt and roots*.
- *Recreation areas should not be excluded from policy 4*
- *Do not let naturalization become an excuse for decreasing maintenance and allowing boulevards etc to become a refuge for invasive weeds and litter, which seems to be the current practice.*
- *"Naturalization" usually just looks like noxious and prohibited noxious weeds flowering and spreading year by year and that is a direct threat to our biodiversity! Especially to native grasslands. Please consider a noxious weed inspection program*

ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT

Another key theme identified by participants focused on park management and maintenance practices, emphasizing responsible park strategies, and community engagement initiatives encompassing education, programming, campaigns and collaboration. Participants stressed the importance improved overall management and maintenance of City parks, as well as economically and environmentally responsible park management practices with suggestions ranging from increasing the use of natural herbicides, shifting from gas-powered equipment and planting species that demand less irrigation and maintenance.

Verbatim comments

- *A reasonable process for removing trees on public lands by requiring replacement elsewhere is needed.. IE public utility space by private owned lots.*
- *Outlaw herbicides and fertilizers for lawns and encourage homeowners to have naturalized yards. Increase participation in composting by distributing (or making more accessible) composters for home owners.*
- *I believe with Policy Direction 4 if there was incentivization for new communities when people are moving into new homes to create a drought tolerant front and backyard instead of grass, this would help show the importance of this policy.*
- *Education and communication will be required to support broad understanding and help to shift public perception/expectations. Success also relies on how these spaces are maintained, which also requires a more indepth understanding of maintenance needs*
- *As long as these initiatives do not spend more money ripping out existing infrastructure that the city spent lots of money already on. Ex, bow river river walk, ripping out all vegetation to put a retaining wall in after, poor planning and costly*

PARK PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Respondents also emphasized key considerations for park planning decisions, including addressing issues related to the re-zoning and redevelopment of City parks, creating minimum requirements for green space in new developments, addressing the inequitable distribution of parks in Calgary, reducing urban sprawl by optimizing and balancing increased population density with the need for green spaces, and strategically planning park locations for new communities including location and setbacks and overall thoughtful planning for well-balanced and accessible parks.

Verbatim comments

- *Ecological network planning should inform city-building also in the sense that edge areas should not necessarily be developed further. Well-planned parks can enhance established areas and limit the demand for sprawl.*
- *Just that changing the bylaw on development of multi family housing in areas like Roxboro takes away existing, and highly necessary green space especially for cooling in the heat of the summer - for the whole city.*
- *Plan for more naturalized/forested parks to be within walking distance to more people. Dissolve the idea that you need to drive a car to get to a forest when you live in a city, it's insane.*
- *Equity amongst neighborhoods. Sadly, lower income communities and very new low cost suburbs have less green space and trees. A plan for the city should ensure there are enough trees etc in all neighborhoods.*
- *Start using the Riparian Setback Matrix Model for wetlands. Don't allow developers use "grandfathered setbacks" - we have new science, use the proper scientific setbacks!*
- *Blanket upzoning that encourages 60% lot coverage destroys the urban tree canopy.*

Low income Calgarians via Fair Entry

While a few Fair Entry applicants shared that they liked both points of description about what Calgary would look like under this goal, another shared they were nervous about wildlife.

Another disagreed with the environment first approach of policy direction 1, by saying:

- *People first where we going to live?*

Racialized and Newcomer

Question 1: Please share your thoughts about Goal 1: Protect and Enhance. Do you have any suggestions we should take into consideration when developing this goal?

Overall, members of the focus groups held by Action Dignity shared the same considerations that were previously mentioned, especially in relation to the look of naturalized spaces, building more parks and maintaining them, particularly in Northeast Calgary, and expanding the tree canopy. During this discussion, participants also shared that they wanted accessible spaces for hosting events and gatherings, more amenities and increased safety for both people and wildlife. The most prevalent themes among the responses are outlined below.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The most common responses from members of the focus group centered on the need for community involvement, especially increased education and awareness that related to parks, climate change, enhancing parks, information and history of local plants and animals, benefits of xeriscaping, as well as fun facts about nature and wildlife that could help families learn and interact. They shared several tactics to achieve this, including signage, social media platforms, media, campaigns and community events.

Respondents also expressed the desire to have greater opportunities to become more involved in their parks through engagement opportunities that would allow them to provide input on design and activities, community gardens or planting programs and neighbourhood watch programs that would encourage a sense of community.

SUPPORT FOR BIODIVERSITY AND NATURALIZATION

Respondents also emphasized their support for naturalization, including increased biodiversity, and wildlife in Calgary's green spaces. One respondent shared that identifying and mapping existing plants could assist in achieving this goal. They also shared that medicinal plants, herbs and fruiting plants that the community could pick should be considered in the implementation of these policies.

PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

A small number of comments expressed their support for environmental preservation, calling for a strategy that enhances park structures and design. One respondent emphasized the need to conduct comprehensive assessments of environmental impacts prior to development to identify potential risks and implement measures to minimize the project's impact on the environment. Other respondents shared that priorities for The City should be to build reservoirs and water storage facilities, protect the watershed and lessen human impact on the environment.

Question 2: Do any of these policies have the risk of creating inequity for diverse ethno-cultural communities in Calgary? If yes, please explain. Any suggested solutions?

The members of the focus group at Action Dignity shared positive feedback and expressed the sentiment that the proposed policies would foster a sense of inclusion and equity in Calgary's parks. Some comments focused on the need for everyone to feel safe and comfortable in parks, with an example provided relating to the availability of separate gendered washrooms.

CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

Respondents from Action Dignity stressed the importance of considering the diverse cultural needs of Calgary's diverse ethnocultural groups in implementing these policies to promote inclusivity and avoid contributing further to disparities. They highlighted that City staff and decision-makers should receive training to understand the lived and living experiences that have historically promoted mistrust, as well as the diverse needs of ethnocultural groups, stating that this would assist them in avoiding biases, stereotypes and oversimplification. They stressed that cultural learning is crucial to identify policies that could unintentionally contribute to inequity and prevent access to park spaces or reduce usability for equity-denied groups. They also emphasized the importance of developing policies that attend to language barriers, create inclusive spaces and prevent oversight of various groups. Suggestions ranged from inclusive and appropriate design, culturally sensitive programming and equitable access initiatives.

COLLABORATION AND REPRESENTATION

Respondents emphasized the importance of ongoing and transparent collaboration with ethnocultural communities, stressing their crucial role in sharing and integrating their needs and perspectives into park development. A suggested approach included the creation of a community circle conversation to facilitate discussions. Concerns were raised about inadequate representation and inclusivity in selecting liaison officers and decision-makers, contributing to additional inequities and barriers.

Goal 2: Connect and Grow

Participants were asked to rate and provide feedback of any considerations The City should have while developing the following proposed policy directions for Goal 2: Connect and Grow. These policy directions were developed based on feedback from Calgarians during Phase 1, which highlighted that more parks and more amenities that are better connected for people and wildlife are a priority.

The proposed policy directions for goal 2 are as follows:

Policy direction 1: Increase the minimum size of parks for new communities, while redeveloping existing parks to ensure homes are within 400 metres of a recreation, sports and natural environment function.
Policy direction 2: Identify opportunities to develop underused and unconventional open spaces into functional, accessible spaces in underserved areas of the city.
Policy direction 3: Locate parks centrally to the community and design linear parks and pathways to connect to other parks in the community.
Policy direction 4: New and redeveloping parks will be designed for connectivity between residential and commercial zones (complimented by the 5A network).

Question 3: We developed Goal 2 and its associated policy directions based on your feedback. Participants were asked to rate them 1 - 5, with 5 being the highest level of support and 1 being the lowest level of support.

Most participants indicated support for the proposed Policy Directions, with Policy 2 having the most 'happy' responses (405 participants), followed by Policy Direction 3 (400 participants), Policy Direction 1 (369 participants) and finally Policy Direction 4 (319 participants).

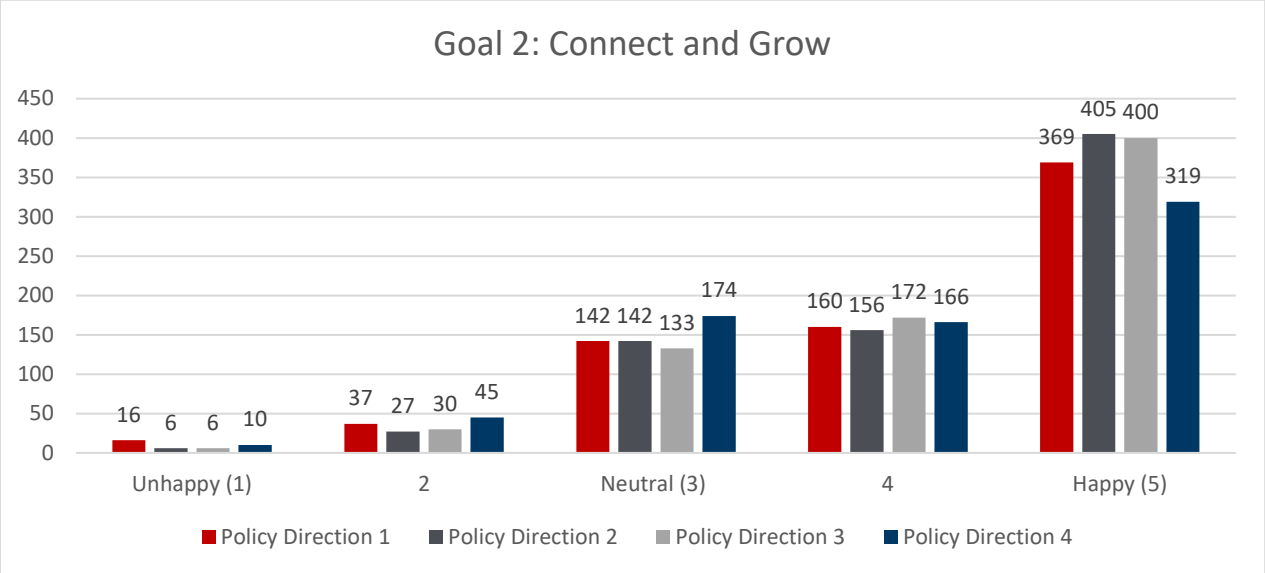


Figure 4 *Support for Goal 2 - Open Houses, Action Dignity, Portal and Fair Entry*

Question 4: Please share your thoughts about Goal 2: Connect and Grow. Do you have any suggestions we should take into consideration when developing this goal?

Engage Portal and Open Houses

THOUGHTFUL PARK DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

The most common theme stressed the importance of thoughtful park design and development to ensure the creation of high-quality, community-focused parks that fulfill local needs and encourage full utilization. Conservation of natural spaces was highlighted as a key priority, with a strong objection to unnecessary redevelopment of green spaces. Participants were open to introducing amenities and multi-use spaces where suitable, along with vendor opportunities, provided there was thorough community engagement to gain insights into the community's preferences and requirements.

Additionally, participants expressed their support for Policy Direction 2 “Identify opportunities to develop underused and unconventional open spaces into functional, accessible spaces in underserved areas of the city”. However, there was concern that this would lead to the redevelopment of natural spaces or result in lower-quality parks in some areas to achieve this directive.

Verbatim comments

- *creating a minimum park size is not a useful goal when the parks currently present in new areas such as Seton in SE Calgary are just a large open field with no trees. Many parks are underutilized soccer fields and baseball diamonds.*
- *Retain existing parks/green spaces and enhance with facilities. Involve residents and communities in the enhancement.*
- *Convert many empty lots, including those in industrial areas, into green space, either as vegetable gardens for the community or as green park space like the Inglewood Bird Sanctuary for people and wild animals such as birds , rabbits, and deer.*
- *The playground in Bridgeland is an amazing example of an excellent use of underused/underutilized space. This could have been a corner that homeless people gravitated to, but it is a fun and safe playground for families. Very impressive! Well done City!*
- *My concern here is what is underused. Having just green space is not underused I don’t want park space turned into skateboarding parks.*
- *I am concerned that #2 ('unconventional open spaces') will lead to crummy, after-thought parks in communities that need well designed natural spaces the most - our underserved communities. They need functional spaces, not after-thoughts*

CONNECTIVITY

Participants supported increasing connectivity for people and wildlife through linear parks and an improved pathway system. They expressed their desire for uninterrupted pathways that would allow people to travel and commute without cars. A subsection of this theme also stated the need to improve accessibility through the 5A (Always Available for All Ages and Abilities) Network and transit access.

Some respondents expressed their concerns over the proposed policy directions. Notably, respondents communicated that these directions were incompatible with the directions in Goal 1: Protect and Enhance due to the conflicts between naturalization efforts and the infrastructure required to improve the 5A network.

Additionally, some expressed concerns over increasing connectivity which they felt could lead to increased pollution and social disorder in park spaces.

Verbatim comments

- *Public space should be for people. Currently, our city revolves around cars. This plan will beautify our city, while giving public space back to the people. Also, connected with GOOD 5A infrastructure is paramount. We should not be forced to drive.*
- *Increasing connectivity to other communities through overpasses and underpasses with the pathway system should be essential in community planning.*
- *We need more pathways without interruption, such as memorial drive pathway. Need to be able to go long distances on bike, foot, etc without being constantly stopped by lights. For safety and ease of use*
- *Integrate parks and transit, especially light rail, e.g. park space near transit stations.*
- *We don't light our parks and pathways due to our dark skies policy, so the 5A network is unachievable unless massive changes or finances are supplied to implement a pathways technology that allows both dark skies and lit pathways.*
- *Direction 4 - 5A network is not always compatible with natural environment parks (e.g., Weaselhead Special Protection Park). Plan 5A network to balance biodiversity conservation and mobility needs.*
- *I worry that connecting parks to commercial zones might expose the parks to emissions and pollutants thereby reducing the escapeisim value of the parks*

PARK GROWTH AND PLANNING

Participants generally supported the idea of having a greater number and larger parks as the city grows, including different types like natural, recreational and dog parks. They also liked the idea of having parks centrally located in their communities to improve accessibility.

However, concerns were raised as some participants disagreed with these policy directions, worrying that they might affect planning decisions, contribute to urban sprawl, and may not be necessary if parks were well-connected. There were also concerns about not wanting minimum size requirements and central location policies to prevent the development of smaller parks. People felt that parks should be developed in harmony with the natural landscape of each community, especially if they serve multiple neighborhoods, which may not result in centrality.

Verbatim comments

- *Love the increase in size, increase in connectivity, etc. More natural areas, less manicured areas.*
- *Goal even more relevant if city is increasing density. Parks should be bigger.*
- *I like it. Park space is really important and needs to be a central part of all new developments and redevelopments*
- *focus on quality not just quantity; 3- central can be helpful, but also work with the assets that exist (natural and otherwise) which may not be central. Linear connectivity is important.*
- *Under this point eventually what happens is older parks get reduced to smaller size . Thus not in favour of this design initiative. New parks can be designed under this,older parks can just be cleaned & new trees planted without reducing their GREEN AREA*
- *increaseing min. size of of parks for new communities could also increase sprawl and city operationg costs. city would need to be cognizant of this and work with planning to make sure these communities are higher density to compensate. but i like the plan*

- *Policy 1 and 3 should include consideration for parks that are utilized for multiple communities. This may result in a park is not 'central' in a community (if the word 'central' is being used as a location).*
- *Parks should be located where is makes sense rather than in the center of a community. We need to protect the diversity of park space (ie prairie, river basins, escarpments valleys etc)*

GENERAL CONCERNS

Beyond the mentioned themes, some participants raised general concerns about the proposed directions. A few expressed the need to protect park spaces from sale and development, particularly Nose Creek Valley, Glenmore Landing, Nosehill Park and Richmond Green.

Additionally, some respondents emphasized that the proposed policies would be challenging to achieve, emphasizing the need to consider present and future maintenance capacity and economic efficiency. Participants also reiterated safety concerns, especially regarding encampments and user conflicts. A small number of participants indicated a need for more information and expressed confusion about the proposed directions, particularly the language used.

Verbatim comments

- *No expansion or redevelopment or existing zoning changes for commercial or residential towers/condo's encroaching on preexisting city parks or green spaces in our city. The Glenmore Reservoir, Fish Creek Park and Nose Hill Park should be top priority!*
- *All plans must consider the sustainability of the parks, especially ongoing care and maintenance of both exisitng and proposed facilities. Current plans are woefully deficient in managing existing facilities, so what is being proposed to improve that?*
- *Again, fiscal responsibility and networking with Sport Calgary/School Boards/existing Schools seem logical in planning and sharing resources and need. Spending taxpayer money efficiently and effectively.*

Fair Entry

One Fair entry applicant wondered why The City was just considering policy direction 1 now, and others shared appreciation for what this will look like in Calgary. Another participant shared that housing was more important than growing parks.

- *we need home for people to live*

Racialized and Newcomer

Question 1: Please share your thoughts about Goal 2: Connect and Grow. Do you have any suggestions we should take into consideration when developing this goal?

Participants from racialized and newcomer communities expressed satisfaction with the proposed policy directions, feeling that they would enhance accessibility and movement between parks, residential areas, and commercial hubs. They echoed sentiments shared by other respondents, supporting the growth of the park network, improvements to accessibility, the 5A network, and expressing concerns about ongoing management and maintenance. Respondents also highlighted the importance of increasing native species and supporting biodiversity. The top theme from respondents is explained below.

THOUGHTFUL PARK DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

Respondents' greatest concern related to ensuring that parks were designed thoughtfully to serve multiple purposes, including recreational activities, sports facilities, natural environment preservation, and community events. One of the most prominent themes related to developing accessible, inclusive, multi-generational spaces where Calgarian's of all ages could enjoy Calgary's parks, even during the winter. They expressed a need for more spaces in which members of the community can connect, whether through improved seating and gathering areas or events like markets, cafés, and outdoor fitness spaces. Respondents also expressed the desire for community engagement and consultation when parks are being redesigned or redeveloped to ensure that parks meet the community's diverse needs.

Question 2: Do any of these policies have the risk of creating inequity for diverse ethno-cultural communities in Calgary? If yes, please explain. Any suggested solutions?

Action Dignity respondents felt that these policies would create greater opportunities for diverse communities to connect, discuss issues and share their knowledge of Canada. They also felt that providing the community with a sense of ownership would result in greater engagement as individuals would contribute more and care for their parks. They also shared that there was a need for adequate crossings for all types of park users and improved safety near lakes and rivers for children. However, the most prominent themes are outlined below.

VARIATION IN COMMUNITY NEEDS

Respondents emphasized the importance of recognizing diverse needs among ethnocultural communities, cautioning against a one-size-fits-all approach to park development that could create further inequities. They provided specific examples, noting variations in preferences for active recreation amenities, park programming, resources, and multi-use spaces among different communities. To address these potential inequities, they suggested actively seeking input from diverse communities, fostering cultural inclusivity in programming, ensuring access to resources, and promoting representation and participation.

UNEQUAL ACCESS TO PARKS

Respondents highlighted the uneven development of parks across the city, affecting accessibility for racialized and newcomer groups. Specifically, they noted a disparity in parks, amenities, and pathway networks, particularly in the Northeast quadrant compared to other areas like the Northwest and Southwest. To address this imbalance, respondents emphasized the need for increased focus and importance on developing parks in the Northeast quadrant to ensure fair and equitable access for all Calgarians.

Goal 3: Include and Support

Participants were asked to rate and provide feedback of any considerations The City should have while developing the following proposed policy directions for Goal 3: Include and Support. These policy directions were developed based on feedback from Calgarians during Phase 1, which highlighted that inclusive, accessible, multi-generational park spaces that build community are a priority.

The proposed policy directions for goal 3 are as follows:

Policy direction 1: Standardize multi-generational, multi-use and universal design for amenities and infrastructure (furniture, bathrooms, etc.) when developing and redeveloping parks.

Policy direction 2: Review design standards for park; include minimum provision standards for items like benches, picnic tables, washrooms and garbage cans.

Policy direction 3: Create increased volunteer opportunities and stewardship of parks by communities.

Policy direction 4: Increase ease of access to information about parks and volunteer opportunities by:

a) Developing a customer-oriented, interactive parks web presence and social media strategy; and

b) Providing effective booking systems that are fast, reliable, informative, flexible and customer focused.

Question 5: We developed Goal 3 and its associated policy directions based on your feedback. Participants were asked to rate them 1 - 5, with 5 being the highest level of support and 1 being the lowest level of support.

Most participants indicated support for the proposed Policy Directions, with Policy Direction 2 having the most 'happy' responses (387 participants), followed by Policy Direction 1 (363 participants), Policy Direction 3 (369 participants) and finally Policy Direction 4 (296 participants).

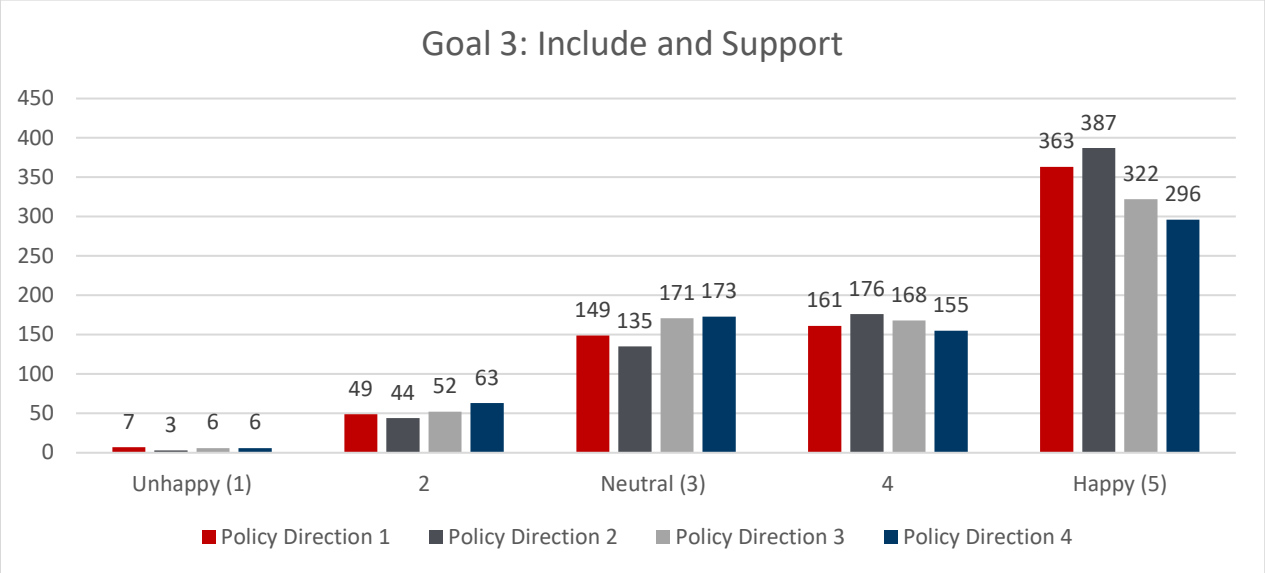


Figure 5 *Support for Goal 3 - Open Houses, Action Dignity, Portal and Fair Entry*

Question 6: Please share your thoughts about Goal 3: Include and Support. Do you have any suggestions we should take into consideration when developing this goal?

Engage Portal and Open Houses

IMPROVED PARK AMENITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

This theme highlighted a desire for enhanced park amenities and infrastructure. Respondents emphasized the importance of facilities such as garbage cans, tables, benches, fire pits, signage, community gardens, storage, playgrounds, and recreational equipment. Additionally, there was a sentiment expressing the necessity for improved infrastructure, including washrooms, shaded structures, running water, and lighting. Respondents reiterated that proper maintenance and aligning these facilities with community needs was required to ensure utilization.

Within this theme, a subgroup emphasized the importance of increased accessibility and the creation of inclusive, multi-use spaces to cater to Calgary's diverse, multi-generational population. Respondents advocated for a variety of parks and amenities to meet the diverse preferences of park users.

Lastly, concerns were raised about the compatibility of the directions to increase accessibility and enhance amenities with Goal 1: Protect and Enhance. Some respondents indicated that, while they generally supported accessibility and improved infrastructure, implementing these policies in natural spaces might detract from their overall appeal.

Verbatim comments

- *furniture, bathrooms, recycling and garbage cans are wonderful, security and cleaning must be included.*
- *It is nice to have different parks amenities in separate parks so they are not all the same. Outdated infrastructure should be changed like baseball diamond. Soccer, basketball/outdoor hockey seems to be more engaging.*
- *I really want to see extreme heat climate projections considered in the parks plan. I hope there is a plan for more shade structures, water fountains, splash parks, etc. This will also increase multi-generational use. Also more amenities like pump tracks.*
- *Integrated design to meet multiple goals is needed but thought through carefully - e.g. playgrounds are great but there's no shade, few places for parents to sit, few places to picnic. We like to walk, but dangerous on bike paths with kids and loose dogs*
- *Not every park created has to be accessible for every age, culture and ability. Some parks can be designed for climbing active kids, some accessible and some for adults. Don't over modernize. Volunteer ability would be great!! With support from city.*
- *Many of the new parks downtown and in beltline have a similar amenities and features. Create more variety in the design and purpose of new parks. Design greenspaces downtown to provide quiet respite from noise and to mitigate noise itself.*
- *Please consider that adding picnic tables, garbage cans, and benches is not necessarily an improvement for nature parks. This infrastructure can diminish the atmosphere of natural park spaces. Less is more when is comes to nature park infrastructure.*

STANDARDIZATION CONSIDERATIONS

Respondents mostly favored policy directions promoting standardization and minimum provisions for park spaces, citing potential benefits such as enhanced economic efficiency and increased inclusivity and accessibility.

However, some individuals voiced reservations about standardization, fearing it could result in overly uniform or "cookie-cutter" parks. Furthermore, concerns were raised that a one-size-fits-all approach may not accommodate the diverse needs of each park, particularly natural spaces, potentially leading to negative impacts.

Verbatim comments

- *Not all parks are the same and standardization is not required for all aspects of a park. Aboslutely some things like bench and garbage cans be standardized but each park should have the oppurtunity to have its own unique items.*
- *Standardizing design & amenities will help promote inclusivity as too much input from volunteers or public with respect to individual park will contribute to specific flavors of the neighborhood which would be against inclusivity.*
- *Not a fan of taking a "cookie cutter" approach to our parks. Many parks are unique and planning their amenities should take this into consideration. Ottawa does a great job of this.*
- *I don't agree with standardization, different sights for different needs, Quiet places and fun places for kids are not the same thing, places for picnics and sports are not the places for bird watching*
- *I'm not sure about standardizing amenities. Natural environment areas (ex Griffith Woods) should not be overrun with washrooms and picnic tables just to fulfill standard requirements. Some places are better left alone.*

INCREASED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Respondents stressed the significance of enhancing community engagement through diverse channels and varying levels of participation. The most common responses advocated for community involvement via consultation, education, campaigns, incentive programs, and park sponsorship opportunities. Overall, there was widespread support for expanding volunteer and stewardship opportunities, encompassing various groups such as community, sports, cultural, youth, seniors, and the unhoused.

Alternatively, some respondents expressed concerns regarding increasing stewardship and volunteer opportunities. Common concerns included confusion about the exact roles and responsibilities of volunteers and a perception that reliance on volunteer programs might shift maintenance responsibilities away from The City. Additionally, respondents emphasized issues with volunteer recruitment and safety.

Verbatim comments

- *I completely agreement with Policy Direction 3, the CoC should increase public opportunities for residents to maintain and improve their own park spaces, instead of penalizing people who mow public spaces when city contractors fail to provide quality.*
- *There are significant opportunities for large community volunteer days with Parks co-ordination and communication to residents e.g. thistle pulling*
- *City arborists/ gardening staff could host engagement sessions in various communities where each family has the opportunity to sponsor (plants, foster, water and pay for) a small plot of land where they learn about and plant native species of plants and grasses.*
- *Mixed feelings about volunteers in parks. Communities who maintain their own areas should receive something in return! More amenities, funding for their CA, something to reflect and encourage the hours that volunteers put into it.*

- *My only caution is how difficult it is right now for CAs to get volunteers. We love our parks and want them to be maintained and protected.*

BOOKING SYSTEM

Some participants voiced concerns and confusion about the suggested incorporation of technology as some respondents expressed confusion about the purposes of these systems in relation to parks and their potential impact on users. Most responses related to the booking system with some expressing that the current booking system needed enhancements. Alternatively, disagreements arose regarding the proposed booking system, with uncertainties about potential costs to The City and citizens. There was a perception that it could act as a barrier to access, and concerns were raised about park users being unable to use parks without prior online registration.

Verbatim comments

- *I would like to see improvements to the current booking system to make it more electronic and allow for confirmation of bookings after hours.*
- *Inclusivity is important! But, bogging the idea of parks down with a social media strategy and apps is a bit silly. Parks shouldn't need to have presence on tiktok to get visitors. Parks should have intrinsic value that brings people to visit.*
- *I will be discouraged from using the parks if I have to sign up online for access*

GENERAL CONCERNS

Participants emphasized the significance of safety and enforcement in the development and implementation of these policies. Most responses focused on concerns such as vandalism, homelessness, speed limits on pathways, user conflict and off-leash dogs. Respondents called for heightened monitoring and bylaw enforcement to address these issues. Some participants indicated a need for more information and expressed confusion about the proposed directions, particularly the language used.

Verbatim comments

- *Safety is an important part of making parks accessible for children and seniors.*
- *We love Inglewood Bird Sanctuary as we can be completely comfortable knowing we can't be injured by cyclists,, would like more parks like this*
- *For me, policy around off leash dogs is extremely important. I live near a park that allows dogs off leash (Roxboro) and the amount of dog waste is horrible. Also, the playgrounds constantly have off leash dogs on them. The dog areas need to be fenced in.*
- *#1 - What is "universal design for infrastructure"?????*

Fair Entry

A few Fair Entry applicants liked what this would mean for Calgary, and one said it was a great idea. Others shared their desire for more amenities that they would use.

- *I would like to see an exercise park in the community of Crossroads*
- *more swings in parks or old style parks i.e. original slides, zipline is awesome at Westwinds*

Racialized and Newcomer

Question 1: Please share your thoughts about Goal 3: Include and Support. Do you have any suggestions we should take into consideration when developing this goal?

Respondents in the Action Dignity focus groups expressed overall support for the proposed policy directions related to Goal 3: Include and Support. They recommended collaboration between The City and non-profits to establish peer support groups and workshops, aiming to enhance engagement with racialized and newcomer communities. Similar sentiments were echoed concerning the importance of increased amenities and infrastructure, aligning with the perspectives shared by participants in the portal and open house sessions. The key theme from these discussions is summarized below.

INCLUSIVE PARK DESIGN, AMENITIES AND PROGRAMMING

Responses from Racialized and newcomer participants predominantly emphasized the desire for the development of multi-use park spaces that prioritize inclusivity and accessibility for all Calgarians, regardless of age, race, income, gender, religious affiliation or abilities. They underscored the importance of diverse infrastructure and amenities that are universally accessible, including wide paths, clear signage, ramps and change tables in all washrooms. Specific requests were made for inclusive and sensory-rich play structures with back supports on swings, along with activities that foster cultural learning, such as Punjabi, Chinese or Arabic alphabets. Additionally, respondents highlighted the significance of multi-generational activities, emphasizing the need for age-appropriate programming for both children and seniors, particularly during the winter months.

Question 2: Do any of these policies have the risk of creating inequity for diverse ethno-cultural communities in Calgary? If yes, please explain. Any suggested solutions?

Members of Racialized and newcomer communities expressed strong support for incorporating community gardens and a volunteer program into the proposed policies. They emphasized the need for careful structuring of these initiatives, including adequate training for volunteers to ensure they possess the necessary skills to contribute to parks. Additionally, respondents reiterated the significance of ensuring park amenities are both inclusive and accessible. The primary themes from these discussions are detailed below.

COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS

Responses from Racialized and newcomer participants underscored the importance of tailoring park policies to the unique demographics of each community. This customization, they noted, should extend to various services and amenities, incorporating relevant signage, languages, art, programming and facilities. One respondent suggested including racialized individuals in signage would promote a sense of inclusivity. Some participants recommended conducting needs assessments to identify specific support requirements and allocate resources accordingly, ensuring equitable access to support services like community events, recreational programs and wellness initiatives. Community engagement was discussed as an important aspect of these policy directions to assist The City in achieving these goals.

RISK OF EXCLUSION

Respondents acknowledged the complexity of this goal, recognizing that oversight of certain groups could potentially result in exclusion and discrimination among diverse communities. Despite efforts for universal accessibility, participants noted that specific ethnocultural communities could face unique challenges or need accommodations not adequately addressed, leading to disparities in park access. To address this risk,

participants recommended City staff undergo cultural awareness and sensitivity training and that there is proper representation in park planning decisions.

Goal 4: Manage and Maintain

Participants were asked to rate and provide feedback of any considerations The City should have while developing the following proposed policy directions for Goal 4: Manage and Maintain. These policy directions were developed based on feedback from Calgarians during Phase 1, which highlighted that improving maintenance, increasing safety in parks, and managing user conflict while being financially responsible are priorities.

The proposed policy directions for goal 4 are as follows:

Policy direction 1: Create sustainable funding for park development and redevelopment that deals with increased density and usage.
Policy direction 2: Standardized levels of service for the maintenance of parks.
Policy direction 3: Create an investment strategy to deliver improved park management.
Policy direction 4: Support user safety and security in parks by:

a) collaborating with community services, social outreach partners, CPS and other agencies to develop a strategy to address safety for park users with a focus on helping vulnerable populations and dealing with encampment issues within parks;
b) exploring parks specific bylaw officers that are dedicated to the protection and parks and enforcing rules and regulations;
c) incorporating Crime Prevention Through Environment Design principles into the design and maintenance of recreational parks; and
d) improving signage and information on proper park usage.

Question 1: We developed Goal 4 and its associated policy directions based on your feedback. Participants were asked to rate them 1 - 5, with 5 being the highest level of support and 1 being the lowest level of support.

Most participants indicated support for the proposed Policy Directions, with Policy Direction 4 having the most 'happy' responses (456 participants), followed by Policy Direction 1 (398 participants), Policy Direction 2 (345 participants) and finally Policy Direction 3 (250 participants).

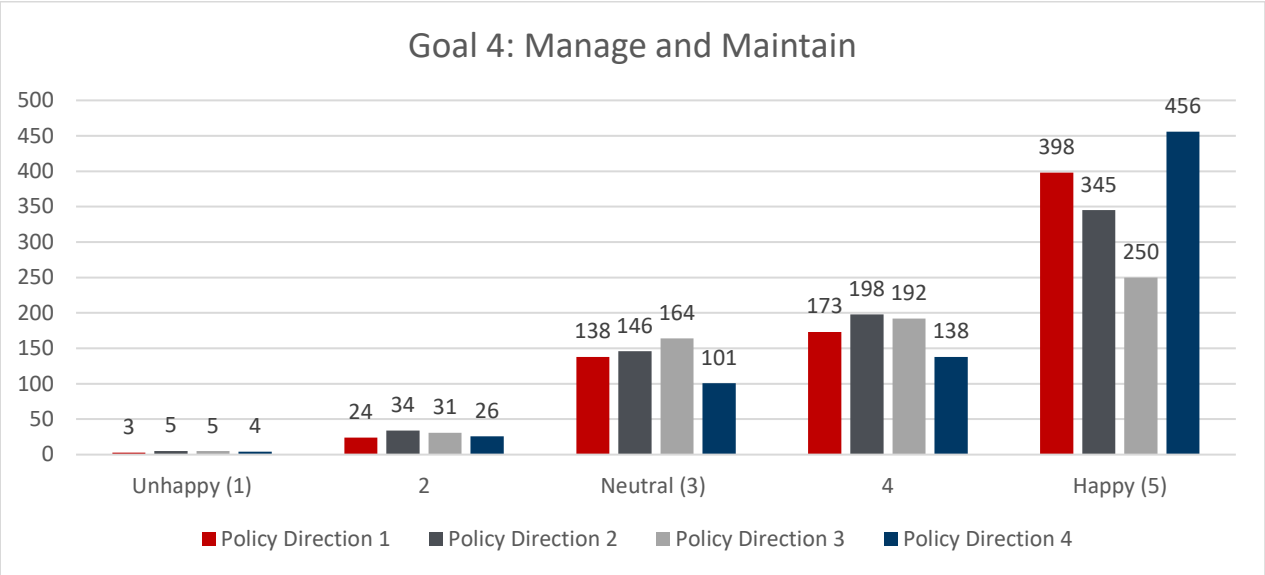


Figure 6- Support for Goal 4 - Open Houses, Action Dignity, Portal and Fair Entry

Question 2: Please share your thoughts about Goal 4: Protect and Enhance. Do you have any suggestions we should take into consideration when developing this goal?

Engage Portal and Open Houses

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Participant responses consistently underscored safety and security as a central theme in the development and execution of Calgary's parks policies. Concerns included issues like litter, animal waste, drug paraphernalia, drug and alcohol use, the presence of unhoused populations, graffiti, speed limits on pathways, off-leash dogs and user conflict. Respondents emphasized the importance of enforcement, suggesting strategies such as increasing the presence of park-specific bylaw officers and Calgary Police Services, enforcing fines, enhancing the reporting system, and collaborating with social service agencies and community groups. Some participants proposed design-oriented safety measures, advocating for improved park designs during planning, increased lighting, and the installation of CCTV.

However, some respondents voiced apprehensions about this policy direction, especially increased police presence, expressing discomfort with this form of enforcement. Others opposed the use of hostile architecture for safety improvement and emphasized the need for affordable housing options, education and increased support for the unhoused population. Some questioned the effectiveness of measures like unhoused removal, fines, signage, and police presence.

Verbatim comments

- *Parks need to feel safe, be safe and clean for people to use them. Citizens shouldn't have to worry about their safety or that of their children when going to parks.*
- *Policy direction 4 in this section is of utmost importance. Everything else that is done to create amazing parks in the City, won't be used if we feel unsafe!*
- *No encampments allowed in parks! They're public places so they can be used by everyone for their intended purpose they are not meant to be living spaces and allowing encampment reduces both the actual safety and perception of safety.*
- *PD4. "Encampment issues" could be lightened with the implementation of other services. All people deserve to be safe in parks including those without a house. I do not want CPS presence in parks! Parks specific bylaw officers focused on education is good*
- *4 - this needs to be paired with the city's commitment to providing supports for vulnerable populations instead of policing people who have no options. I support enforcement of bylaws pertaining to respect of the land (ex. keeping dogs on leash).*
- *I don't like the idea of having parks being policed and I don't think we should kick people out of encampments. And I don't like antihomelessness design, it's dehumanizing and worse for everyone else's use as well (especially metal benches)*
- *With affordable housing and ensuring all citizens have a home, a lot of our social issues will be resolved. We must have that goal in the forefront of any planning. .*

IMPROVED MAINTENANCE

The second most prevalent theme among participant responses highlighted the need for enhanced park maintenance and amenities. Suggestions encompassed general maintenance improvements for park facilities, such as pathways and washrooms, along with specific considerations for greenery and the tree canopy. Respondents proposed various tactics to achieve this objective, including ongoing collaboration with other City

business units, local businesses, and community groups. Additionally, recommendations were made to transition towards more natural park spaces and to increase education and signage efforts in support of this direction.

A small number of respondents stated that they had concerns about standardization and the development of natural park spaces to achieve these directions. While some acknowledged the benefits of standardization for improving maintenance, they emphasized that the one-size-fits-all approach would not work and that levels of service and standardization need to be tailored to each park depending on its size, usage, location and purpose.

Verbatim comments

- *Yes improve amenities, maintenance for parks in Neighbourhoods with increasing density. Provide signage for parks, this is not a frill. Signage on our responsibility to care for park is important… many do not know this. Park stewards helpful.*
- *Pathway management needs to be maintained to access design standards and clear of snow and ice (control).*
- *The urban forest is very neglected! Adequate maintenance is not visible! Dead and dying trees are common,*
- *Natural areas, the best thing about parks, do not require a whole lot of maintenance. Filling parks with facilities that do, are not the best use of resources. These types of facilities should be located in and maintained by Community Associations.*
- *Education. School field trips with passionate and knowledgeable leadership will create public ownership, pride and care for outdoor spaces.*
- *Campaign to public to keep parks and green spaces litter and dog poop free. Increased fines. Because I live next door to a green space which is neglected, they should get some increased attention too.*
- *different parks / park types / park use need different attention, again 'standardize' sounds rather ominous... park rules need to keep them available for all citizens, trimming vegetation for safety needs to happen more...*

ECONOMICALLY SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT AND MANAGEMENT

Some participants stressed the importance of economically sustainable approaches in park development and management, highlighting the significance of adequate funding, prudent spending, and environmentally sustainable design practices. Proposed solutions varied from renting out park spaces and equipment to facilitating more vendor opportunities and fostering partnerships with local businesses.

However, concerns were raised regarding the economic impact of this policy objective. Some respondents voiced concerns about potential outcomes such as citizens being required to pay registration and parking fees for park use, the sale of park space as a funding source, potential tax increases, and insufficient park funding to fulfill these objectives.

Verbatim comments

- *Consider parks both individually and as part of a network - each one doesn't need to be all things to all people or for all goals. More investment, and sustained investment beyond capital investment is absolutely necessary.*

- *Get Park Sponsorships… partner with local companies to pay to have their names associated with parks. (Not only is it a revenue stream, but if it's a local company, those companies can do employee volunteering in the park)*
- *I don't think the city should be regularly spending money making upgrades that aren't really needed. Sure they should do it when there is a need for it, like being end of life, or being super underutilized but other than that it's not really needed.*
- *Increased security & sustainable approach to park funding ideal but not practical at this time. City of Calgary has several issues requiring lots of financial resources & time. low priority to allocate funds & resources to Calgary parks*
- *a city park is a CITY PARK. the city must not be able to sell off parts of parkland for park maintenance. We pay taxes! Some revenues can be derived from sponsorship, i.e. installation of memory benches, the music themed section at Glenmore South.*

Fair Entry

Again, while a few Fair Entry applicants shared their appreciation for what this would look like in Calgary, others commented that more housing was important. One participant commented that lighting was needed when considering policy direction #4.

- *People need homes to live in not parks.*
- *More housing so people aren't sleeping in parks.*

Racialized and Newcomer

Question 1: Please share your thoughts about Goal 4: Manage and Maintain. Do you have any suggestions we should take into consideration when developing this goal?

The feedback gathered for Goal 4: Manage and Maintain closely mirrored responses from other discussions, emphasizing themes related to enhanced maintenance, economically sustainable management practices and safety and security. A summary of the key considerations shared by respondents is provided below.

IMPROVED MAINTENANCE

Responses from Action Dignity participants concentrated on enhancing overall maintenance practices, echoing concerns expressed by other groups. Their feedback centered on increasing personnel, utilizing volunteer groups, addressing general cleanliness, managing litter, pest control, maintaining washrooms, and greenery upkeep. Participants stressed the importance of more signage and educational efforts for both the community and parks staff, specifically highlighting the need for incorporating multi-lingual and multi-cultural elements.

ECONOMICALLY SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT AND MANAGEMENT

Respondents suggested various tactics to achieve economically efficient and sustainable park management, such as integrating technology, utilizing waste management sensors, implementing smart irrigation systems, adopting energy-efficient lighting, and employing online platforms for maintenance issue reporting. Participants also recommended eco-friendly design principles, including naturalized landscaping techniques, water conservation measures, and the incorporation of green infrastructure. Some respondents proposed fundraising campaigns, charity events, and donation drives as effective ways to generate funds, while others emphasized considering increased density and usage during the design phase to prevent the future need for acquiring additional land and develop it to the same standard to accommodate growing park usage.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Participants emphasized the importance of improved safety and security for all park users. Focus group members discussed various tactics to enhance safety, such as increasing the presence of park staff and police, enforcing bylaws with fines, designating areas for alcohol consumption, and developing emergency response plans for natural disasters or other threats. Respondents also expressed concerns about ensuring that park staff receive proper training, so they have cultural awareness and to treat Racialized park users with respect.

Question 2: Do any of these policies have the risk of creating inequity for diverse ethno-cultural communities in Calgary? If yes, please explain. Any suggested solutions?

In general, respondents echoed similar themes to those previously mentioned regarding diverse community needs and stressed the importance of continuous community engagement to avoid perpetuating inequities for racialized and newcomer communities. However, they stressed that language barriers, cultural nuances, and time-constraints could act as barriers to members of the community. Two specific themes emerged prominently during the focus group discussions on this goal, which are outlined below.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION

Action Dignity participants stressed the need for continuous, strategic education and communication with racialized and newcomer communities to ensure their inclusion and support. Respondents highlighted potential language barriers that could impede the achievement of these goals and recommended the use of multilingual communication strategies. They emphasized the inadequacy of signboards in reaching these communities and cautioned against assuming universal access to technology, as it may unintentionally exclude individuals with limited digital literacy or access to smart devices, creating a digital divide in accessing maintenance information and reporting issues.

REPRESENTATION IN DECISION-MAKING

In discussions with Action Dignity focus groups, the emphasis was on the need for collaboration with Racialized and newcomer groups, especially advocating for greater representation in decision-making processes to ensure that diverse perspectives are taken into consideration. Suggestions to address this involved consulting with community representatives, leveraging community leaders to disseminate information and encouraging diverse representation on Boards, Committees, and Commissions that are involved in park management practices. Participants shared that by taking these measures The City would promote an environment of inclusivity and belonging in Calgary's parks.

Section 3: Parks, points and principles

The third section on the portal page, and presented to other audiences in various ways, was intended to understand which Guiding Principles participants felt were the most important based on their values.

Question: How would you support the guiding principles?
We want to know how you would value our guiding principles. You have ten points to allocate to the different principles. You can use them all on one principle or spread them out according to which ones you want to support. You must use a minimum of five points before you can submit.

Responses varied based on the forum used to collect feedback. As a result, this information is reported separately below.

Overall, the Guiding Principles that received the most support were Safety and security, Conservation and Protection of the Environment and Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing.

The Guiding Principles that received the most support on the Portal Page were Conservation and Protection of the Environment, Connectivity for People and Wildlife and Climate Resilience.



For Action Dignity respondents and participants at Open Houses, the Guiding Principles that received the most support were Safety and Security, Conservation and Protection of the Environment and Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing.

Due to variation in facilitation, a small number of participants engaged through Action Dignity ranked the 10 Guiding Principles from 1 to 10 instead of allotting points. In order of most ranked to least ranked the results were: Economic resiliency; Innovation; Climate resilience; Cultural landscapes and sacred spaces; Connectivity for people and wildlife; Inclusive and accessible parks; Conservation and protection of the environment; Supporting communities; Physical and mental health and wellbeing; and Safety and security.

Another small number of Action Dignity respondents rated the proposed guiding principles out of 10, the results of those responses in order highest rated to lowest rated are: Connectivity for people and wildlife; Inclusive and accessible parks; Physical and mental health and wellbeing; Safety and security; Conservation and protection of the environment; Innovation; Climate resilience; Economic resiliency; Supporting communities; and Cultural landscapes and sacred spaces.

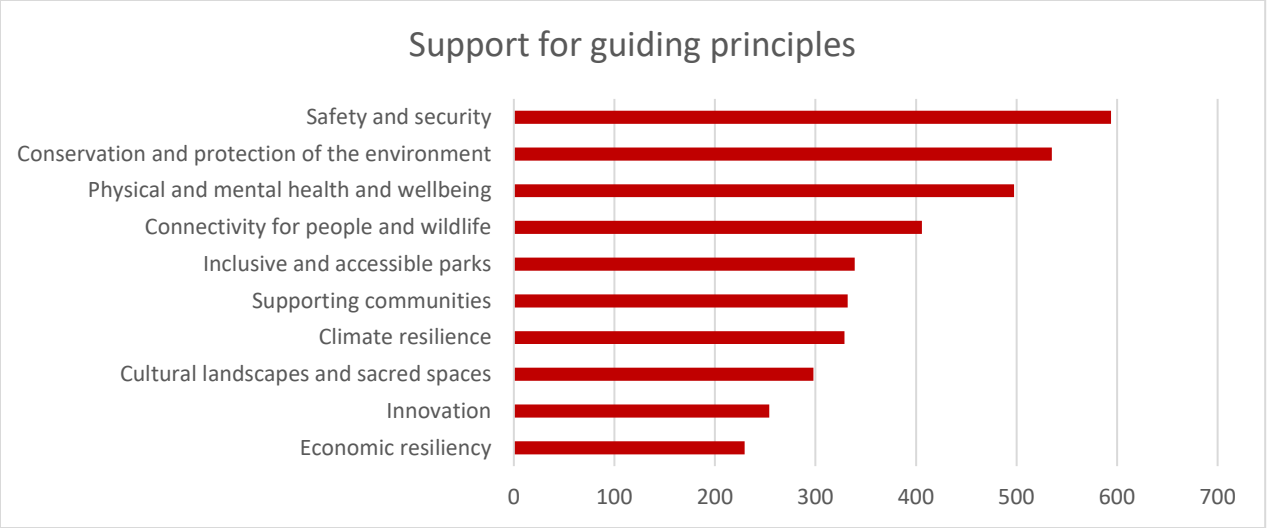


Figure 7 *Support for guiding principles – All Inputs*

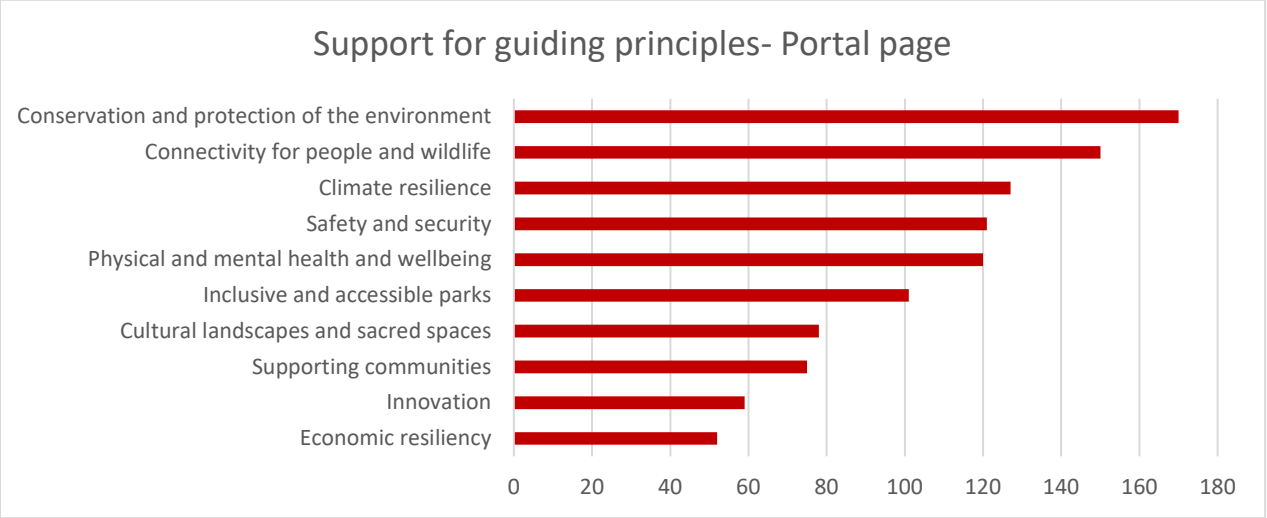


Figure 8 *Support for guiding principles - Portal*

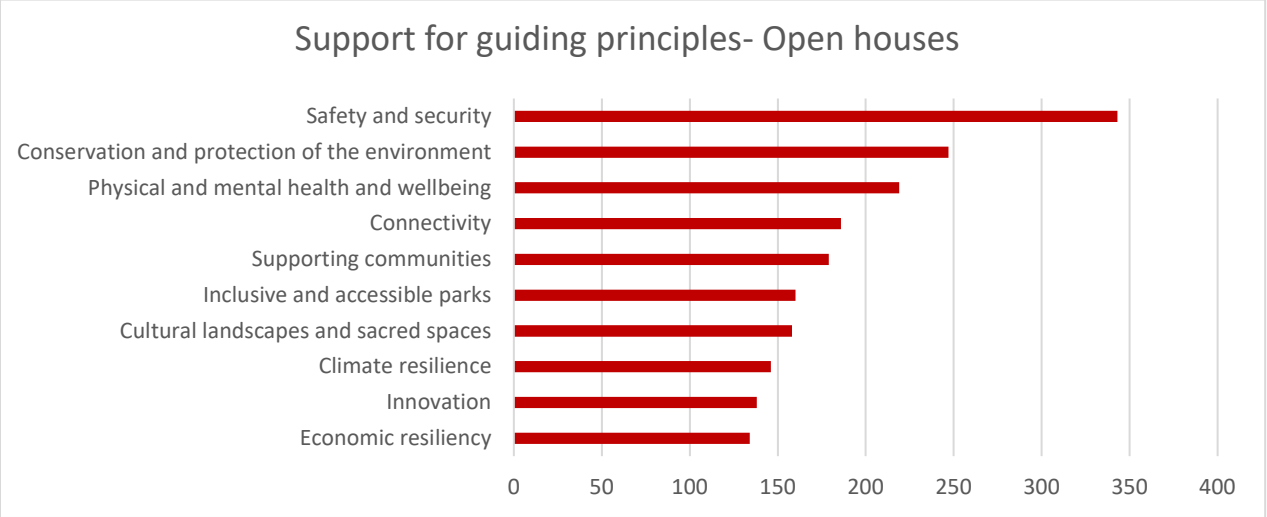


Figure 9 *Support for guiding principles – Open Houses*



Figure 10 *Support for guiding principles – Action Dignity*

Summary of themes from open houses and portal

Goal	*Themes*	*Sub-themes*	*Sub-sub-themes*
Goal 1	***Environmental preservation***	Protection of important ecological areas	Protection from development Protection from sale Protection from human impact Protection from pets
		Tree canopy	Protect existing tree canopy Increase tree canopy Planting fruit trees
		Protection of specific park areas	Glenmore Landing Nose Creek Weaselhead
	Naturalization and ecological management	Support for naturalization	Enhanced biodiversity Planting native species Naturalization in all types of parks, including recreational Support for natural park spaces
		Considerations around Calgary's ecosystem	Prairie climate Climate change
		Concerns about naturalization	Aesthetic appeal Spread of noxious weeds Application to public property only Maintenance and upkeep Effectiveness next to roadways
	Park management and maintenance	Improved management and maintenance	
		Environmentally responsible management tactics	Removing cement and asphalt/Increasing green spaces Increasing use of green energy Protecting water sources Organic weed control
		Community engagement	Education Programming Campaigns Collaborative partnerships
		Cost effective and economically responsible management	
	Park planning and development	Park planning considerations	Reducing sprawl Balancing densification Minimum requirements in new communities Unequal distribution of parks Thoughtful location planning Increasing setbacks

Goal	*Themes*	*Sub-themes*	*Sub-sub-themes*
		Putting the environment first in planning decisions	
Goal 2	**Thoughtful park design**	High quality, community focused parks	Amenities and multi-use spaces that will be utilized Increasing vendor opportunities Conducting community engagement
		Conservation of natural park spaces	Naturalization and biodiversity Minimal human impact Balancing natural green space and infrastructure
		Concerns over park planning and policy directions	Will lead to small, poor quality parks Conflict between centrality and natural landscape General concerns over
		Disagreement with redevelopment of park spaces	Destruction of existing parks and natural green spaces Loss of park space to sale/development Cost of redevelopment and efficiency
	C*onnectivity*	Increased connectivity of parks for people and wildlife	Support for linear parks Improve pathway system
		Improve Accessibility	5A network Transit access
		Concerns over increased connectivity	Incompatibility between Goal 1 and 2 Increased pollution Social disorder
	Park growth	Planning considerations	Increased variety of parks Underserved communities 400 meters Integration into city planning
		Support for park growth	Increasing size of parks Increasing quantity of pars
		Concerns for park growth	Contribution to urban sprawl Minimum size requirements prevent smaller park development
	General Concerns	Protection of green spaces from sale, development, re-development and densification	
		Improved park management and safety	Unhoused and encampments Bylaw enforcement Hazards
		Improved park maintenance	
		Economic responsibility	Increased costs Efficiency of policies

Goal	*Themes*	*Sub-themes*	*Sub-sub-themes*
Goal 3	***Improved Park Amenities and Infrastructure***	More amenities	Garbage cans Tables Benches Fire pits Signage Community gardens Active recreation and playgrounds Water features
		Improve Infrastructure	Washrooms Shaded structures Access to water Lighting
		Accessible designs and multi-use spaces	Multi-cultural Multi-generational Variety in park designs and amenities
		Improved maintenance of amenities and infrastructure	
		Concerns	Incompatibility of amenities and accessibility with Goal 1 Increased costs
	Community engagement	Increase community engagement opportunities	Consultation Education Campaigns Incentives Park sponsorship
		Increase volunteer opportunities	Community groups Cultural groups Sports groups Youth groups Unhoused
		Concerns	Clarification needed on roles and responsibilities of volunteers Shifting responsibility from The City Lack of volunteers Safety of volunteers
	Standardization	Design standards considerations	Support for minimum provisions Will result in increased inclusivity Will result in cost efficiency Does not support hostile architecture
		Concerns	Will result in “cookie-cutter” parks Differing needs of parks depending on use Negative impact of standardization on natural parks
	Economic Considerations	Economic resiliency	Increase vendor opportunities Improve cost efficiency Improve funding for parks

Goal	*Themes*	*Sub-themes*	*Sub-sub-themes*
	Booking System	Concerns and confusion regarding booking system	Purpose of booking system Inability to access parks without registering Increased costs for Calgarians and park users Improving existing system
	General concerns	Safety and Enforcement User-conflict	Vandalism Unhoused population and encampments Bylaw enforcement Security Safety and speed on paths Off-leash dogs
Goal 4	**Safety and security**	Improved safety and user-conflict	Unhoused population Litter Graffiti Speed limits on pathways Cyclists Off-leash dogs
		Enforcement Tactics	Bylaw officers and enforcement Collaboration with CPS Increased fines Improved reporting methods Collaboration with social service agencies
		Thoughtful park design	Improving park layouts Increasing lighting CCTV Installation Increase signage No hostile architecture
		Concerns	CPS presence will deter park users Effectiveness of the proposed policy directions Education is needed Need for affordable housing and proper supports
	Park development and economic considerations	Financial investment in parks	Economic resiliency Park funding requirements
		Continued protection and investment in park network	
		Concerns	Increased taxes Park user fees Selling parks as an economic strategy Ongoing park funding

Table 5 *Emergent themes from Connect Event Series*

Advisory Committee Meetings

Social Wellbeing Committee

On Wednesday, October 18, 2023, the team met virtually with this committee which is comprised of members of the following unique committees:

- Social Wellbeing Advisory Committee
- Gender Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Subcommittee
- Advisory Committee on Accessibility
- Access Design Subcommittee
- Older Adult Advisory Table

Following the presentation, committee members asked questions regarding the capacity to achieve all the proposed directions and guiding principles, clarification regarding some of the terms used, and how parks will support and celebrate Calgary's multicultural population. The suggestion was made to provide definitions for terms that are not well known or understood, such as economic resilience and inclusion.

Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee

The Parks and Engage team attended the Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee meeting on October 10, 2023, to share insights from the first phase of engagement and report back on the ways in which their feedback had impacted the proposed guiding principles and policy directions. The committee received this information and offered feedback on the City's relationship-building with Indigenous Peoples. Recommendations included being careful in how information is presented and avoiding terms like "validate," as they may support a colonial framework that doesn't fully value lived experiences and Indigenous knowledge. Instead, focus on using language that respects these experiences and prioritize trauma-informed communication. When making presentations, consider using the medicine wheel as a framework to better align with Indigenous holistic approaches, moving away from relying solely on graphs.

While the Parks team received commendation for their relationship-building efforts since the first phase, the Committee stressed the need for an ongoing commitment to reconciliation in meaningful ways. They suggested organizing an annual summit and ensuring continuous community engagement led by Indigenous voices, including the Metis community. Recognizing the importance of having a full-time Indigenous representative on the team, they emphasized its value in strengthening relationships and fostering better collaboration.

Finally, The Committee asked for clarification on the land-use studies that the Parks Cultural Landscapes team had been conducting and were advised that the team went to the surrounding Nations to gather further information on land and important sites, and each of the Nations are completing these studies themselves. They also advised that the short timeline between phase 3 of engagement and the presentation to City Council may need to be reconsidered.

Anti-racism Committee

The team participated in a meeting of the Anti-Racism Action Committee on October 12, 2023. During the meeting, they presented the results from phase 1 of engagement along with the proposed guiding principles and policy directions for phase 2. Overall, the Committee did not provide specific suggestions or considerations regarding the information presented. However, they acknowledged and appreciated the equity-focused work carried out by the team in Phase 1 and the commitment to continuing this work in Phase 2. The Committee recommended that the team return later to share their findings and illustrate how these efforts have influenced the development of policies.

Climate Advisory Committee

The team engaged with members of the Climate Advisory Committee meeting on October 17, 2023, where several concerns and questions were raised regarding the Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan. Following the presentation, one question focused on addressing shade and cooling in areas not suitable for tree canopy, to which the response confirmed that integrating this into the policies is well within the scope of the parks plan. Another topic highlighted the need for a better understanding of resilience, with the Committee offering to assist, particularly regarding the impact of climate change on ecosystems, such as the effects of sustained drought on urban canopies. There was an emphasis on both human and ecological health and well-being, given their interconnected dependency. Integration of the Parks Plan across various plans within the city was identified as a fundamental goal.

The issue of preserving ecologically sensitive areas on the outskirts of Calgary was discussed, confirming Parks' collaboration with Climate to build a future ecological network. This involves integrating the parks plan into the municipal network plan, while being mindful of ecological mapping and reserves. The necessity of expanding and utilizing cycling infrastructure was also underscored. Regarding future developments and landscape protection, alignment with the Parks and River Valley Project was highlighted, which involves reviewing setbacks through land use bylaws and implementing development setbacks for the overall health and well-being of Calgarians.

The Committee posed questions relating to the implementation of new principles, such as Innovation and Safety & Security, the plan is expected to provide guidance on various approaches. Safety concerns, including user conflict and feelings of insecurity, will be addressed through collaboration with CPS and social service agencies. The importance of education-first enforcement, design principles, and park activation in addressing Safety & Security concerns will be emphasized, recognizing the need to navigate unforeseen challenges that weren't initially part of the plan's scope but are crucial issues for Calgarians.

External Workshops and Meetings

Environment Workshop

October 24, 2023 (9:30 – 11:30 a.m.)

Overall, the discussion reflected a concern for maintaining the delicate balance between urban development and environmental preservation, with a focus on community engagement, education, and safety in park management.

Ice Breaker:

- The importance of separating users in parks to reduce conflicts was highlighted.
- A suggestion is made for a larger buffer with wetlands to minimize potential issues.
- Parks are seen as frontline defenders in maintaining the environment.
- The notion that once a city is established, true nature might no longer exist is discussed.
- Acknowledgment of the correctness of the council directive to increase tree canopy.
- Observations about Calgary having a "fake forest," and the historical lack of trees in the city are mentioned.

Guiding Principles:

- The need for enhanced connectivity and safe pathways for wildlife is emphasized.
- Signage and education efforts should be more prominent, addressing issues like not feeding ducks.
- Climate considerations are discussed, emphasizing the importance of protecting wetlands and drainage.
- Recognition that water management has evolved and will continue to change over time.
- Connectivity is crucial for wildlife, with a call to create pathways for them both into and out of the city.
- Safety and security concerns are raised, particularly regarding the impact of BBQ pits on animals, emphasizing the need for proper waste disposal and bins.

Goals:

- Questions are raised about the benefits of densification for older communities, and whether some of it could be redirected to parks and green spaces.
- The importance of community engagement and education, with a focus on enforcement, is emphasized.
- The idea of park volunteers, wardens, and stewardship programs is suggested.
- Concerns are expressed about issues such as encampments, dark pathways, and the need for addressing safety concerns in parks.

Community Builders Workshop

November 9, 2023 (10 a.m. – Noon)

Overall, the workshop produced a comprehensive discussion on park planning, including environmental considerations, community engagement, funding challenges, and the balance between development and maintenance.

Mandate and Community Projects:

- The organization's mandate may shift to naturalized areas if aligned with environmental goals and community projects.
- Specifics about a community project, the Murdoch Park Project, in collaboration with the Calgary Foundation are discussed.

- Funding for the project is sourced from the stormwater group.
- Emphasis is placed on low-maintenance developments due to limited manpower.

Resilience Plantings and Inclusive Planning:
- Resilience plantings, inclusive of wildlife habitats, are prioritized.
- Considerations for safety, security, and inclusivity in park design are discussed, with attention to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.
- Challenges related to inappropriate use of public spaces and safety issues are raised.

Cultural Landscapes:
- Interest is expressed in having access to planting guidelines significant to Indigenous groups.
- Challenges related to maintaining certain Indigenous plants are acknowledged.

Supporting Communities:
- A capital sustainment fund is proposed to address damages and replacements caused by third-party damage.
- Questions are raised about parkland requirements for new community developments.

Goal 1 - Naturalization and Funding:
- Challenges with naturalization projects, particularly regarding costs, are highlighted.
- Fundraising difficulties for naturalization projects are discussed, with a preference for stories emphasizing community needs.

Goal 2 - Community Involvement and Spatial Mapping:
- The sustainability of developments and the role of community associations in the process are questioned.
- The use of spatial mapping tools and Equity Index Maps for developing underused spaces is discussed.

Goal 3 - Washrooms and Multigenerational Parks:
- The need for a cost analysis on permanent, temporary, or no washrooms is raised.
- Considerations for multigenerational parks, including adolescents, are emphasized.

Goal 4 - Maintenance and Funding Opportunities:
- Questions about handling overflowing garbage cans and reporting maintenance issues are discussed.
- Concerns about resource allocation and equity in addressing community needs are raised.
- The potential for public-private partnerships (P4) is considered for funding opportunities, with a focus on long-term plans and community stewardship

Development Industry Workshop

November 7, 2023 (2 – 4 p.m.)

Overall, the notes reflect a detailed discussion about the challenges, considerations, and potential implications of the organization's plan, with a focus on practical implementation, affordability, and environmental impact.

Goal 1 - Naturalization of Boulevards:
- Concerns are raised about the challenges in increasing naturalization due to poor soil, lack of water, and poorly executed planting.

- Technical complications are highlighted, and the need for caution in sharing ideas with the design world is emphasized.
- The balance between great ideas and practical, cost-effective solutions is discussed.
- Potential unintended consequences, such as a bigger footprint, and the need to balance with affordable housing are considered.

Goal 2 - Implementation and Affordability:

- Questions are raised about how the implementation is being followed through, particularly regarding affordability.
- Lack of information on affordability considerations in the plan is noted.
- The importance of providing detailed information, numbers, and specifications for easier understanding is emphasized.

Goal 4 - Funding and Affordability:

- Concerns are expressed about who will pay for the initiatives – the city, developers, or end-users.
- The goal of becoming an affordable city is discussed.
- Suggestions are made for an in-person workshop for better discussion and understanding.

Discussion:

- Questions are raised about washrooms and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), and concerns are expressed about investing in facilities that may later be closed.
- The reconciliation of CPTED with naturalization and potential conflicts between recreational, environmental, and naturalized areas are discussed.
- Questions about the development of school sites and associated parks are posed.
- Concerns are raised about the sharing of information within the organization, particularly with those making decisions or working in the field.

Chat:

- Questions and answers are exchanged regarding the alignment of the new Parks Plan with the existing City Open Space Plan, particularly regarding stormwater management facilities.
- A comment is made about the need for a stormwater-focused discussion and whether drought tolerance could eliminate the need for irrigation.

Alberta Health Services

December 4, 2023 (2 – 3:30 p.m.)

Overall, the notes reflect a range of considerations related to park design, access, facilities, cultural aspects, and safety policies, indicating a comprehensive and community-focused approach to park planning.

Artificial Shade Canopies: There's a query about whether the exploration included artificial shade canopies for parks.
Dual Purpose of Winter/Summer Mental and Physical Well Being: There's a mention of a dual purpose, possibly related to both winter and summer wellbeing.
400m Designate: A question is posed about the rationale behind designating 400 meters, but the purpose or context of this measurement is not clarified.
Park Access and Pathways: Concerns are raised about park access, emphasizing that pathways are sometimes more critical than the park itself.

Drinking Water and Facilities: Questions are asked about the provision of potable drinking stations and washrooms in parks.
Green Line and Construction Impact: Inquiries are made about the potential impact of Green Line construction on parks.
Placemaking in Parks: Positive feedback is given about the concept of placemaking in parks.
Parameters Defining Parks/Green Spaces: A question is raised about the parameters that define a park or green space.
Health Equity: The importance of health equity in green spaces is highlighted, questioning if there's a specific plan for areas lacking greenery.
Cultural Landscapes and Traditional Spaces: Interest is expressed in understanding how Cultural Landscapes and Traditional Spaces are integrated into the parks plan.
Environmental Safety: There's a query about policies addressing environmental safety within the parks.
Behavioral Policies: Questions are raised about policies regarding behaviors in parks, including concerns about illicit substances, alcohol, and smoking.
AHS (Alberta Health Services) Coordination: Reference is made to AHS (Alberta Health Services) coordinating substance use at events, and whether the parks plan could adopt similar measures.

On-line Coffee and Conversations

Tuesday, October 17 (Noon – 1 p.m.)

Overall, there is a strong desire for meaningful engagement, where people want to talk to others, be listened to, and feel empowered to make a difference. The discussion highlighted various concerns related to communication, transparency, safety, funding disparities, and engagement processes within the context of city planning and community involvement.

Concerns About the Decision-Making Process: Participants expressed concerns about a perceived gap in the decision-making process where decision-makers seem too distant from those who genuinely care and want to make positive changes in the city.

Landlord/Tenant Relationship: There is the sentiment that despite being called partners with the city, they are more in a landlord/tenant relationship. Safety, security, and maintenance issues were cited, including concerns about tall grass affecting player safety. The league cut the grass themselves, incurring an $800 cost. Incidents like porta-potties being set on fire raised safety concerns. The league had to cover the costs, highlighting a lack of communication and transparency. There were frustrations expressed with the lack of support and understanding for baseball assets, as well as issues with the permit process and a perceived lack of partnership with the city.

Funding Disparities for Determined Sports: Concerns were raised about the lack of funding opportunities for established sports compared to emerging sports. Maintenance for determined sports appears to be falling behind, while others receive additional opportunities.

Issues with the Access Process and Parking: There are concerns about the process hindering voices and a lack of consultation and control. Access to parks is a recurring concern, and parking is highlighted as a contentious issue. One participant's concerns include difficulties in finding information and understanding next steps, particularly regarding a parking lot issue.

Tuesday, October 24 (Noon – 1 p.m.)

The discussion included thoughtful consideration of various aspects, from policy alignment and public participation to the integration of past data and the promotion of biodiversity and naturalization.

Desire for a Unified Citywide Policy and Alignments: There is a call for a cohesive policy that spans across the entire City of Calgary, ensuring consistency in approach. Concerns are raised about how various plans and policies fit together, and whether there's a worry about over-engagement with the three phases of the parks plan. The Biodiversity Strategy is noted to be outdated by a decade, and there's a query about whether the parks plan will serve as a conduit for updating this work. Questions are also raised about how the parks plan might impact the Wildlife Management Plan

Sources of Parks Data: A suggestion is made to establish a comprehensive repository of parks data, including documents dating back to the 1950s, to facilitate public review. Inquiry about whether past documents are publicly accessible, as well as the importance of data collection, open-source approaches, and even citizen science is emphasized.

Planting of Fruit Trees and Tree Types: Inquiry about whether the plan addresses the planting of fruit trees in parks, and if there are considerations to limit certain types of trees.

Shift in Thinking: There's a question about whether the plan reflects a shift in thinking about the use of cemeteries, suggesting potential alternative uses such as nature reserves or recreation areas.

Will the plan envision more naturalization, reduced mowing, and increased focus on pollinator gardens?

The suggestion is made to incorporate nature observation stations, such as boardwalks, observatory towers, and viewing blinds, inspired by examples like Quebec parks. Positive examples, like Elliston Park and the Inglewood Viewing Bridge, are highlighted as models for creating amenities for the observation of animals.

Youth Engagement

Guiding Principles

Are the things most important to you for Calgary's parks reflected in this list?
Mount Royal and West Island College students expressed satisfaction with the list of priorities for Calgary's parks, noting the inclusion of environmental protection, supporting communities, safety and security, and cultural celebration. While a few respondents highlighted concerns about specific aspects like recreation and wildlife encounters, the majority affirmed that the list comprehensively addresses various issues related to park accessibility, inclusivity, and environmental conservation. One student disagreed, emphasizing that they prefer when green spaces are left completely natural.

Are there any principles that you disagree with? Why?
Mount Royal and West Island College students generally agreed with the listed principles for Calgary's parks, emphasizing the overall relevance and applicability of these principles to a diverse range of citizens. Some respondents raised concerns about the implementation of supporting communities and safety and security. Two respondents raised concerns regarding ensuring safety and security, questioning the methods and what constitutes safety. Overall, respondents found the principles aligned with their expectations for an ideal park, with some expressing minor reservations about specific naming conventions.

Are there any guiding principles that you feel are missing, and should be added?
Overall, West Island College and Mount Royal Students felt that the guiding principles were comprehensive, but highlighted several areas they believed were missing. These included addressing issues of overcrowding, seasonal park offerings, support for Calgary's unhoused population, vendor opportunities, and increased education and guidelines for park usage. The most common theme among students suggested a greater focus on sports and active living, including increasing access to multi-use spaces and diverse infrastructure within parks and enhancing sports programs for both children and adults.

Goal 1: Protect and Enhance

Tell us what you think about this bucket of policies. What do you like? What do you not like?
Is there a policy direction you think is missing, that would help achieve the intended goal?
What parameters would you put on any of these policies?

Respondents at Mount Royal University and Bishop Caroll High School appreciated the emphasis on preserving the ecological network and planning the community around it, increasing the tree canopy, integrating naturalization efforts into municipal areas and moving away from vehicle-centric infrastructure. However, concerns were raised about the broadness of the policies, with a desire for more specificity, particularly regarding the potential financial, political, and social implications.
One respondent suggested the need for a policy direction involving fees for diverse, expensive parks to address the balance between natural preservation and increased use. Others raised concerns about the lack of protection for current parks, the absence of a wildlife element, and the need for policies specifying land use restrictions, enforced by bylaw officers. One respondent stated that there were no missing directions in the proposed policies.

Respondents emphasized that naturalization efforts focus on sparse areas and industrialized zones, responses were split between focusing on older communities and newer developments. Concerns were raised about the potential risks and safety implications of reintroducing wildlife in urban areas. Regarding xeriscaping, respondents advocated for its application in areas with fewer space restrictions and concerns about water damage. Respondents advocated for more greenery in higher populated areas like downtown.

Goal 2: Connect and Grow

Tell us what you think about this bucket of policies. What do you like? What do you not like? Is there a policy direction you think is missing, that would help achieve the intended goal? What parameters would you put on any of these policies?

Mount Royal and Bishop Caroll students liked the idea of developing underutilized parks and making spaces multifunctional, emphasizing improved accessibility and connectivity especially in underserved areas. However, concerns were raised about the necessity of a minimum park size in development, arguing that it could discourage park creation and negatively impact house prices. While respondents acknowledged the positive aspects of connectivity and inclusiveness, they also noted the absence of solutions for balancing the rights and safety of unhoused people.

Respondents generally felt that the proposed policies adequately covered the necessary aspects to connect and grow parks and communities. However, concerns were raised about the absence of policies addressing wildlife connectivity, park names and responsibilities, and the need for specific policies focusing on community programming and park upkeep to enhance attendance. Additionally, there is a suggestion for policies that create more specifically designed parks, catering to the needs of underrepresented sports like ski and snowboard freestyle parks and mountain bike trails.

Students proposed that the policies be implemented in areas like Northeast Calgary with less accessible Parks and Recreation to enhance accessibility. They emphasized conducting population surveys to align parks are aligned with the needs and wants of the community. Additionally, there is a call for different policies between downtown and suburban areas, highlighting the importance of considering factors like wildlife connectivity and the natural preservation of spaces based on location.

Goal 3: Include and Support

Tell us what you think about this bucket of policies. What do you like? What do you not like? Is there a policy direction you think is missing, that would help achieve the intended goal? What parameters would you put on any of these policies?

Mount Royal and Bishop Caroll students expressed appreciation for the multigenerational and multi-use aspects of the policies, emphasizing the positive aspects of accessibility and usability and increased awareness through social media. They recommended making park booking more intuitive and expressed interest in increased amenities like bathrooms, benches, and accessible spaces in all parks. However, they outlined concerns regarding the safety and maintenance of washrooms in parks.

Overall, students felt that nothing was missing from the proposed policies but suggested that different forms of promotion through posters and banners would be beneficial.

Respondents felt these policies should be applied in all parks to increase usage, with a special consideration for dog parks.

Goal 4: Manage and Maintain

Tell us what you think about this bucket of policies. What do you like? What do you not like? Is there a policy direction you think is missing, that would help achieve the intended goal? What parameters would you put on any of these policies?

Students from Bishop Caroll and Mount Royal appreciated the idea of standardizing park management, acknowledging the varied management and maintenance needs of different parks. They also appreciated that there would be efforts to collaborate with social service agencies and improve safety in parks. They felt that the proposed directions, specifically increased maintenance would lead to more job opportunities. However, one group did raise concerns over increased maintenance, expressing that this direction could lead to higher taxes and greater time constraints for Parks staff. There was strong support for increased signage and bylaw officers as proposed in Policy 4, but there were reservations about an increased police presence in parks. Concerns were raised regarding whether wealthier parks should be forced to meet a "minimum" standard, particularly regarding safety and security standards.

Students suggested that maintaining effective communication across all levels of employees, from garbage men to policy planners, is crucial for achieving the intended goal. Additionally, they felt that increased community involvement was needed, emphasizing that students could earn credits for volunteering.

Respondents suggested applying policy directions to ensure longevity and sustainability, particularly for underrepresented communities like the Northeast. They cautioned against the standardized levels of service, emphasizing the need for equitable distribution of resources and considering factors like park usage and community characteristics.

General Youth Questions

Tell us what you think about this bucket of policies.
Is there a policy you think is missing that would be better at achieving this goal? These questions were posed to students at West Island College, who stated that they appreciated the inclusive nature of the policy directions and emphasized that they would also benefit the environment. They felt that installing art pieces, heated enclosures and active recreation facilities, such as climbing structures, would be beneficial. One student emphasized a need for a greater focus on innovation.

If the results of the parks plan could be experienced immediately, how will you benefit from these policies as a teenager? Students at West Island College and Bishop Caroll High School were asked this question and emphasized that these policies would encourage greater usage among teenagers, encouraging them to go outside and experience parks and wildlife. They stated that this would greatly benefit their mental health during stressful periods, as well as their physical health if they are able to cycle and exercise in parks closer to their home. One group emphasized the benefits to the environment as climate change occurs, specifically mentioning the benefits of the tree canopy during droughts and other natural disasters.

How will you benefit from these policies in 20 years? Responses from students at West Island College and Bishop Caroll High School emphasized the benefits this would have for their future family as they would be able to spend time together in parks and enjoy nature together. They also expressed the positive impact this would have in creating a greater sense of community as there would be places for everyone to gather and spend time together.

Next steps

The draft plan is being developed based on the feedback received during Phase 2 of the public engagement and input from other internal and external interested parties. The draft plan will be presented to the public and other interested parties for comment as part of phase 3 of engagement to ensure it has adequately captured their feedback and to identify any major issues prior to final presentation to Council. Phase 3 engagement is scheduled to be held in late Spring 2023 and the final draft plan is scheduled to be put forward for Council consideration by the end of 2023.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Demographics

The graphs below reflect demographic data collected from 842 unique surveys including participants who engaged through the Portal Page, Action Dignity, Fair Entry and Youth Engagement. If participants chose to complete the survey, all demographic questions were also optional.

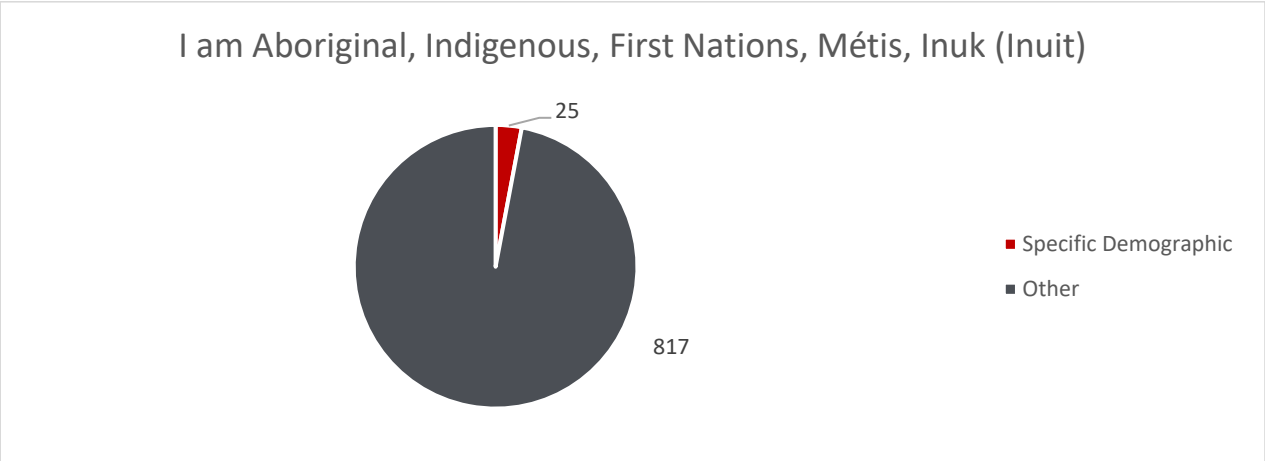


Figure 11 *Aboriginal, Indigenous, First Nations, Metis, Inuk (Inuit) demographics*

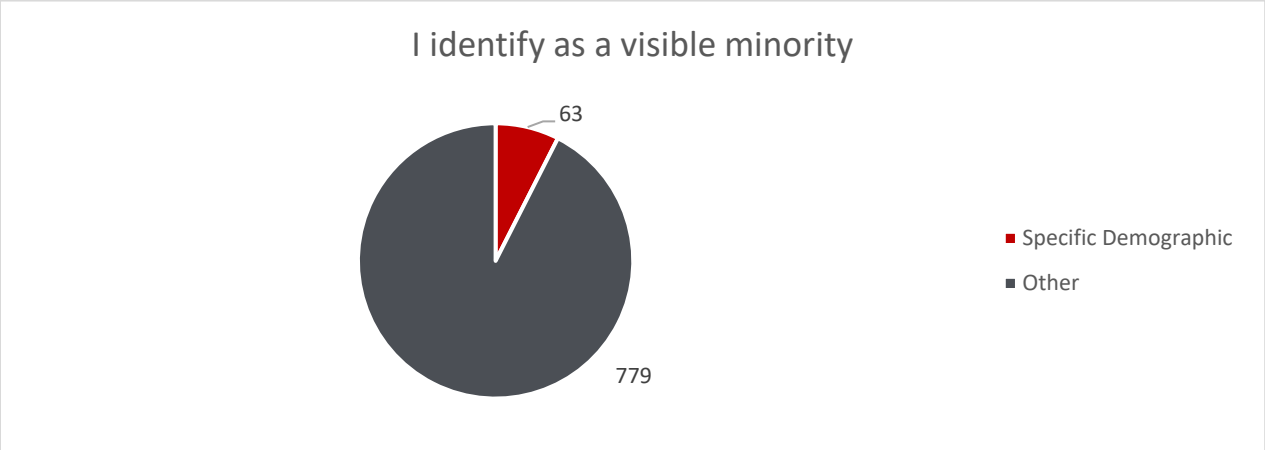


Figure 12 *Visible minority demographics*

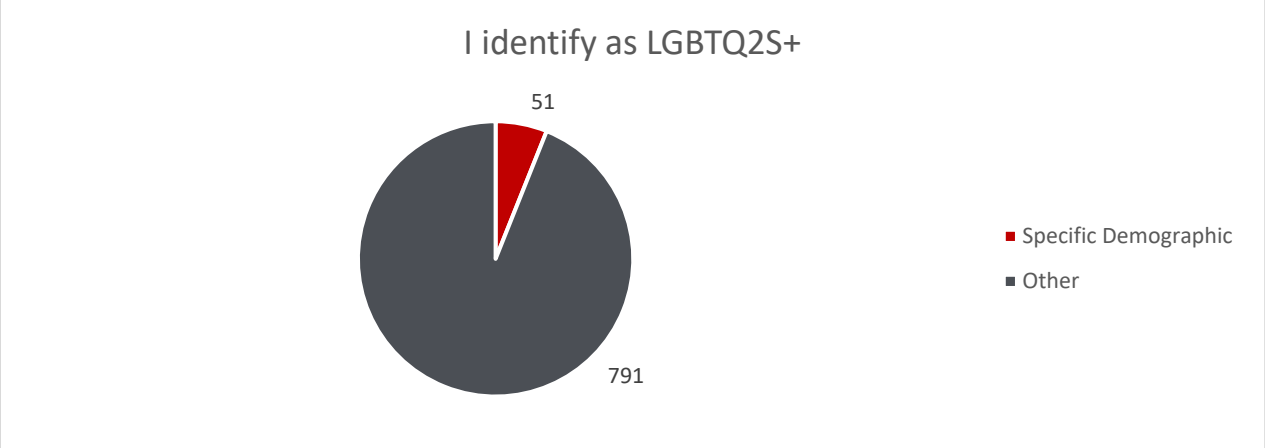


Figure 13 *LGBTQ2S+ demographics*

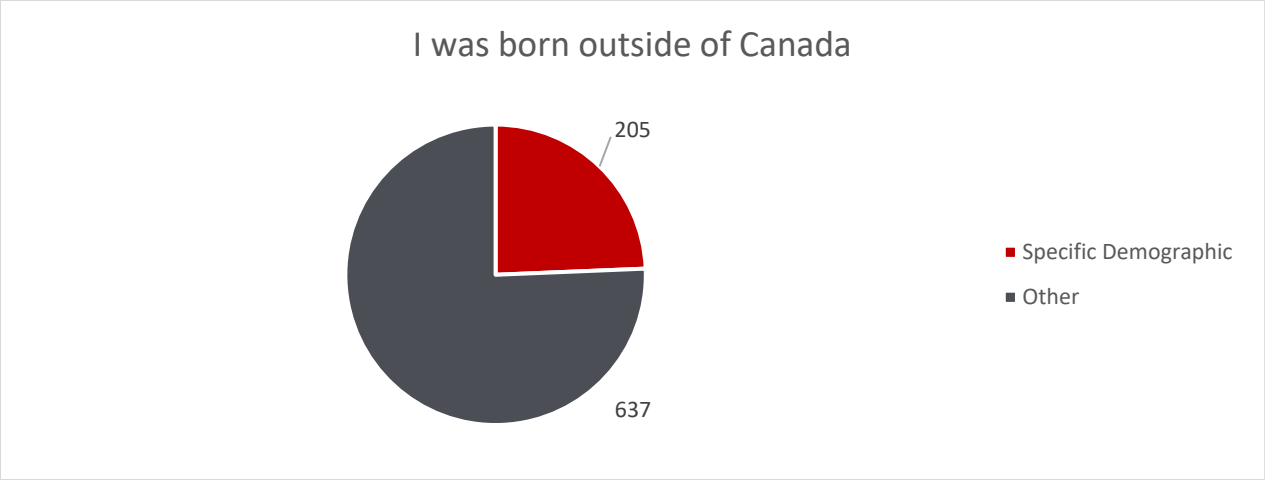


Figure 14 *Born outside Canada demographics*

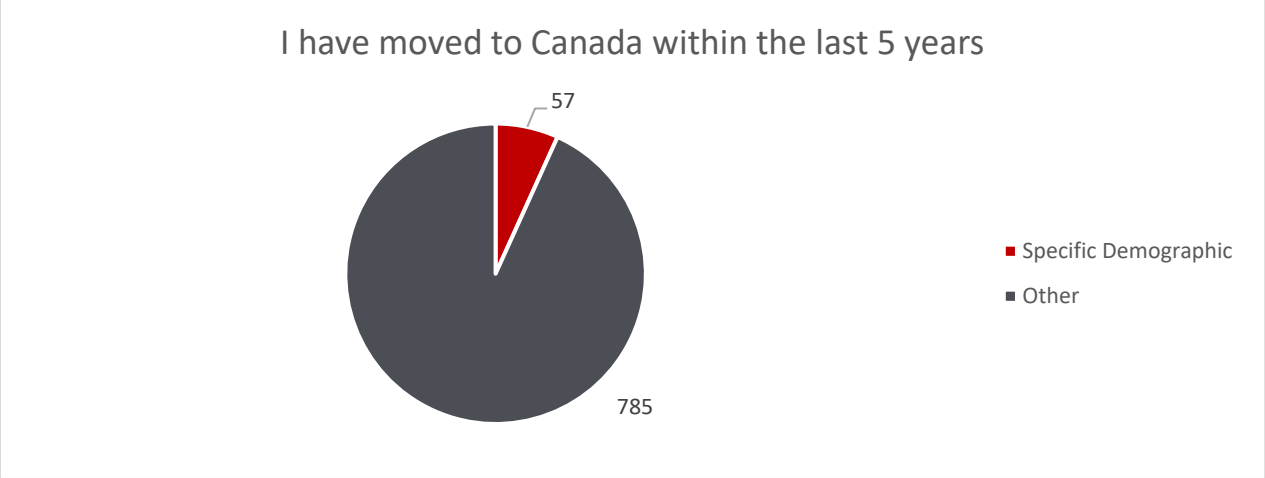


Figure 15 *Moved to Canada within the last 5 years demographics*

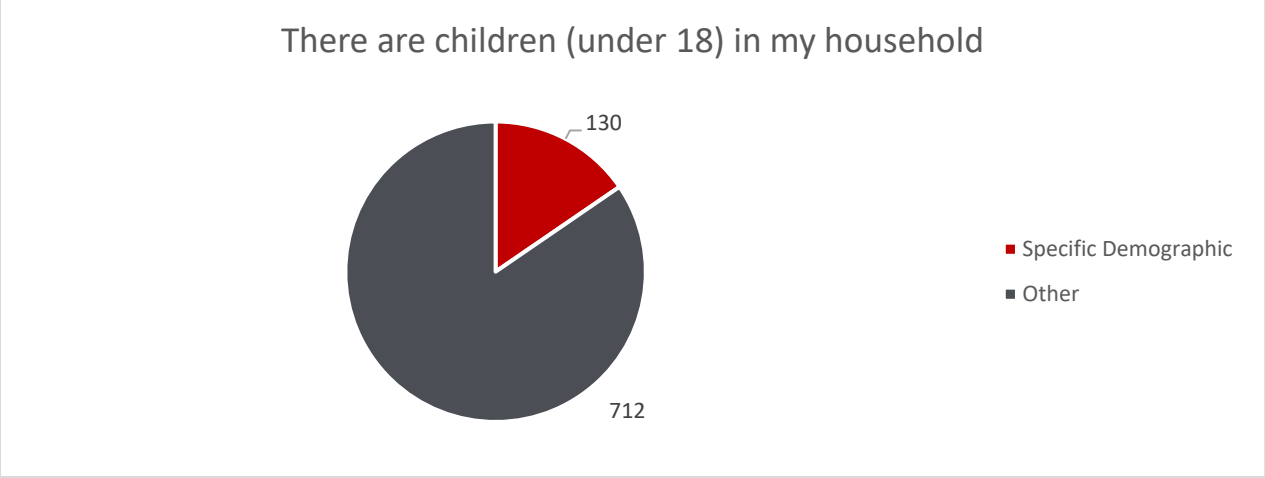


Figure 16 *Children demographics*

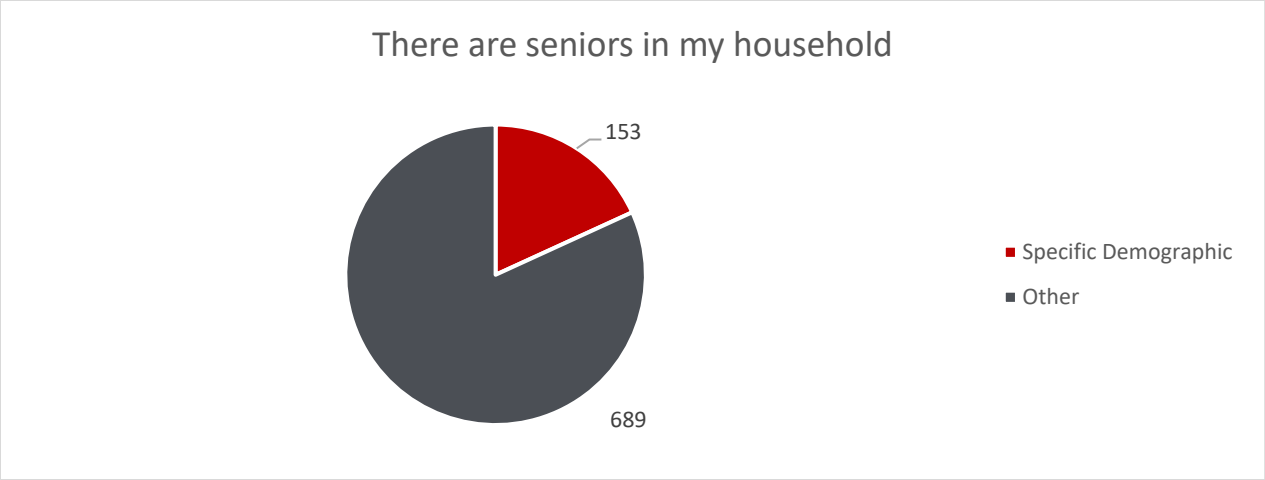


Figure 17 *Seniors demographics*

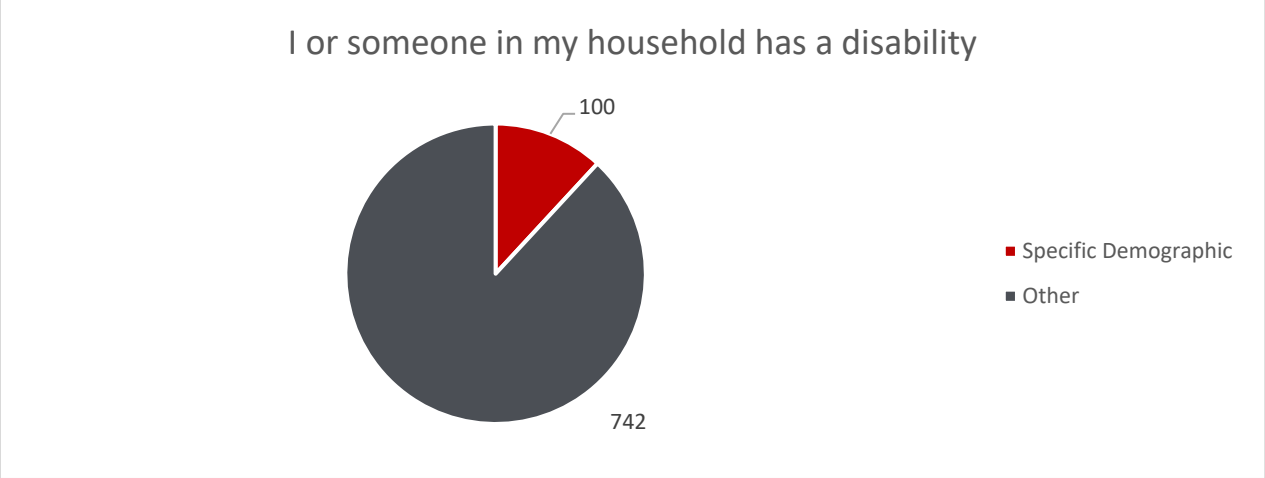


Figure 18 *Disability demographics*

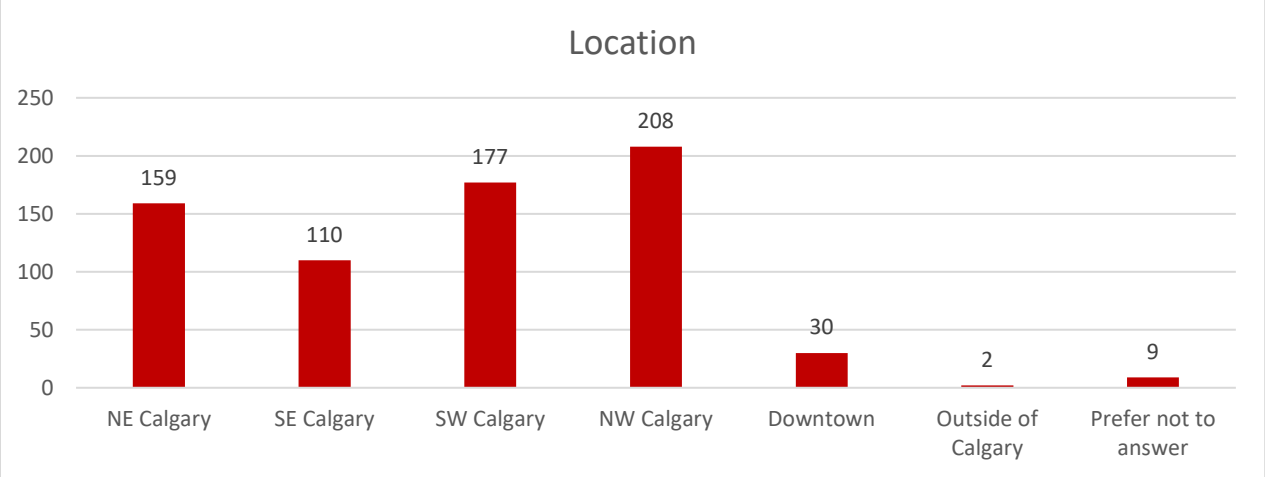


Figure 19 *Location demographics*

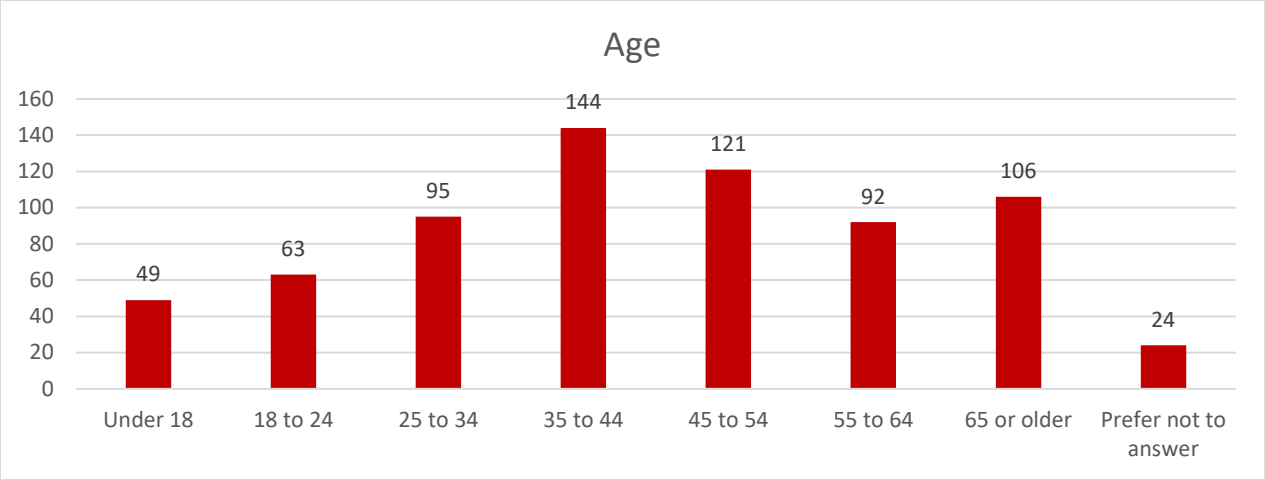


Figure 20 *Age demographics*

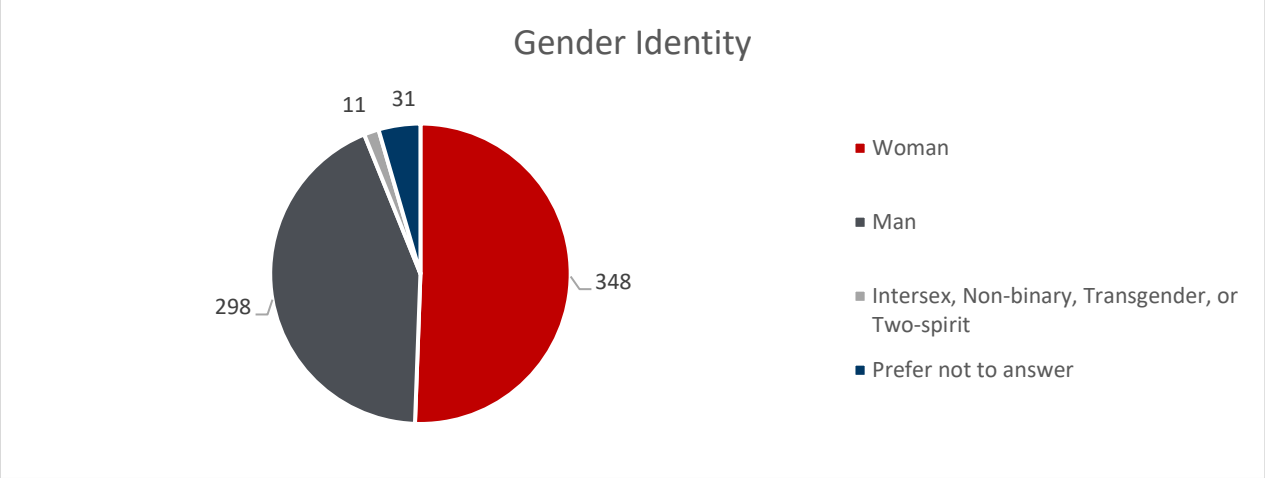


Figure 21 *Gender identity demographics*

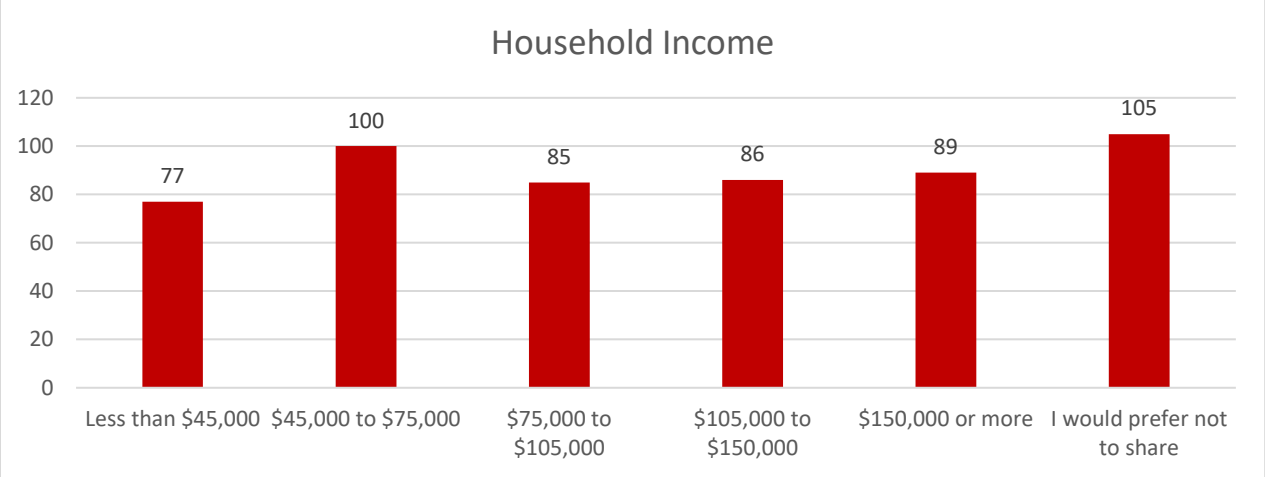


Figure 22 *Household income demographics*

Appendix B: Explanation - Verbatim comments and quotes

Verbatim comments and quotes presented in this report include all feedback, suggestions, comments and messages that were collected online and in-person through the engagement described in this report. All input has been reviewed and provided to Project Teams to be considered in decision making for the project.

Any personal identifying information has been removed from the verbatim comments presented here. Comments or portions of comments that contain profanity, or that are not in compliance with the City's Respectful Workplace Policy or Online Tool Moderation Practice, have also been removed from participant submissions.

Wherever possible the remainder of the submissions remains. No other edits to the feedback have been made, and the verbatim comments are as received. As a result, some of the content in this verbatim record may still be considered offensive or distasteful to some readers.

Appendix C: Explanation – Engagement at The City

"Engagement" at The City of Calgary is defined as: *Purposeful dialogue between The City and citizens and interest-holders to gather information to influence decision making.*

Engagement is:

- **Citizen-centric** - focusing on hearing the needs and voices of both directly impacted and indirectly impacted Calgarians.
- **Accountable -** upholding the commitments that The City makes to Calgarians and other interested and impacted parties by demonstrating that the results and outcomes of the engagement processes are consistent with the approved plans for engagement.
- **Inclusive -** making best efforts to reach, involve and hear from those who are impacted directly or indirectly.
- **Committed -** allocating sufficient time and resources for effective engagement of citizens and interest-holders.
- **Responsive -** acknowledging Calgarian's and other interested and impacted parties' concerns; and
- **Transparent -** providing clear and complete information around decision processes, procedures, and constraints.

The City's commitment to transparent and inclusive engagement processes is outlined in the Engage Policy (CS009).

Appendix D: Explanation – Research versus Engagement

Engagement is a professional discipline that incorporates a variety of methodologies to gather people's opinions and views on specific issues or topics, to provide information for decision making. Engagement often involves two-way dialogues or conversations with the objective of gaining a deeper understanding of the issues.

Unlike Research, Engagement opportunities are inclusive and usually open to all interested parties who would like to have a say about the issue or topic at hand. The outputs of Engagement activities are descriptive and provide a deeper understanding of the views and sentiments of the participants. The nature of these inclusive techniques mean that information collected is directional and, as with qualitative research, cannot be generalized to the larger population.

Engagement at The City of Calgary is defined as purposeful dialogue between The City and interest-holders to gather information to influence decision making. More specifically, the Engage Resource Unit works with project teams at The City to meet project needs and ensure citizens have their say about those projects.

The City has a six-step process for engagement with citizens:

1. Assess the need for engagement.
2. Develop a plan – determine engagement roadmap and budget.
3. Tell the story – create content to inform and educate interest-holders.
4. Raise awareness – promote opportunities for interest-holders to participate.
5. Connect – open opportunities for interest-holders to provide input.
6. Report back and evaluate – loop back to share what was heard and what was done with stakeholder input.

- Unlike Research, Engagement opportunities are inclusive and usually open to all interested parties who would like to have a say about the issue or topic at hand. The outputs of Engagement activities are descriptive and provide a deeper understanding of the views and sentiments of the participants. The nature of these inclusive techniques mean that information collected is directional and, as with qualitative research, cannot be generalized to the larger population.
- Engagement is not meant to be a representative sample of interest-holders while quantitative Research methodologies are designed so that the data collected from a randomly selected sample of individuals is considered to be statistically representative of the larger population.
- Research seeks answers to questions that are important to The City and looks to represent the views of Calgary's population using analytical and statistical methods. Engagement seeks feedback on issues that are important to citizen groups and looks to reflect perspectives of those citizens that are most interested or impacted by City activities.