



WESTMINSTER

Budget Town Hall Summary

On May 9, 2024, City Council, Staff, and the community held the inaugural Budget Town Hall at City Park Recreation Center. Together, they reviewed and discussed the City's budget and funding priorities for the 2025 budget development. City councillors guided small group discussions and attendees provided input on the following four questions:

1. What do you value most about living in Westminster?
2. What do you feel the City needs to improve on?
3. These are the [City Council's Strategic Priorities](#) that we use to guide the City's initiatives. Please rank these priorities from 1-6 in order from most important to least important according to your preference.
4. Are there areas for funding that you, as a community member, feel are missing? Are there priorities we missed?

There were over 40 attendees and an additional 12 virtual attendees who participated in answering the questions above. After the small group discussions, each city councillor shared out the responses from their small group with all in attendance.

What We Heard:

Question One: What do you value most about living in Westminster:

Participants shared a diverse array of values during the discussion, each value contributing to the overall well-being and vibrancy of the community. Common values included:

- **Access to parks and open space.** There was a strong consensus among participants that our parks and open spaces are one of Westminster's best features. More specifically, participants emphasized

the importance of the Westminster Hills Open Space. Participants appreciate efforts to preserve and enhance the views of the mountains because the views are not only aesthetically pleasing, but also contribute to the city's unique sense of place and identity. To improve access to our open spaces for all Westminster residents, participants noted that the city needs to improve ADA accessibility and connectivity in our open spaces.

- **Library services and resources**, which promote literacy, lifelong learning, and community engagement.
- **Community safety**. Participants confirmed a feeling of community safety, which drives residents to feel secure in their neighborhoods.
- **Supporting small businesses**. Participants also advocated for supporting small businesses by streamlining city processes and lowering barriers to launch businesses and Westminster. Participants noted that “none of this happens without businesses.”

Together these values create a more vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable community for all residents to enjoy.

Questions two and four: What do you feel the City needs to improve on?

Participants discussed common themes to improve the City, including:

- **Efforts to support small businesses**, such as offering access to water, solar, and energy credits, and providing incentives to attract and retain businesses in Westminster.
- **Improving transparency and communications**, such as a new website with a recent focused calendar, more promotion of city programs, and summary notes from council meetings.
- **Better maintenance of open spaces and parks**. Specifically, participants said that they appreciate spaces such as the Westminster Hills Off-Leash Dog Park. Participants viewed these spaces as crucial for the city to prioritize and maintain.

The suggestions participants had for improving City operations were shared with staff. These will help guide city efforts to develop a budget that meets resident needs.

Question three: Ranking City Council's Strategic Priorities

City Council adopted new strategic priorities in May 2024:

- Strategic Priority 1: Access to Opportunity
- Strategic Priority 2: Community Empowerment and Engagement
- Strategic Priority 3: Community Health and Safety
- Strategic Priority 4: Economic Vitality
- Strategic Priority 5: Resilient Infrastructure
- Strategic Priority 6: Organizational Vitality

For question three, participants ordered City Council's strategic priorities from most important to least important:

Most Important: Access to Opportunity and Resilient Infrastructure tied as the leading priorities for participants.

Varied Importance: Community Health and Safety ; Economic Vitality; and Community Empowerment and Engagement

Least Important: Organizational Vitality was consistently rated as the least important priority in comparison to the other remaining priorities.

Participants gave examples of ways to invest in these priorities, including:

- Low-income support such as providing water bill credits to those in need.
- Access to diverse housing options for all ranges of income.
- Supporting and diversifying businesses within the City to increase sales tax revenue.
- Creating and maintaining infrastructure for mobility connectivity and ADA needs such as missing sidewalks.

Ultimately, each of these shared priorities contribute to a vibrant and resilient Westminster.

What's next? - June 3, 2024 Budget Retreat:

Staff will share themes from the inaugural Budget Town Hall with City Council as part of the June 3, 2024, Budget Retreat Study Session presentation.

The Budget Retreat is a time for City Council to share policy guidance with Staff about priorities to include and address in the 2025 budget development process. The themes shared during the Budget Town Hall will be taken into account along with a variety of considerations, including the Strategic Plan, community requests, as well as operational and regulatory requirements.

Collectively, these will all be considered during the budget development process to guide the City towards providing high-quality core services and fostering resilience in order to promote a safe and thriving community.