



# User Fees Report: Calgarians perspectives

## Overview

The following is a combined report of the September 2022 Perception of User Fees Citizens' View Survey and the October 2022 Engage Fees and Subsidies Policy 2023 – 2026 Review What We Heard Report. A summary of Social Media support for the Engage Review is also included.

## Research and Engagement

Research and engagement are both used by The City to gather input from Calgarians. Research methodologies seek to collect information from targeted individuals based on selected criteria while engagement is open to anyone and encourages everyone to contribute.

Each approach has its own methodologies and depending on the objectives of the project. In some cases, both Research and Engagement are used to get a broader picture of the perceptions and opinions of the targeted group.

- Research incorporates both quantitative and qualitative methodologies using the analytical methods, statistical techniques and guiding principles of the applied social sciences to gain insight, provide evidence, and support decision making. The primary objective of research is not to be inclusive of all interested parties but rather to gather information that best represents the larger population.
- Engagement is a professional discipline that incorporates a variety of methodologies to gather people's opinions and views on specific issues or topics in order 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. Engagement techniques generally do not restrict the number of opportunities that an individual or group of individuals has to provide input while research methodologies generally restrict individuals to one input opportunity per survey or focus group/interview. Engagement *aims to support decision-making* by seeking feedback through a qualitative approach to generally reflect *ideas* and perspectives of those interested or impacted by City activities.

Together, research and engagement activities help us better understand the opinions, preferences and attitudes of Calgarians. This understanding enables a data-driven approach to decision-making and planning so that our strategies are informed by what residents value about our services and programs.

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# Perception of User Fees Citizens' View Survey Report

September 2022

## Perception of User Fees: Citizens' View Survey

### Background and Methodology

In an effort to gain more insight into perceptions of User Fees, research was conducted with Calgarians on key areas of City of Calgary policy and principles.

An online survey was conducted with Citizens' View panelists. Citizens' View is an online panel that encourages citizens to participate in shaping City of Calgary programs and services through surveys, discussions, and engagement activities.

The survey was conducted Aug. 8 - 18, 2022. It was sent to 2,710 panel members and 1,401 completed it (52 per cent completion rate).

NOTE: These survey findings are not considered statistically representative of all Calgarians. Due to the composition of the group of panelists who completed the survey, results should be regarded as directional and should not be projected to the larger population without research with a representative sample of citizens.

Compared to the overall population of Calgary, respondents to this survey are older, more likely to live in the NW and less likely to live in the NE:

## Summary of Findings

- Overall, a large majority (81%) of survey respondents agree that “a mix of user fee and general tax-supported funding is appropriate for services that benefit both the individual using the service and all citizens.”
- Many respondents (76%) agree “services that benefit everyone in the community should be funded by property tax,” while a small majority (56%) agree “those who directly benefit from a good/service should be the only ones paying for this service.”
- When it comes to services that are partially funded by user fees and partially funded by taxes, a small majority (58%) say, “how the service benefits all Calgarians and individuals” should be the most important consideration when determining the balance between fees and property taxes
- A minority (20%) say that “how the service benefits all Calgarians” is the most important consideration while a similar proportion (18%) say, “how the service benefits the individual using the service” is most important when determining the balance between user fees and property taxes.
- A large majority (86%) of respondents agree that “user fees should be structured to help ensure that people use services responsibly,” while a similar proportion (84%) agree “City facilities and

resources should be provided in such a way that they provide everyone the greatest benefit, including diverse groups.”

- A sizable majority (81%) also say that “rates should be reduced at low demand times to attract additional user groups,” while three-quarters (76%) agree “user fee reductions should be based on an individual’s level of need.”
- A similar proportion (73%) also agree that “Goods and services should be provided to meet the diverse needs of Calgarians.”
- Many (77%) respondents agree “a higher fee for some services should be charged for those living outside Calgary,” while the same proportion (78%) agree “The City should provide reduced fees or rebates in special situations on either a temporary or ongoing basis.”
- Two-thirds (66%) agree “The City should structure its fees based on an individual’s or group’s ability to pay.”
- More than three-fifths (63%) of survey respondents say they have used and paid a fee for any City of Calgary service in the past year.
- Of those, a majority (67%) of respondents say they have used Transit, a sizable minority (47%) say they have used Recreation, and a minority (39%) say they have used Animal and Pet Licensing.
- Of those who have used and paid for Transit in the past year, a small majority (51%) say an increase in Transit fees would have no impact on their quality of life, while one-quarter (24%) say it would have a general negative impact on their quality of life.
- Of those who have used and paid for Transit, a strong majority (90%) say, “there should be reduced rates for different groups of people” including low income Calgarians, seniors and children (6-12).
- Of those who have used and paid for Recreation in the past year, a minority (38%) say an increase in Recreation fees would have no or very little impact on their quality of life, while one-quarter (26%) say they would use Recreation less. A similar proportion (24%) say an increase would have a “negative impact to quality of life.”
- Of those who have used and paid for Recreation in the past year, a majority (83%) of respondents say, “there should be reduced rates for different groups of people” including seniors, low income Calgarians, children (6-12), and youth (13-17).
- Of those respondents who have used and paid for Recreation in the past year and agree there should be reduced Recreation rates for different groups of people, a majority (65%) agree they “would support paying a slightly higher fee to help reduce rates for different groups of people” while a sizable minority (43%) say they “would support an increase in property taxes to help reduce the fees of different groups of people.”
- Of those who have used and paid for Animal and Pet Licensing in the past year, a small majority (52%) say that an increase in fees would have no or very little impact on their quality of life, while a small minority (19%) say an increase would have a “negative impact to quality of life.”
  - Of those who have used and paid for Animal and Pet Licensing in the past year, a small majority (57%) say, “everyone should pay the same rate” while a sizable minority (40%) say,



# Peception of User Fees Citizens' View Survey Report

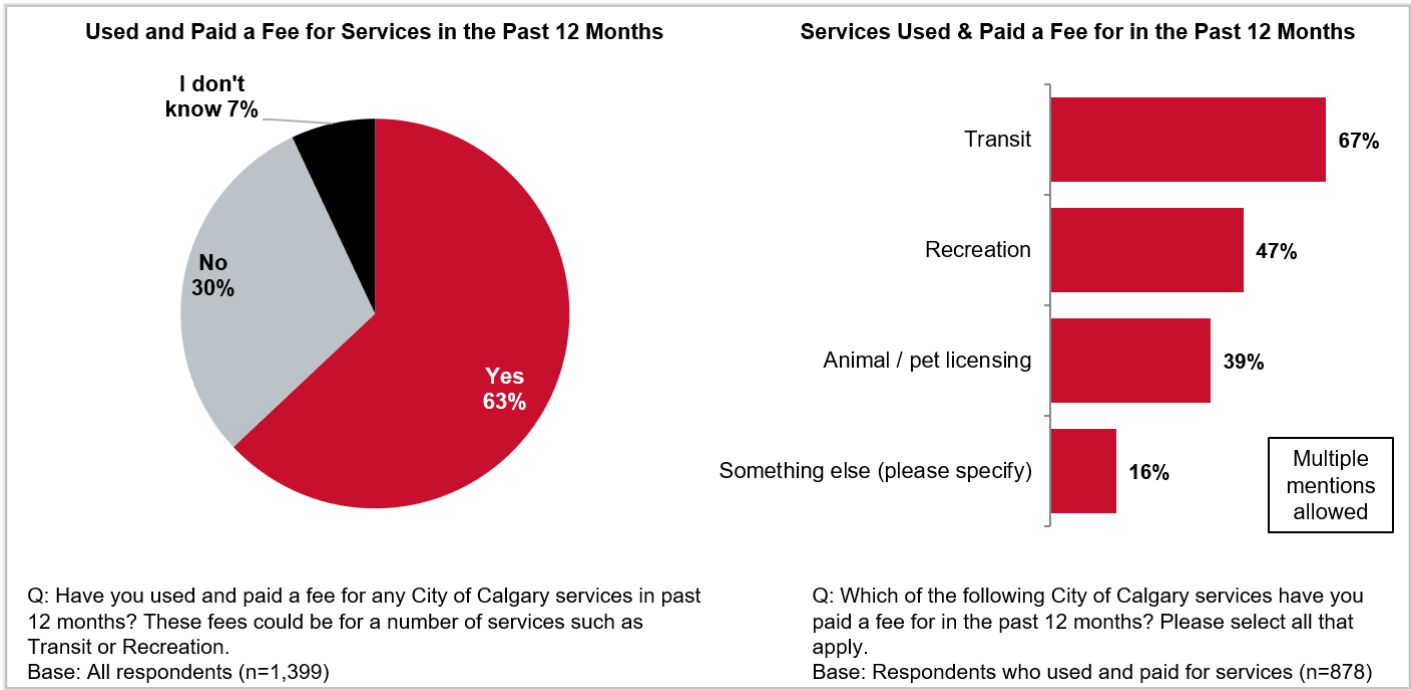
September 2022

“there should be reduced rates for different groups of people,” including seniors and low income Calgarians.

## Detailed Results

### Service Usage

More than three-fifths (63%) of survey respondents say they have used and paid a fee for any City of Calgary service in the past year. Of those, two-thirds (67%) say they have used Transit, around one-half (47%) say they have used Recreation, and two-fifths (39%) say they have used Animal and Pet Licensing.





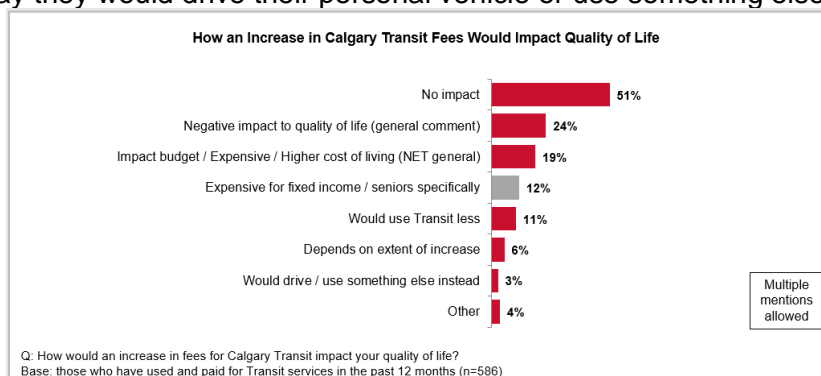
# Perception of User Fees Citizens' View Survey Report

September 2022

## Calgary Transit User Fees

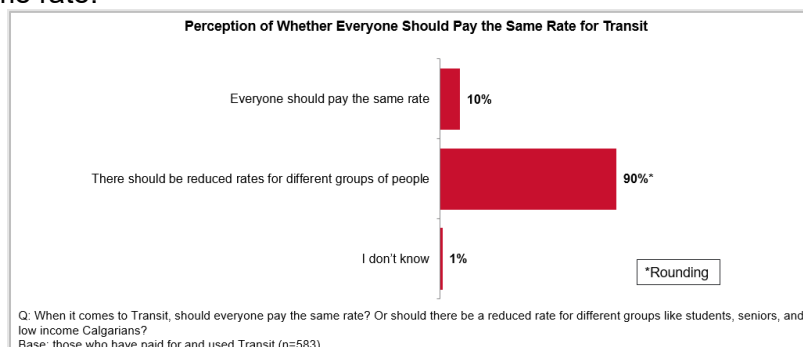
### Transit Fee Increases: Impacts to Quality of Life

Of those who have used and paid for Transit in the past year, one-half (51%) of survey respondents say on an open-ended basis that an increase in Transit fees would have no impact on their quality of life. One-quarter (24%) say it would have a general negative impact on their quality of life. One-fifth (19%) say an increase would negatively impact their budgets, with around one-in-ten (12%) of those specifically mentioning they live on a fixed income. One-in-ten (11%) say they would use Transit less while a minority say they would drive their personal vehicle or use something else (3%).



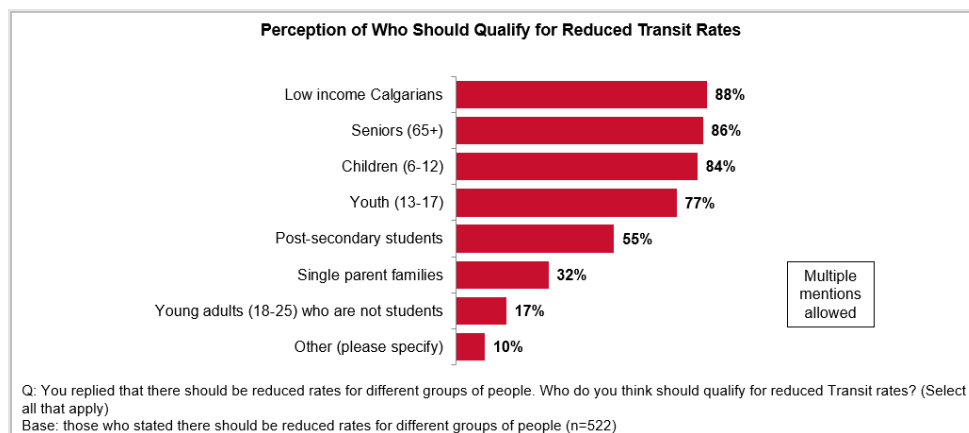
### Perception of Reduced Rates for Transit Users

Of those who have used and paid for Transit in the past year, a vast majority (90%) of respondents say, “there should be reduced rates for different groups of people,” while one-in-ten (10%) say “everyone should pay the same rate.”

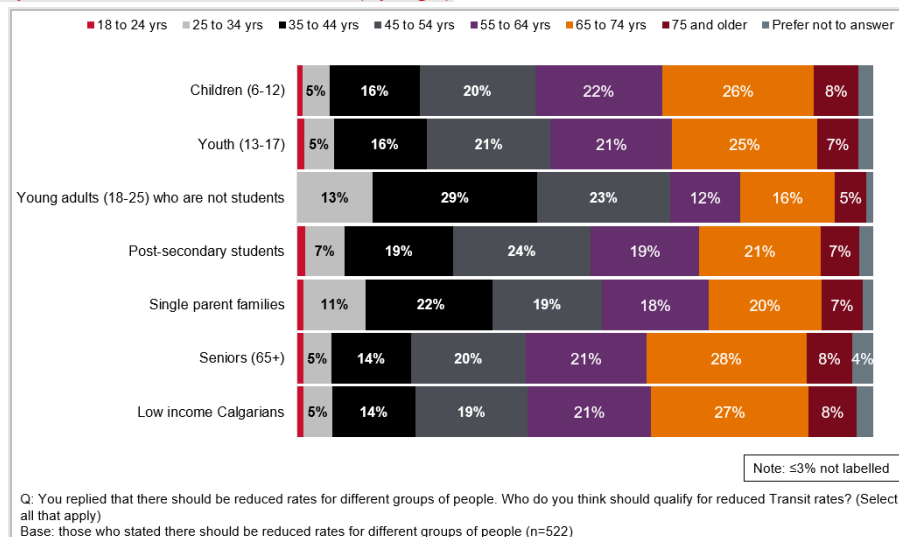


### Who Should Qualify for Reduced Transit Rates

Of those respondents who have used and paid for Transit in the past year and agreed there should be reduced Transit rates for different groups of people, a large majority say, “low income Calgarians” (88%), “seniors” (86%), and “children (6-12)” (84%) should qualify for reduced rates. Around three-quarters (77%) also say “youth (13-17)” should qualify, while around one-half (55%) say “post-secondary students” should qualify. One-third (32%) say “single parent families” while fewer than one-fifth (17%) say “young adults (18-25) who are not students” should qualify for reduced rates.



## Who Should Qualify for Reduced Transit Rates (by age)

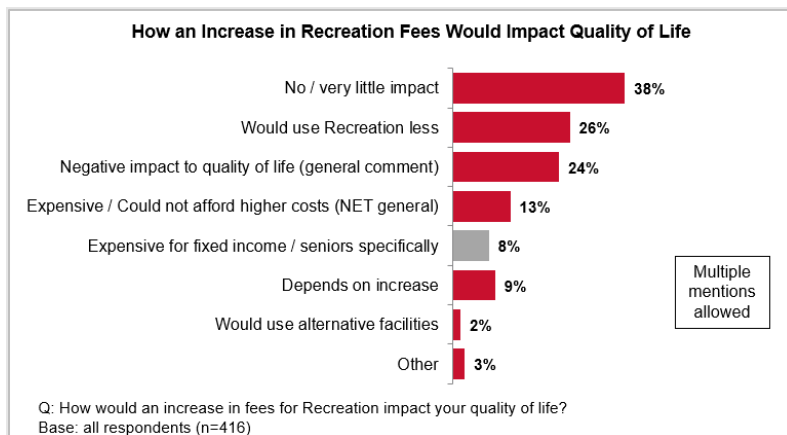


## Recreation User Fees

### Recreation Fee Increases: Impacts to Quality of Life

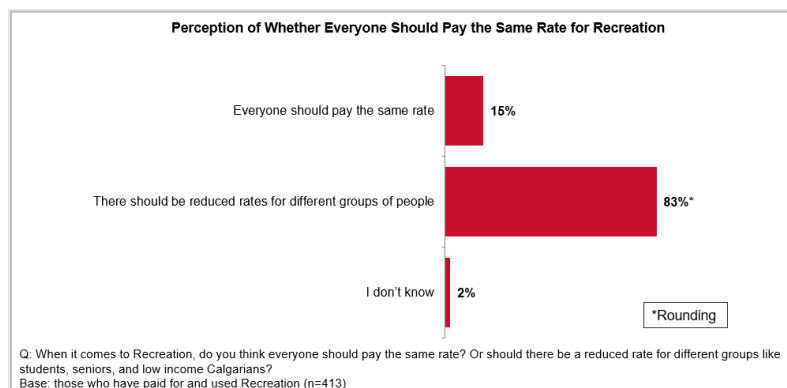
Of those who have used and paid for Recreation in the past year, nearly two-fifths (38%) of survey respondents say on an open-ended basis that an increase in Recreation fees would have no or very little impact on their quality of life. One-quarter (26%) say they would “use Recreation less” while a similar proportion (24%) say an increase would have a “negative impact to quality of life.” A small minority (13%) say it would be too expensive and they could not afford it, with less than one-in-ten (8%) of those saying they also live on a fixed income.





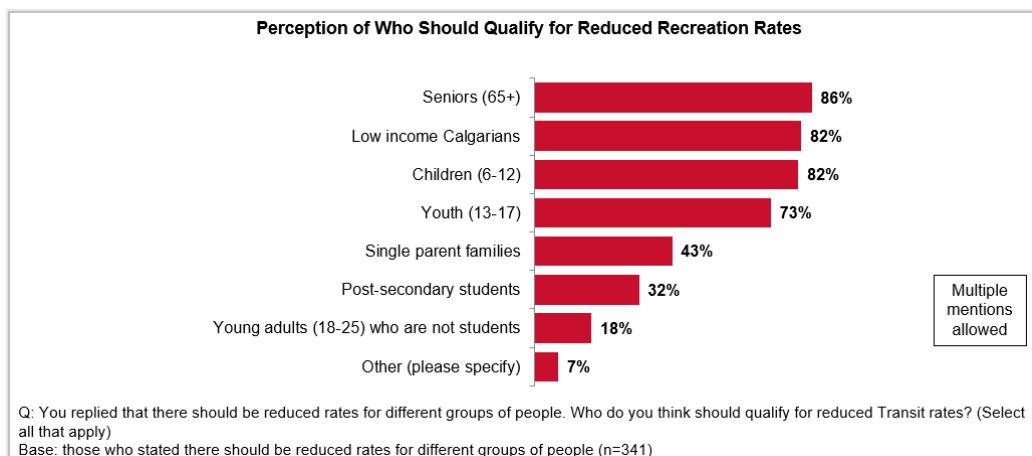
## Perception of Reduced Rates for Recreation Users

Of those who have used and paid for Recreation in the past year, a majority (83%) of respondents say, “there should be reduced rates for different groups of people” while fewer than a small minority (15%) say, “everyone should pay the same rate.”

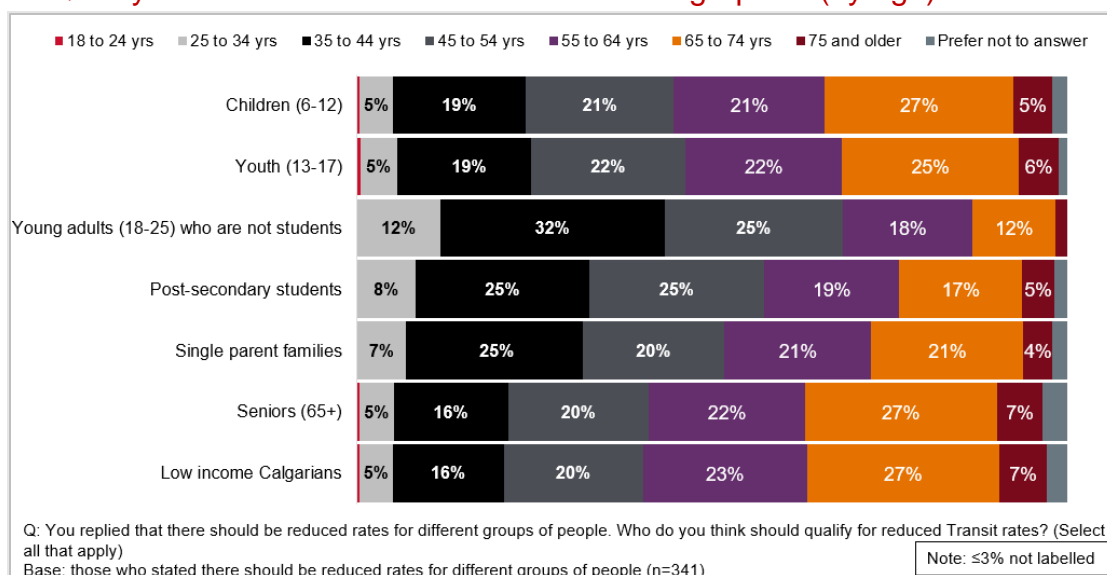


## Who Should Qualify for Reduced Recreation Rates

Of those respondents who have used and paid for Recreation in the past year and agreed there should be reduced Recreation rates for different groups of people, a large majority say, “seniors” (86%), “low income Calgarians” (82%), and “children (6-12)” (82%) should qualify for reduced rates. Around three-quarters (73%) also say “youth (13-17)” should qualify, while more than two-fifths (43%) say, “single parent families.” One-third (32%) say “post-secondary students” and nearly one-fifth (18%) say “young adults (18-25) who are not students” should qualify.

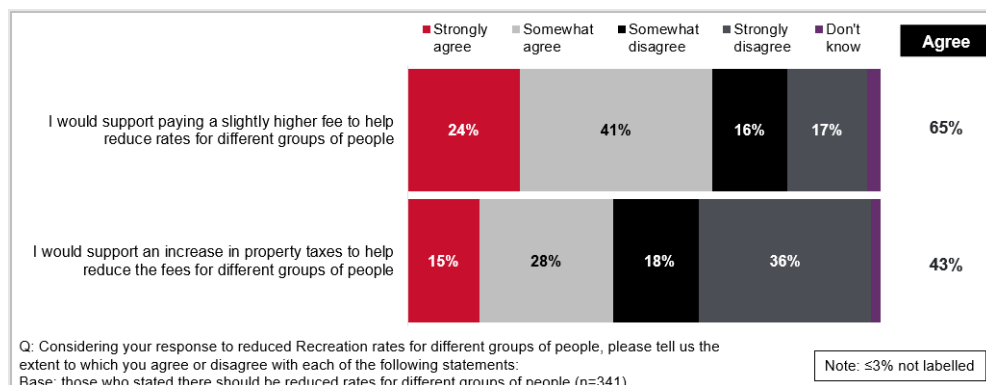


## Who Should Qualify for Reduced Recreation Rates: Demographics (by age)



## Perception of Reduced Recreation Rates

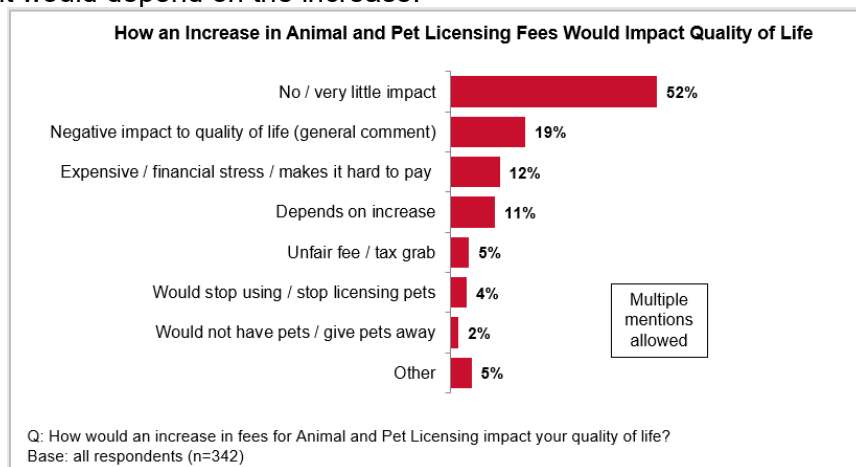
Of those respondents who have used and paid for Recreation in the past year and agreed there should be reduced Recreation rates for different groups of people, two-thirds (65%) agree they “would support paying a slightly higher fee to help reduce rates for different groups of people.” Of that, one-quarter (24%) of respondents “strongly agree” with this sentiment while two-fifths (41%) “somewhat agree.” More than two-fifths (43%) say they “would support an increase in property taxes to help reduce the fees of different groups of people.” Of that, a small minority (15%) “strongly agree” with this sentiment, and nearly three-in-ten (28%) “somewhat agree.”



## Animal and Pet Licensing User Fees

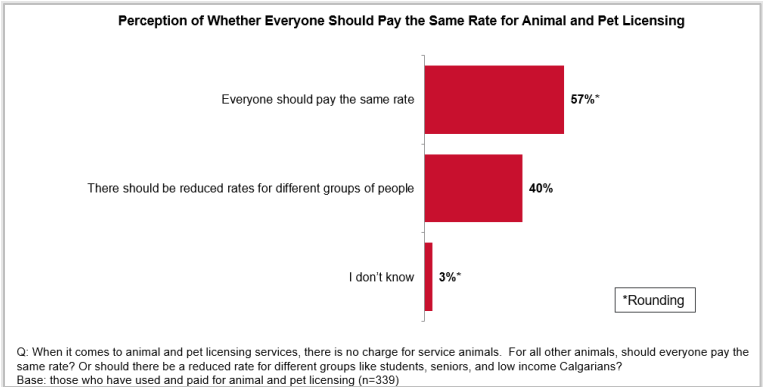
### Animal and Pet Licensing Fee Increases: Impacts to Quality of Life

Of those who have used and paid for Animal and Pet Licensing in the past year, one-half (52%) of survey respondents say on an open-ended basis that an increase in fees would have no or very little impact on their quality of life. One-fifth (19%) say an increase would have a “negative impact to quality of life” while one-in-ten (12%) say it would be expensive and add financial stress and a similar proportion say, “it would depend on the increase.”



## Perception of Reduced Rates for Animal and Pet Licensing

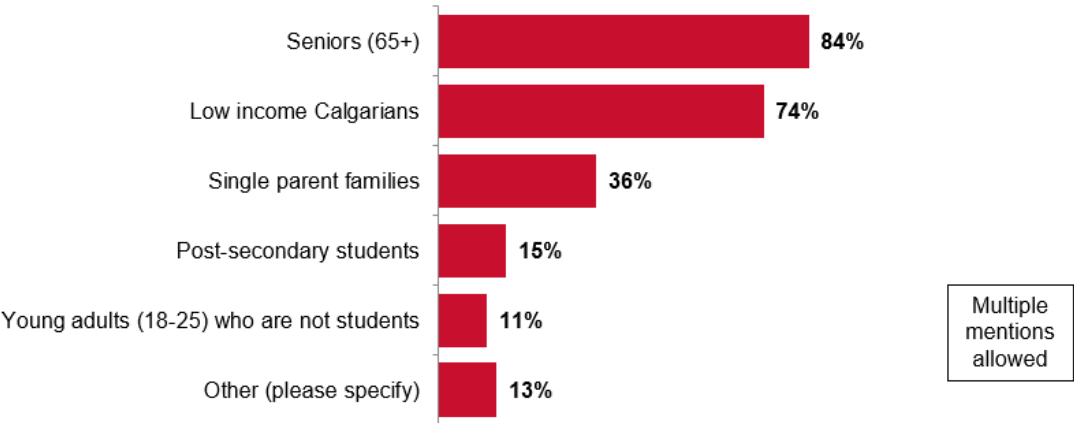
Of those who have used and paid for Animal and Pet Licensing in the past year, a small majority (57%) of respondents say, “everyone should pay the same rate” while two-fifths (40%) say, “there should be reduced rates for different groups of people.”



Who Should Qualify for Reduced Animal and Pet Licensing Fees

Of those respondents who have used and paid for Animal and Pet Licensing in the past year and agreed there should be reduced rates for different groups of people, a large majority say, “seniors” (84%), while three-quarters (74%) say, “low income Calgarians” should qualify for reduced rates. More than one-third (36%) say, “single parent families” while fewer than one-fifth (15%) say, “post-secondary students” should qualify. One-in-ten (11%) say “young adults (18-25) who are not students” should qualify.

Who Should Qualify for Reduced Rates for Animal and Pet Licensing



Q: You replied that there should be reduced rates for different groups of people. Who do you think should qualify for reduced animal and pet licensing service rates? (Select all that apply)  
 Base: those who stated there should be reduced rates for different groups of people (n=137)



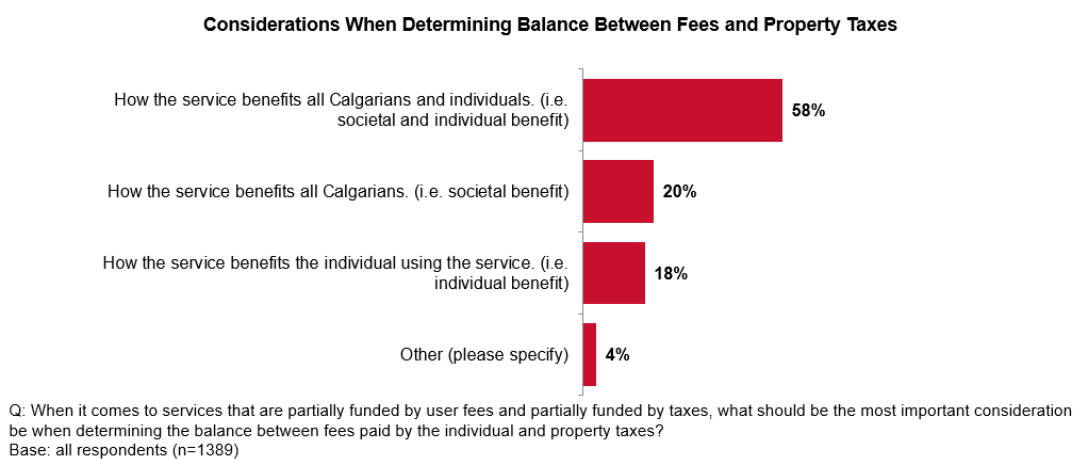
# Peception of User Fees Citizens' View Survey Report

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## Overall Perception of User Fees

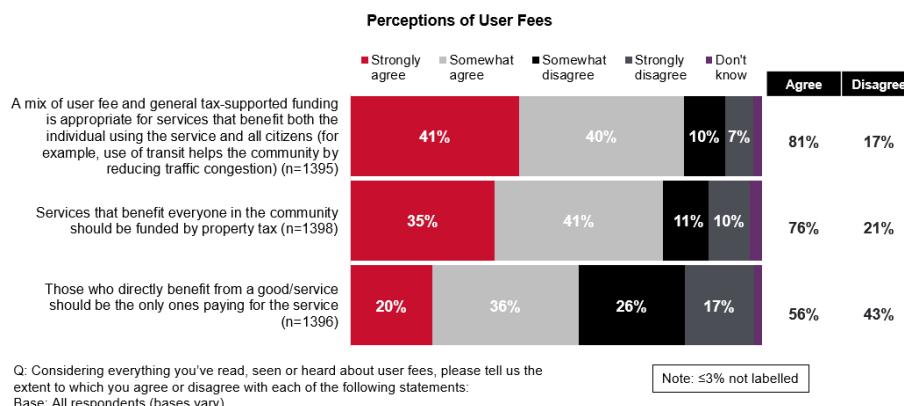
### Perception of the Balance Between Fees Paid by the Individual and Property Taxes

When it comes to determining the balance between fees paid by the individual and property taxes, nearly three-fifths (58%) say, “how the service benefits all Calgarians and individuals” should be the most important consideration. One-fifth (20%) say that “how the service benefits all Calgarians” is the most important consideration while a similar proportion (18%) say, “how the service benefits the individual using the service” is most important.

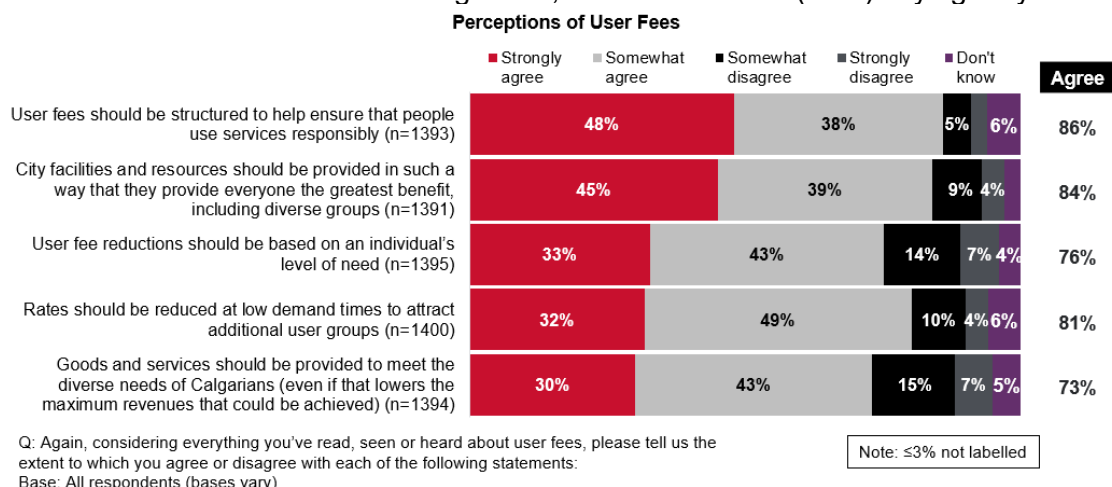


### Perception of User Fees

A strong majority (81%) of respondents agree that “a mix of user fee and general tax-supported funding is appropriate for services that benefit both the individual using the service and all citizens,” with two-fifths (41%) saying they “strongly agree” with this sentiment. Three-quarters (76%) agree “services that benefit everyone in the community should be funded by property tax,” with one-third (35%) saying they “strongly agree” with this sentiment. More than one-half (56%) agree “those who directly benefit from a good/service should be the only ones paying for this service” with two-fifths (20%) saying they “strongly agree” with this sentiment.



A strong majority (86%) of respondents agree that “user fees should be structured to help ensure that people use services responsibly,” with one-half (48%) saying they “strongly agree” with this sentiment. A similar proportion (84%) agree “City facilities and resources should be provided in such a way that they provide everyone the greatest benefit, including diverse groups” with around one-half (45%) saying they “strongly agree” with this sentiment. Four-fifths (81%) say “rates should be reduced at low demand times to attract additional user groups,” with one-third (32%) saying they “strongly agree.” Three-quarters (76%) agree “user fee reductions should be based on an individual’s level of need,” with one-third (33%) saying they “strongly agree” while three-quarters (73%) also agree that “Goods and services should be provided to meet the diverse needs of Calgarians,” with three-in-ten (30%) saying they “strongly agree.”



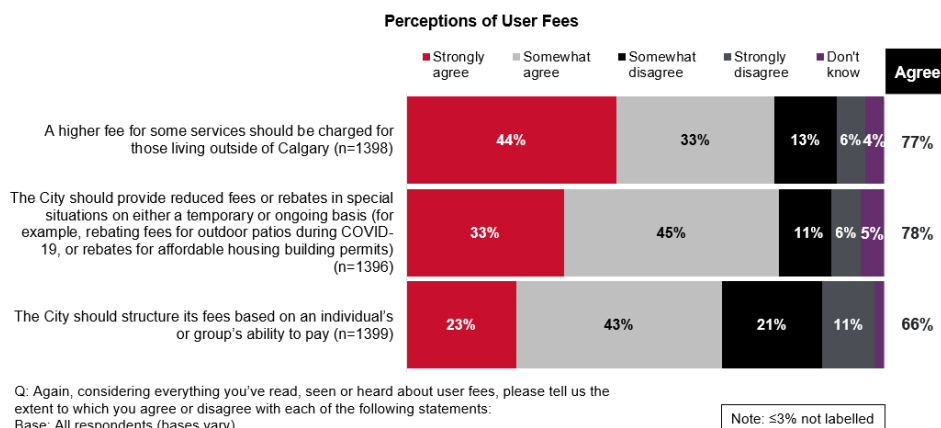
Around three-quarters (77%) agree “a higher fee for some services should be charged for those living outside Calgary,” with more than two-fifths (44%) saying they “strongly agree” with this sentiment. Nearly four-fifths (78%) agree “The City should provide reduced fees or rebates in special situations on either a temporary or ongoing basis,” with one-third (33%) saying they “strongly agree.” Two-thirds



# Perception of User Fees Citizens' View Survey Report

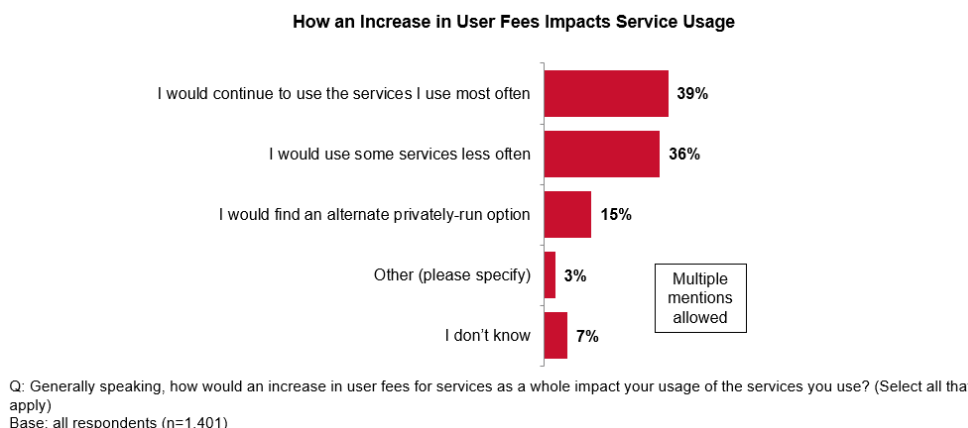
September 2022

(66%) agree “The City should structure its fees based on an individual’s or group’s ability to pay,” with one-quarter (23%) saying they “strongly agree” with this sentiment.



## Perception of How an Increase in Fees Impacts Service Usage

When it comes to how an increase in user fees would impact usage of services, two-fifths (39%) say they “would continue to use the service” they use most often. Conversely, more than one-third (36%) say they “would use some services less often” with an increase in user fees. A small minority (15%) say they “would find an alternate privately-run option.”



## Transparency in Service Funding

When it comes to how can The City be more transparent in how services are funded, one-quarter (24%) of survey respondents say using various mediums to access information (like newspapers, social media, and The City website). Fewer than one-fifth (15%) say giving more detailed breakdowns, while around one-in-ten (12%) say publishing reports publicly.

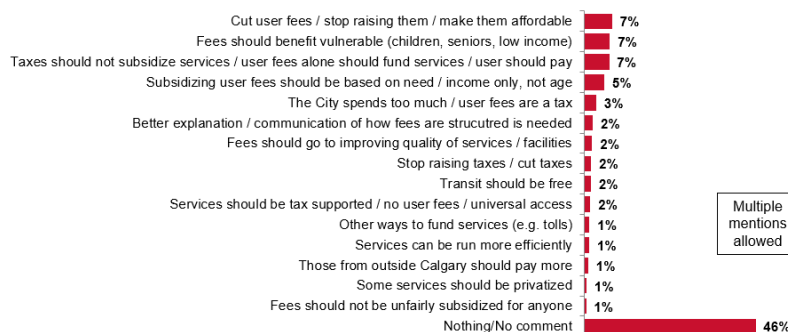
## How The City Can Be Transparent About Service Funding



Q: How can The City be more transparent in how services are funded?  
Base: all respondents (n=1,401)

When it comes to open end “further comments” about User Fees, almost one-half (46%) had no comment. Less than one-in-ten said “cut users fees” (7%), “fees should benefit vulnerable” (7%), and “taxes should subsidize services” (7%).

## Further Comments Regarding User Fees



Q: Do you have any further comments related to user fees? Please take a moment to tell us in the space below.  
Base: all respondents (n=1,401)

## Select Verbatims: Open End Question

- “Ideally, in my opinion, the tax system at the federal and provincial levels should be changed to enable municipalities to provide free and universal access to services. The current corporate and personal income tax system at the federal and provincial levels has decade by decade contributed to the perverse and growing gap between the rich and the poor.”
- “Transit is a necessity for many people. The City wants to encourage people to use transit to reduce cars on the road and as part of the climate change plan, so reduce the cost or make transit free. The city has a job to provide services to Calgarians at the lowest possible cost not to raise money for unnecessary projects and plans by city council without Calgarians approval.”
- “The world is filled with increasing user fees so perhaps it's time to look deeper into the terms being used to pay services. Tax increases are very unpopular as there are many who do not pay property



taxes but utilize the very services user fees are supposed to cover. We're firm believers in users paying for what they use - in full, with the use of rebates for ONLY those whose financial situation warrants said refund."

- "Fees should be reviewed on a regular basis with an eye to outsourcing the management of services to the private sector. For example, some recreational facilities should be owned by The City and run by the private sector."
- "In general, I'm okay with user fees as long as they are fair. I understand that the user fees do not cover the true cost of the service (Calgary Transit) and that having these services in place can have a greater impact than what we may see on the surface. For example, Calgary Transit reduces the need for people to own vehicles, drive their vehicles to work etc. Recreation facilities can have a wider impact than going for a swim. It could lead to better physical and mental health which would reduce the strain on an over-subscribed medical system."
- "How do I pay for my bins as a single person who sometimes doesn't have a bin emptied for weeks at the same rate as a family of, say, four people
- Why isn't there a discount for single occupancy?"
- "If you want Calgarians to make better use of public transit, it needs to be more accessible/affordable to ALL, especially those who are low income or disabled. We also need buses that run frequently around the clock, not just during rush hour! If usage on a bus route is low, so that bus is reduced to only running once an hour, it becomes useless to most who need it. People rarely have the option of adjusting their work schedules to accommodate infrequent transit."
- "I'm against a blanket reduction in user fees for seniors even this I'm almost at that age. Many seniors in this city are quite well-off for a variety of reasons, so lower fees should be based on need and income."
- "Fees for individual use should be paid by the user but consideration must be given to seniors on single fixed income. Also, if you are not paying the exorbitant, we Calgary taxpayers face, you should not get the service or pay more for it. The people who live in bedroom communities surrounding Calgary must pay higher fees, I as a person who is facing the loss of my home because I can no longer pay the ever-increasing property tax should not have to pay for services non-Calgary use and enjoy."
- "I strongly believe that people who live outside of Calgary should pay more for services - regardless if that is an increased user fee or a chargeback to the community the users live in. I see a lot of people from Chestermere coming into Calgary to work, using up our resources and only paying what I pay. If they can afford to live out there, they should pay more to do so."
- "I would prefer to not raise transit fee too much. They seem the most expensive. I don't mind increasing user fees for pools and recreation centres (they are still a lot less than private options). I feel like if you have reduced fees for low income, that would cover a lot of the other groups that need help accessing those things (eg, low-income seniors or students would fall in that category anyway)."
- "The current inflation that has hit our world is not an excuse to raise fees. Increasing costs is. But making those who can afford full payment pay exclusively for the subsidized groups is wrong. The city has to look at what costs it can cut and be transparent about art projects, and other lovely but unnecessary expenditures that could be sometimes donated and/or locally produced instead of having international artists commissioned."
- "Yes, transit needs to become zones. Other cities have zones, travel between these zones increases the cost to use. We charge one of price whether you travel 1 stop or the entire length of

city. Do not bring in diversity, there should not be any special interest group reduced rate. Instead of looking at increase in fees for out of towners, how about a reduced price for those with a Calgary address (Florida as an example has a resident fee vs regular fee)."

- "Low-income individuals should be subsidized so they can benefit from services."
- "Transit regions makes sense. Areas further out who have lower property rates should maybe pay more for transit, the costs are higher to live on the edge of the city. It does make sense that rates are cheaper for Calgarians for certain fees, many tourist places have similar structures."
- The YMCA style with subsidized rates based on income is a great model. Transit feels more complicated. It just feels like lower fees actually make the system operate better as there needs to be volume."
- "I believe that there should be the opportunity for subsidies when needed, but that users pay for individuals who can afford to pay is important."
- "I think people with low income, no matter their peer group status should get rebates. There are rich seniors or rich other individuals from otherwise marginalized groups who do not need rebates."
- "I am in favour of user fees because as an example, I'm a golfer and a non-golfer shouldn't have to pay. I'd like to see transit users pay for the service. Too often I see small buses running empty or close to empty, rather expensive service, what about a dial a bus or whatever, or running less often."
- "Public transit should be funded more by taxes since it is of great societal and environmental benefit."
- "Generally, I believe essential municipal services should be paid for from taxation, not fees (excluding administrative fees, such as pet licences). Examples: sewer, water, storm drainage, utility infrastructure, road maintenance, garbage collection and disposal, and recreation infrastructure. Elective or discretionary services that can be provided by the private sector should be so provided. The underlying principle is that municipal governments are there to make the municipality operate efficiently for the good of all citizens, not those who can afford to pay."
- "I'm not a big fan of user fees as it usually hits the most vulnerable who can least afford it. A thorough analysis of the cost benefits and the pros and cons for citizens using the service would be good. One size will not fit all, and perhaps different services require different handling - price structure. More work but better results."
- "Cut the cost and salaries at city hall. Stop wasting money on personal social issues and nonsensical chest puffing projects. Charge the big housing developer and rental groups for public transportation, parking, access to parks and greenspace maintenance since you're letting them develop and ruin out natural beauty creating urban sprawl and contributing to the city's overall costs in this matter."
- "I support a fee structure which takes into account ability to pay (i.e., low-income subsidies)."
- "There are certainly some circumstances when reduced user fees should be offered to under privileged citizens for economic reasons. Diversity is a completely different issue, and I fail to see why this group of individuals was even mentioned in this survey."
- "I am all for user fees to cover the expense of the facility. I am not in favor of higher fees to subsidize people who are too cheap to pay for something they can afford based on their own choices."
- "I strongly support user fees for specific services paid for by those using the service. Need to identify how many individuals actually benefit from specific services and the costs related to these services."
- "Stop the nickel and dime method and look to ALL avenues before raising fees. Make corporate builders pay their fair share. Stop giving benefits to big business, support small businesses. Stop the



# Peception of User Fees Citizens' View Survey Report

September 2022

steady stream of money being provided to big business. Calgary is more than big companies. Its people."

- "I'm all for user fees so long as revenues are actually applied to that service and so long as disadvantaged user groups, or individuals can obtain reduced payment or no payment services easily with minimal red tape."
- "I believe the present user fee structure in Calgary is very acceptable. I know most services in Calgary cannot be paid for by the users - transportation, for instance, has to be subsidized - swimming pools are the same - plus many more - all need subsidizing."

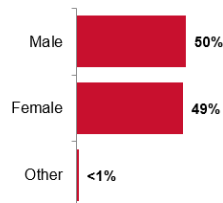


# Peception of User Fees Citizens' View Survey Report

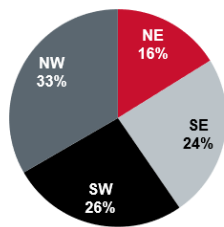
September 2022

## Survey Demographics

**Gender**  
(asked, not inferred)

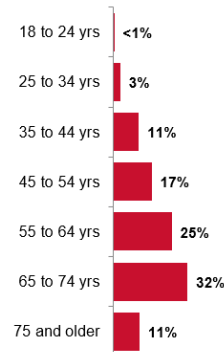


**Quadrant of Residence**



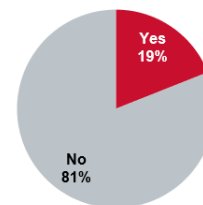
Base: All respondents (n=1,146), unless noted otherwise

**Age**

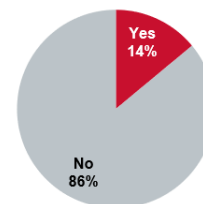


NOTE: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

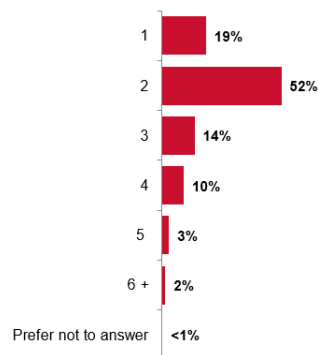
**Children Under the Age of 18 in the Household**



**Senior (aged 65+ years) in the Household**



**Household Size**



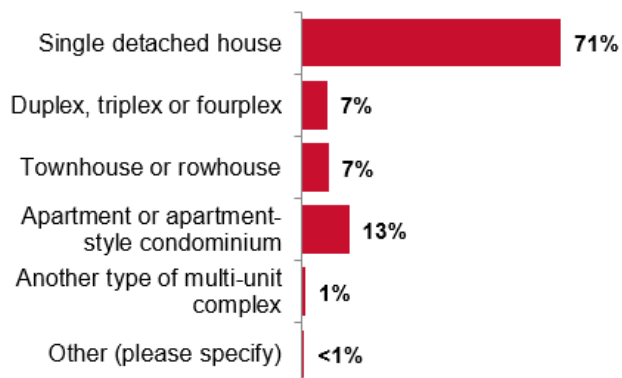
Base: All respondents (n=1,146), unless noted otherwise

NOTE: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

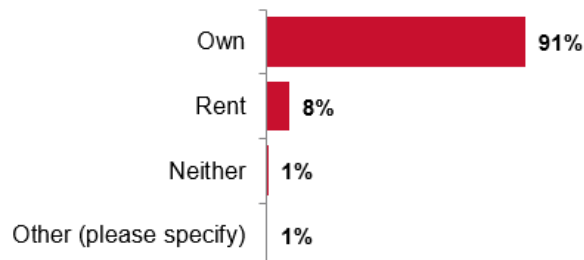
# Perception of User Fees Citizens' View Survey Report

September 2022

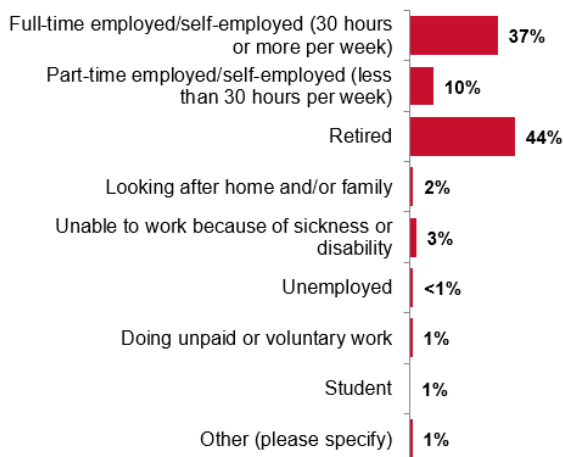
## Dwelling Type



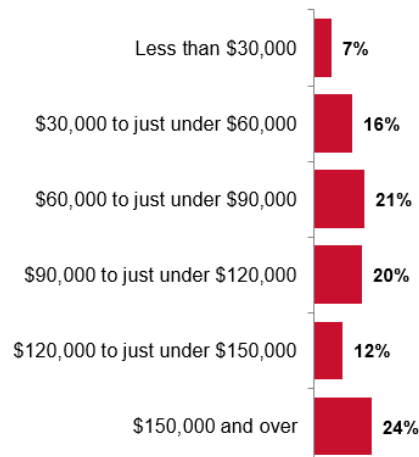
## Home Ownership



## Employment



## Income



Base: All respondents (n=1,146), unless noted otherwise

NOTE: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.



# Social Media Support User Fees and Subsidies Policy

October 2022

## Social Media Summary

To lightly promote the opportunity to weigh in on our user fee policy review to Calgarians, we posted organically on all social media channels between Sept. 20 and 27. Using a hook that a lot can change in 10 years, we saw high interest on our posts with greater than average reach on all channels. It performed the best on our Instagram feed, reaching over 38,000 people with a high-quality image from a Calgary photographer contrasted with the same scene from 10 years ago. We also saw one of our highest-reaching posts ever on NextDoor, with very high engagement and reach. Twitter was the most effective at driving link clicks, with 70 from that channel (although it should be noted that NextDoor does not provide link click information).

In total, we reached over 100,000 people, generating over 2,700 positive reactions and 149 link clicks. Overall, this campaign was effective, especially with no paid promotion to amplify it.

Reach/impressions: 104,308

Reactions: 2,747

Shares: 146

Link clicks: 149

Comments: 155



# User Fees and Subsidies Policy 2023 – 2026 Review

What We Heard Report  
October 2022

## User fees and Subsidies Policy: 2023-2026 Review

### Executive summary

The User Fees and Subsidies Policy 2022-2023 Review aims to revise and approve an updated policy. To confirm Policy direction, the project team needed to explore public understanding and gather feedback on the proposed four consolidated policy principles.

This report covers Phase 2 engagement undertaken between Sept. 1-30, 2022. The goal of the second phase of engagement was to explore public understanding and receive feedback regarding the four proposed policy principles. Phase 1 engagement was included in the 2023-2026 Service Plans and Budgets first round of engagement. Click here for the [What We Heard Report](#).

### Tactics

Engagement took place online ([www.engage.ca/fees](http://www.engage.ca/fees)) and through an online information session hosted on Microsoft Teams. Promotion of the User Fees engagement occurred during the in-person 2023-2026 Service Plans and Budgets pop-up events.

#### Tactic

- + portal page
- + information session
- + in-person

#### Result

- +1,300 visitors, 417 contributions
- +82 views, 4 attendees
- +17 pop-ups, 1,000 plus touchpoints

### Themes, Learnings and Insights

The table below synthesises the most consistent and or relevant themes and insights gathered throughout the engagement process. Any learnings, insights, and themes that exist outside the four policy principles are noted to be 'out of scope'.

#### Theme

- + Definitions
- + Eligibility
- + Affordability
- + Access

#### Learnings and Insights

- + Elements of subjectivity, clarification and process were needed
- + A review of qualifications for various programs (out of scope)
- + Keep programs and services affordable (out of scope)
- + Everyone can access the services and programs they need (out of scope)

**Definitions** within the principles were seen as vague, easy to manipulate, and open to interpretation. More transparency around the process - both within the four principles and the policies they affect.

**Eligibility** requirements for programs and cost to be reviewed and updated.

**Affordability** of programs and services included new arrivals to Canada, families, and middle-income earners, and older adults.



# User Fees and Subsidies Policy 2023 – 2026 Review

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**Access** to programs, services and events to remain fair and equitable. This ranged from swimming programs, transit and even the events centre (if built with taxpayers' dollars).





# User Fees and Subsidies Policy 2023 – 2026 Review

What We Heard Report  
October 2022

## Project Overview

Calgarians (or visitors to Calgary) pay a fee to use some City services, for example, the fees paid for water utilities, licences, permits, yoga classes, sailing lessons and soccer field rentals. When a service charges a fee and how much that fee is for an individual is guided by legislation and [The City's User Fees and Subsidies Policy](#).

This policy was last reviewed in 2008 and amended in 2012. As a lot has changed in the last 10 years, we are now reviewing the current policy with the aim to have an updated policy in place by 2023. User Fees are an important revenue source for The City and provide a significant portion of the operating budget (approximately 30 per cent (including utilities)).

User fees can help to drive efficient service provision by providing services at the desired level of individual customer and enabling customers to better understand the connections between cost and service provision (i.e., provide information on the value relative to cost).

How user fees are applied can be used to advance quality of life results (societal benefits) by encouraging behaviours that benefit all citizens. The User Fee Policy provides a standardized way to assess the appropriate balance between user fees versus general tax support to fund various goods and services as well as provides a consistent method to cost and assess the societal benefit of various goods and services and promote consistent application in setting fees.

## Goals of the Policy Review

**To review and update** the current User Fee and Subsidy policy (and implementation tools) that follow best practice and support the achievement of The City of Calgary Quality of Life results.

**To create a fair, equitable and transparent cost recovery system** for establishing and adjusting fees and charges.

**To provide clarity and foster understanding** (amongst internal and external stakeholders) of how and when fees are applied at The City.

To develop **an implementation plan** in conjunction with the policy revision

## Project objectives (phase 2)

The project objective for the second phase of engagement was to explore public understanding and receive feedback regarding the four policy principles: Full Cost Principle, Benefits Principle, Resource Efficiency Principle, Ability to Pay Principle. Phase 2 ran as a separate engagement strategy alongside 2023-2026 Service Plans and Budgets, 2023-2026 engagement, from Sept.1 – 30, 2022.



# User Fees and Subsidies Policy 2023 – 2026 Review

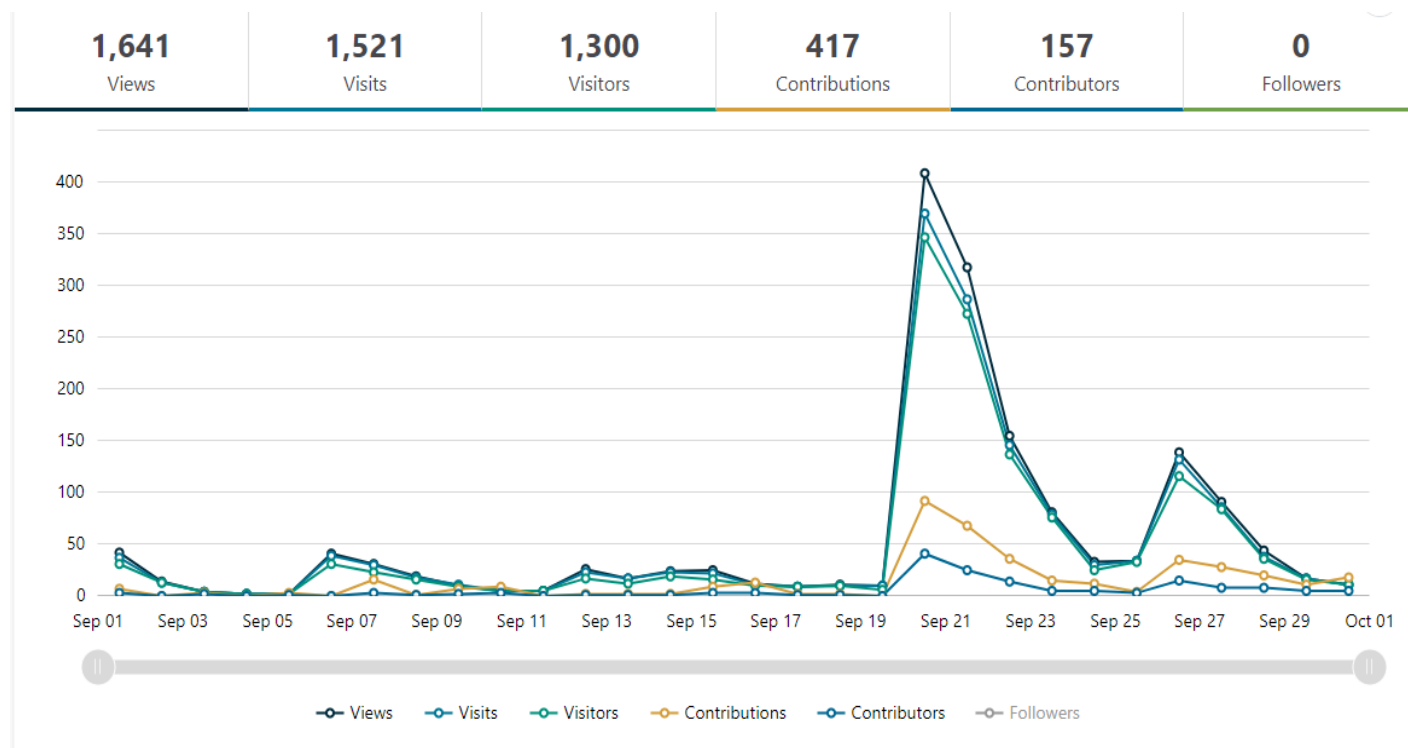
What We Heard Report  
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## Engagement scope and overview

### Engage portal page

The Engage portal page (<https://engage.calgary.ca/fees>) was open for input from Sept. 1 - 30, 2022. The table and associated graphic below shows how many users visited the website and the degree of participation. Please note we had zero

| Metric        | Description   | Number |
|---------------|---|--------|
| Visitors      | The number of unique public or end-users to a Site. A Visitor is only counted once, even if they visit a Site several times in one day. | 1,300  |
| Visits        | The number of end-user sessions associated with a single Visitor.   | 1,521  |
| Views         | The number of times a Visitor views any page on a Site.   | 1,641  |
| Contributors  | The unique number of Visitors who have left feedback or Contributions on a Site through the participation tools.                        | 157    |
| Contributions | The total number of responses or feedback collected through the participation tools.  | 417    |





# User Fees and Subsidies Policy 2023 – 2026 Review

What We Heard Report  
October 2022

## In-person

Seventeen pop-up sessions were held throughout the city during the month of September. Although the focus of these pop-ups was on 2023-2026 Service Plans and Budgets, discussion and promotion of User Fees Policy was done using informational business cards and presence of subject matter experts at these events.

## Information Sessions

The project team presented at an Engage Resource Unit bi-monthly meeting for making outreach and engagement accessible on Sept. 21, 2022. Regular attendees of this meeting include Universal Access, CNIB, Deaf and Hearing Alberta, Disability Action Hall as well as Poverty Talks!.

An online information session, with a question-and-answer period afterwards, was held on Sept. 26, 2022. We sent over 35 emails to special interest or community of practice groups. We had 82 people view the invitation online (Eventbrite) and four attendees.

## What we asked

### Engage portal page

The User Fees and Subsidies Policy Review engage page: <https://engage.calgary.ca/fees>, offered two mechanisms for engagement, including 1) *Feedback form* with the four User Fees Policy Principles, 2) *Ask the Expert* where participants could ask a question and a response would be provided by a subject matter expert.

### Feedback Form

Participants were asked two questions for each principle:

1. Is there anything else we should add to this principle?
2. Do you have any concerns with this principle?

There were also two additional closing questions:

1. Used together, do you think that the four draft principles can effectively guide how and when fees are applied to City services?
2. Thinking about User Fees, is there anything else you would like to add to the conversation?

### Ask the Expert

This section provides a place for the public to ask a question to be answered in a timely manner by the project team. It was pre-moderated and harassing, abusive or non-inclusive speech is not posted.



# User Fees and Subsidies Policy 2023 – 2026 Review

What We Heard Report  
October 2022

## Information Sessions

A PowerPoint presentation was given to participants explaining the project and was followed up with a question-and-answer period.

## In-person

Promotion of the User Fees portal page was done at seventeen pop-up sessions held throughout the city. No feedback was gathered at the pop-ups.

## What we heard

### General

Participants had mixed perceptions of the relationship between User Fees and Taxes and shared some confusion over what share of services are covered each. Participants frequently identified User Fees that are mandatory for essential services are simply another hidden tax and doesn't provide any opportunity to increase efficiency.

Participants understand the challenge to balance the User Fees and Taxes to ensure affordability and social value of providing access to all Calgarians however also desire accountability for higher taxes.

Participants question the transparency of the process and desire more information and input when setting User Fees with concerns about the amount of revenue generation, how Taxes and User Fees are connected and fairness for all Calgarians.

Note: Some themes or feedback did not directly correlate with the questions asked and are therefore considered to be out of scope. They have been noted and are included in this report due to their frequency and the concerns participants brought forward.

Below are the consistent and relevant themes pulled from across the four principles and closing questions.

**Definitions** within the principles were seen as vague, easy to manipulate, and open to interpretation. More transparency around the process - both within the four principles and the policies they affect.

**Eligibility** requirements for programs and cost to be reviewed and updated.

**Affordability** of programs and services included new arrivals to Canada, families, and middle-income earners, and older adults.

**Access** to programs, services and events to remain fair and equitable. This ranged from swimming programs, transit and even the events centre (if built with taxpayers' dollars).



# User Fees and Subsidies Policy 2023 – 2026 Review

What We Heard Report  
October 2022

## Full Cost Principle

Is there anything else we should add to this principle?

- Nothing further needs to be done. It's fine as is.
- Definition of terms – review and clarification
- Cost calculations, taxes, and external impacts that weren't considered (out of scope)

Do you have any concerns about this principle?

- Cost calculations, taxes, and external impacts (out of scope)
- Transparency of process
- Equitable and affordable programs (out of scope)
- Taxes (out of scope)

## Benefits Principle

Is there anything else we should add to this principle?

- Nothing further needs to be done
- Definition of terms – review and clarification

Do you have any concerns about this principle?

- Definition of terms – review and clarification

## Resource Efficiency Principle

Is there anything else we should add to this principle?

- Nothing further needs to be done
- Definition of terms – review and clarification
- Equitable process
- Access and Affordability (out of scope)

Do you have any concerns about this principle?

- Review process to ensure transparency and up-to-date requirements
- Definition of terms – review and clarification
- Revenue generation, Access and Affordability (out of scope)



# User Fees and Subsidies Policy 2023 – 2026 Review

What We Heard Report  
October 2022

## Ability to Pay Principle

Is there anything else we should add to this principle?

- Nothing further needs to be done
- Definition of terms – review and clarification
- Eligibility of participants

Do you have any concerns about this principle?

- Eligibility and Equitable application of the program
- Taxes, Fair Entry, Subsidies (out of scope)

## Closing Question

Thinking about User Fees, is there anything else you would like to add to the conversation?

- Concerns surrounding User Fees and Taxes
- Affordability of services and programs
- Review of the process

For a detailed summary of the input that was provided, please see the [Summary of Input](#) section.

For a verbatim listing of all the input that was provided, please see the [Verbatim Responses](#) section.



# User Fees and Subsidies Policy 2023 – 2026 Review

What We Heard Report  
October 2022

## Summary of Input

### Engage portal page – feedback form

The following section is an overview of the feedback gathered from the [Engage Portal Page](#). We asked the same two questions for the four basic principles as well as a closing question.

### Full Cost Principle

#### Is there anything else we should add to this principle?

More than half of the participants had nothing to add and thought the principle looks good as it is.

*“This seems reasonable. You should include some incentives such as discounts with full payment up front (less overhead).”*

Suggestions related to the principle included benchmarking the full cost to other municipalities as well as an alignment piece into the full cost equation. They also wanted more explanation of **Definitions** and their ability to hide indirect costs in their vagueness.

The most common themes were missing **Costs** to the example given (swimming lessons) (out of scope), followed by **Taxes** (out of scope) and **External forces** (out of scope).

*“Marketing cost.”*

*“Ongoing maintenance costs and capital improvements to the facilities should have their own category.”*

*“I think non-monetary costs should be further emphasized and explored. Are there environmental costs?”*

#### Do you have any concerns about this principle?

Many respondents had no concerns with this principle and thought it was fine as it was.

*“No but please try to keep the costs of services as low as you can in these hard financial times.”*

*“No, I think this is a sensible way to look at things in terms of actual cost.”*

Another theme (concern) was about **Cost Calculations**. Cascading themes of Cost Calculations were lack of **Transparency** in the process, the **Omission** of revenues generated, and costs that would be omnipresent whether a program ran or not (e.g., utilities or capital costs).



# User Fees and Subsidies Policy 2023 – 2026 Review

What We Heard Report  
October 2022

*“No but please try to keep the costs of services as low as you can in these hard financial times.”*

*“No, I think this is a sensible way to look at things in terms of actual cost.”*

*“Many of the costs listed in the example would be incurred, at least in part, whether the program runs or not (eg utilities, capital costs). These costs should not be fully included in the calculation, with incremental costs/opportunity costs of forgone revenue a more appropriate metric.”*

*“I would like, as a tax payer, to actually see these costs in a report. I think user fees are too high and are making it difficult for people to workout or use other city facilities.”*

Some participants wanted to make sure programs remained **Equitable** and **Affordable** (out of scope) while others were concerned about **Taxes** being used to fund programs (out of scope).

*“Yes, I am concerned that these services will now be available to those that have, and nothing is available for those that have not.”*

*“I would like, as a tax payer, to actually see these costs in a report. I think user fees are too high and are making it difficult for people to workout or use other city facilities.”*

*“The principle doesn't make sense in regards to Calgary tax payers using the services they ALREADY pay for. There should be no fees for Calgarian tax payers to use these amenities, it is frankly ridiculous.”*

## Benefits Principle

### Is there anything else we should add to this principle?

Many participants thought the principle looked good or that nothing further needed to be added to it.

*“no using this principle i think would address the need for the newcomers as well as the low income transit and recreation pass as this is good for mental health as well*

*“A balanced approach makes sense - direct beneficiary and societal benefit mix.”*

One of the main themes centred around the **Definition** (or clarification) of Benefits (i.e., what need to be included as well as the cost of benefits).

*“Your benefits principle is not being treated the same was as your costs principle. You're including absolutely every possible benefit in the benefits column, while ignoring wider societal costs in the costs principle.”*

*“Benefits to individuals vary - factors such as age, immigrant status and income affect potential benefits.”*





# User Fees and Subsidies Policy 2023 – 2026 Review

What We Heard Report  
October 2022

*“The calculation of funding mix can not be made in isolation without consideration of all the services the City provides. These services need to be prioritized based on public benefit to determine that split to ensure balancing of the overall city budget”*

## Do you have any concerns with this principle?

As in the previous question, participants thought the principle looked good or that nothing further needed to be added to it.

*“Agreed with for the most part.”*

*“May this be implemented well.”*

The main theme (concern) with this principle centred around **Definition** and its subjectivity.

*“By controlling what benefits and costs get included in the calculation, you can make the numbers justify literally any project.”*

*“Who will decide what portion is paid by who? I would like the city to make costs transparent so that users can understand exactly what percentage they are paying for. Transit for example rises in cost yearly, but does the cost to run the service really go up that much?”*

## Resource Efficiency Principle

### Is there anything else we should add to this principle?

Approximately ten percent of participants had nothing to add and thought the principle looked good as it was. There were also several comments that were out of scope of the question asked.

The main themes were a review of the **Definition** and the communities considered, that the process remained **Equitable** while keeping in mind **Access** and **Affordability**. Concerns were also raised about private facility pricing comparison.

*“Community benefits is subjective and certainly open to skewing.”*

*“Minimum availability thresholds for unrestricted (within reason) public use of public facilities.”*

*“market comparison is artificial, if anything, compare to non-profit facilities median income/affordability might be a better measure, markets charge as much as demand will allow to maximize profit”*



# User Fees and Subsidies Policy 2023 – 2026 Review

What We Heard Report  
October 2022

## Do you have any concerns with this principle?

The main theme (or concern) was the **Review Process** and **Definition**. This included the clarification and subjectivity of terms such as 'community' as well as who would be evaluating the use and application of City Services.

*"Evaluating the use and application of City resources is a very difficult job. [...]"*

*"Would the research that goes into pricing these fees be transparent?"*

Smaller (or quieter) themes were related to **Revenue Generation**, **Affordability**, and **Access**. These are considered to be out of scope.

*"I don't agree with this principle fully. Not everything is about revenue generation! Review services for utilization and drop lowest ones."*

*"Calgarians deserve to access services consistently regardless of market conditions, in fact public services are needed MORE when markets are crashing because household income also falls. When market prices fall, fees should reduce too but they never seem to. City services should not be structured for profit."*

*"publicly funded facilities should be available for public use as much as possible. Restricted access periods where facilities are only available for specific communities or user groups necessarily limit access for those who are not part of that community/user group and these conflicting needs must be balanced, with a presumption towards minimizing restrictions on the use of publicly funded facilities. Where public admittance is restricted, full operating costs should be met by users."*

## Ability to Pay Principle

### Is there anything else we should add to this principle?

Many respondents had nothing to add to the principle and thought it looked good as it was.

*"Depends on the service, but seems appropriate."*

Themes included the **Definition(s)** and **Eligibility**.

*"Ability to pay needs to include the value that they get. Someone who can enter a facility and use it for 4-6 hours gets a much cheaper product than someone who can only use it for one hour."*

*"Consider adding a statement to this principle with direction to offer different payment options".*

*"It is important to properly weigh this principle. [...]"*



# User Fees and Subsidies Policy 2023 – 2026 Review

What We Heard Report  
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Smaller (or quieter) themes included yearly checks or reviews on participants (out of scope) as well as application of the principle to basic services.

*“The principle is fine, but the household income should be lowered to access subsidy. Our income is too high to have the subsidy, yet we cannot afford the city services.”*

*“Consider adding a statement to this principle with direction to offer different payment options.”*

## Do you have any concerns about this principle?

Many participants felt there were little or no concerns with this principle.

*“No concerns. I commend the city leaders for making this one of the four main principles. It is very important to retain.”*

The main themes (or concerns) that emerged were around **Eligibility**, and **Equitable** application of the program.

*“This constantly having to prove income is embarrassing and I know myself refuse to do such a thing. [...] It doesn’t feel good.”*

*“Ability to pay should consider more than just income level.”*

Smaller (or quieter) themes were **Taxes**, **Fair Entry** and **Subsidies**. These themes, while important, are considered to be out of scope for this phase of engagement.



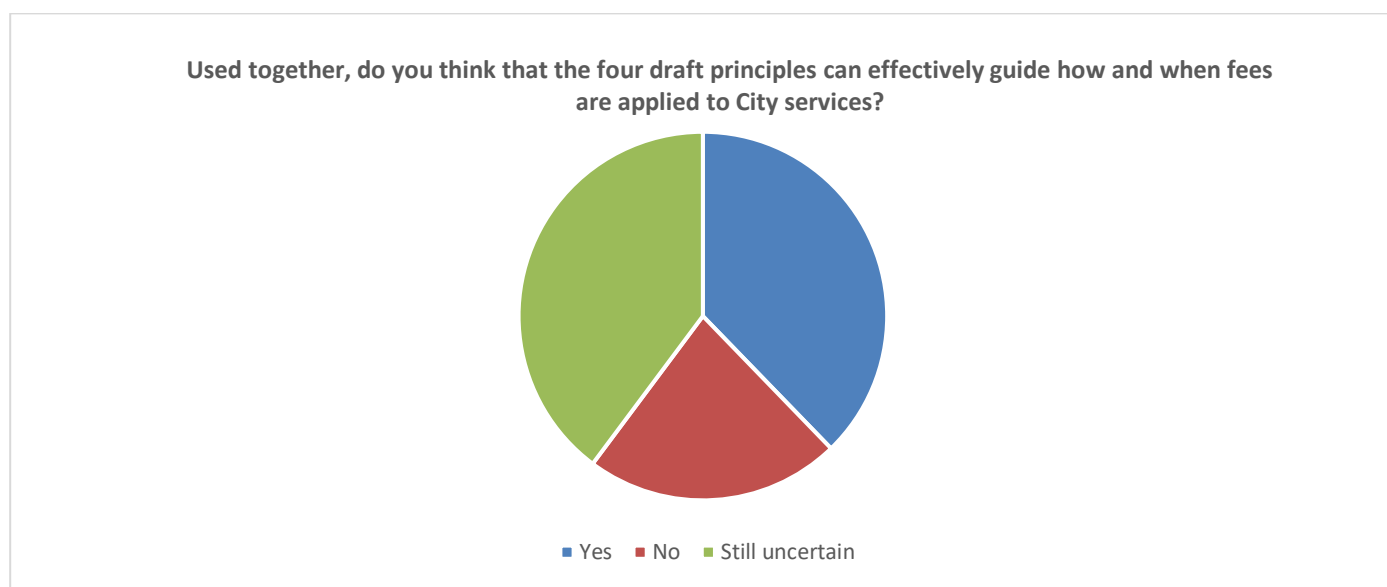
# User Fees and Subsidies Policy 2023 – 2026 Review

What We Heard Report  
October 2022

## Closing Question

*Used together, do you think that the four draft principles can effectively guide how and when fees are applied to City services?*

Participants were divided on this question, with 37 responding yes, 22 responding no and 39 were still uncertain. This is illustrated in the graphic below.



*Thinking about User Fees, is there anything else you would like to add to the conversation?*

When asked about User Fees, the top themes were **Fees** and **Taxes**, **Affordability**, and **Review of Process**.

*“User Fees should be subsidized by the Federal Tax revenues”.*

*“I’m fine with your 4 guiding principles but I do have a problem with the City constantly raising our taxes.[..]”*

*“Fees are a very tricky element to get right. Please do not limit access by creating payment barriers for lower income earners, unemployed etc.”*

*“User fees should be set to encourage use to maximize value of the existing capital expenditures. Yet they should be considered prior to any future capital expenditures to ensure that expenditure provides the value / benefit to the community in the long term, without being a greater burden on the tax roll.*



# User Fees and Subsidies Policy 2023 – 2026 Review

What We Heard Report  
October 2022

*The process for subsidy has to be easy and fast to obtain. and should be accounted for in the benefits bottom line (more use / access a good thing)."*

Smaller (or quieter themes) were specific to the **Fair Entry Program, Subsidies, and Equity**. These themes, while important, are considered to be out of scope for this phase of engagement.

## *Ask an Expert*

We received three contributions. Two of the questions were regarding transit fees while the other asked for clarification on the legal difference on municipal fees and taxes.

## Next Steps

Phase 2 engagement responses will be evaluated and used in the User Fees and Subsidies 2023-2026 Review process and draft policy. Phase 3 engagement will occur in early 2023 to gain public feedback on the draft policy.

The public will have the opportunity to provide feedback to Council in Spring 2023



# User Fees and Subsidies Policy 2023 – 2026 Review

What We Heard Report  
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## Acknowledgement of Bias

Although measures were taken to eliminate any bias creep in the engagement process, we acknowledge that some bias may still exist. The following engagement biases are noted:

**Sponsor bias<sup>1</sup>:** When participants know – or suspect – the sponsor of the engagement, their feelings and opinions about that sponsor may bias their answers. This could come from the ongoing public conversations regarding User Fees and Taxes.

**Confirmation bias<sup>2</sup>:** This occurs when a researcher forms a hypothesis or belief and uses respondents' information to confirm that belief. Confirmation bias then extends into analysis, with researchers tending to remember points that support their hypothesis and points that disprove other hypotheses. To minimize confirmation bias, researchers must continually re-evaluate impressions of respondents and challenge pre-existing assumptions and hypotheses.

**Leading questions and wording bias<sup>3</sup>:** Elaborating on a respondent's answer puts words in their mouth and, while leading questions and wording aren't types of bias themselves, they lead to bias or are a result of bias. Use of the swimming example may have inserted an unintentional bias into the questions with many respondents focussing on the issues mentioned (e.g., providing swim times to meet specific cultural needs) instead of the principle itself.

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<sup>1</sup> *Essentials of Marketing Research, An Applied Orientation* By Naresh Malhotra, John Hall, Mike Shaw, Peter Oppenheim. Pp 227. <http://www.readexresearch.com/understanding-survey-data/>.

<sup>2</sup> <http://psy2.ucsd.edu/~mckenzie/nickersonConfirmationBias.pdf>; [http://www.anderson.ucla.edu/faculty/keith.chen/negot.%20papers/RabinSchrag\\_ConfirmBias99.pdf](http://www.anderson.ucla.edu/faculty/keith.chen/negot.%20papers/RabinSchrag_ConfirmBias99.pdf) UCLA

<sup>3</sup> *Essentials of Marketing Research, An Applied Orientation* By Naresh Malhotra, John Hall, Mike Shaw, Peter Oppenheim. Pp 227.



# User Fees and Subsidies Policy 2023 – 2026 Review

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## Verbatim Responses

**Ability to Pay Principle:** All Calgarians should have the opportunity to access city goods and services.

Is there anything else we should add to this principle?

There must be special consideration to the financial capacity of newcomers especially if they have not secured employment yet.

# of children should also be considered when figuring out the ability to pay. Individuals who are subsidized should have yearly checks to affirm they still meet the criteria.

**Fair Entry** is supposed to help low income Calgarians. Why is income guideline based on the Federal poverty line. Guaranteed income supplement (GIS) (Federal Program) is based on income but they do not include any social assistance payments ie Alberta senior benefit, GIS. They also don't include OAS. This principle should include Fair Entry with much better program.

No I agree with this principle

Hydro subsidy would be nice like the one London Ontario has. So many people on low income struggling

Non profit groups only after validation of Non profit!

Ability to pay needs to include the value that they get. Someone who can enter a facility and use it for 4-6 hours gets a much cheaper product than someone who can only use it for one hour. For a recreational facility this is critical. The cost per hour of use is similar yet a person with MS or RA would not be normally able to use a Rec centre for nearly as long as a healthy individual or may not be able to go for significant portions of a month if they are on a monthly pass.

Nope

No

Consider who pays for the operating costs and capital costs. As a Calgarian, I'm open to having all of our amenities available to be used by everyone in the region. However, other municipalities in the area have preferential treatment towards their own residents. ie. Chestermere non-residents have to pay a fee to use their lake. Airdrie residents get early sign up to their facilities. We are all welcoming, but this isn't shared. Can we negotiate with our neighbours to discourage this?

We need to make sure that all citizens have equal access regardless of income.

Ability to pay should also consider family size. We have four children and although my husband makes enough for me to stay at home and we would never apply for low-income subsidies, we often decline visits



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to city facilities because of the cost of paying for 6 ppl. "Family" rates usually include only 2 kids. Most places (Heritage Park, movies, swimming) cost us around \$100 per visit. Therefore, we rarely go.

No

Nothing comes to mind.

I agree with the principle.

no

I think this should be people and groups, not just people. There are many low budget grassroots organizations who would love to utilize facilities to better their community.

"The City should push senior levels of government to take on these ability to pay responsibilities, at least in part. Consider adding a statement to this principle with direction to offer different payment options. When water metering was introduced, people could choose between variable or flat rate, depending on what worked for them. Give people the option to choose a variable vehicle use fee for instance, or flat rate (through property tax), so they can do what works for their household."

If you need to use a service like Transit, is it a goods that the person using it, can pay the fee, or should the fee be appropriately charged to the employer, who can give the employee a Transit card like they do at Schools, universities. Why have a person who is working pay, to be employed when an employer can have it charged to them and then the employer can have employees use transit rather, than have city, or business have parking spaces for the vehicles.

Are User fees necessary on things we can not use all the time?

No

Depends on the service, but seems appropriate.

Always take into account the cost to participants - transportation, equipment, child care.

Need to ensure this is based on financial need and not "age". Example is the senior transit pass.

It is important to properly weigh this principle. Transit passes for seniors should be offered at a reduced rate regardless of income (of course, individuals living at or below the poverty line should have their passes reduced even further). It's important to encourage seniors to leave their home and best to discourage driving past a certain age.

No





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There are groups or individuals that have limited ability to pay . This should apply mainly to more basic services such as transit and less to recreational or cultural services.

Not at this time

The principle is fine, but the household income should be lowered to access subsidy. Our income is too high to have the subsidy, yet we can not afford the city services.

Sounds like socialisim at it's finest. No thanks.

You neglected to add the option of no fees. The city of Calgary heavily taxes Calgarians as it is. It is unreasonable to be taxed to pay for these services and pay for these services with AFTER tax dollars. Double dipping may have been the norm but this does not mean it is the right way to run a city.

no now

After tax tax and user fees are making people worse off financially for the average person.

Seniors and low income families can't afford the tax and utility increase now so no new fees!!

Looks good

No

I think the reduction curves should be steep and reach '0' at the bottom.

Make it easy for people to get the lower rate. Having to prove income may discourage those who should benefit from making use of the policy.

This is great. I often find the cut-off for low-income assistance is too low, especially given the cost of living in Calgary, but I understand that is governed quite a bit by how much money is available for subsidy.

There needs to be a cap on the cost. Just because someone is wealthy doesn't mean the potential fees they pay should be disproportionately higher. They are generally living in more expensive properties, and are paying higher taxes, even though the cost to the city for that property isn't substantially higher than a smaller or less expensive property.

Do more to address homelessness. Remove hard income cut-offs for rent assistance - when you live in poverty, every dollar makes a difference, and it doesn't empower people to better themselves if they have to keep a low income in order to still have a safety net. Calgary housing or any other programs should use a sliding scale and not kick people out if they have a higher income eventually. Also, forcing low income to live in poverty-concentrated communities does way more harm than good.

No



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Full-time students (post-secondary and K-12) should qualify as low-income. Costs are very high for this population, something many other cities recognize and subsidize transit fees, for example. Families in Calgary who have 2-4 children riding city buses are paying astronomically high monthly fees just to get their kids to/from school. This harms our economy because there is less \$ to spend on anything else.

Affordability and indexed to inflation.

Should only apply to residents or groups of Calgary, not to visitors or those who live outside of Calgary.

"Specify what counts as low income. For example, I am native and by default usually fall into these categories, but I earn a 6 figure salary. Base the definitions on something tangible such as income versus age, race or ethnicity"

Sometimes people legitimately need help to pay for access, even if they aren't meeting an arbitrary income cut-off. Not sure how to address this, but some sort of process should be put in place to make sure those in need are able to access key services such as transit and recreation.

This principle, and the Fair Entry system, should apply to more city goods and services.

With huge increases to the cost of living, I think more than just level of income needs to be looked at (and it's the first I've heard of the sliding scale for Transit). Should look at the shrinking difference between income and outgoing expenses for most people.

look to existing programs from other levels of government to support individuals before jumping to add more (inefficient) subsidies.

Seniors discounts should be specifically included

## Do you have any concerns with this principle?

Newcomers must receive support especially in using the facilities as part of their appreciation of their new city.

Fair Entry says a relative living with you has to be considered when determining income eligibility. I'm 70, my daughter living with me is 34. She should not have to subsidize me to go swimming or take the bus or be able to go to Heritage park or exercise at a city facility. I'm not married to her. I can't afford to take transit and go downtown, use city facilities (Zoo, Heritage park) Being able to do those is so important to mental and physical health. It's hard for seniors and the low income.

Is there a better way to promote online if people are eligible for this time of reduced fees for calgary services?

Overall these principles are good on paper, but are they good in real life? As opposed to subsidies maybe the fees should be time of day based so a use of something is cheaper at quiet times of the day. The fee



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goes up in the higher demand times. For something like busses I am a senior but it is cheaper to drive and park ( say going to Bmo) I can park for \$12 but the bus for 2 people is nearly \$15. Vancouver and Toronto discount their transit for seniors to half the cost here.

the overhead to determine who gets reduced rates and to manage that is wayyyyyy too high

NGO with big money backing them getting a pass as Non profit!

Once again, as a taxpayer, there should be no user fees at all.

Unable to pay has great variance based on motivation. A college student may have a wreck of a car but the newest pair of skis and phone.

There haven't been any new city facilities added south of canyon meadows despite the fact that there are 12+ communities which would benefit from a pool, gym, art facility, etc.

No

Ability to pay should consider more than just income level. If a larger family were to use the service, is it a reasonable price to pay for more than 2 children? Should an adult be charged as much as a child?

Below market pricing leads often leads to improper allocation of scarce resources.

does this mean the more you earn the more you pay or is the cost capped at whatever it is and some just pay lower. I find costs too high currently and feel we should be reducing costs where we can instead of inventing new ones. people don't need more programs to be involved in just more freedom (no costs) to move around- work on safety in transit for example instead of expanding. I don't care how much city it covers if it isn't safe I'm not riding

Yes, it affords people with a way to game the system and obtain services at a reduced cost even when they are fully capable of paying the full cost. It also requires the city to have access to income information for individuals

Seems fair

Only concern is how to make the subsidies equitable.

Please use it carefully so as not to pass a burden onto others

I would like to know what the low income threshold is, and how often it is re evaluated

Scrap this method too much administration

"Why is it ONLY LOW INCOME who can receive reduce rates or rebates?"



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What about hard working families that are struggling just as much, if not more, in some cases."

This constantly having to prove income is embarrassing and I know myself refuse to do such a thing. I would rather go without then have to stand there and show, "yeah I am poor" and besides in our case it isn't so much that we have a lower income but that we have a sick person whose medical condition is expensive. So what now I have to prove that as well. It doesn't feel good.

Is this principle being applied to funding a ticketed arena operated by a highly profitable business? Would be interesting if sliding scale ticket prices were a condition of public funding.

Yes, it should be apportioned to user, not just homeowner to be charged.

Yes, there should be an exemption for people who do not use all the items , but fees for items we do not need or use. The principle should state the User Fees are only for some items all use like Garbage but the others are not used. Summer is okay for the Green cart other wise it is just a money grab.

It is essential.

No

What level of financial income is being selected. Ensuring equitable for families and single.

Some people have \$millions but no income. Just income is not a good indicator of ability to pay.

Recognition of people that have been left behind economically is critical to engaging participation and benefit to the entire community. Lowering costs to people in this category is critical to engaging them in community life.

No

No concerns. I commend the city leaders for making this one of the four main principles. It is very important to retain.

No concerns

This should be done through fair entry. Low income- Disability, etc should get reduced fees. Otherwise, this will be took advantage of! Don't do sliding scale. Why complicate things! Or maybe having sliding scale above low income cut off

The city of Calgary already heavily taxes Calgarians. It is unreasonable to tax Calgarians to use services that tax dollars go to only have them pay a fee to access the same services their tax dollars paid for.

As a person about to entre retirement user fees and taxes are my biggest concern. I don't have a government pension. I lived here all my life. Continued growth of the City government is eating up my



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saving with ever increasing taxes and user fees. My taxes have tripled in 12 years along with user fees. This is after tax money. Sad to say like many I know we don't think we have better services, just bigger more expensive government.

The concern I have with this is the determination of those unable to afford it. Over the years I have seen many people take advantage of these programs and end up with far more "pocket money" at the end of the day than someone who, it was determined, did not qualify. Income and family situations all play a factor, but how do you ensure that the ability to pay is a true determination.

No

I want to ensure no one falls through the cracks. I am a manager in the non-profit sector, there is a senior who volunteers every day, rain or shine. He comes on the accessibility bus because he is in poor health and disabled. I know he lives in subsidized accommodation and has a room mate. Our agency pays his bus pass, or at least any subsidized portions, because he cannot afford it. Getting about is intrinsic to his wellbeing. I am not sure in what world a man like this should pay anything.

I would say that cost should never be a barrier. Even if someone \*can\* pay (for transit or a pool, for example), the cost is often a barrier to actually using it. We often use costs to 'gatekeep' services, and I think that's wrong.

Nope!

Stay aware of the messaging so it doesn't sound like "make the rich pay". This is a city with a higher concentration of high net worth families than most cities, and you need them to stick around.

City Council should look at the social housing program in Vienna, Austria. It's the best in the world, and we could model it and eliminate homelessness. We are the perfect Canadian city to take on a project like this. We have the space and capital, and we would benefit a lot from appearing in headlines across the country/world as a progressive city that is leading the way to solve problems that are rampant in many other places. If there is a job opening related to this I'd love to apply for it.

Non profits should not get discounts - they still have money.

Pricing should be understood, but not set. I would like to see a more extreme version of this. There is a lot of money in Calgary, generally I would support higher prices for most and deeper discounts for those who need it. This could even be done facility to facility, a brand new pool in a new area of the city, surrounded by rich people, should have a higher base cost (then discounts for those who need)

Agree with the principle. Would suggest its scope and implementation consider not just individuals but also families. Inflation is high and affordability of transit, recreation, etc. is decreasing dramatically for many middle-income users. People are being 'priced out' who don't normally fall below the poverty line.



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Is LICO an accurate assessment of affordability? So low income individuals have a reduced cost For access, however, what is the process to determine affordability for mid-income earners? When I moved from low-income to mid-income, we could no longer afford art/sport lessons, passes to the zoo and science centre and transit passes well paying full child care costs. How are you ensure access is affordable for all nit just low income and high income earners.

Outdoor public pools should be free to access. Not everyone can afford air conditioning and use of pools is ESSENTIAL during summer months, especially for children

When looking at income, should also know what other "benefits" they are already using, eg. what other financial supports are they getting, either from government or nonprofits. Many considered "middle class" do not qualify for assistance because of their income, but struggling as much or more because they still have to pay for everything themselves.

not equitable

Ability to pay is difficult to define

I'd like to see even cheaper access for youth on public transit so at a young age they become familiar & comfortable w public transit rather than using cars which plug up parking/cause traffic jams. My own selfishness wld ask for even cheaper senior rates b/c prov gov requiring 'over 75' driver testing will further isolate those not used to using public transit.

**Benefits Principle: Those who benefit from the use of a service should pay for that service.**

**Is there anything else we should add to this principle?**

This is good.

This all looks good but until transit is utilized by a much higher number of people it becomes a very expensive service we all subsidize. Community busing continues to be poor in multiple communities. Provide more parking at LRT stations and central hubs. If transit keeps going up people will go back to driving rather then taking the crowded hot buses.

Nope I agree

no using this principle i think would address the need for the newcomers as well as the low income tansit and recreation pass as this is good for mental health as well

Transparency in assessing benefits and a method for the public to challenge the decisions.

There should be a way to assess how it affects the community when things are too costly or not operating as they should.



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Cost should be keep low for services

Is carbon tax considered?

No

"Is the benefit of children accessing the service vs not accessing it taken into consideration?

If we care about children being active, being exposed to cultural events, being able to explore beyond their world at home, then we need to see the access of these services as a large benefit to the children in our city.

Also, is the benefit to the family considered, not just the individual?"

no

transit is a poor example cause we already pay to use it, but if your talking about water parks, garden etc then I dont agree on paying

"Your benefits principle is not being treated the same was as your costs principle. You're including absolutely every possible benefit in the benefits column, while ignoring wider societal costs in the costs principle."

How is 'benefit' calculated? Lots of room for skewing of results here based on goals.

To calculate the benefit to the community I think you also need to understand the demand for the service.

no

No

I don't think so.

We should apply this principle more broadly! We distinguish between individual and community benefit for transit, but do not do this for vehicles (either use of the roads and streets or on-street storage of private vehicles).

A balanced approach makes sense - direct beneficiary and societal benefit mix.

Benefits to individuals vary - factors such as age, immigrant status and income affect potential benefits.

The calculation of funding mix can not be made in isolation without consideration of all the services the City provides. These services need to prioritized based on public benefit to determine that split to ensure balancing of the overall city budget



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No

As a general rule the city should pay half of the cost and the users should pay the other half.

If you consider the capital outlay mass transit specifically the C-Train - users should pay a higher fee than for regular transit and if too complicated raise the prices across the board

This is comprehensive and covers benefits to individual and society.

No

Costs should be allocated proportionally to usage. For example I pay approximately \$10 for water and yet \$30 for fees. There's no incentive to reduce my water use because it's such a small part of my bill. If water / waste water/ other utility fees were proportional to usage it would encourage everyone to be more environmentally friendly and allocate costs where they belong.

The benefit of attracting tourist dollars and it's spin off effect to restaurants, hotels and the economy

Definition of community, and how they are determined. Is it the same as a ward? Can they change (amalgamate, split)?

Looks good

Certain things should be weighted by the amount that they benefit society (or reduce other costs to society) ie: an art class, while enjoyable to the person taking it, isn't as beneficial to society as swimming lessons because a person who can swim is less likely to need a water rescue, health care for near-drowning or resources to recover their body after drowning. Swimming lessons should be subsidized more than art classes.

No

I think we should

TRANSIT SHOULD BE FREE EVERYWHERE IN CALGARY. We're raped by the prices of everything else. How come every other Canadian city is transit friendly.

No, looks good, it just might help to know a percentage breakdown if that's possible (public vs. individually funded).

No

Need to differentiate between different types of city services. Agree that dog or cat licensing, or parking fees, for example primarily benefit the user. However, transit is more of an essential service for people. So the approach needs to recognize this.





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No.

Looks good

Benefit to the community should also consider environmental costs of alternatives (e.g. car versus transit - not just road cost of alternative, but also environmental cost)

Staying with the transit example, the societal benefits are immense. In this case, why would the fee/tax support be approximately 50/50%, when taxes should support a greater portion of transit costs so as a city and a society we can achieve many goals: mobility for all, more efficient use of land, reduced carbon emissions, equitable distribution of services!

Eg. A safe, clean and more frequent, reliable, accessible transit system benefits all. It becomes the "favored" way to travel for all people, at least for commuting to school/work. Think of actual major cities like Vancouver, London, New York where using their transit, certainly their train systems, is "normal" for everyone. Only "elite" will need and are able to afford drive, pay for gas and parking, insurance.

Transit service, Transit Parking, and Recreation facilities. I believe we need to charge more for Non-Residents of the City. By simply asking for a persons drivers Lic when purchasing monthly Transit passes, and recreation passes, we could help the City recover a bit more from the folks not currently paying the property tax portion of these services. In addition with the park plus system, we could also make the LRT parking free for Residents of Calgary and Charge a fee to Non residents.

disagree with how you define community benefit. Weighting should be more to the individual so as not to burden none users despite your assertion of community benefit.

How much it costs to collect the fee. Around the world many transit systems have discovered that it costs let to run the system for free and pay with taxes rather than collecting fees.

City transit monthly fee's should be much, much lower. You have mentioned the benefit of admissions but the benefit to the citizens earning lower wages is also something that deserves serious consideration. I wish the city would take a stand on something that benefitted the people and lead the country.

**Do you have any concerns with this principle?**

May this be implemented well.

When you say publicly funded, are you meaning property tax funded. I'm a low income senior who owns her own house. 16% of my income goes to property taxes- and I have to help pubicly fund others using the service? And pay the user fee. Fair Entry program is not fair and needs some changes. People of low income and own their own home should not have to be funding others. Fair Entry should not use the Federal poverty statistics to determine their guideline Nor should a relative living with you

Nope I agree



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no.

not everyone agrees on what is public benefit, particularly this insane net zero climate crusade, therefore public benefit should be given much less value in the weighting than individual benefit

The assessment of benefits is highly subjective and open to manipulation/abuse. it is important that this part of the process be very open and transparent, with opportunities for the public to see the decisions and dispute them where necessary.

Transit is a very poor example. People are afraid to use the train system in this city and only use it as a last resort.

There are no limits stated on what is a community benefit. For example, if a racist were to get rid of all minorities they could argue in their definition it was a community benefit

Yes money hungry politicians charging too much for the services! Regularly audited by a 3rd party for fairness

My biggest concern is that this is not followed completely and that the long term benefits are not fully looked at. The City is not a private business and is unlikely to run as efficiently as one. It should be providing that which has a societal positive but is not provided by the private sector. eg. -healthy active people join the fitness club but less healthy people don't have the same cost/benefit ratio so don't join. Yet, they are the part of society that needs it the most.

What is the percentage of cost covered by the city vs. Individual for each benefit? Does it vary by service (eg. transit is 70% city covered vs. Rec activities are 30%)?

No

No

With transit, there are a lot of empty buses driving around, creating more traffic, need for road maintenance and increased emissions (greenhouse and other more noxious emissions). Calgary Transit needs to be more proactive in reducing services on underutilized routes.

your explanation is vague and lacking key information it doesn't share exact costs

Yes, this is way too subjective in nature and would be prone to misuse by politicians and administration people.

No

By controlling what benefits and costs get included in the calculation, you can make the numbers justify literally any project.



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Subjectivity. Council makes these decisions to fund their pet projects or goals.

The principle is rather vague on how the city will determine what the value to the community is. For instance if the person taking transit has to ride the transit system for 2-3 hours where the car will take them 1/2 hour it seems the value to the individual is definitely with the car. How do you manage these tradeoffs.

No

no

Who will decide what portion is paid by who? I would like the city to make costs transparent so that users can understand exactly what percentage they are paying for. Transit for example rises in cost yearly, but does the cost to run the service really go up that much?

I have concerns with all of your user fees. I understand the why but this only makes sense if you reduce our taxes. Our taxes continue to increase and now you want to add a new tax described as user fees. Reduce taxes or allow for more tax credits. To apply another fee is nothing more than a tax grab. I pay for yoga as that is my choice. Are you going to charge me to run? Maybe explain where my taxes go so I have a full understanding. It cannot be a one way street!!!

Yes .the correct approach. Quite subsidizing users

None.

If everything is assessed on a user fee basis, then what do our taxes pay for? What base services to citizens get for their tax dollars? Where is that defined so we can understand.

I believe you lose sight of people who don't want to apply for subsidies and don't want to disclose their financials

The city keeps approving new communities in the far reaches of the ends of the city, yet not enough responsibility is placed on developers to contribute to services such as this. I.e: transit expansions and infrastructure

"How do you measure intangible qualitative benefits? beauty, pleasure, comfort, solidarity?"

Some services, such as Transit should not be funded solely by those who use them as that makes the cost too high.

The difficulty will be determining the split between publicly funded and user portion. Too little public funding (increasing user fee) may deter use and too much may impact other publicly funded services.

No



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No

Yes - it should be a higher rate for those using the transport specifically of being used to go to and from work - for students and seniors a lower fee structure

None

Agreed with for the most part

"Far too vague. How are intangible benefits (mental health) included (you have intangible costs)? In your example there are potential commercial benefits (build in lower cost areas) how are they included? If there is a reduction in parking revenue is that a negative benefit? Is a benefit tied to a timeframe? Is it discounted? Can it increase over time (a park when you increase density)?"

No

No

No

The transit example is good, but how is this applied in practice to other services? For example, subsidized recreation provides community sociohealth benefits; is that captured?

There are areas where the benefit to the community should 'trump' the benefit to the individual. For example, removing user fees from transit while expanding service and access will benefit society an enormous amount. The reduction in single-passenger vehicle traffic would lead to decreased insurance, health, emergency service, pollution, enforcement and other costs. The cost would be marginal and the benefit so large, it can't just be offered to people who can pay for their personal 'portion'.

The rule makers and policy changers are dogwater

Nope!

No

Agree with it in theory but what seems to be missing is the concept of providing a 'hand up' - particularly for essential services like transportation. Lower-income families, students, homeless persons do not have the option to drive, for example. If the user cost becomes prohibitive, they are simply left with no option. This does not benefit the community as they cannot attend school, work, medical appointments etc. So the shared community benefit needs to be calculated more broadly.

The combined individual and community benefits should be clear to citizens.

Agee



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Given the amount of car traffic going into downtown on weekdays, it seems that the community benefit of transit and bike paths is underestimated.

how do you decide what the community goals are?

Yes - see above. Also, staying with transit, how does free parking at CTrains align with this policy? It does not. Does the reserved parking pay for 50% of the capital costs/upkeep/administration/externalities of this service? I would guess it does not.

From your WWHR report, it seems that unfortunately most respondents are of the, "I should only have to pay for me and not others" opinion. Unless people view things from a more equitable lens, I don't think this principle works. People who have more should pay more (ie. personal and property tax) to improve quality of life for all. Recognize that it is a luxury to be a homeowner or a business owner, not a right.

it's not equitable.

No

**Full Cost Principle - The City should have a complete understanding of how much it costs to provide a good or service before setting a fee.**

**Is there anything else we should add to this principle?**

Marketing cost.

It would be great If there is any ability to subsidize swimming lessons for all children so more families utilize this life skill. The number of children who continue to drown every year could be reduced if lessons were open to all and offered a much broader range of availability. Reduce administrative costs wherever possible.

Think that's all

no from what i can see here the principal i am looking at seems to be working

An overall "opportunity cost" should be considered. That is to say, is the cost of a good or service actually worth it to the taxpayers. As an example, the cost of constructing concrete (unused) badminton tables in some of the parks (Stanley Park), or green spaces (Elbow River), was a colossal waste of money. The cost of these goods should have been left in the hands of the taxpayer so that taxpayers can determine how they wish to spend their own money. The city should not be deciding.

Add the costs of the city bureaucratic overhead, the council overhead, the cost of any delays in making decisions, and the potential costs if contracts lack inflation limits and/or performance and penalty clauses.



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More transparency about the costs used in this calculation. Are pet license fees only for services provided to licensed pets? How are the costs allocated between licensed and unlicensed. Why should responsible pet owners pay for the low income spay/neuter program.

Funds to help the homeless and those who are battling drug addiction. We need more staff patrolling the downtown areas and train/bus stations to help these individuals.

No

Have we looked at overhead costs like the staff used to register in swim lessons or program and staff and hire for swim lessons

The public should be informed of the full cost breakdown to understand said full fee! Audited for accuracy of information provided for full fee by a third party ensuring fairness!

Nope

No

Rental cost or expand capital cost to reflect facility usage cost.

Yes I think I'll cost of this new funding should be paid by the counsellors out of their own pockets and not out of funding from the city!!

"Principals are fine but we already pay high taxes that should cover services.

You are double billing and some of us can't afford it!"

the issue is TOO MANY services are being charged extra fees that were formerly part of or taxes, like garbage collection, water, in and out. All of these additional fees eat away at income we do not have. Inflation is harming everyone. A moratorium needs to be placed on all fee acceleration and any new fees. The City of Calgary needs to learn how to live within the budget it has without adding taxes and without changing fee structures.

No

You should scrap this BS of TAXING, TAXING and more TAXING!! You are disgusting the way you TAX people into oblivion!! You are NOT elected to tax people to death!! You are elected to GOVERN within the means of the taxes you already collect!! WE THE PEOPLE ARE NOT YOUR EFFING SLAVES!!! You are absolutely disgusting!!! No where do you say when trying to win the seats GOVERNING, NOT RULING the people of a ONCE GREAT CITY!! This garbage started with



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"If you are going to include ""indirect benefits"" to City spending, such as broader economic activity, growing economy, etc, then you must also include ""indirect costs"" to ensure an apples to apples comparison is being made. Every dollar spent by government is a dollar taxed out of the private sector by the government, so while the government spending might have an indirect benefit, the lower private sector spending means a lower indirect benefit on that side of the ledger."

When it says " Your income " it should MEAN your income . Not " Family income " not all of us share finances . But we share a home because of costs ! This eliminates the option for those that need it most . Not everyone has a partner that shares finances or earned dollars or has joint accounts . Our finances are separate .

Nothing comes to mind

I think the cost is absoulty too high...

This seems reasonable. You should include some incentives such as discounts with full payment up front (less overhead).

no

Looks fine to me

Let's get reasonable...do we need services that cost a fortune? HINT answer starts with N and has 2 letters.

I don't think so.

No

The cost of negative externalities of services (eg traffic congestion, air quality) should also be included in the full cost principle.

No, I believe the city is doing a great job

No

Personally I think a separate budget should be put in the side in case of emergency. Like perhaps a natural event occurs or a big buisness wants to buy out that land to build sky scrapers: the extra budget would be used to protect these public cites or perhaps be invested in upgrading the facilities to better blend in with modern needs

the cost of collecting fees

Poor economic sense

This seems fair



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None

"Should also include all or at least a portion of replacement cost for all capital equipment and building. Not sure if the capital cost included the future replacement. Assume under direct cost this also includes the employer portion of benefits etc. Also indirect - for insurance and liability etc."

Bicycle riders/owners should be paying for the use of the bike paths. They should be required to get a license. Tax payers should not be paying for installation and continued maintenance of bike lanes.

No

Yes fees should be on how you use the products and facilities, as a retired person I do not put much stress on the city roads and the city facilities, my footprint is small and I should be charged accordingly, which should be less

I think that is a very good principle

Safety on LRT. Eg: my friend and I were accosted on LRT. We are 77 years old, presentable and non-threatening but we will not use the LRT again until everyone has to pay to get on in the first place. No action has been addressed by our letters to the city and Let.

Our pensions and salaries have not gone up, ( except for gov workers of course!), and everything else has! Have mercy!

After my submission the "what we've heard so far" section appeared. #'s 2&4 are identical. The waste at the City has to be seriously addressed and not internally. Too many stupid people at the City

No

The policy should cover all opex and capex spend.

No

Do not raise taxes of users fees anymore. You have raided our walkers enough.

Consideration to competitiveness against other swim lesson providers.

I don't understand what you mean by non-monetary costs. If is non-monetary, how can it be a cost?

Ongoing maintenance costs and capital improvements to the facilities should have their own category.

No

Looks thorough





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Maintenance and upkeep of facilities unless that's already accounted for in Capital costs.

None

Users must pay the full cost instead of making seniors on fixed income such as myself subsidize them.

You need to actually define these costs and be transparent for what you're actually paying for with less officials in government tracking it. None of this is rocket science. Your above calculation makes sense, but its easy to pad indirect costs which come at the burden of the tax payer.

Whoever resides on the Calgary Council are a bunch of idiots.

I'm sure insurance/liability is taken into account somewhere here, but that's the only extra thing I can think of!

Environmental costs - for example the cost of people having to drive to the pool because Transit isn't available or timely, or the emissions generated by the pool's heating system.

I think you've caught all the costs involved

No

I think non-monetary costs should be further emphasized and explored. Are there environmental costs?

Benchmarking the full costs to other municipalities, both within Alberta and beyond. For example, living in a city like Calgary is very expensive. Some of these costs are lower in rural areas, yet city residents can't afford to bear all these costs. Perhaps add some alignment piece into the full cost equation (e.g. grant, adjustment (reduction) for societal/safety benefit of having people know how to swim). Easiest way might be to do this as a percentage reduction, not quantify exact amount.

No.

yes, are these costs reasonable, or is there excessive costs or excessive administration

That all overhead cost required regardless of the service be provided not be included in fess. Ie a city provides rec services so the management structure and admin of that structure should be supported by tax's not fees. However direct admin such as time to manage pass life guards should be part of admin fee. New Capital cost should not be included in fees on capital maintenances. Tax should support the assets of city. Fees should only be for o&m and capital maintenance and substaining capital

no

A lot of the places my taxes support - zoo, science center, saddle dome, performing arts center - my family can't use because it is too expensive. We don't qualify for a subsidy but it is over \$100 to take my family of



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four to the zoo. Why not better utilize community centres? Like Thorncliffe? Or provide free opportunities like skate parks?

Environmental costs. E.g. the cost of driving downtown vs. taking transit, walking or biking. I suggest a tariff on parking or entering downtown in a vehicle to subsidize costs of transit and bike paths.

How do other revenue sources fit in (e.g. advertising on buses)

No

environmental impact NEEDS to be addressed with every decision. There are many energy efficient measures that can be taken to reduce overall cost and return on investment. Solar return on investment is very high and will pay for future costs of a facility.

Externalities are often not included in the cost of a good or service. You should definitely include the cost of externalities.

isn't there a random city charge due to inefficiencies?

Taxes should be lower.

There should be areas that are free to the public.

**Do you have any concerns about this principle?**

The facilities should be marketed to the public well (e.g. news broadcast, train stations, trains, etc.) and not just posted in the City of Calgary website to ensure that they will be availed and used.

No but please try to keep the costs of services as low as you can in these hard financial times

no the principal looks ok

Should the costs for these goods or services be incurred in the first place? The costs associated with many goods and services should be left in the hands of the taxpayer rather than having the city waste it on unused or unwanted services. At the very least, the city should create an honest process for determining whether all of these goods or services (in their current format) are desired or will be used by a significant portion of the population.

Government inability to add standard commercial inflation limits, performance and penalty clauses, and other protections in contracts, internally and externally.

Many of the costs listed in the example would be incurred, at least in part, whether the program runs or not (eg utilities, capital costs). These costs should not be fully included in the calculation, with incremental costs/opportunity costs of forgone revenue a more appropriate metric.



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No effort is put into maximizing returns. Thousands of dollars of returnable containers are taken from recycling bins (we were told these would reduce the cost) with nothing being done. Complain and you are told to not use the service you pay for or that it is people in need doing this. One "in need" couple that I heard at a bottle depot were in need of steaks at the Keg and massages

I would like, as a tax payer, to actually see these costs in a report. I think user fees are too high and are making it difficult for people to workout or use other city facilities.

No

Maybe the city should stop spending so much money on useless, pie in the sky projects wasting taxpayer money, and then there would be more money left that we wouldn't have to fork more for user fees that are just for another form of tax!

Are there limits or percentages on the administrative or indirect costs?

Are we sure we are capturing all the costs?

Yes limited profit or zero profit to city for some of these services! The city should not profit from user fees but only enables continuously providing of said services for the community

My concern is that "indirect costs" and "Administrative costs" are similar in function, both being administration related. It's double dipping for oversight expenses.

None

Nope, seems complete

No

Yes that the counsellors and city administration will get city taxpayers to pay for them

Just a way of bringing in more revenue from over taxed property owners.

The example used above is terribly misleading, it is reasonable where swimming lessons are concerned BUT we know that this calculation is being used for EVERYTHING the city does and much of it is stuff we are paying twice for. You have a bloated bureaucracy that needs to be addressed before implementing any new fees or raising existing fees, or changing this formula to cost citizens more money.

Yes, before calculating the 'full cost of a service', shouldn't the starting point be "what services should be provided"?

No



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lib-[offensive language removed] [personally identifying information removed] and got WORSE with [offensive language removed] [personally identifying information removed] and tax sucker and continues with that [offensive language removed] [personally identifying information removed] and [personally identifying information removed] If city council allows this THIEVERY of her CLIMATE SCAM, we will be ready and she should be}ARRESTED for TREASON!!! The most CORRUPT CITY HALL in Canada!! ... STOP RULING!! Govern,

Encourages over spending and inflated costs

None

No. If there are equity concerns, this should be addressed by subsidizing individuals through cash payments (a provincial responsibility), not by distorting markets and messing up the ability for the city to track it's performance.

It effectively punishes people who are already in a bad situation. Those who can't leave . Those who can't reveal their partners finances ( they might pay physically if they do ) and those separated but still sharing a home they bought 20 years ago . The policy needs to be what it says ... your income ... not " Household "

None

Everyone should learn to swim and people don't have the money to have the opportunity.....

no

Costs can change rapidly. If a computer breaks and needs to be replaced has that been factored in or would costs suddenly rose? How often are costs recalculated in this model?

I suspect the admin cost is a much higher percentage of the total than it should be

No

Let's get reasonable...do we need services that cost a fortune? HINT answer starts with N and has 2 letters.

Yes, I am concerned that these services will now be available to those that have, and nothing is available for those that have not.

No

I am worried that direct, overhead ect costs push some low income people out because they can't afford the fees

No



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I'm worried if the budget is going to where they are supposed too. In the example office supplies are indeed necessary to an extent but they shouldn't be given much considering they're things that can be reusable. I also think that waste in general, whether it be financially or physically should be investigated so that they can come up with ways to better save money

Does not consider inefficient management (overhead) or situations where costs are higher for short term circumstances.

Consider costs of replacing and repairing infrastructure.

Capital costs include repairs to and replacement of buildings and other infrastructure, right?

Over priced

No

No

No

The principles listed above make sense. This should apply to bike owners and bike lanes as well.

No

The costs incurred by the municipal government is probably a lot higher than if it was run by an efficient private corporation.

I believe that everyone should be able to swim in a pool, even very poor people. One rule does not work for all people.

Absolutely none provided other programs can subsidize our truly struggling families with user fees. That struggling families are provided with information about Jumpstart and other program in place to cover user fees.

No

That the city may subsidize one group at the expense of other groups leaving too great a burden on some groups to fund others. Everyone should pay a same and equal amount. Full stop.

No

n0

None.



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I think that we'll be surprised on how much all that adds up to.

Yes!!!! Not all services should be about 100% cost recoup!!!!

You don't need more money. Just stop misusing what money you have already. Residential sidewalks were just fine. We didn't need you to spend money creating street restrictions. We don't need more silly art projects either.

Yes, I am going broke because taxes and fees are too high. Soon I will be living on the governments dole. You have drained my wallet dry.

No

I think understanding all the costs is an important step. You also have to understand what others are charging for similar services. If you add all those costs for running a swim lesson and it works out to twice what is being charged at other facilities, your math might be skewed.

I think the money grab with fees is disgusting.

What is missing is the revenue collected from user fees and the trending use analysis. Just because we have always had pools (for example) we shouldn't fund them if their use is on a steady decline.

"Are costs that are streams (operating costs discounted)? How are ethical choices with potentially higher costs factored?"

The manner in which utility fees are currently calculated does not reflect this principle in any way. Currently, utility fees are based on a percentage of the actual price for electricity, gas, etc, meaning that when those prices go up, the City rakes in extra money that has nothing to do with the cost of providing the pipes or wires that send those services into our homes. Why is this when it violates this principle?

No

No

No

No

Will my proprietary tax go down next year because the paved lane is paid for

All but the first cost (wages) is completely arbitrary and my concern is that these will be over calculated and unnecessary additional costs passed on to the consumer.

No subsidy, user must pay.



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I'd like to see car drivers be forced to pay fees for using the road in such a wasteful way... Walkers, wheelers, transit users also pay taxes but do not abuse our common space anywhere near as much.

The principle doesn't make sense in regards to Calgary tax payers using the services they ALREADY pay for. There should be no fees for Calgarian tax payers to use these amenities, it is frankly ridiculous.

No, as long as we are not spending a dollar to learn that the service costs a few cents.

No, I think this is a sensible way to look at things in terms of actual cost.

Just that it doesn't take environmental costs into account.

As the fee charged goes up to cover all costs, it might stop many Calgarians from accessing services.

No

Capital costs I think are often skewed. The city has older (paid for) facilities that are under used, and the new facilities I believe are being "paid for" over the long term, with interest. I wish the "pay back" period could be reduced to slow our spending now.

I don't like the "Where possible," non-monetary costs should always be explored. There should be an environmental and other assessment, so ensure it's being considered appropriately. (even if minimal and based on greenhouse effect of electricity usage). It takes a lot of energy to heat a pool, solar vs electric (natural gas) cost to the environment?

Seems there's a risk to inflate costs by not accurately accounting for the portion (and economies of scale) associated with some of the costs (e.g., equipment, IT services) that are (or can be) shared across the organization. Capital costs also need to be considered over the life of the equipment, building, etc. These are high-value and passing on these costs to consumers over a limited timeframe may increase user costs beyond what is reasonable & affordable (eg for family swim lessons)

No, this principle should remain.

this ignores that some costs are shared or that costs like utilities could be mitigated by exempting them from full utility rates, why should one dept. benefit from the 'business' of another, that's wrong

Generally no, provide there is clear box around the fees and that non specific costs are not included nor the initial capital of facilities used.

no

I don't understand why I am financially supporting services for rich people - there is no way my family could ever afford to see a Flames game, for example. Or ballet. Or even the science center. It is by design exclusionary



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no

No

lack of environmental impact taken into consideration

Look at how to keep Indirect Costs and Admin Costs to a minimum. People working from home get a tax benefit, which I don't as I have to come into the office as I can't afford my own internet and computer/office equipment. But they still get City-paid equipment? Some even come into the office simply to still take paper, pens, etc. This doesn't make sense to me.

no

We need more services that are free and available to all Calgarians. The city is too concerned about cost recovery. Let's pay with our taxes.

Taxes should be lower.

I have a hard time believing that the city of Calgary cannot fund at least a few parks free of fees. Give working families a place to go without having to worry about costs. It may be a small amount to you, but people with kids it's a lot when you're counting every dollar. I believe this city can show a little compassion for families especially in these times where food etc has become so expensive.

## Resource Efficiency Principle - City services should seek to maximize community benefits

### Is there anything else we should add to this principle?

This is good.

Areas that have specific cultural requests should not be monopolizing times or spaces which impede other users from utilizing services.

This is a tough question to answer as I don't want people priced out of services.

Pricing should also take account of peak/off peak usage times, to encourage people to attend during quiet periods when they can and free up space during peak periods.

Minimum availability thresholds for unrestricted (within reason) public use of public facilities.

One group should not have priority over another! We are all equal as Martin Luther King said! Favouritism should be avoided and validated by a 3rd party to ensure equality!!





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It is critical that city operations and facilities which compete with private business compete in a fair basis. Advertising revenue and expenses, facility costs, staffing, and taxes should be considered

The communities considered should be reviewed.

No

The city should not provide services that the private sector can provide. The city consistently expands its role, leading to tax increases and inefficiency.

disagree that there should be different times for different cultures, open swim should be just that open swim

Community benefits is subjective and certainly open to skewing.

I think it should be stated what the intent for the fees collected. Are they intended to be a full cost recover for the service or is the intent to collect more than the cost of the service delivery. If collecting more it needs to be clear where the funding goes. Capital for future expansion of the facility offering the service? General Revenues for the city?

no

"market comparison is artificial, if anything, compare to non-profit facilities median income/affordability might be a better measure, markets charge as much as demand will allow to maximize profit"

?

Why don't we apply this principle to our roads? When we widened Anderson Road SW, did we examine how that would encourage use of road facilities (with associated negative externalities and other benefits)?

Encouragement for the city to invest in established communities further.

Keep fees minimal, especially if subsidies are required.

Residents in some areas of the city pay higher than average taxes and some residents live in areas where income is generally lower and tax revenue reflects that. Community association buildings often reflect income disparity in our city s do program offerings in communities. Should there be more free programs in lower income communities? I have more questions than answers.

No

We should try to provide benefits to 95% of the needs and 95% of the population. There will always be needs and populations that are too expensive to meet given the limited resources of the city.

Not at this time.



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Na

Community and benefit are poorly defined.

Good as is

No

This principle should take into account the necessity of a service AND the benefits beyond the immediate (as well as the medium-term consequences of the fee). Water for example is essential, and fees are regressive and penalise the less wealthy Calgarians. Transit is essential, and impacts people's ability to pay city taxes (if they can't get to work/school, they can't pay). For soccer, you're supporting the health of calgarians, mental and physical, not just their ability to play a game.

I do not think consideration should be given to private facilities. There's no reason to avoid competing with them or to try and protect their business models.

I think this is really good.

No

Hiring and employee schedules should take into account cultural issues. For instance, Muslims should have Thursday and Friday off, but can work Saturday and Sunday. Jews and Seventh Day Adventists should not be scheduled for Saturday.

Need to find a better way to avoid waste of resources (e.g., canceling of bookings and then sports fields go empty)

More of a question: why are roads fully tax supported when they have massive externalities: injuries/deaths/property damage/emissions/climate change/land consumption? Then, we build roads with massive capacity. If "resource efficiency" is a principle, we should be building fewer, smaller roads, especially if we are providing them for a flat rate (built into property taxes).

How regularly are reviews of other facilities and cities done? Do we coordinate our fees with other nonprofits that serve various social inequities?

lol (again)... .wow, you're on a roll. "limited resources"... the city seems to think they have unlimited resources.

I'm not sure where it might fit in, but what about distances from city resources? We live in Deer Run. We were new to CGY at the time, and didn't realize in the flurry of buying a home, what a desert this community is for City services for seniors like us. No pool. Limited bus service. Nearest library not in walking distances (Fish Creek or Shawnessy). I sometimes feel left out. Thank GAWD no community fees for zippo activities.



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## Do you have any concerns with this principle?

Please implement this.

The scheduling of swim classes this summer was awful. Classes filled up so fast that by the time one child was registered a coordinating class for their sibling was full. Parents are needing to be going back and forth at different times so that all children get in lessons. Spots need to be blanked off as sibling spots so parents can have both children in their respective classes. Otherwise, the classes fill so fast you can't get all children booked.

I fear some people might be priced out if comparing to private sector, you need to sell and market the benefit of using the City of Calgary services or premises i.e. for swimming, did you know by attending this lesson, you are helping to employ X amount of fellow people in Calgary and your keeping the community active, that type of marketing needs to be stressed, love local calgary services campaign etc.

no special cultural needs should be considered, this is canada, women swim/exercise etc with men here

publicly funded facilities should be available for public use as much as possible. Restricted access periods where facilities are only available for specific communities or user groups necessarily limit access for those who are not part of that community/user group and these conflicting needs must be balanced, with a presumption towards minimizing restrictions on the use of publicly funded facilities. Where public admittance is restricted, full operating costs should be met by users.

Favouritism by city officials!

Revenue generation should not be a part of any public facility that is taxpayer funded. Period.

Evaluating the use and application of City resources is a very difficult job. The best politicians in the City are not the elected ones. There is little competition for those jobs. The best are the ones in the City staff that can affect what is spent and how.

There haven't been any new city facilities added south of canyon meadows despite the fact that there are 12+ communities which would benefit from a pool, gym, art facility, etc.

No

The city needs to focus on its core responsibilities and deliver those core services well.

with setting set times for different cultures you play into dividing cultures - we are all the same doesn't matter if you Lgb or asian or trans not one deserves special "treatment" over another

None

Community benefits is subjective and certainly open to skewing.



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no

"Would the research that goes into pricing these fees be transparent?"

Private sector can change fees whenever they want, how often would the city re evaluate their fees?"

Private and public facilities are apples and oranges. The city should be focused on providing services to the most citizens possible. Not profit driven.

"Calgarians deserve to access services consistently regardless of market conditions, in fact public services are needed MORE when markets are crashing because household income also falls. When market prices fall, fees should reduce too but they never seem to. City services should not be structured for profit."

This is incorrect thinking. Private facilities are usually clubs catering to well off individuals and hence cost and services delivered are much higher than required from public facilities

Is this principle around concern that limited public resources should be allocated to maximize overall benefit being applied to funding a ticketed arena operated by a highly profitable business?

Very vocal and public cultural groups hold more power to determine who will have access

Market approach may not be appropriate in all cases. It is a guideline, not a rule book.

The city has helped fund very nice new facilities for activities such as swimming as noted in new communities. While established community facilities could use upgrades and or expansion as well as new facilities in established communities

Do not fear undercutting the private sector.

I feel that public services should cost less than private. Private services often have more bells and whistles. We should use caution and ensure comparisons occur with a base level of service.

Market forces should be considered, but the City needs to ensure they are an option for "some" services to ensure access is available to all. i.e. Private Golf Courses provide additional benefits (tangible and intangible) that a municipal doesn't have to provide, such that the fee structure doesn't have to equivalent.

No

No

No concerns

I don't agree with this principle fully. Not everything is about revenue generation! Review services for utilization and drop lowest ones.



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Are these based or susceptible to lobbying with puts some some communities at a disadvantage?

No

No

With all the fees, I am concerned about the cost of administration versus the net benefit. Like if pet permits were free but required, would we ultimately save money by not paying employees to administer them?

I believe revenue generation for community services should rarely be done at the service level. It is far more efficient to collect revenue through the existing residential and business tax programs, and remove barriers to entry for the community. That is the best way to maximize community benefit.

Revenue generation should be a secondary concern, not one on equal footing to the encouragement of facility use.

Nope!

Cultural "needs" should not affect resource availability

No, although I believe citizens should be engaged and part of the conversation about what is "appropriate" service levels/use. The on-demand transit service in Calgary is a great example of this principle working.

Calgary can be an expensive city, and due to that, private companies need to charge a lot to recoup costs. Many times the cost of programs and sports are outpriced for families that make middle incomes but don't qualify for subsidies. How does the city ensure that programs are meeting the needs of community and not leaving some out due to inflation and true affordability beyond the free market costs?

"Generally speaking, city run facilities should be cheaper than the equivalent private facilities. In most cases the extra cost of private facilities is for enhanced facilities above and beyond what is available in city facilities. This will encourage a wider range of users, who can't necessarily afford the private rates"

Need to have facilities open more - when it is a hot day in summer, and all you want to do is go for a swim to cool off ... and it isn't even open!!! I am good with principle but it needs to be used and facilities OPEN, especially on long weekends and other peak demand periods.

Comparing to the transit example, where societal benefits are massive, and users are still required to pay 50% of the cost, it is absurd to provide roads with users paying 0% of the cost despite massive externalities.

Has there been any research as to why some people are choosing private facilities over public ones, and how we can make City facilities more appealing/competitive?

efficiency is good if it's actually efficient (i have my doubts)



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What justifies providing events/services free of additional fees? What criterion is used to provide services that are 100 percent funded by taxpayer- I.e no user fee?

## Closing Question(s)

**Thinking about User Fees, is there anything else you would like to add to the conversation?**

Look at affordability when deciding on fees so things don't get priced at more than is worth paying.

yes if i wee to build upon what i see working here i see that the low income transit passes are working for those who are low income for the homeless population from what i am seeing is many newcomers to the city are struggling to afford these fees and example are migrants that migrate to the city from other cities i think an easy way to resolve this would be providing the ones who are at the shelters for example a one month one time bus pass until they are able to get on income support

Refer to my earlier comments. Are these goods and services even required or desired by a significant percentage of the population or are they being done to appease a hand full of counsellors and special interest groups.

Any services where user fees are charged should be optional to the taxpayer, who should be able to opt in or out, and seek services elsewhere, as with essential utilities, where the regulated rates options, or market options may be selected. Services charging fees should be regulated like utilities by the relevant provincial boards.

Charges should also take account of peak usage times. For example, weekday daytime bookings of sports facilities should not cost as much as peak time usage, to help spread demand and encourage those who are available during quiet periods to use them then instead of during times of overcrowding.

With fees for garbage/recycling/compost the city does nor encourage efficiency. If people want to share bins there is no incentive to do it, each pays the full fee. With this structure the city empties every bin at every home rather than one for multiple homes

Yes

Mandatory fees (i.e. garbage collection, power municipal access fees) where there is no option to change behavior or not use the service are Taxes, not Fees, and should be labeled as such.

Fair fees for services to operate that service without large profits should be the ultimate goal! Not sure this city council can and will do this however!

User fees must take into account the direct benefit of any service to the user. Most swimmers just want to play in the water and don't want lessons, so user fees should not include lesson or administrative costs. Not everyone should have to pay an increased fee because some want that service. Therefore the lumping of all things swimming-related is too broad it's and unfair and inappropriate to charge all swimmers for everything.



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The purpose of a City facility should not be the same as a private one. As a born Calgarian, who has lived elsewhere too, I am happy to have a smaller government but recognize real value in the governments role in providing leadership and in balancing opportunities for citizens. The Soviet is improved if more people have opportunities to Live rather than just be alive.

There haven't been any new city facilities added south of canyon meadows despite the fact that there are 12+ communities which would benefit from a pool, gym, art facility, etc. As a result, the facilities in the south are in very high demand and often calgarians aren't able to access the services available. This is further exacerbated by the closure of Acadia pool.

No

Just another way of taxing us when we are already taxed

I spent 5 years working in finance at city Hall. I do not trust anyone to do what is right or what can be done without taxing the citizens more.

User fees for those with limited income (disabled, seniors, etc.) should be eliminated. Service fees on Enmax should be eliminated - utility bills are far too expensive.

I would like to see more family rates and a recognition that "family" can be more than 2 children.

The city needs to focus on the core services that are within its responsibilities, and deliver those services well. Council needs to stop expanding its role as it leads to inefficiency and increased taxes.

NO MORE TAXING!!!!!! We used to be the BEST CITY, now we are a commie sh\*thole.... Who on earth wants to move to a city where the council taxes, taxes and more damn taxes!!!! STOP RULING and work with the money you suck out of us already!!!!!!!! DISGUSTING!~!!! Most DYSFUNCTIONAL CITY HALL EVER!! 4 Generations in Calgary and I have watched how you tax and spend nobody's have destroyed us!! CRIMINAL!!!!

User fees are a way of increasing taxes on citizens and saying that tax increases are minimal

The full cost principle should be applied whenever possible.

I'm hoping the city is not implementing more fees, we already pay enough in taxes. I do not agree with visitors paying more than residents, we want tourism in Calgary!

Nothing comes to mind

I worked for 40 yrs for the city taught thousands of every age how to swim I enjoy the sport myself still and now find it too expensive for a swim the best thing you can teach your child.... I can't afford it for an hour that I need for two three times a week... Sad 😞 for sure...





# User Fees and Subsidies Policy 2023 – 2026 Review

What We Heard Report  
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I support user fees as a way to keep taxes low. Low income supports for those that cannot afford costs as part of this picture are also supported.

All user fees should have a sliding scale depending on income. A wider conversation around what services we charge fees for and what we don't and whether some things should be further tax funded.

Please continue to keep parks and green spaces free and well maintained. The benefits to society are immense for both physical and mental health.

User fees are a form of taxation. I am 100% against being taxed more. The city has not shown responsibility with the taxes accumulated for businesses. When the downtown happened taxes got shifted as buildings were re-evaluated down. The issue is the city collected and spent the money and did NOT access the risk of a downturn. Reduce my taxes before you think of adding more user fees.

The city is very top heavy with too many managers and supervisors eating up the budget.

Charge more for non residents>....adults should provide driver's license, students their student cards, we ones free

SERVICE is the key term, while sustainability is important, there is no reason for public services to ever have profit, all should go into service delivery and maximize access for all Calgarians (including mid-income and larger families not qualifying for FAIR entry who can't afford big fees).

I think it may not be effective enough. What info that you have provided is a vague presentation. There are just way too many questions for me to be able to answer this questionnaire. I understand that you may be looking for high level feedback, however anything high level can sound good enough or great. The pain and the failure will be in the details. As proven when NASA wants to launch, it's always that 1 panel, 1 bolt, 1 o-ring that fails the mission. Sure your rocket looks like it can fly.

"Can we help support the "mid-income range" of people / families some more? Seems we're so concerned about low income or those that don't even want to work & participate in being a functional human being and citizen. Those of us that are trying to provide for our families and children, are being forgotten (left behind to struggle). Living paycheck to paycheck, not being able to save or get ahead, should not be a "normal" thing."

Please shift more services, particularly those like vehicle use, which have negative externalities, out of property taxes and into user fees. Shifting to a vehicle user fee for instance, would more accurately reflect the cost to serve different individuals and households (and their negative externalities on congestion/air quality) more so than models or taxes allow. At least offer people the choice to opt into that.

Fees should be cut or eliminated on utilities (eg: water) as this is a Necessity, not a want-to-have. Or at least: no fee up to an established threshold





# User Fees and Subsidies Policy 2023 – 2026 Review

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Stop having user fees on items which should be allocated to Properties, that use the service mostly, not just on single ownership properties.

Want all fees to be decided, by the public who want them, not just because we live in certain homes. Why charge all for Bins we hardly use all the time.

More direct fees to users, less tax dollars for fluff programs like painted boxes and walls on bridges, ugly birds on pedestrian overpasses, and other unneeded costs. We have a spending problem in Calgary and cutting costs should be a priority. If a service is valuable people will pay for it, otherwise encourage corporate or private donations to cover vanity projects like unnecessary bike lanes and art installations and STOP USING TAX DOLLARS.

User fees should not be based on Income - they should be low enough to encourage high use in order to maximize community benefit and not require additional administrative costs to determine income or other requirements. An example is free swim admission for children - no different than free library use.

I think that unfortunately the organized groups have received more exposure and individuals have lost some of their ability to seek services without being members of a group.

Keep them as low as possible, although I can't easily define what should be a City service.

Over priced for little service. Tax and spend government

Not at this time

No

"User fees should be set to encourage use to maximize value of the existing capital expenditures. Yet they should be considered prior to any future capital expenditures to ensure that expenditure provides the value / benefit to the community in the long term, without being a greater burden on the tax roll. The process for subsidy has to be easy and fast to obtain. and should be accounted for in the benefits bottom line (more use / access a good thing)."

No

So many mitigating factors!

bike paths need to be paid by bike owners for the maintenance and new construction.

Some facilities that are hugely unprofitable or running at huge losses should be closed

We are already taxed significantly. The City already has significant surplus funds, does not plan properly and uses funds frivolously in many situations. Clean it up - you will have lots of money left over to fund things.



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I think the library should bring in a yearly charge. I think that all residents should have to pay a yearly parking fee to park anywhere on city streets.

Bikes should be licenced due to high cost of building bike lanes and related infrastructure. Allows for ability to report speeders, dangerous behaviours and bring some sanity back to public pathways and roads

"Municipal decisions need to support community as a whole. Pools/arenas are paid from taxes to spread the cost/safety of recreation across a broad base to enrich lives. It is not the municipal responsibility or fiscal reality to absorb the cost of recreation or life enrichment. User fees are needed for niceties.

Human's need food but most expect to pay for groceries. Human's need clothing; ditto. We should know to swim, skate, dance, but it's not a human need, it's a nicety. Fee support for some."

The cost of collecting and processing user fees should be calculated and compared with the revenue from them. If the cost exceeds, say 50%, perhaps even 30%, there should be no user fee.

"I tried to answer the question on resource efficiency but for some reason the robot got locked up so my response to that question as follows; I don't understand that specific times need to be established for cultural needs - these are public services and supported by all and the times etc should be equal and available to all"

Being a city that offers affordable and accessible programs, goods, and services to all people no matter their cultural background or economic standing is a value that should drive leadership as they make decisions and even as they consider tax increases. I am grateful to live in a city where high value is placed on that and I believe it makes Calgary an attractive place for both newcomers and long-term residents.

No

Keep up the good job.

Create lower costs for utilities etc for lower income. Also, cut services not well utilized but don't cut the services you provide through fair entry or that program. Focus on the lower income and less advantaged people.

The cost of living in Calgary is so high, it makes it impossible for mid to low income earners to make use of some of the services. Yet if you hike taxes in order to lower the income bracket for subsidy, we will not be able to afford the taxes either.

Stop raping my wallet with fees on top of taxes. And start planning for the full lifecycle of infrastructure so you don't need to increase taxes. We could do with less city government, not more. What's this study costing us?



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There are some services that should not have user fees and should be fully supported with our taxes ie the public library. For children under 16 yrs of age no user fees for public swimming pools, transit and C train rides. The city needs to build and staff public washrooms in the downtown and perhaps other high use areas eg. perhaps near C train stations that are free to the public.

Some services may need to be privatized. How does that consideration find its way into the discussion?

needs definitions - these are unclear

Keep the fees down taxes have already increased substantially!!!

Only what I have already said about ensuring the ability to pay is a true factor.

When considering Recreational offerings, additional subsidies could be offered beyond the singular program allowed if the person is taking a "recreational" program that has a value beyond just having fun: ie swimming lessons, first aid training, instructor training, health/fitness programs.

"I am on Income Support. After rent and bills, I have \$110/mnth for food etc. The fair entry program is ESSENTIAL for my buspass and affordability to swimming. Please do not eliminate this program. There us no other option for affordable transportation to Dr appts and shopping. [personally identifying information removed]"

People who do not live in Calgary, but work in Calgary, should absolutely be subject to fees. They use our highways, utilities that range from water, power, to garbage. At the very minimum a road like Deerfoot should be tolled for non-Calgarian residents - it's the lowest hanging fruit we have. Forget the user fees, the tolling roads will get you the money you're looking for.

Cost should never prevent someone from using a service like transit, which is 100% a benefit to everyone in the city.

So many facilities in Calgary are effectively walled off behind neighbourhood boundaries. We should be focussing less on the relation to market costs and more on ensuring that all Calgarians have access to a wide variety of services.

We need to strike a reasonable balance between fee-based vs. no-fee services, since there is a perception that Calgarians pay higher taxes than comparable cities (not true, but perception is reality). Those paying higher taxes may feel that this is just a "cash grab". Words matter.

I would be willing to pay more taxes for more services and to make user fees lower, even for those services I do not use personally.



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Calgary needs to add Safe Consumption Sites back. Your lawmakers are so against helping the people in the lower tier that they are literally treated as criminals. This pyramid system is going to topple all of us. Capitalism will not win.

Some of the fees are confusing and unfair - I'm particularly thinking of the "fair entry" recreation pass. There's an annual rate that is a lot cheaper than the monthly rate, but you have to get it in the same calendar month that you're approved. If the user doesn't get their mail right away with the approval letter, and then get their annual pass in-person at a rec center before the month end, or perhaps they don't have the funds to pay for the entire year that month, they can't get it at all.

Calgary has been in a spend cycle for some time. The City has a responsibility to reign in its spending, even if that means reducing some service levels, particularly right now. Increasing user fees may price out some citizens from pretty essential services that make Calgary a vibrant city.

Inflation, cost of living and the impact that has on access to recreation and health.

City taxes are rising year over year. If more services move to user fees, there must be a visible reduction in taxes to offset this shift. Rising taxes and rising/new user fees is not sustainable nor value added to citizens.

User fees are classist and unfair by definition. There shouldn't be user fees for public facilities. All user fees do is give privileged people privileged access, it's unethical and unfair. Obviously not all Calgarians enjoy equal access to public facilities and there's a lack of affordable facilities. Closing Beltline Pool is an example of mismanagement of a much needed and greatly supported by its users facility unfairly closed.

Free access to outdoor pools in the city. Other municipalities such as Toronto, deem this an essential service

"People living in suburbs are often unfairly discriminated against by city services. We pay the highest taxes and fees for garbage for example, but get the least from them. For us to use many of the services provided which are downtown, we have to pay exorbitant parking fees or struggle with unreliable public transport"

Some standardisation across city services when they are reassessed. Currently I do get free transit, but not subsidised swimming and activities for example

Your principal is not equitable and you should be making DATA driven decisions. Who uses what services? How often? Are you collecting data???

Need more public education on costs of providing services and then a breakdown of how they are funded.

Should keep a discounted "seniors" rate

Again, negative externalities (i.e. local pollution/noise/climate change/injury/death from roads and driving) should be included in the calculation of societal benefits. In this case the disbenefits far outweigh the



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benefits, therefore, users should pay part of the cost. And that full cost accounting would include the externalities.

Given the number of rebates, etc. available just charge the fees on everything you can with the target of full cost recovery.

There is too much obsession with funding things with user fees rather than taxing appropriately to cover these kinds of services.

Taxes should be lower

"Seniors fee structure is needed - it's separate from an ability to pay reduction Unsure what service/event prompts applying a user fee"

## Engagement principles

At the City of Calgary engagement means, purposeful dialogue between The City and stakeholders 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 citizens
- **Accountable** upholding the commitments that The City makes to the community 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 the community
- **Responsive** acknowledging community concerns
- **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).



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# Perception of User Fees Citizens' View Survey Report

September 2022