

Council Budget Process Survey Results October 29, 2021 – December 2, 2021

Question 1: Comments or recommended improvements to budget deliberation prework including presentations and briefings provided to Council

1. Spend time introducing each fund, including the use, constraints, resulting balances
2. Bring financial policies to the Council in the beginning of the process
3. Clearly specify when Council gets to provide input on what goes into the budget
4. Spend time talking about how staff proposes the money will be spent and why it is needed or benefits the community
5. Council should not micromanage the process
6. Bring community engagement and involvement efforts before the long range financial strategy
7. Eliminate the budget process update
8. Economic update and revenue forecast should be provided quarterly, and it should be clearly understood how this is being used to make decisions about finances at the city
9. Council needs clear context for decision making on the budget
10. You need to get buy-in on the assumptions at the beginning of your work to avoid changes that shift with political wind
11. Be more transparent and realistic about the city's financial position – suggest including CAFR information in the monthly financial report
12. The long range financial strategy is not a true strategy unless it has been updated to clearly define long range results or specific outcomes.
13. The long range financial strategy should be forward looking
14. We need to see how the 2-year budgets fits into vision for where we are supposed to be going
15. The vision should be set at the council retreat
16. Need to see the work of the Civic Results Team up front and justification for any differences between Staff Results Team and Civic Results Team
17. Have session with each of the directors during the year before to understand their approach to their offers
18. Provide councilmembers with the same department overview presentations that are provided to the results teams
19. Add an indicator of when Council can submit budget priorities or offers.

Question 2: Comments or recommended improvements to community engagement and involvement

1. Add another email address, the community does not know what BP means.
2. Share the survey results with Council
3. Council needs to determine how they can respond to people who gave input
4. Increase social media outreach
5. Add an additional public hearing early in the process

Question 3: Comments or recommended improvements to the preliminary budget document or supplemental information

1. Special purpose funds or accounts
2. Include hiring plans with a set of staffing authorizations
3. Each offer should have a cash flow and schedule of expenditures that indicates when work will begin
4. Use the new project summary sheets to describe capital projects
5. Performance measures should be discussed before the budget process begins
6. The budget offers should include more detail about what is funded in the baseline. They are too high level
7. Add a section on funding set aside for future spending needs. BWC, CIP

Question 4: Comments or recommended improvements to how the budget is organized or how it is presented to Council

1. Prefer budgeting by priorities approach
2. Talking about the process does not add value, talking about what is in the budget does
3. Council needs to focus on the policies, financial and decisions, not the process.
4. Discussions about the process are a distraction
5. Add visuals to the executive summary to help the public understand how their taxpayer dollars get investing
6. Other Council's have a lot more visibility of the full budget picture instead of sections/priorities. We need to see the full picture.

Question 5: Comments or recommended improvements to budget deliberations

1. Ground rules should be binding and not up to interpretations
2. Clear drop-dead date for all amendments to the budget
3. The time limit should be 3 hours even if it means adding more nights
4. There should not be ground rules other than Council Rules of Procedure
5. Explain how comments get categorized and addressed by staff
6. Need some specific criteria on what an actionable comment looks like.
7. Explain how council issues and the parking lot get address by staff
8. Are Thursday nights needed?
9. We need agreed upon ground rules
10. Enough time should be provided for staff to respond to our issues and major changes. This should be done before Council dives into the offers and revisited via the matrix throughout the process.
11. Once we decide on a process, we need to stick to it.
12. Consider an outside facilitator instead of the FAC chair
13. Council should see the parking lot matrix from last cycle in Q1 of 2022 to address any of those items in advance of the start of the process.