

Citizen Engagement & Insights

Led by: Director of Customer Service & Communications

Service Description

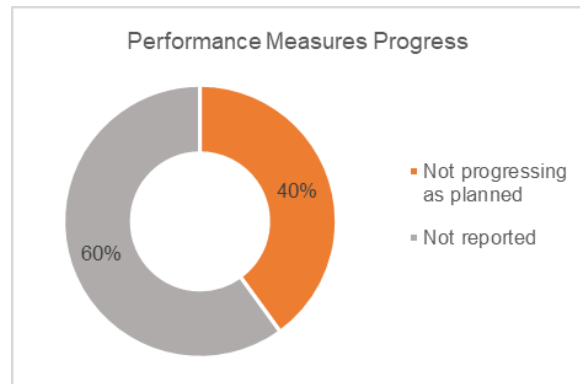
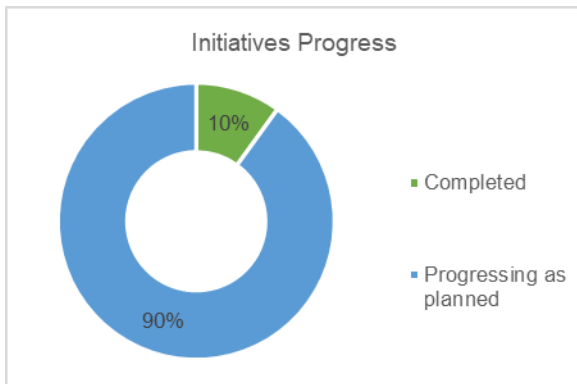
Citizen Engagement & Insights (CEI) plans and executes safe, fair, and accessible opportunities for Calgarians to give input (in-person, phone, and digital channels) on City programs, services, and overall quality of life in Calgary. We integrate multiple sources to provide insights on participant values, assumptions, beliefs, and expectations. This data is used to create meaningful and actionable insight to inform City decision-making, policy creation, mitigate risks, identify opportunities for continuous improvement, and drive accountability and transparency for Calgarians.

Service Updates

Key service results

1. In one of the largest engagements ever, this service seamlessly integrated research findings and public input (Initiative 1) on citywide rezoning. Over 30,000 engaged Calgarians submitted nearly 5,000 feedback responses during an 87-day period. Notably, the survey revealed that 55 per cent of Calgarians believe rezoning will make housing more affordable. This information along with the 15-day public hearing informed communications and planning.
2. The Engage team supported five Local Area Plans, the most to date. In the first half of 2024, 20 in-person and online events were held, with over 11,000 residents, community groups, businesses, and other key interested parties actively contributing to shaping a forward-looking vision for their communities.
3. Research provided insights into equity-deserving communities based on existing research and is finalizing a survey on Calgarians' perspectives on information sources related to City programs and council decisions. These efforts will enhance understanding of mis/disinformation and contribute to a more accurate reflection of Calgary's diverse population, fostering an inclusive, well-informed, and responsive city (Initiative 5).

Progress summary



Risk(s) impacting the progress

Public perception of The City's transparency and accountability in decision-making
Increased demand for services



Measuring Our Performance

Legend

— Actuals

■ Expected Future Performance

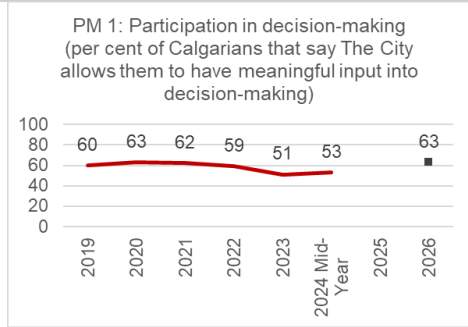
➔ Progressing as planned

⊖ Not progressing as planned

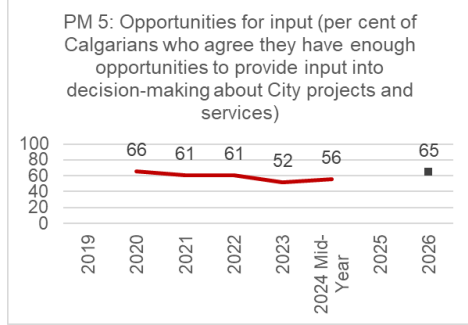
Performance Measures

Story behind the numbers

Status



This service provides City decision-makers with diverse perspectives from Calgarians. After a significant decline from the spring 2023 survey, perceptions of how well The City is meeting expectations for participation in decision-making has increased to 53 per cent in spring 2024 (up two percentage points from fall 2023). Despite being on par with municipal benchmarks, the current trend of declining public trust will impact the service's ability to meet the expected future performance of 63 per cent. The focus remains on providing Calgarians with inclusive and accessible opportunities for input into City programs and services.



Calgarians expect sufficient opportunities for input in City decision-making. Perceptions about input opportunities rose slightly to 56 per cent in spring 2024 (up four percentage points from fall 2023), but remains below the 63 per cent in spring 2023. Despite surpassing the municipal benchmark for input opportunities, the diminishing trust in government makes it unlikely to meet the expected future performance of 65 per cent. The service remains committed to meeting the growing expectations of Calgarians by providing more input opportunities in 2024.



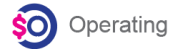


Progress on Service Delivery











PROGRESS STATUS





FUNDING TYPE



Initiative 1		Impact Area: City-wide	Funding Type:
Provide opportunities for input on City programs and services that are safe, fair, accessible, and representative of all Calgarians through the new target research and engagement activities and further implementation of the Inclusive Engagement Guide.			
UPDATE 	In the first half of the year, this service provided Calgarians with opportunities for input on City programs and services. The Corporate Research Team conducted multiple 'Perspectives on Calgary' surveys, exploring key issues such as the single-use bylaw, downtown event centre, and economic priorities. Additionally, the Engage Resource Unit provided training on overcoming participation barriers and applying a social equity lens to engagement projects. Together, this service focused on enhancing social equity and representation of Calgarians to enable data-driven decision-making.		
Initiative 2		Impact Area: Not applicable	Funding Type:
Improve organizational understanding of our scope and scalability through education, awareness and expectation-setting as an input into City decision-making.			
UPDATE 	Improving organizational understanding of this service line directly impacts Calgarians' access to input opportunities. The Research team worked closely with Council, sharing comprehensive fall research results, reflecting the perspectives of their constituents. Simultaneously, the Engage team is finalizing a training module and resources for the Communications team, ensuring a deeper understanding of engagement principles. Collectively, these efforts enhance service delivery, foster public trust, and contribute to a more inclusive city for all Calgarians.		
Initiative 3		Impact Area: City-wide	Funding Type:
Improve The City's ability to provide social equity and more accurately reflect its diverse population through the enhancement and expansion of online research panels. Larger panels with a wider population increase the overall representation of individuals and businesses and are critical to the success of the panels research program.			
UPDATE 	Increasing panel participants generates higher-quality data and better representation to more accurately reflect the opinions of Calgarians. By June 2024, the Corporate Research Team achieved significant progress in broadening research panels. Strategic partnerships and targeted focus group invitations led to a 7 per cent growth in the business panel and an impressive 10 per cent growth in the Panel of Calgarians. These efforts enhance the overall representation of both individuals and businesses in Calgary, ensuring diverse perspectives shape the city's future.		
Initiative 4		Impact Area: City-wide	Funding Type:
Deliver broader context and insights into business leaders' attitudes and behaviours by initiating additional qualitative research. This work will provide critical information for key corporate initiatives such as the downtown revitalization and will aim to enhance The City's global positioning.			
UPDATE 	Collaboration between The City and local businesses is essential for Calgary's economic prosperity. In spring 2024, Research conducted in-depth interviews with business owners, managers, and leaders across Calgary. This research provides valuable insights into local businesses' perceptions, outlook, and attitude toward the economic landscape. The findings will be shared across The Corporation, informing the design and enhancement of business-focused City programs and services. This service will continue to establish effective communication channels to proactively engage with businesses.		
Initiative 5		Impact Area: City-wide	Funding Type:

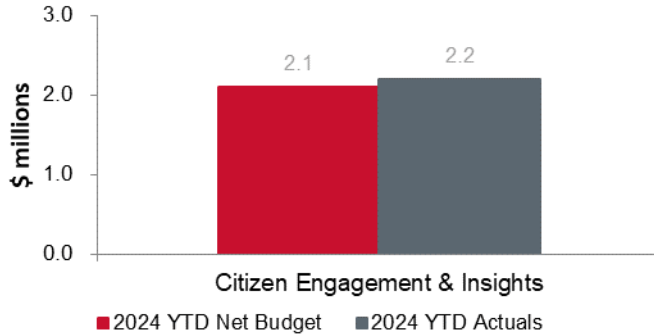
		
Gain insight into perspectives, lived experiences, and expectations of equity-deserving Calgarians by conducting primary research and advanced analytics. Research has seen increased demand for further analysis of Calgary's diverse communities. Advanced analytics and new data collection will address this need and provide insights into communities to improve social and service equity.		
UPDATE 	Embracing diverse perspectives helps shape an inclusive and responsive municipal government. Research delivered analysis of the Fall Survey of Calgarians with a focus on equity-deserving communities such as the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, individuals born outside Canada, households with disabilities, females, indigenous Calgarians, low-income earners, racialized groups, and both seniors and young adults. Results were shared across The Corporation, providing decision-makers with insights on priorities that are representative of all Calgarians.	
Initiative 6	Impact Area: City-wide	Funding Type: 
Improve access to data by expanding and better-leveraging external partnerships through benchmarking, academic research and partnering with other municipalities. Expanding collaboration will enhance connections, build relationships and knowledge-sharing opportunities and provide The City with enhanced global positioning.		
UPDATE 	Municipal benchmarking fosters transparency by comparing performance with other cities. In the first half of 2024, Research proactively established partnerships with Canadian cities, fostering collaboration on municipal benchmarks. These efforts include expanding the survey scope and welcoming Ottawa in 2025 as a new participating city, bringing the total to seven. This evidence-based analysis serves as a compass for decision-makers in delivering effective programs and services for all Calgarians.	
Initiative 7	Impact Area: City-wide	Funding Type: 
Provide online engagement that is accessible to all Calgarians by enhancing The City's capabilities and mirroring the in-person experience of engagement.		
UPDATE 	The service is committed to improving accessibility through in-person and online engagement. The Engage team has successfully mirrored the in-person experience through an online social mapping feature. This tool visually represents community data and interactions within a geographical context by capturing participants' experiences, perceptions, and interests on an interactive map. Through comments and polls, this feature fosters two-way conversations, promoting transparency and inclusivity. Improving the digital experience ensures Calgarians have access to diverse opportunities for input.	
Initiative 8	Impact Area: City-wide	Funding Type: 
Provide greater digital equity for Calgarians who do not have access to technology by leveraging external partnerships to provide access to digital devices capable of gathering online engagement.		
UPDATE 	The service is committed to improving digital equity and accessibility for input opportunities through key partnerships. The Engage Resource Unit has solidified a partnership with the Calgary Public Library. Through a formal memorandum of understanding, it now offers both online and in-person engagement opportunities at library locations. This collaboration aims to reduce barriers to participation by providing access to technology and fostering community-based interactions. By ensuring equitable access, all Calgarians have access to contribute their opinions in shaping The City's future.	
Initiative 9	Impact Area: City-wide	Funding Type: 
Improve engagement opportunities for equity-deserving Calgarians through the development and piloting of new tactics, tools and processes. Based on resource evaluation and reporting on effectiveness of the new actions, all of the recommended actions will be incorporated into future engagement projects.		
UPDATE 	The service actively seeks opportunities to support equity deserving Calgarians. The Engage Resource Unit has established partnerships with school divisions to integrate public engagement into the school curriculum's democracy unit. By introducing and educating youth about the public engagement process, the service contributes to intergenerational equity, a fundamental principle for maintaining trust in government. Ensuring that young minds understand how engagement works today prepares them to be informed and engaged Calgarians tomorrow.	

Initiative 10	Impact Area: City-wide	Funding Type: 
Build community trust, deliver greater efficiencies and reduce community fatigue with multiple project engagements in specific geographic areas by working to transition the community relations engagement pilot into a fully operational program.		
UPDATE 	<p>The Engage Resource Unit concluded its community relations pilot with the Chinatown community in 2023. Following the completion of the pilot, resources were transitioned to other projects.</p> <p>Community relations work continues to be an important area of focus for the Engage Resource Unit, and insights gathered from the pilot have been applied to subsequent engagement activities and the Inclusive Engagement Guide. This service will continue to explore ways to foster long-term relationships with communities.</p>	



Service Updates on Financial Performance

Net Operating Budget and Actuals as of June 30, 2024

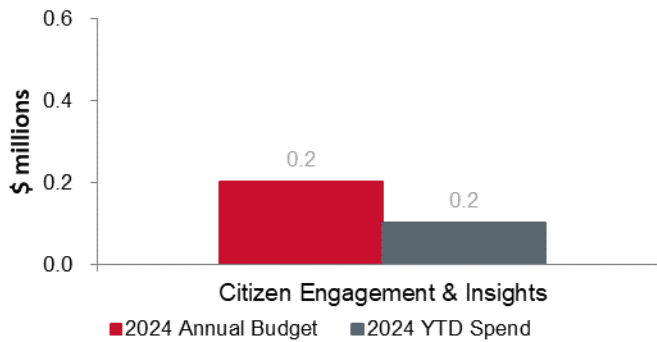


Operating Budget Updates - 2024 YTD net operating budget vs actuals:

Citizen Engagement & Insights has an unfavorable year to date operating variance of \$0.1 million. The main reason that have contributed to the variance is timing of recoveries from other business units.

Investments in engagement and research professionals support purposeful dialogue between The City, impacted or interested Calgarians, and other communities or groups to gather information to add viewpoints, information, and value to the decision-making process. In 2024, resources were strategically managed to balance ongoing work and the high demand for citywide rezoning activities.

Capital Budget and Spend as of June 30, 2024



Capital Budget Updates - 2024 total capital budget vs 2024 YTD spend:

Citizen Engagement and Insights has spent 24.7 per cent of the approved 2024 budget. In 2024, the capital expenditures have been used to deliver the following: email marketing solution licenses. Remaining funding is committed for 2024 survey work pending completion.