

2011 Capital Budget
Public Consultation Discussion

Capital budget public consultation sessions were held on December 6, 2010 at the Sturgeon Creek Community Centre, and at the Winnipeg Convention Centre on December 9, 2010.

Winnipeg residents, businesses, community groups and associations were invited to attend. The sessions were hosted by Councillor Scott Fielding, Chair of City Council's Standing Policy Committee on Finance, and supported by Michael Ruta, the City's Acting Chief Administrative Officer.

The following is a summary of public consultation discussions.

Question

Should the City's spending on infrastructure and capital projects be increased, remain the same or be decreased?

Responses

- Participants voiced very different opinions about the capital budget. Some would like to increase the budget and others would like to see it stay the same.

Question

What do you think is important for the 2011 Capital budget and how do you think the budget should be spent?

Responses

- Focus the funding on extending rapid transit, paving back lanes in the inner city, building new Community Centres in the inner city, bringing recycling and composting to the Brady Landfill, and providing greater access to recreation for the underprivileged.
- Increase the number of off-leash dog facilities in Winnipeg.
- Consider pedestrian, bicycle and wheelchair access when planning new infrastructure developments and align them to Active Transportation.
- To enable infill re-development and renovation, we need flexible building codes that recognize some of the unique aspects of old buildings. Don't require old buildings to come completely up to modern standards. Find a reasonable compromise. Have flexible policies that preserve the character of homes. There is a need to incorporate the design of the older neighbourhoods into the new neighbourhoods.

- Promote infill development but balance it with development in the suburbs. If we stop suburban development, the city will lose a tax base.
- Green roofs may take a lot of the surface run-off and help with land drainage.
- Encourage higher density growth and take advantage of growth within the inner city. Stop sprawl on the outskirts as this just adds to the infrastructure deficit.
- Promote community vibrancy by increasing the number of bike paths, walking trails, infill housing, and community resources (community centres, museums, parks and public spaces).
- Increase the number of community centres and expand green space in the inner city.
- Have better transit in existing neighbourhoods and align Active Transportation with transit.
- Connect bike paths to Google.
- Have a transparent and equitable distribution of funds for organizations like the Manitoba Children's Museum.
- Decrease the expansion of roads and have better traffic controls. Have fewer cars and give people more transportation options.
- Put a moratorium on development in suburbs. Don't do any development in the outskirts. Density in the inner city is important. Urban sprawl costs more.
- As city moves outward it affects planning. Urban sprawl increases the number of vehicles coming in from the outskirts or outside the city. People from outside the city do not pay taxes here but use our infrastructure.
- Retail box stores re-direct money away from other Manitoba businesses like Palliser. Big box store developments are not sustainable.
- People will come from other areas to shop at IKEA. You have to have a fair mix between business, new development and local businesses. There will be a spin-off for other businesses.
- Rapid transit is needed to transport a large number of people to the University of Manitoba daily.
- Bike paths are needed along rapid transit. Active transportation should be built into the system.
- Connections with rapid transit will have to move just as fast as rapid transit.
- There is a need for a wider road at the Pembina Highway and Jubilee underpass. More lanes are needed to help avoid the bottleneck that occurs at that location.
- Keep the green space along Berry Street.
- Build a shoulder on Saskatchewan.

- Build covers over sidewalks to encourage walking and eliminate the need to clean snow from sidewalks.
- Connect buses to GPS and include information regarding transfers.
- City should consider if a capital project would lower the cost to the citizen before going ahead and building.
- Build an overpass over the rail lines at Waverley.
- Money should be put toward wherever the deficit is.

Question

Where would the money come from?

Responses

- Impose user fees. There should be a pay-as-you-throw fee, but not in all areas of the City. Modify the user fee for the inner city. Growth should be paid for by development fees and those fees should be used in the inner city. Charge a bag fee for excess bags but don't impose this uniformly throughout the City. Some areas could pay by assessment to property rather than a fee per bag.
- Charge development fees in the suburbs as developers are not paying full cost of these developments.
- Increase property taxes. (2)
- People who commute to the city should be charged a toll or fee.
- To fund the transportation infrastructure, get the money from gas taxes, gas fees, parking and car registration fees.
- Parking fees should apply everywhere, including all big box stores. If big box retailers participate in a Park and Ride program, then exempt them from the tax. The tax should apply to all parking lots.
- Impose user fees up to cost recovery. Some people feel user fees are regressive; however, one can mitigate that. Have a low-income program for water rates, for example. The same is true for energy. The city should look at income-sensitive fees.
- Why not impose a user pay for outside the city? Outside communities are not paying their fair share.
- Get a percentage of the revenue from the Provincial Sales Tax.