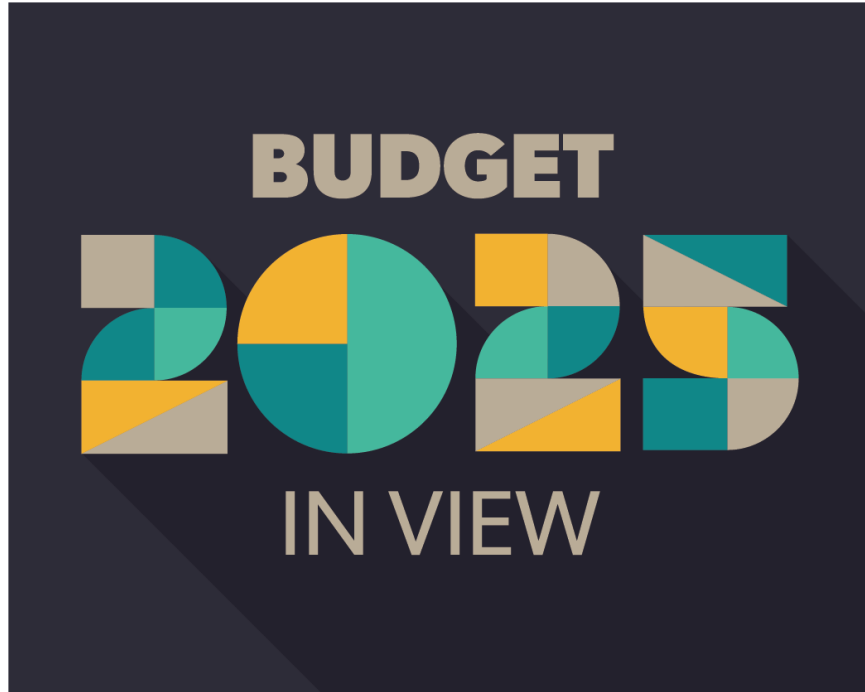


**Budget 2025**  
**What We Heard Report**  
Spring 2024



**July 10, 2024**  
**The City of Red Deer**

## Summary:

In May 2024, The City began asking residents for input related to Budget 2025. We wanted to understand what residents value most related to City services, while also understanding the financial priorities citizens have for our organization.

The spring phase of public participation related to Budget 2025 occurred from May 23 to June 28, 2024. Through our online and in-person opportunities, we connected with more than 400 residents who contributed their input.



357 online engagement contributions



61 people surveyed through pop-up engagement



~70 people engaged at market booths

## Engagement Techniques:

- **Online:**
  - May 23 – June 28, 2024
  - Participatory budgeting tool and survey
- **In-person Booths:**
  - Saturday, June 8 – Red Deer Farmer’s Market
  - Wednesday, June 26 – Downtown Market
- **Pop-up Engagement:**
  - June 25 – evening: Recreation Centre
  - June 27 – morning: Collicutt Centre
  - June 28 – morning: GH Dawe Centre

## What we asked:

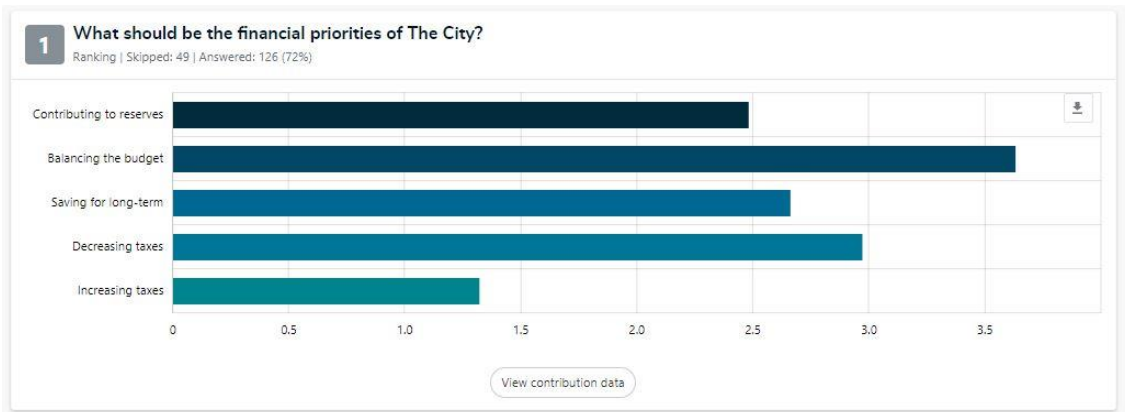
Through our engagement we asked citizens the following questions:

- What City of Red Deer services do you and your family value the most?
- What services do you want The City to spend more on?
- What services do you want The City to spend less on?
- What should be the financial priority of The City?
- How informed do you feel about The City’s budget?

## What we heard:

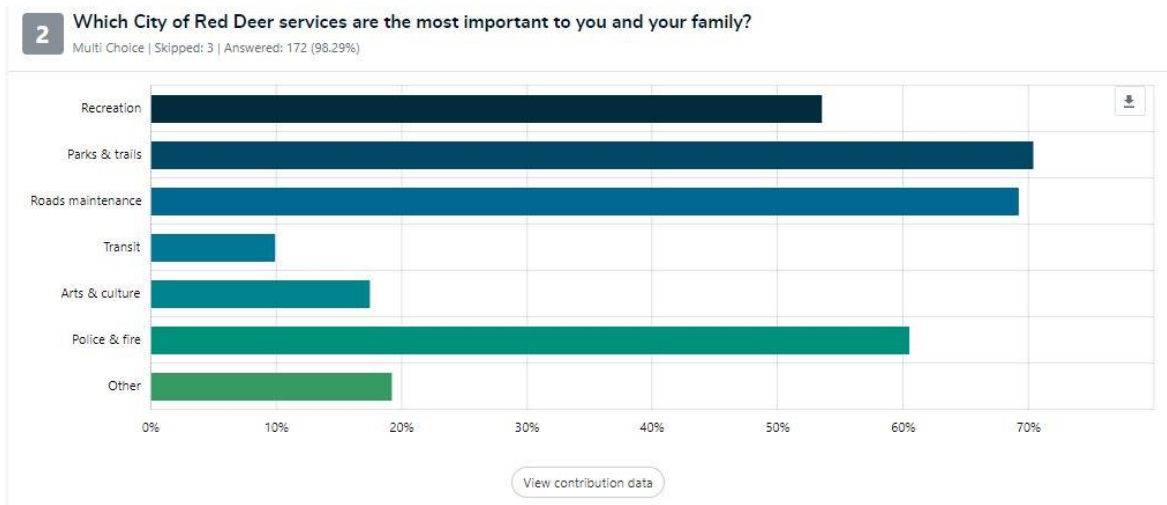
### A. Survey Responses:

1. When asked to rank the financial priorities for The City of Red Deer, the majority of respondents indicated that **balancing the budget** should be our top priority, followed by **decreasing taxes**.



2. When asked to rank municipal services from most important to least important, the top three most important services according to respondents were:

- I. Parks & trails
- II. Roads & Maintenance
- III. Police & fire



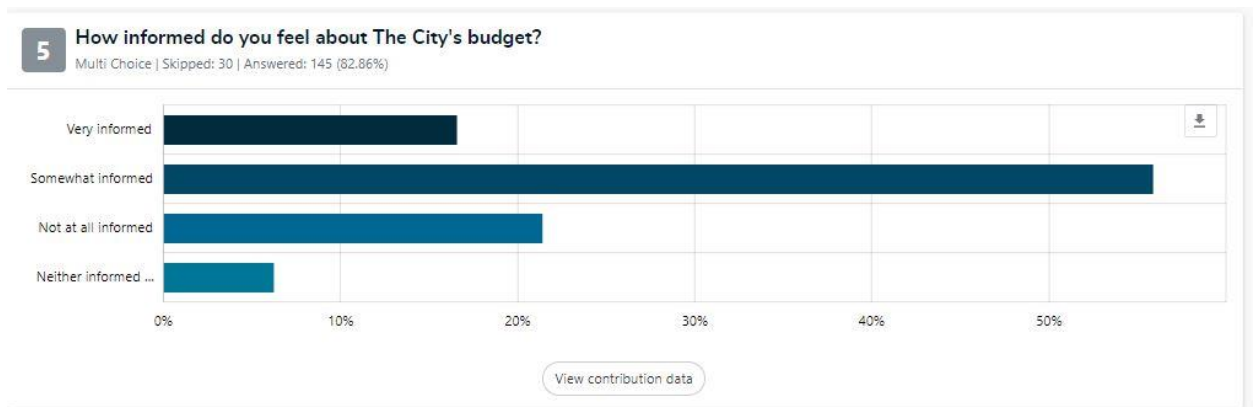
3. When asked what services The City should **spend more** on, the following top three themes emerged:

- I. **Roads, parks and trails:** Respondents identified the upkeep of roads and trails through maintenance (including street sweeping and snow removal), and park maintenance (including mowing and weed management) as the top area to spend more on.
- II. **Recreation:** Respondents identified recreation as the second area to spend more on, with respondents wanting expanded offerings while continuing to be affordable.
- III. **Public safety, and social supports:** Respondents identified public safety as the third area to invest in within the context of issues surrounding homelessness, urban encampments, social services and housing affordability.

4. When asked what services The City should **spend less** on, the following top three themes emerged:

- I. **Policing:** Respondents identified wanting to see less spent on RCMP, peace officers, and policing services.
- II. **Public art and culture:** These areas were identified by respondents as an area to spend less during tough times.
- III. **Administration and staffing:** Respondents identified city administration and staff as a top theme to spend less on. This included the number of employees as well as wages.

5. When asked how informed respondents felt about The City’s budget, 73% felt either very or somewhat informed.



6. When asked how we can **improve our communications** about the budget process, the top three themes were:

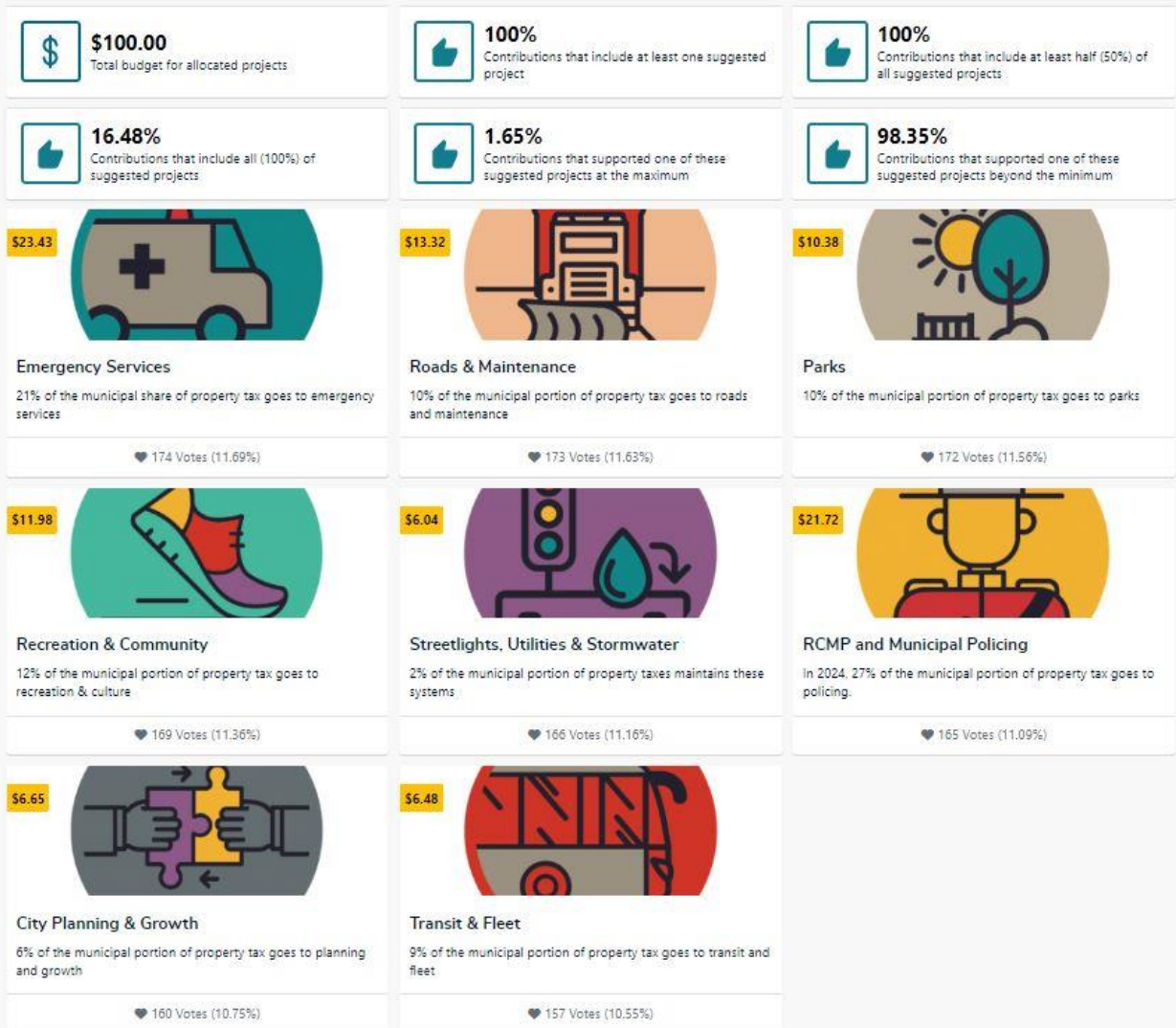
- I. **Desire for ongoing opportunities:** Respondents indicated they wanted to continue to have input opportunities, and are appreciative of current efforts.
- II. **Clearer and detailed information:** Respondents want more detailed and easily accessible information on budget and spending.
- III. **Use of multiple channels:** Respondents asked for a variety of communication channels to reach different segments of the population, including social media, newspaper, tv, and radio.

B. Participatory Budgeting Responses:

Through the participatory budgeting tool, citizens had \$100 to allocate to the following municipal services: Roads & Maintenance, Streetlights/Utilities/Stormwater, Parks, Recreation & Community, RCMP & Municipal Policing, Administration, Emergency Services, City Planning & Growth, Transit & Fleet.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Current Amount</b>	<b>Respondent Average Amount</b>
RCMP and Municipal Policing	\$27	\$21.72
Emergency Services	\$21	\$23.43
Recreation & Community	\$12	\$11.98
Roads & Maintenance	\$10	\$13.32
Parks	\$10	\$10.38
Transit & Fleet	\$9	\$6.48
City Planning & Growth	\$6	\$6.65
Administration	\$3	\$0
Streetlights, Utilities & Stormwater	\$2	\$6.04

## Suggested Priorities <sup>?</sup>



### What's Next:

The City of Red Deer is reviewing this feedback, and will inform budget recommendations that administration makes to City Council.

In September 2024, we will re-engage the community in budget conversations, including some of the recommendations administration will be considering. In November 2024, City Council will debate Budget 2025.

More information will be shared on [engage.reddeer.ca](https://engage.reddeer.ca)