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**Creating the City we Value**.

**Set Up a House Meeting**

1. Identify and train the team that will lead the conversations. There should be two leaders for each conversation. A facilitator and a host that records and looks after logistics.
2. Schedule times to have your house meetings. During or after a service, regular meeting are some of the best times. Or organize a times set aside for these meeting – (if they are a separate time.)
   1. Identify who you want to invite.
   2. Invite them and sign them up to attend.

**During the Meeting**

1. The host should welcome people. Explain what the meeting is about. Explain the ground rules and introduce the questions.
2. Give each person an equal amount of time to respond. Generally, it is good to have one of the leaders start to set an example of the depth and length of response.
3. One person speaks at a time, encourage them to be as concrete and personal as possible. Encourage story telling.
4. Honour each other’s stories. Keep others from interrupting, trying to solve each other’s problems or arguing with each other.
5. Record important themes, people who may be potential leaders and what they would lead/take action on. Record any commitments to take action.

**Guiding Questions**

Frame: We are at an important time for our city. The social, economic and health impacts of COVID19 are mounting. We are becoming more aware of the impacts of racism and colonialism. Our city is facing a $77 million deficit which means hard choice will need to be made, choices that will shape the sort of city we live in for years to come.

1. What do you value in our city that is worth preserving? What is a change you are willing to work for and why?

2. The Alliance’s response:

1. Budget overview. The challenge. What does the city budget pay for? Where does its income come from? What difference does this make in our daily lives. (City budget overview Document)
2. Based on our listening campaign, our collective discernment and our ongoing work the Calgary alliance is prioritizing these things in engaging the city budget. (Alliance one pager handout).
3. Our reconciliation team has focused on concrete ways we can move forward with Truth and Reconciliation with a focus on the issues of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and identified. The central problem they have identified is that Indigenous communities are often “over policed and under protected.” They have identified that the best way to go forward locally is to build on the police’s current Indigenous Liaison Officer program, which has been successful in building relationships, but is too limited (one officer) for the need in the city. They are asking for one indigenous liaison in each police district. The CPS description of the Indigenous Liaison officer is:

“The Aboriginal liaison officer also works with numerous agencies and programs to help promote awareness and healing within the community. This collaboration serves to better educate the Calgary Police Service of current issues as well as provide opportunities to assist the community in its own healing.”

1. Reactions – do these reflect the needs in our city and the values we stand for? Are these things you are willing to help us work for?
2. Actions that the Calgary Alliance is asking of us (Action hand out)
   1. Attend the October 29th Action assembly
   2. Write your city councillor, the chief of police and police commission.
   3. Engage with social media.
   4. What can I sign you up for?

3. What in our institution’s values call us into public life? How do you want to express that in the context of shaping the city’s priorities, as reflected in the budget? What actions will we commit to taking?

**After the Conversation**

1. Thank everyone for participating. Report back to people what they have committed to do. Register anyone that has signed up for the assembly.
2. Gather as a Core team to compile what you have heard, along with the commitments people have made.
3. Make sure anyone who has offered to write or engage with social media is on CACG’s mailing list.

**General Instructions Given to the Group.**

* Honor each person’s story
* Listen for understanding and insight-what makes that person who they are?
* Do not try to solve someone else’s problems or engage in therapy.
* Share stories that you are comfortable sharing publicly. This is not a counseling session and not confidential, there is a note taker who will share what is has been heard.
* Pay attention to how you are reacting to others’ stories-what insights or questions are they stirring in you?
* Be conscious of time limits in order that everyone gets time to speak.

**City Budget 2020: What You Should Know**

The City of Calgary operating budget outlines which programs and services will be funded and which will be cut. The City has a budget plan for 2019-2022. According to the *Alberta Municipal Government Act*, The City must balance its books each year. It is not allowed to borrow money to meet day-to-day **operating expenses**. It can borrow money for long-term **capital projects** such as roads and buildings.

**Impact of COVID-19 and low oil prices**

Administration is predicting a **shortfall of $56 to $82 million** for the rest of 2020. The City must either reduce spending or increase revenue, or both, to balance the budget. These changes to the budget are called **Mid-Cycle adjustments**. The City is looking for ways to save at least $74 million through the Solutions for Achieving Value and Excellence ([SAVE](https://www.calgary.ca/cfod/save.html)) program.

**Where does The City get its money?**

Property taxes are the biggest source of income, but they are shared with the Province. On July 21, 2020, City Council decided not to increase overall property taxes for 2021. Other sources of money include business taxes, user fees, licences and fines, reserves, and grants from other levels of government. The good news is The City will receive $152.8 M in stimulus money to invest in [capital projects](https://pub-calgary.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=139554), including affordable housing and transit infrastructure. There has also been some federal money for operations in 2020. Operating funds for 2021 are still at risk.

**How does The City spend property taxes?**

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**What programs and services are at risk? How will cuts affect the most vulnerable?**

* **Transit:** Relies heavily on revenue from fares and advertising. Transit is predicting a [shortfall of $59M](https://pub-calgary.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=139367). The City wants to reduce regular service, stop growth, and use contracted services.
* **Sidewalks, Pathways and Streets:** Snow and ice removal will be reduced.
* **Fire Response:** City Council is suggesting an increase of 30 seconds in response time.
* **Civic Partner Funding (Public Library, Calgary Zoo, Arts Commons, etc.):** May be at risk of cuts.
* **Recreation Centres:** Depend on admission and programming fees, so may be at risk of cuts.
* **Youth Employment Centre, Youth Probation Officer and Senior Home supports** may be at risk.

**What happens next?**

* **November 9:** City Council will review Administration’s recommendations
* **November 23-27:** City Council will decide on budget adjustments and hear input from the public. This is your chance to make your voice heard!

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**Operating Budget** COVID has brought challenges to the operating budget of the City of Calgary. The Calgary Alliance represents over 35 000 Calgarians bringing together faith, labour, non-profit and community organizations. We are raising our collective voice to say that any cuts or changes in the operating budget must do the least harm to the most vulnerable. Specifically,we ask that city council:

* [**Maintain the Fair Entry program and all it does to support access to transit, recreation and other programming and services.**](https://www.keepcalgarystrong.ca/transit)
* [**Maintain transit services and fare structure**](https://www.keepcalgarystrong.ca/transit)**.** We are concerned about the recent cuts to transit services. Transit is core infrastructure just like water and roads. Transit service must, at a minimum, be maintained. The most vulnerable must not be further disadvantaged by eroding their ability to get to work, school, appointments and social events.
* [**Maintain**](https://www.keepcalgarystrong.ca/budget_cuts) **funding to Calgary Neighbourhoods, Libraries, Recreation and Community supports.** These programs and services connect neighbours and are vital in addressing the mental health, economic and social isolation challenges this city faces. We are particularly concerned about potential cuts to senior’s home maintenance services, the Youth Employment Centre and youth probation officers.

**Policing**

* **That the Calgary Police Service appoints an indigenous liaison in each of its districts**. We must make structural changes and investments if we are to take the promise of **Truth and Reconciliation** and make it a reality.
* **That the PACT Teams be expanded so that there is more than one team and that there is always at least one team available 24/7.**

Both of these requests build on the success of existing programs and expand them to meet the needs of Calgarians and address long-term social issues

**Capital Budget and Projects**

* **Prioritize i**[**nvestments in transit and affordable housing stock for stimulus spending.**](https://www.keepcalgarystrong.ca/transit)This pandemic has underscored that having a homeless population uses more resources than providing affordable housing options.  It makes moral and economic sense to direct stimulus spending to affordable housing.
* **The Sustainable Building Policy must be robust, enforceable, and align with the Climate Resilience Strategy.** Specifically, the four new capital projects The City has committed to building must be net-zero emission, water-wise buildings hosting zero-waste events.

**Creating a City we Value**

**How to Take Action**

I. \_\_\_\_ **I will attend the Calgary Alliance for the Common Good’s Fall assembly.** Your presence will demonstrate to those who hold power that there are Calgarians who care and that they need to seriously address our concerns about the city’s budget and policing.

When: **October 29th at 7:00 pm on Zoom**

To receive the zoom link register at: <https://www.calgarycommongood.org/calgary_alliance_for_the_common_good_fall_assembly>

**II. \_\_\_\_ I will write my City Councillors**

1. Information on how to find and contact your city councillor can be found at: <https://www.calgary.ca/citycouncil/councillors-and-wards.html#council>

2. In your correspondence please ask –

I. That in the city budget they:

1. [Maintain the Fair Entry program and all it does to support access to transit, recreation and other programming and services.](https://www.keepcalgarystrong.ca/transit)
2. [Maintain transit services and fare structure](https://www.keepcalgarystrong.ca/transit).
3. [Maintain](https://www.keepcalgarystrong.ca/budget_cuts) funding to Calgary Neighbourhoods, Libraries,  Recreation and Community supports.

II. That they help us advocate for the police to:

1. Appoint an indigenous liaison in each of CPS’s districts.
2. That the PACT teams (police and crisis teams – these include a police officer and a mental health worker) be expanded so that there is more than one team available and that they are available 24/7.

III. For Capital Projects

1. Prioritize i[nvestments in transit and affordable housing stock](https://www.keepcalgarystrong.ca/transit).
2. The Sustainable Building Policy must be robust, enforceable, and align with the Climate Resilience Strategy. Specifically, the four new capital projects The City has committed to building must be net-zero emission, water-wise buildings hosting zero-waste events.

**III. \_\_\_\_ I will write the Police Chief and Police Commission**

To contact the police commission – email [cpced@calgarypolicecommission.ca](mailto:cpced@calgarypolicecommission.ca)

To contact the Chief of Police - [cps@calgarypolice.ca](mailto:cps@calgarypolice.ca), [mneufeld@calgarypolice.ca](mailto:mneufeld@calgarypolice.ca)

403-428-5900

Please ask that:

1. That the Calgary Police Service appoints an indigenous liaison in each of its districts. We must make structural changes and investments if we are to take the promise of Truth and Reconciliation and make it a reality.
2. That the PACT Teams (police and crisis teams – these include a police officer and a mental health worker) be expanded so that there is more than one team and that there is always at least one team available 24/7.

Both of these requests build on the success of existing programs and expand them to meet the needs of Calgarians and address long-term social issues

**IV. \_\_\_\_ I will post on social media**

Twitter is an important way to amplify our voice and have it heard by City Council.

**How you can help.**

1. Sign up for a free Twitter Account. [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)
2. Follow the Calgary Alliance @CommonGoodYYC
3. Retweet and like the posts that the Alliance shares. - This helpful for individual citizens and even more helpful if your organisation has a Twitter account.
4. We’d also recommend that you follow city councilors – or at least your own. To see what they post. You can also send them messages by composing tweets and putting their Twitter handle in the text. They will see it that way. Twitter handles for Calgary Council

Naheed Nenshi @nenshi

1 Ward Sutherland @Ward4Ward1

2 Joe Magliocca @Joe\_Magliocca

3 Jyoti Gondek @JyotiGondek

4 Sean Chu @seanchucalgary

5 George Chahal @ChahalGeorge

6 Jeff Davison @JeffDavisonYYC

7 Druh Farrell @DruhFarrell

8 Evan Wooley @EWooleyWard8

9 Gian-Carlo Carra @gccarra

10 Ray Jones @RundleRay

11 Jeromy Farkas @JeromyYYC

12 Shane Keating @CouncillorKeats

13 Diane Colley-Urquhart @BigRedyyc

14 Peter Demong @peterdemong

1. To keep abreast of what is going on at Calgary City Council we recommend you follow the following journalists. Smith (Herald) and Dippel (CBC), Darren Krause (LiveWire) often live-tweet what is going on at council meetings

Madeline Smith @meksmith

Scott Dippel @CBCScott

Adam MacViver @AdamMacVicar

Darren Krause @LiveWire\_DK

We also recommend following (and supporting) The Sprawl @sprawlcalgary which does long reads and pod-casts on city and provincial politics

1. During City Council meetings most councillors are on their phones on twitter watching the #yyccc. You can comment in real time on what you are hearing by tweeting using this hashtag.

You can also follow and like the Calgary Alliance on Facebook @CommonGoodYYC

I. \_\_\_\_ **I will attend the Calgary Alliance for the Common Good’s Fall assembly.**

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**II. \_\_\_\_ I will write my City Councillors**

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**III. \_\_\_\_ I will write the Police Chief and Police Commission**

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**IV. \_\_\_\_ I will post on social media**

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