



Finance Committee

Report on Input from the 2020 Budget - Your Priorities Public Engagement Process

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Title

Report on Input from the *2020 Budget - Your Priorities* Public Engagement Process

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

Not referred to a committee.

City Manager Recommendation:

Receive a report on the input collected from the *2020 Budget - Your Priorities* public engagement process, and consider how the input from community members can inform the 2020 budget process.

Report

Issue:

Whether to receive a report on the results of the *2020 Budget - Your Priorities* public engagement process and discuss how to use it as part of this year's budget process.

Staff Contact:

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Presenter(s):

Stacey Ray, Senior Planner, Office of Performance & Innovation, Administrative Services

Background and Analysis:

Olympia has an inspiring community vision - a healthy, vibrant, beautiful capital city. Our budget is one of the most important ways in which we demonstrate how we will achieve that vision.

In 2018, the City hosted a Community Conversation on Budget Priorities to hear directly from citizens their top priorities for the City. The City Council used that input to inform the 2019 budget process, including allocating additional funds to top priority areas identified by participants. Other positive outcomes included Councilmembers receiving input from community members not normally engaged through traditional outreach means, and participants having reported a greater awareness of and trust in City government.

Hosting the community conversation in 2018 was piloted as part of the first full year of implementing the annual Priorities, Performance, and Investment (PPI) Cycle. The PPI cycle includes gathering the community's priorities and evaluating our performance so we can adjust investments as necessary to achieve the community's vision.

This year, staff piloted using the online engagement tool, *Engage Olympia*, to invite even more community members into a virtual conversation called *2020 Budget - Your Priorities*. The goal was the same as last year: to listen to citizen's perspectives on the top priorities for the City, so City Council can use those perspectives to inform the 2020 budget.

The survey launched on Tuesday, July 9, and was open until Friday, August 23. A variety of methods, including social media and direct email invitations were used to invite citizens to participate. This year's process resulted in 471 completed surveys from 186 individuals. The number of surveys completed is higher than the individual participants because they could reply to one or more surveys (one for each Action Plan focus area). The surveys asked respondents to prioritize desired outcomes, and comment on how they felt the community was doing at achieving those outcomes.

A second goal of this process was to educate citizens about the City's budget process and finances. *Engage Olympia* included links to fun and informative videos that explained how the City budget works and to *OlyFinance* where they could read a "data story" about how we budget using the PPI cycle.

A third goal was to test if a virtual process could work to engage new or typically underrepresented community members in City decision-making. The objective being to see if input could be collected from a pool of respondents that matched as closely as possible a demographic sample of Olympia citizens.

Staff will review and share what's been learned from this year's virtual engagement process, a snapshot of who responded to the surveys, and an analysis of the input, with an emphasis on topics for consideration to inform the 2020 budget. .

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

Opportunities for citizens to engage with the City on budget priorities are of high community interest, and the result of the 2020 budget process will have citywide impacts.

Options:

1. Receive the report on community input from the *2020 Budget - Your Priorities* public engagement process
2. Do not receive the report.

Financial Impact:

None; this engagement effort was completed as a work plan item for the Office of Performance & Innovation in partnership with staff from Information Services and Communication Services.

Attachments:

Priorities, Performance, and Investments Cycle
2019 Virtual Budget Engagement Overview

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Website: Engage Olympia