2025–2026 Biennial Budget Process Council Feedback Summary

Category	Overall Feedback (Average)
Budget Calendar and Process	Excellent
Long Range Financial Strategy	Good to Poor
Community Engagement Efforts	Poor to Good
Budgeting for Equity	Good
Departmental Budget Overview	Fair
Departmental Outcomes & Performance Reviews	Fair to Poor
Capital Investment Programs and Business & Technology Investment Programs Overview/Forecast	Good
Economic Update & Revenue Forecast	Good
Budget Document - Preliminary Budget Document - Budget Summary - Line-Item Workbook	Good to Excellent
Fiscal Policy Review	Good

Scale: **Poor**: Very ineffective, **Fair**: Somewhat ineffective, **Good**: Somewhat effective, **Excellent**: Very effective

1. Transparency and Clarity

Effective Areas:

- Early delivery of materials, allowing for better preparation ahead of final deliberations.

- Some aspects of budget performance tracking were noted as useful for understanding resource allocation.

Opportunities for Improvement:

- Baseline budget offers should include clearer and more detailed breakdowns of what is funded.

- The use of data and performance metrics needs to be more transparent, focused on genuine outcomes rather than easily met targets.

- Ensure that performance measures are balanced, meaningful, and aligned with organizational goals, rather than focusing on easily achieved accomplishments.

- Enhancing the integrity and transparency of data reporting will strengthen community trust, support more informed decision-making, and identify opportunities for continuous improvement.

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2. Community Engagement

Effective Areas:

- The effort to provide various public engagement opportunities was recognized.

- Some participants found value in the Civic Results Team meetings, despite low participation.

Opportunities for Improvement:

- Expand community education efforts to build broader understanding of the budget process and enhance public confidence in financial decision-making.

- Redesign public hearings to be more welcoming, interactive, and genuinely focused on gathering meaningful resident feedback, starting earlier in the budget cycle.

- Reimagine and strengthen the Civic Results Team process to foster deeper and more consistent public involvement, leveraging relationships built through initiatives like Redmond 2050 to support a more community-driven budget.

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3. Budget Process

Effective Areas:

- The structure of budget discussions supported meaningful dialogue and decision-making.

Opportunities for Improvement:

- Discuss potential revenue strategies and financial risks early in the budget process to allow sufficient time for evaluation and consensus building.

- The implementation of the new subcommittee standards developed at the 2025 retreat will help future budget processes to improve efficiency and focus leading to better decision-making and community engagement.

- Support the ongoing 2025 efforts to complete and operationalize the Long-Range Financial Strategy and Fiscal Policy, to provide clearer context on financial principles, priorities for both Council and the community.

- A clearer and more detailed articulation of the City's vision, goals, and challenges by the mayor would provide valuable context to guide Council discussions and budget decision-making.

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4. Document and Deliberation Process

Effective Areas:

- Budget documents were generally clear and accessible, with improvements recognized in how information was organized.

- The facilitation of Council budget sessions was effective in supporting productive discussions.

- Council appreciated the addition of a more concise Budget Summary document for the 2025–2026 cycle.

Opportunities for Improvement:

- Quarterly financial updates should be provided more regularly to track progress toward goals and maintain momentum between budget cycles.