

To: COUNCIL

Meeting Date: 09/14/21

Subject: Budget Engagement Survey Results

Submitted By: Sheryl Ayres, Chief Financial Officer

Prepared By: Katie Fischer, Deputy Treasurer

Report No.: 21-240(CRS)

File No.: C1101

Recommendation(s)

THAT report 21-240(CRS) re: Budget Engagement Survey Results be received for information.

Executive Summary

Purpose

- With the objective of engaging the public in the budget process, the 2022 budget engagement survey was launched in June and July. This report summarizes the feedback based on responses received.

Key Findings

- In total, the survey had 133 respondents; this compares to 510 responses to the 2020 budget survey and 56 to the 2019 budget survey.
- Of the City's strategic actions approved in May 2021 through the new Strategic Plan, creating and activating spaces that offer things for people to do and establishing our core areas as attractive destinations ranked as the highest priority at supporting the City's recovery from the pandemic.
- The majority of respondents (66%) preferred tax rate increases at or above inflation, allowing for service levels to be maintained or enhanced. 36% preferred increases above inflation, and 30% preferred increases at the rate of inflation.
- Of the City's external-facing services, Parks, Fire, Roads, Active Transportation and Recreation & Culture were identified as the most important services to avoid any service level reductions should there be a need to lower taxes.

- To raise revenues, the majority of respondents (65%) prefer increasing existing user fees over adding new user fees or increasing taxes. This remains consistent with the survey findings from two years ago.
- 77% of respondents indicated they have somewhat or good understanding of how tax dollars are used.

Financial Implications

- The information provided through the survey will be considered as staff and management continue to prepare the draft budget, not only for 2022 but also will be factored into the 2023, 2024 and 2025 budget forecasts.

Background

The 2022 budget plan includes a public engagement strategy, with the objective of engaging residents early in the process so that their feedback can be built right into the budget.

The budget engagement survey was officially launched through engageCambridge on June 28th, 2021, and was open for public input until July 29th, 2021. It was advertised through the City's social media accounts, social media ads on Facebook and Instagram, and profiling on the City's website.

In total, the survey had 133 respondents; this compares to 510 responses to the 2020 budget survey and 56 to the 2019 budget survey. It is important to note that the responses are not considered statistically valid due to the number of responses and the methods used to capture responses. However, they do provide important insights and act as a gauge into the community's objectives surrounding the City's 2022 budget.

Analysis

Strategic Alignment

PEOPLE To actively engage, inform and create opportunities for people to participate in community building – making Cambridge a better place to live, work, play and learn for all.

Goal #2 - Governance and Leadership

Objective 2.5 Focus on the responsible management of financial resources, ensuring transparency and accountability.

The 2022 budget process enables staff to focus on responsible financial management while maintaining transparency and accountability to management, Council and the public.

Comments

Staff are currently preparing the 2022 budget, followed by Management review later in September and October and then Council review beginning in November. The information provided through the survey will be considered as staff and management continue to prepare the draft budget, not only for 2022 but also will be factored into the 2023, 2024 and 2025 budget forecasts.

Existing Policy/By-Law

N/A

Financial Impact

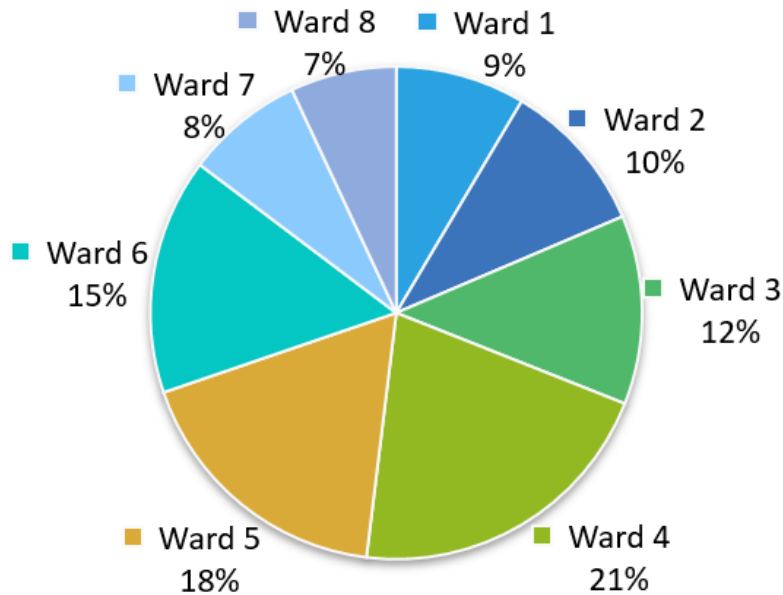
Through the 2022 budget process, Council directed staff to prepare the 2022 tax-supported operating budget with a target base budget tax levy increase generally in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Current forecasts project an increase between 1.7% to 2.2% for 2021. During preparation of the budget staff will consider current levels of service and make recommendations as required to ensure City services are being delivered most efficiently to meet the community's needs. All impacts from capital projects, growth and new service level initiatives will be submitted as part of the 2022 budget process for consideration by Council.

Public Input

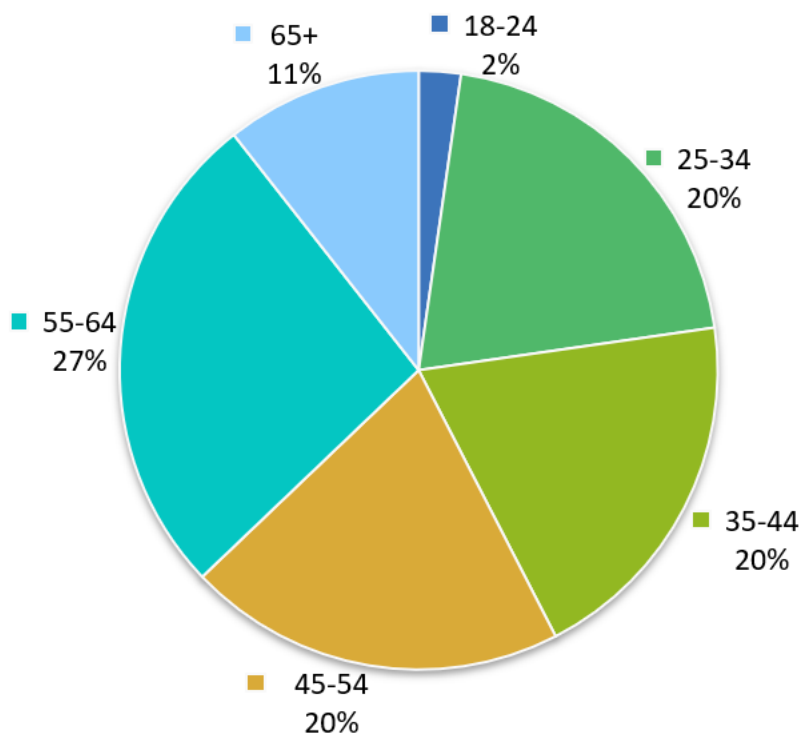
The following section is a summary of the detailed responses and comments from the survey results, available in Appendix A. Note that certain responses were redacted to ensure privacy of individuals and/or remove inappropriate content, consistent with the moderation guidelines from engageCambridge which can be found at <https://www.engagewr.ca/moderation>.

Demographics

The survey responses had good representation from wards throughout the City, with the highest representation in Ward 4 (21% of respondents) and the lowest in Ward 8 (7% of respondents).



More than half of respondents (58%) were over the age of 45, with 38% of respondents being 55 years or older.



Strategic Actions

With the approval of the new Strategic Plan in May 2021, the survey asked respondents to rank the six strategic actions that the City has the mandate and capacity to lead. The ranking was in the order of those that best support the City's local recovery as it emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic. Those actions identified as the most important

would be ranked with a lower number, with “1” being deemed the highest priority to focus on and “6” being the lowest priority.

The results show a strong favouring towards the two following strategic actions as being the highest priority at supporting the City’s recovery from the pandemic:

- Create and activate spaces that offer things for people to do; and,
- Establish our core areas as attractive destinations.

Strategic Action	Average Rank
Create and activate spaces that offer things for people to do	2.71
Establish our core areas as attractive destinations	2.86
Provide age-friendly services that are accessible to all	3.60
Enhance opportunities to enjoy built and natural heritage	3.61
Lay the foundation for future community building	3.86
Enhance equity and inclusion efforts	4.18

Balancing the Budget

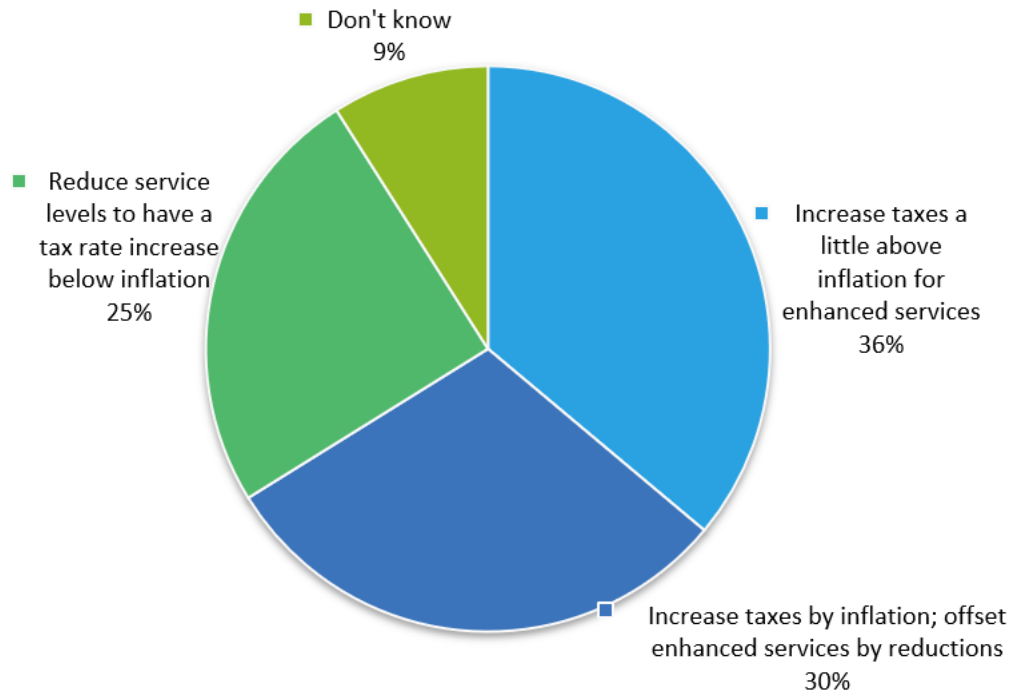
Respondents were asked the following question as part of the survey:

Local governments must balance the cost of delivering services with taxation, and the cost of providing services continue to rise as a result of inflation. Additionally, adding or enhancing services such as expanded recreation amenities further adds to costs. Which of the following options would you most prefer for Cambridge to balance increasing costs?

- Increase taxes a little above the rate of inflation to provide for enhanced service levels such as expanded recreation amenities, without the need to cut services elsewhere to offset.
- Increase taxes by the rate of inflation; if services are enhanced in one area, these should be offset by a reduction to services elsewhere.
- Reduce existing service levels to have a tax increase below the rate of inflation.
- Don’t know.

The response that was chosen the most was the first option, to increase taxes a little above the rate of inflation to provide for enhanced service levels, with 36% of

respondents selecting it. An additional 30% of respondents selected the second option, to maintain tax increases at the rate of inflation by offsetting any enhanced services in one area through reductions in other areas. 25% of respondents identified their choice as reducing existing service levels to maintain a tax rate increase below the rate of inflation, and 9% didn't know their preference.

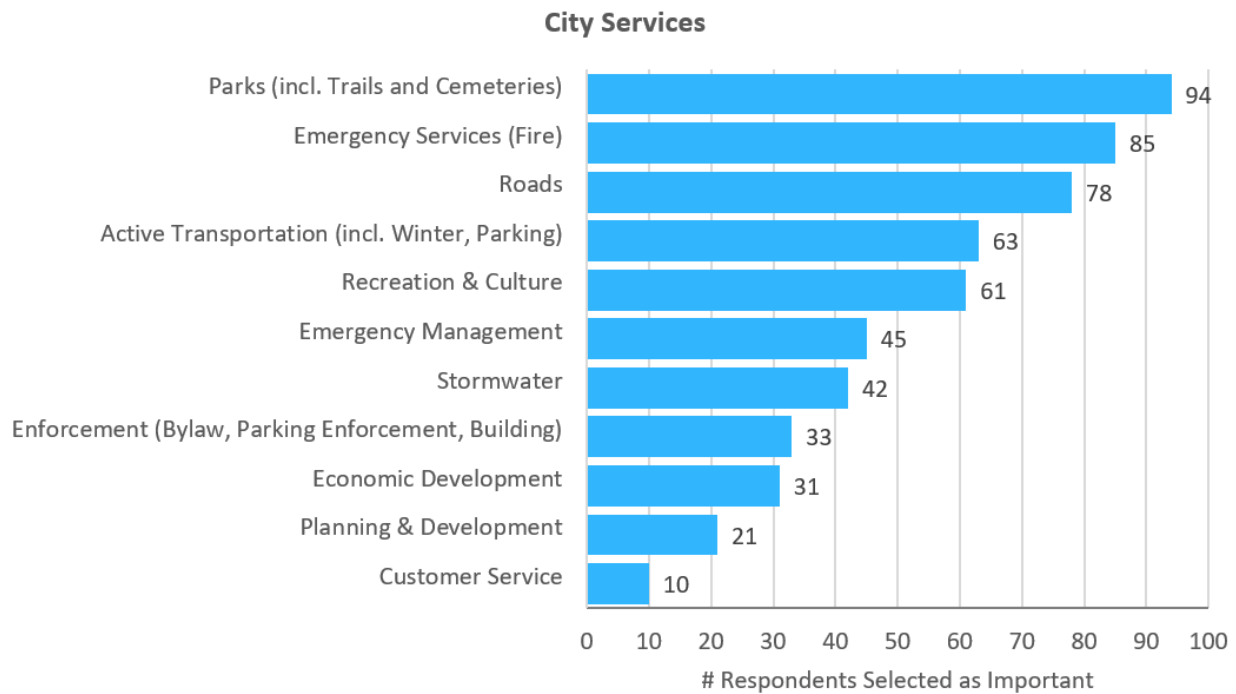


City Services

In the event that service levels need to be reviewed to find reductions to lower the tax rate increase, the survey asked respondents to identify those City Services that are most important to them such that they should not be targeted for service level reductions. Of the City's external facing services, respondents were asked to select up to 5 services for this question.

As shown on the following chart, those services that were most often selected by respondents as being most important to them are:

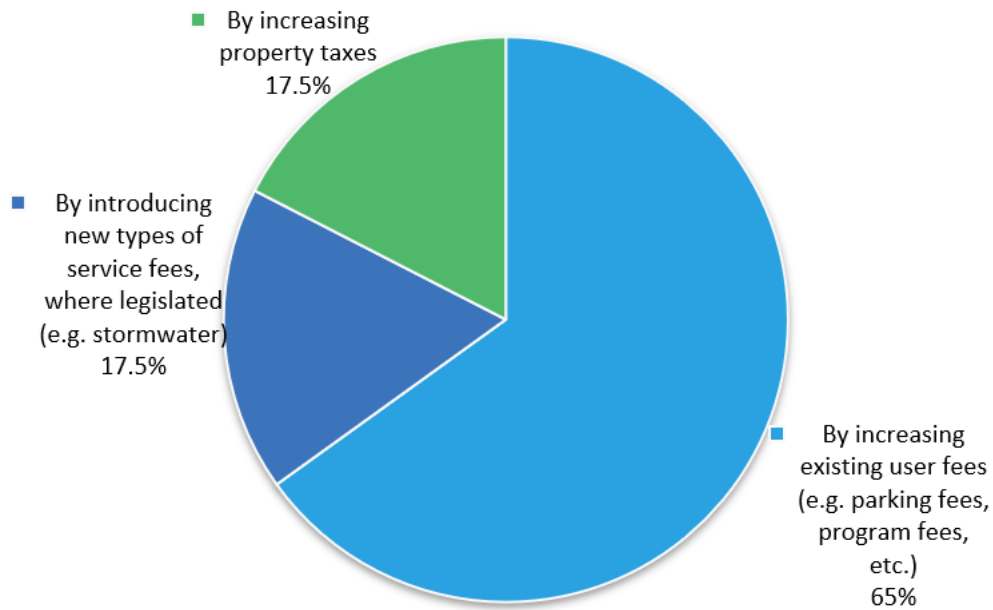
- Parks (94 respondents selected)
- Fire (85 respondents selected)
- Roads (78 respondents selected)
- Active Transportation (63 respondents selected)
- Recreation & Culture (61 respondents selected)



Taxes vs User Fees

As seen in a previous question, 66% of respondents prefer property tax increases at or above inflation in order to maintain or enhance services, compared to 25% of respondents who prefer tax increases below inflation even if it means reduced services to achieve. As an alternative to taxes, user fees could be increased to pay for the cost of additional services or reduce the tax burden. The responses to the next question indicate the majority of respondents would actually prefer increasing user fees instead of increasing taxes.

To the question “Should the City need to increase the amount of revenue it collects from citizens, how would you most prefer the City to collect this?”, the majority of respondents (65%) selected “By increasing existing user fees (e.g. parking fees, program fees, etc.)”. An equal number of respondents (17.5% each) selected “By introducing new types of service fees, where legislated (e.g. stormwater)”, and “By increasing property taxes”.

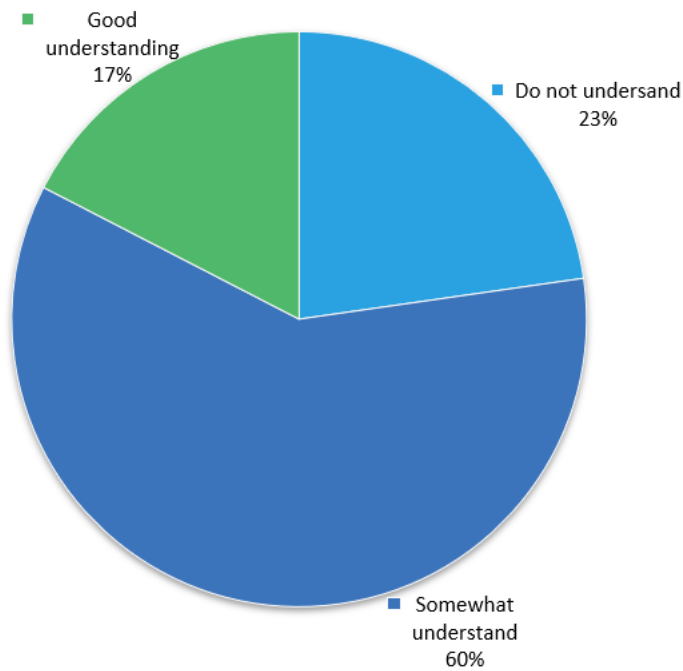


This same question was asked in 2019 as part of the 2020 budget engagement survey. It had similar results with the majority (61%) of respondents selecting to increase existing user fees.

Understanding of Municipal Budgets

To provide excellent transparency and accountability to citizens and ratepayers in the City's budget, it is important that the information be understandable to the public. To begin measuring how the City performs in this respect, the final question of the survey asked whether the respondents feel they understand how their tax dollars are used within the City budget.

77% of respondents indicated they have somewhat or good understanding of how tax dollars are used. However, 23% have indicated they do not understand. Staff plan to utilize this feedback in developing strategies moving forward around informing citizens and ratepayers better on how their tax dollars are used.



Respondents were also able to provide comments to the survey. These can be found on pages 9 to 24 of the attached survey results in Appendix A.

Additional feedback from a member of the public was received and is included in Appendix B.

Internal/External Consultation

The budget engagement survey questions were drafted through collaboration between staff from Financial Services, Corporate Communications, and Corporate Strategy.

Conclusion

The feedback received through the 2022 budget engagement survey indicated a desire to keep taxes affordable and/or minimize future tax increases while recognizing the need for improved delivery of certain services or increased levels of certain services. The information provided through the survey will be considered as staff and management continue to prepare the draft budget, not only for 2022 but how it may shape future years' budgets and be factored into the 2023, 2024 and 2025 budget forecasts.

Signature

LeDivision Approval

Reviewed by Legal Services



Name: Sheryl Ayres

Title: Chief Financial Officer

Departmental Approval



Name: Dave Bush

Title: Deputy City Manager Corporate Services

City Manager Approval



Name: David Calder

Title: City Manager

Attachments

- Appendix A: Budget Engagement Survey Results
- Appendix B: Additional Public Feedback

2022 Budget Engagement Survey

SURVEY RESPONSE REPORT

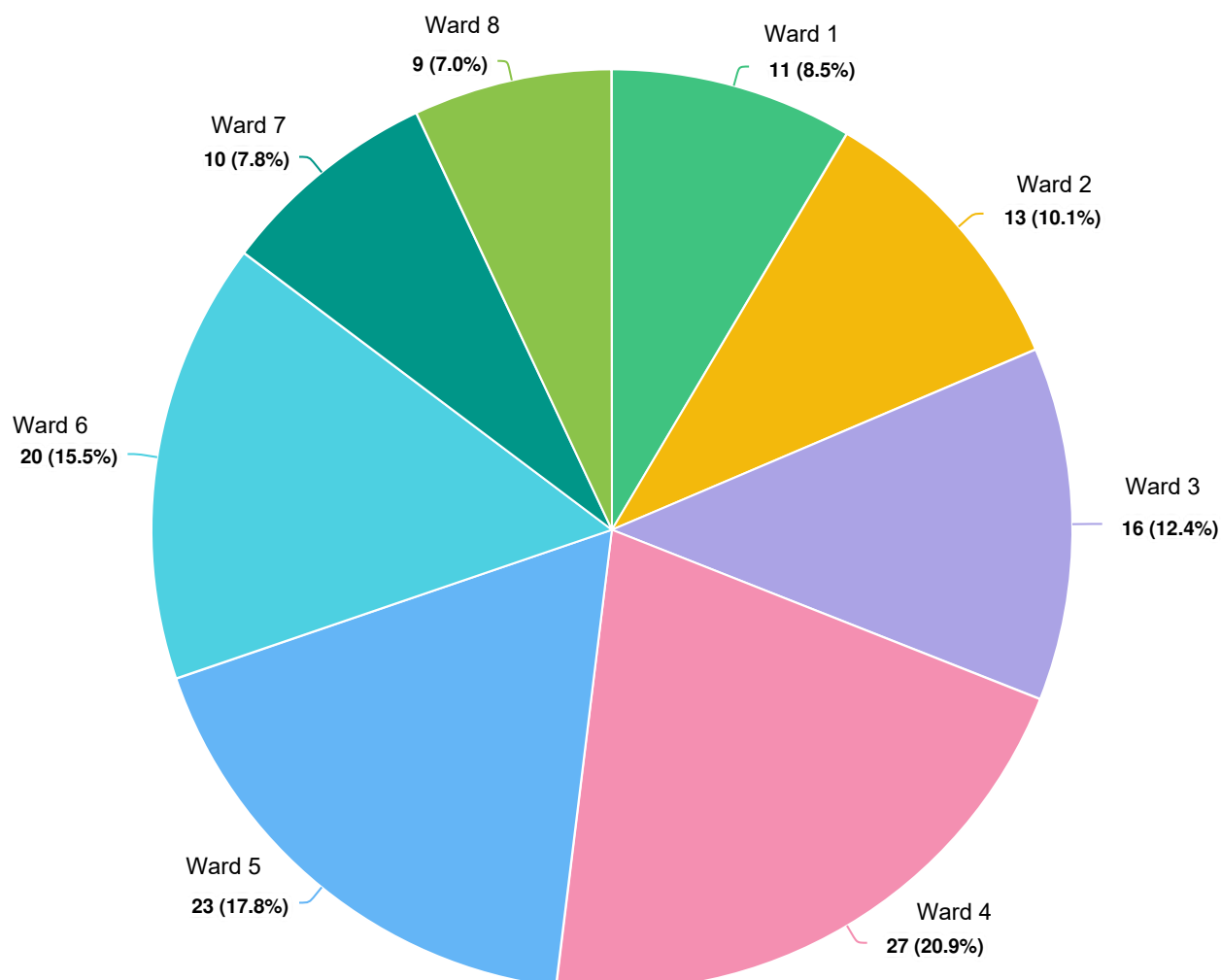
28 June 2021 - 29 July 2021

PROJECT NAME:

Budget 2022



SURVEY QUESTIONS

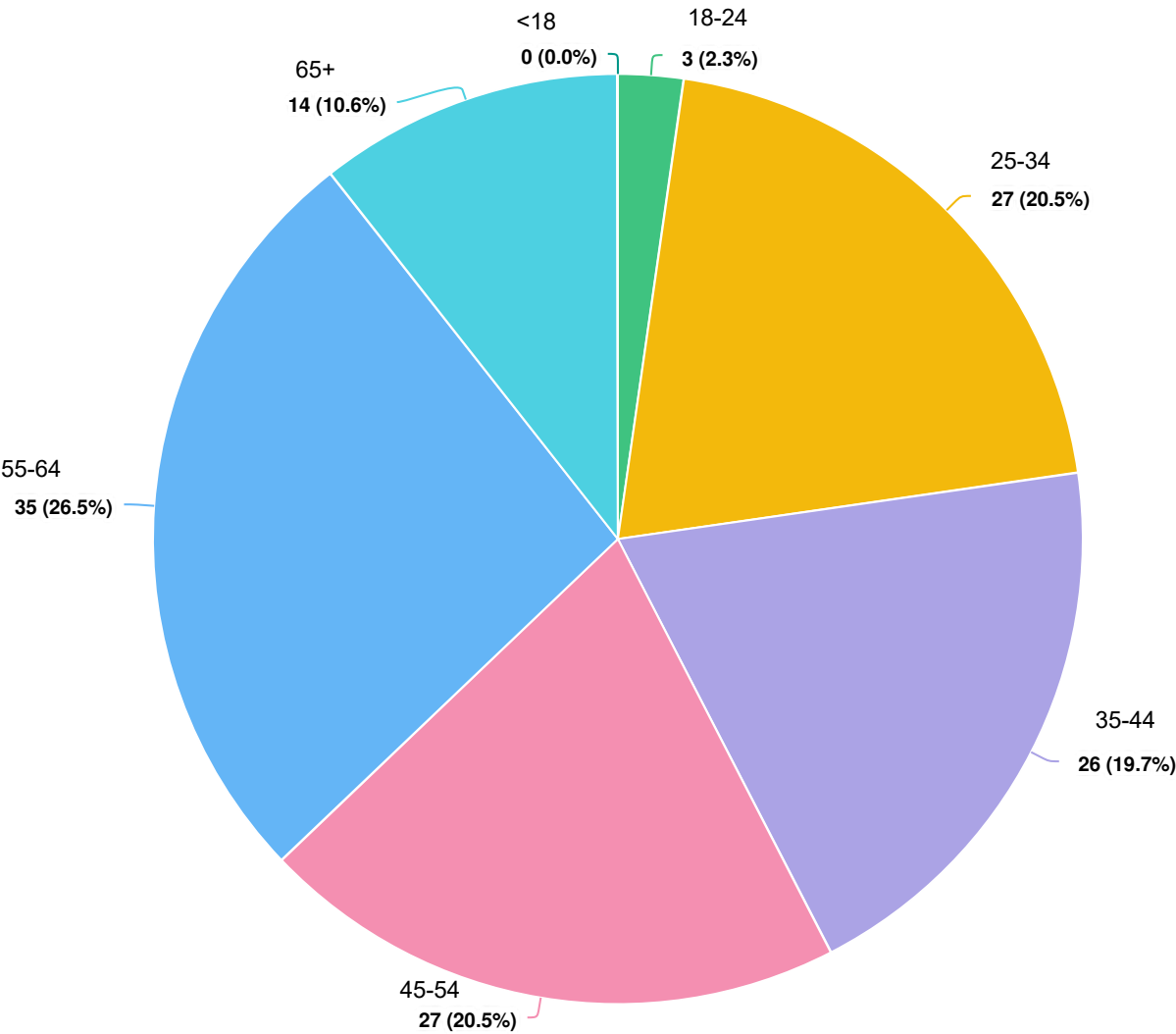
Q1 Which Ward do you live in? (not sure? look it up here)**Question options**

● Ward 1 ● Ward 2 ● Ward 3 ● Ward 4 ● Ward 5 ● Ward 6 ● Ward 7 ● Ward 8

Optional question (129 response(s), 4 skipped)

Question type: Dropdown Question

Q2 What is your age?



Question options

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+
- Under 18

Optional question (132 response(s), 1 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

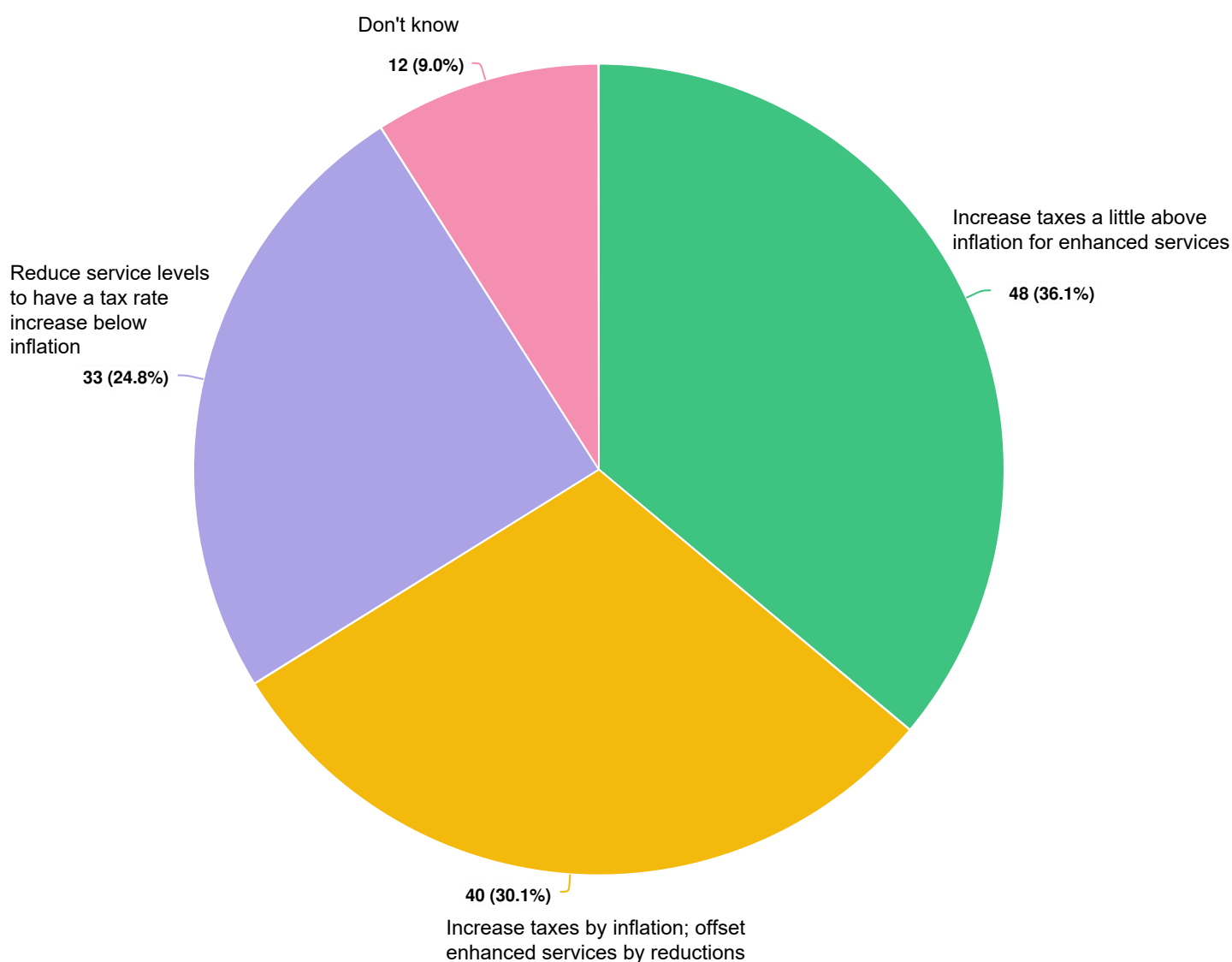
Q3 In May 2021, Council approved the City's new Strategic Plan. Based on over 2,000 responses to stakeholder and community outreach, there are six strategic actions that the City has the mandate and capacity to lead. For more information refer to the ...

OPTIONS	AVG. RANK
Create and activate spaces that offer things for people to do	2.71
Establish our core areas as attractive destinations	2.86
Provide age-friendly services that are accessible to all	3.60
Enhance opportunities to enjoy built and natural heritage	3.61
Lay the foundation for future community building	3.86
Enhance equity and inclusion efforts	4.18

Optional question (132 response(s), 1 skipped)

Question type: Ranking Question

Q4 | Local governments must balance the cost of delivering services with taxation, and the cost of providing services continue to rise as a result of inflation. Additionally, adding or enhancing services such as expanded recreation amenities further add...



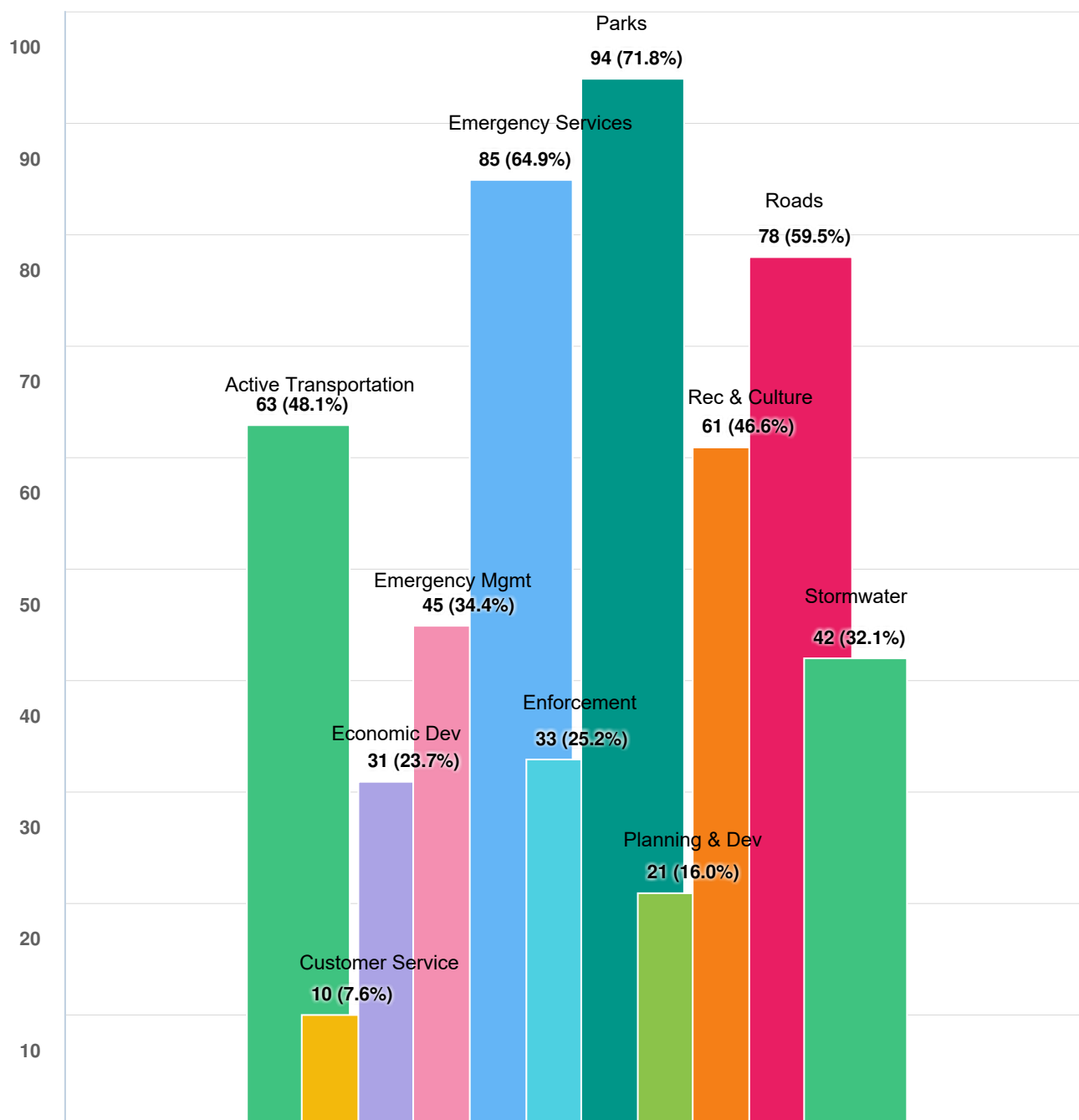
Question options

- Increase taxes a little above the rate of inflation to provide for enhanced service levels such as expanded recreation amenities, without the need to cut services elsewhere to offset.
- Increase taxes by the rate of inflation; if services are enhanced in one area, these should be offset by a reduction to services elsewhere.
- Reduce existing service levels to have a tax increase below the rate of inflation.
- Don't know

Optional question (133 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Radio Button Question

Q5 The City strives to balance excellent service delivery while maintaining affordable tax rates. This could potentially mean reviewing service levels to find reductions. Which of the following City services are most important to you and in your opini...



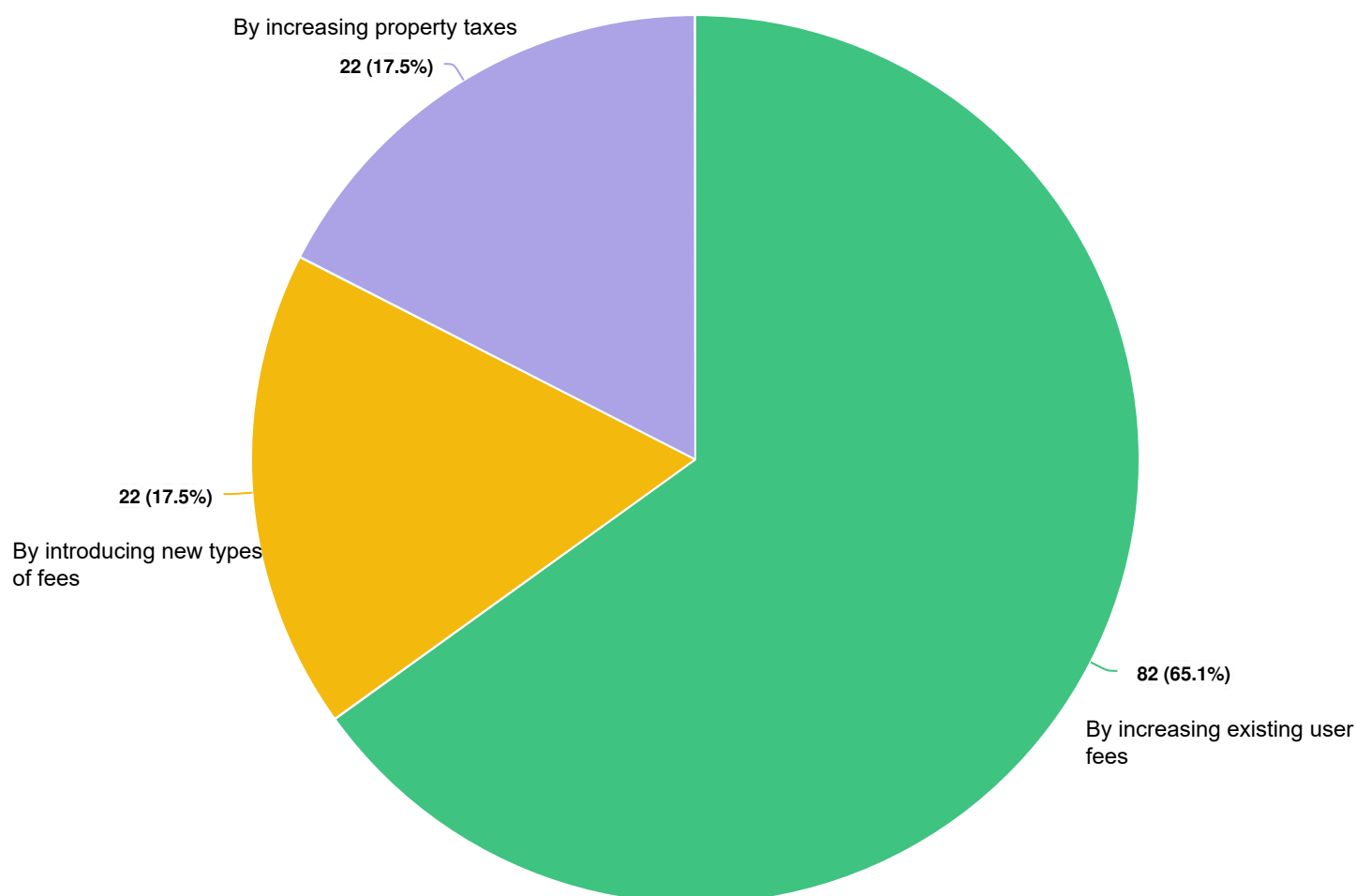
Question options

- Active Transportation (including Winter Maintenance, Parking & Transportation)
 ● Customer Service
- Economic Development
 ● Emergency Management
 ● Emergency Services (Fire)
- Enforcement (Bylaw, Parking Enforcement, Building Services)
 ● Parks (including Trails & Cemeteries)
- Planning & Development
 ● Recreation & Culture
 ● Roads
 ● Stormwater

Optional question (131 response(s), 2 skipped)

Question type: Checkbox Question

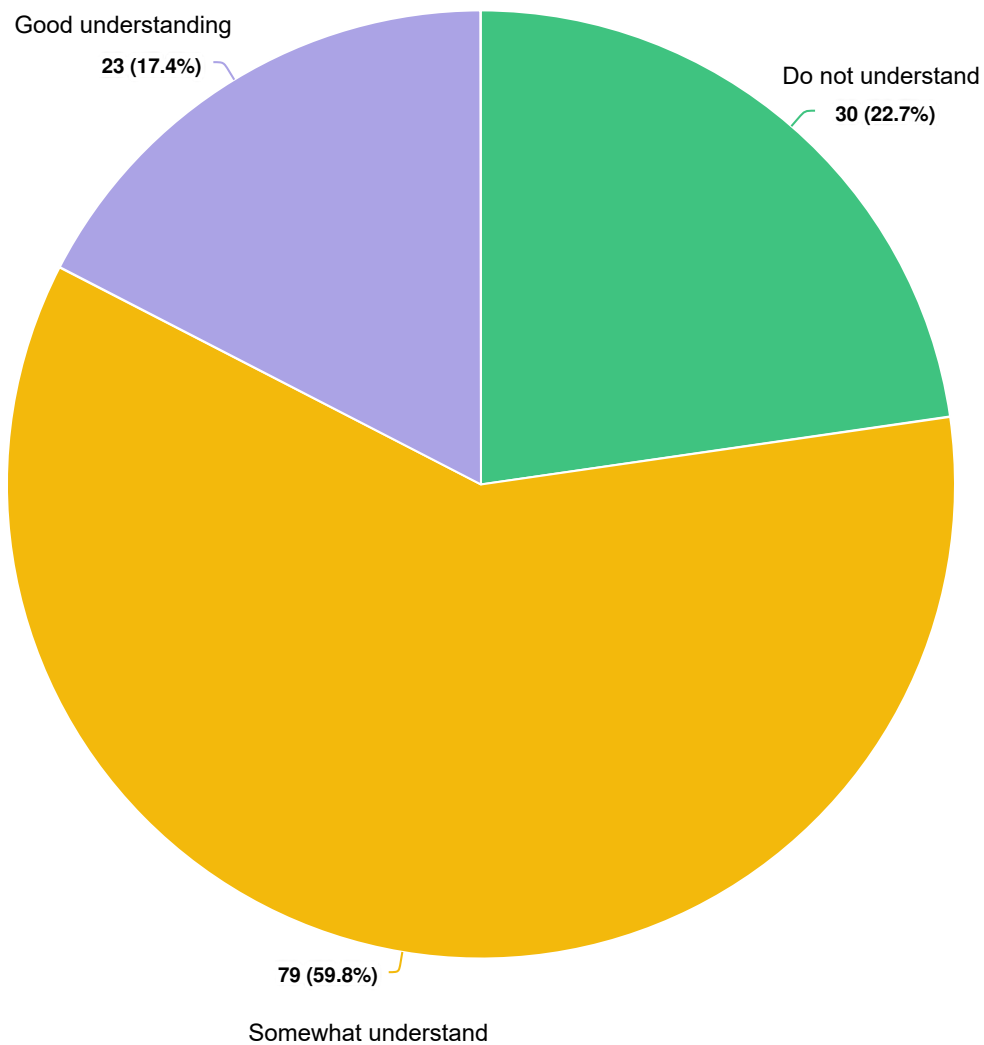
Q6 | Should the City need to increase the amount of revenue it collects from citizens, how would you most prefer the City to collect this?



Question options

- By increasing existing user fees (e.g. parking fees, program fees, etc.)
- By introducing new types of service fees, where legislated (i.e. stormwater)
- By increasing property taxes

Optional question (126 response(s), 7 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q7 | Do you feel that you understand how your tax dollars are used within the City budget?**Question options**

☐ Do not understand ☐ Somewhat understand ☐ Good understanding

Optional question (132 response(s), 1 skipped)

Question type: Radio Button Question

Q8 | Please provide any additional comments.

Anonymous

6/28/2021 01:49 PM

Circumventing obviously needed repairs to city buildings and structures like the Riverside Park Grandstand and heritage walls surrounding it will ALWAYS result in higher costs later. More attention needs to be given to taking care of existing structures.

Anonymous

6/28/2021 02:08 PM

Tax dollars going out the window 'processing ' applications from developers wanting very tall (greedy) buildings that are beyond what our planning act allows. Waste of taxpayer \$ fiddling with all these. Send them back instead of spending our tax dollars holding public meetings etc trying to make us resident taxpayers that volunteer our time in the community, feel grateful that the plans are getting closer to what is allowed.

Anonymous

6/28/2021 02:15 PM

stop giving tax money to big business like hamilton theater

Anonymous

6/28/2021 03:35 PM

Honestly, Cambridge looks awful. The boulevards are overgrown, flower beds are full of weeds and not maintained. If the city is not going to maintain stuff (ex flower bed's at Craigs Crossing, flower beds on Hespeler Rd) get rid of them. It's embarrassing.

Anonymous

6/28/2021 03:43 PM

Please look into some of the larger local businesses sponsoring some of these program and enhancements.

Anonymous

6/28/2021 03:56 PM

I don't feel this survey adequately covers all potential options. For example, for questions 4 there is no option for reducing taxes. Had there been, by answer would have been as follows: Question 4 - Reduce existing

service levels so that tax rates can be REDUCED. To expand upon that, I think the municipality should be focusing on becoming as lean as possible and eliminating bureaucracy. The City should only be focused on providing basic infrastructure for water/sewer, transportation, emergency services, and parks. In Cambridge we are under 4 levels of governance - municipal, regional, provincial, and federal. All levels have taxes, all levels are full of wasted resources, and overpaid bureaucrats. We are seeing taxes and costs of services rise without any actual increase in number or quality of those services, and further, most people are not seeing corresponding increases in wages to compensate. Aside from providing the most basic infrastructure, the municipality needs to get out of the way to allow businesses and individuals the freedom to spend more of their own resources how they see fit.

Anonymous

6/28/2021 04:22 PM

I disagree with the limited options in question #6. There are areas to cut back that are not included in the options. Firstly, cut back on management salaries. Stop wage increases for staff for 2022 and until we recover economically. Stop waiving development fees. Stop paying so many consultants to redo reports. Stop contributing to social programs or initiatives that are not municipal responsibilities. Stop building more libraries as we have enough. The new glorified basketball center in East Galt that is replacing a more functional sports center doesn't even meet the needs of our athletes and users. Fundraising fund raising and more fund raising...there are many options. There is so much

Anonymous

6/28/2021 04:25 PM

wasteful spending that could be cut back and still offer necessary services without an added increase to fees or taxes. The tax payers should not have to continue to pay for the mismanagement of our tax dollars.

Salary review on the chief of police and fire chief. The whole fire department should be reviewed. Since your there look at the pay scale of all city employees and get them down to what normal people get paid. Since we are struggling with covid we should freeze any city employees and managers wages. Stop waisting tax payers money on special interest groups. Let them organize and raise funds for special things eg painted crosswalks. Anything that is not essential to their safety or well being they should pay for. Use common sense when spending our hard earned money. Show the taxpayers some respect with our money. When we have an election for city council we should require a criminal record search as well of a credit rating. If you can't pass a credit check how are you going to manage taxpayers money.

Anonymous

6/28/2021 04:40 PM

Number 6 should include sponsorships and revenue from developers towards parks and recreation.

Anonymous

6/28/2021 04:40 PM

Stop seeking out to developers and building on our river's and downtown core! Build towers along Hespeler rd or the 401

Anonymous

6/28/2021 07:21 PM

Gouvernement needs to get out of things it has no business being in and leave those items to the private sector. If they are really important they will survive and if they aren't they won't. Tax dollars should not be

	wasted on any items that service special interest groups.
Anonymous 6/28/2021 07:43 PM	To Make the Galt core more attractive you need to get rid of The Bridges shelter and do not let a safe injection site in our city
Anonymous 6/28/2021 09:00 PM	I would like our city to concentrate on finding ways to communicate with the public. The internet site and publications in the paper are really not enough, especially when we cannot present to council other than by phone.
Anonymous 6/28/2021 09:28 PM	Per question #5 - tough to compare life safety of fire services to other services I would not like to see cut. Appreciate that even emergency services should be accountable. (Just mean that in the list) Look for a well balanced budget- between safety (roads and water too) with recreation, arts and general community wellbeing. All with moderate tax increases - understanding something had to give. Thanks for asking.
Anonymous 6/28/2021 10:19 PM	More services provided in cambridge rather than sent to KW.
Anonymous 6/28/2021 10:27 PM	Cambridge needs to slow down its development (adding multiple high rises); and if its going to add development require a high number of affordable units as well as green construction (over and above what is required by the province) such as green roofs
Anonymous 6/28/2021 11:10 PM	Relocate the services all from Galt downtown that attracts the homeless who are coming into peoples yards, cars, sheds & even homes. No amount of money you spend in town will make me let my teenage kids walk downtown for live entertainment

or other great activities. I personally as 46 yr women wouldn't walk from downtown alone after sunset. That's sad & crazy! I pay taxes & I'm happy to do so. I think watching a guy burn drugs & smoke them in front of my house on the curb at 9:40pm is unfair. I had guy sitting in my back yard last week, scared me - in my own yard, I again do not think this is fair way to live and I see very little to stop this. And yes I've attended almost every (illegal drugs in our community) injection site (depends on acronym public health is calling it to make it sound better). Bridges was built & was helpful to many get on their feet again. Now it along with other services are being abused to continue the issues.

Anonymous

6/28/2021 11:39 PM

I would like to see Hancock community pool stay open. This low income demographic is changing to younger families as many older home owners are moving out with limited income to have their own pool. The new sports Plex will be too far away and this community won't be able to access it especially without transportation. There is very little in the way of any other recreational activity on this part of the West side. Little to know parks, very little children's play areas and very little trails. Take away Hancock pool and this area is left with very little compared to other areas of Cambridge.

Anonymous

6/29/2021 12:03 AM

Stop putting money into SCS at the Region's discretion and lobby HARD for Provincially appointed mental health & treatment options. Demand our Police Services respect the taxpayers and "do their jobs" ... ie lobby for judicial reform and stop engaging those known to be repeat

	offenders and apply the laws we already have. (Vagrancy, theft and vandalism to start)
Anonymous 6/29/2021 12:30 AM	Lower taxes! Inflation is already making it hard enough to get by.
Anonymous 6/29/2021 12:33 AM	With an influx of development in our cores we can see increased taxes through population growth without seeing major infrastructure cost increases. It will also help raise money through more transit users, more businesses in our core. More spending in our core. We need to be careful not to fall victim of halting growth and progress due to a loud minority opinion of fear of change and nimbyism. The squeaky wheel does not need the grease. Thoughtful and well-planned growth can make our city vibrant, increase our tax base, and allow us to create walkable cities, and trails and other amenities that will benefit our city
Anonymous 6/29/2021 01:11 AM	The homeless growth combined with the drug issues is spreading far beyond downtown Galt....parks and plazas are not as safe as they were 5 years ago.....good luck with that one.
Anonymous 6/29/2021 11:47 AM	Affordable housing, actual police services (arrest those who steal & break the law; protect those who pay their taxes!) and actually listening to what Cambridge citizens need and want would be great!
Anonymous 6/29/2021 12:39 PM	More needs to be done regarding general safety for residents. To many homeless, mentally ill and drug addicted people accosting residents and stealing from yards.
Anonymous 6/29/2021 02:07 PM	The city needs more affordable housing, meaning rental units that are at or below market cost. \$1,300+ a month is NOT affordable. There

also needs to be more money put toward homeless shelters and care. The funding for this could be taken from the police budget, they do not need that much money.

Anonymous

6/29/2021 04:51 PM

Thank you. You are doing a great job!

Anonymous

6/29/2021 06:30 PM

The City of Toronto has 58 outdoor pools. After this summer Cambridge will have 1. The political leadership in Toronto decided to put families and children first, living in an urban area, in buildings the city has provided these citizens of all ages a place to cool off in the summer, learn skills, build community and provide employment opportunities for many youth. The health benefits are unmeasurable for these families. The cost of enjoying the outdoor pool for the participants is zero. It is shameful that the city of Cambridge does not put it people first.

[redacted]

6/29/2021 10:30 PM

Q4 - an answer that you don't show is to improve/increase efficiencies within the system. Q6 - increase the taxes on vacant buildings; reduce the exemptions from development charges

Anonymous

6/30/2021 12:20 AM

This survey is not direct and I do not feel like I trust my own city/municipality.

Anonymous

6/30/2021 11:37 AM

Having a safe place for my kids to play outside in our ward is extremely important The kids need a few add on to the existing parks like maybe a splash pad for summer and a baseball net to be reinstalled at Willard Park. Currently we have ro drive to GCI or wait patiently for the 20 plus kids to be done at the local catholic school. We currently have 2 tennis courts that arw rarely used and I believe that one could be

transformed into a half court, or the patch of gravel behind the city works building on Beechwood, where one used to sit, be rebuilt. My sons and their friends would gladly pitch in and help fundraise for a badly needed upgrade to a park they are slowly or already outgrowing. Our kids need more outdoor spaces and updated sports areas. I would also love to see a plan for ball diamonds in Cambridge. Having 2 kids in CMBA and travel, I see what other city centre's offer, and ours could use some love, if you kids kids a place they are proud to call home, you will see more engaged youth!

Anonymous

6/30/2021 01:40 PM

Climate change mitigation needs to be included in all plans

[redacted]

7/01/2021 04:05 PM

I think preparing for climate change now will save us a lot of money in the long run. So, investing in active transit, green infrastructure, trees, native plants, etc. to prevent or mitigate floods, heat island effect, winter storms, etc.

[redacted]

7/01/2021 09:17 PM

Using taxpayers money to fund illegal drug use/ safe suicide CTS sites. Should be illegal. Roads, water, sewage, garbage, and emergency service. Should be priority.

[redacted]

7/03/2021 08:52 AM

Nowhere on this survey do I see the city asking me if I want to see a reduction in the pay of the council or any other member on the city payroll who makes 6 figures or more. Question # 4 does not provide all options available to the city. Just as an F.Y.I - there are many who are on a fixed income, as we age and are on a pension who simply cannot afford an increase. It would be nice to see the city take that demographic

into consideration, before you tax us out of our homes. Before coming to the community and asking for more tax dollars, be sure you are fiscally responsible, reduce redundancies within your administrative workforce, utilizing students, recent graduates for term / contract positions in areas that would make sense as well as ensure, that those who are employed by the city, for the city, are working effectively. Businesses have to look at this all of the time before considering a cost increase. We are taxed very heavily here, and we are suffering because of it. Our services are not as good as Mississauga / Meadowvale, but our taxes are almost as high. As the city grows and more houses are added, the city is going to have to figure out how to better manage their workforce and resources. One last item. In reading the strategic plan for the city, there are items that discuss "Encourage safe and healthy neighbourhoods". I would love to know how this ties in with the locations selected for the Safe Consumption Sites?

Anonymous

7/03/2021 01:46 PM

Build student type dorms as affordable accommodation. With shared kitchen bathroom. Each complex would have a not for profit business on the ground floor ran by a number of residents in turn. Businesses could be cafe, laundromat, repair shop, homemaking skills/crafts like clothing repair

Anonymous

7/05/2021 10:05 AM

It seems like the only way to get the current budget approved is to start raising taxes again. I understand it's the easiest way to get funds to the city but there has to be another way to collect money. Whether that means a combination of slight raise

in taxes and a reduction in services with changes in community events being paid for instead of free. It could benefit the long term of not raising taxes every budget proposal

Anonymous

7/05/2021 03:42 PM

We need stronger funding programs and policy and planning for heritage and arts and culture. Hoping that large-scale developments will offset budgetary concerns in a short-sighted approach and we will lose what makes Cambridge unique and desirable. Keep our cores vibrant with sympathetic development and incentives for rejuvenation with heavy fines for demolition and new construction. Focus the high density growth outside of the core areas.

Anonymous

7/06/2021 03:32 PM

We need affordable housing! My generation can't afford to rent or buy and are all looking to move out of province or Canada.

Anonymous

7/07/2021 08:19 PM

I feel as a city and region that we should be working toward reconciliation. A major component of this should be to pay Indigenous People's for the land in which Cambridge uses. This could easily be done by designating a portion of every household and businesses property taxes to be given to the Indigenous groups who first used this land.

[redacted]

7/12/2021 02:53 PM

Please stop the loose leaf curbside pick up. Every year they are not collected by the time the snow comes and the plow pushes them all over the place making a mess (and they blow in people's yards that might have bagged theirs or mulched) and they block storm drains and cause flooding. I took pictures of the mess last year. Home owners can bag them or mulch them into their lawns. It's time to look at how Fire

Departments are set up. This is a big cost and the number of fires that require response has greatly reduced over time. They are often the first people on site when 911 is called because they have nothing better to do. It would be better to put that money to a Health Hub near the hospital that combines CTS, Mental Health Services, lodging etc. It makes no sense to deploy a fire truck to something an ambulance should be responding to. Think of the number of fires there has been in a year - it makes no sense.

[redacted]

7/12/2021 02:54 PM

Tax paying residents are at their wits end with city council using their dollars on things like self-injection sites that provide drugs and needles that are funded by residents tax dollars. We don't want to stabilize someone's addiction, we want to provide services to only those choosing to stop. Provide services to those looking to get off drugs, rehab centers. Invest more in policing as residents are afraid to walk around their own neighborhoods. Homes are being broken into and personal shed/garage items taken. Invest in more policing to ensure residents are safe in their own neighborhoods.

Anonymous

7/13/2021 10:29 AM

As a city employee, I would love to see where the taxes are being spent on each received pay check. This is a widely used practice and should be considered. This practice would follow your core values of IRIS

Anonymous

7/13/2021 10:43 AM

Cambridge is a wonderful place to live

[redacted]

7/13/2021 10:45 AM

increase the level of policing if you are going to increase taxes. Cambridge has become a hotspot for homelessness, the mentally

Anonymous

7/13/2021 10:46 AM

challenged and drug addicted. Let's see some of our tax dollars addressing these issues.

The city has approved growth that it cannot support and will likely increase taxes to support. Perhaps council should learn to manage existing budget and community before approving mass buildings. Crime has spiked and council doesn't seem to care or respond, it's amazing how we have managed without many services thru pandemic - this should be clear on where costs can be cut, just as private businesses are doing.

Anonymous

7/13/2021 11:21 AM

Cambridge needs to find a way to build the city into a community. It is one city yet it is divided due to amalgamation and no clear community structure. We need to create spaces (natural and built) that will make all Cambridge citizens proud to live here and not be afraid to venture into downtown cores or the surrounding areas. We need a city that we can all be proud of and that comes with maintaining vital services (roads, Emergency Services etc) and building out community services + enhancing areas that truly are beautiful but riddled with their historical challenges. We need to encourage business development in Galt, Preston and Hespeler downtowns - that will get more people going there. We need community recreation spaces that aren't run down. If no one can find a way to adjust the budget that exists, yes, we need to charge more for city-run programs or services, or increase taxes. No major increases will be tolerated, but BE CLEAR on what taxes are doing and maybe people won't care as much. Some will yes

Anonymous

7/13/2021 11:51 AM

but if you told me I have to pay an extra \$100/year so that we can have a safer downtown Galt (and told me how you're going to do it) or create a massive rec centre my kids can use...sign me up!

[redacted]

7/13/2021 12:00 PM

I work in a grocery store (in Cambridge) my pay will never again increase (as I am at top rate of 19\$) my husband's pension will never increase and yet every year taxes increase, transportation costs increase, food prices increase. Just something to think about.

I believe the city could make a lot more money by attracting more small businesses, instead of drug addicts and criminals.

Anonymous

7/13/2021 02:05 PM

Provide funding for childcare.

Anonymous

7/13/2021 08:09 PM

Stop wasting our taxpayer money. The whole council should be fired and in jail for what they have done to this city. We struggle to get by and can't even afford to live here anymore. But go ahead and raise our taxes even more and give yourselves more raises when you dont listen to a single thing people tell you this city has gone to [redacted] under your watch you don't even live in this city. Not my mayor!!!

Anonymous

7/13/2021 09:52 PM

We have many positive things in Cambridge. Let's continue to work towards being a city where people live full and complete lives and embrace this city. Not just a place where people move to and commute out of town to work.

Anonymous

7/13/2021 10:07 PM

Like all public sector jobs, the rate of pay/benefits/pension are considered great jobs to have. Unfortunately the staffing structure supports too many

managerial positions. Do we really need supervisors reporting to managers reporting to a director in each department? Could more work be completed efficiently with less management and more front line staff? I hope the city is considering internal reviews and cuts as well before offloading tax increases to citizens.

Anonymous

7/22/2021 11:39 AM

I feel that there is not enough information, or contacts from who to obtain the information, about where tax dollar is spent. Therefore, citizens voices are not heard or acknowledged. As a long time resident, I see tax dollar being spent on things that citizens are opposed to. Unfortunately, Cambridge has become a run-down city in the last 4-5 years in front of my eyes. Very sad.

Anonymous

7/22/2021 01:25 PM

With the advent of COVID and the city not providing the services it contracted with the citizens in the budget of 2020 and 2021 their should be no need for any tax increases. The city had at least 4 to 6 months in 2020 and at least 6 months in 2021 where the budgeted services were not fully provided as identified in the budgets. Where are the savings.

[redacted]

7/24/2021 06:18 PM

why would i agree to a tax increase when i feel the city does nothing to help us ... it's just another money grab the counsellors don't listen the city doesn't listen it's really sad

[redacted]

7/25/2021 12:29 AM

I would like to see audits and reviews looking for ways to reduce spending..

Anonymous

7/25/2021 03:05 AM

Instead of raising taxes put all new spending on hold till the economy recovers. Cap all city payroll look to cut spending on all non essential services

[redacted]

7/26/2021 12:07 PM

Is there no way to increase efficiencies that would help decrease our overall spending that would allow our quality of life to go up while keeping or decreasing the amount of taxes we pay? Also, stop giving city workers pay increases. The average city employee far out weights the median income of those you're collecting from in Cambridge.

[redacted]

7/29/2021 11:08 AM

I am shocked that you don't have addressing climate change as a specific priority. We can't wait any longer. We need to address that at all levels of government. We should put money into achieving the TransformWR goals for greenhouse gas reduction, including the 50 by 30 goal. Council needs to give staff clear direction to up their game, not just keep on with current policies and hope for the best. The city has a pretty good active transportation "network spine" already identified. We need to build cycling routes for all ages and abilities on that entire spine if we are to achieve our GHG reduction targets. Current plans won't even achieve that by 2040 (and who knows how much longer), let alone 2030. You need to increase the active transportation planning staff, and give them the power and money to make that network complete and fully connected (no utilization -killing gaps that exist on most AAA routes today) no later than 2030. This will undoubtedly require that cycling routes are developed in some places even though no roadwork is planned (or perhaps the roadwork planned for a later year gets moved up). One obvious example that needs to be reviewed is Fisher Mills and Guelph Avenue. MUTs are being built on Maple Grove Road, but utilization will be low until better connections are

made through to Hespeler.

Optional question (59 response(s), 74 skipped)

Question type: Essay Question

Subject: FW: [External] Land Back Tax

On Jul 2, 2021, at 2:49 PM, [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Hello Councillor Adshade,

My name is [REDACTED] and I am writing to you as a member of your ward and a city of Cambridge lifer. I would like to propose that the city of Cambridge adds a 1-5% increase to the property taxes that are collected for the year 2022 specifically to fund indigenous services and programs from the rightful occupiers of the Halidman Tract. Over 200 years ago this land was granted to the Haudenosaunee people yet I and many other settlers of this area have lived on it their entire life without paying a single cent. I challenge you to let the city of Cambridge be a leader in reconciliACTION. Help pay back the trauma we caused and give communities the support they deserve.

I look forward to hearing your response, Thanks a lot [REDACTED] Sent
from my iPhone