

2019 Budget Priorities Public Engagement Summary

January 21, 2019



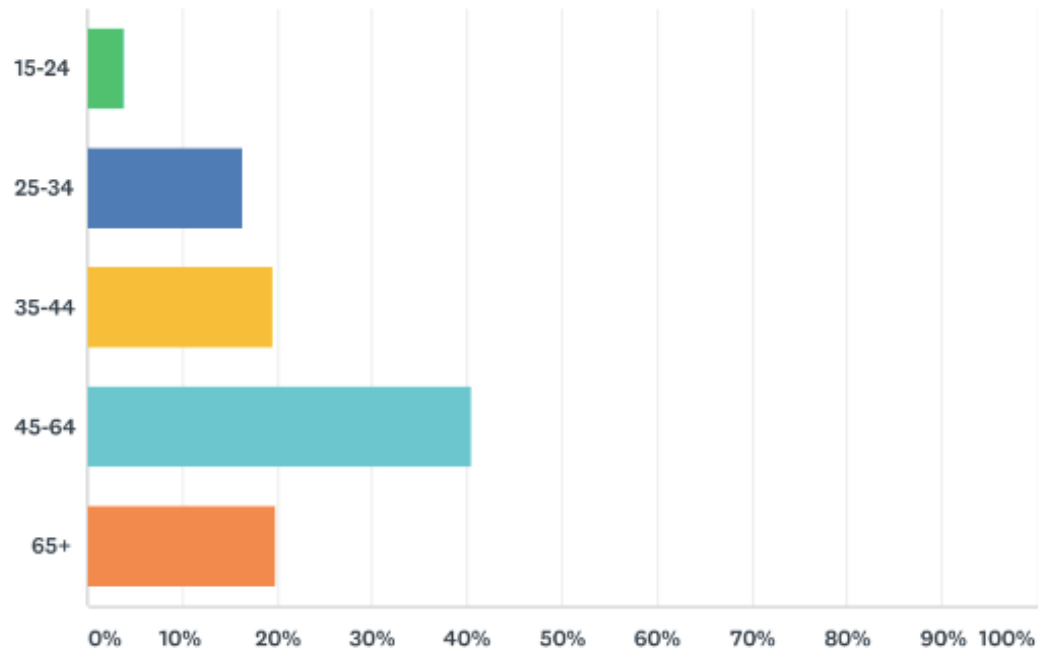
2019 Budget Process Public Engagement

- Public input opportunities included a social media campaign, online public survey and a Budget Priorities Town Hall on January 3, 2019
- 1,573 responses to the survey were received compared to 1,070 versus a year ago (VYA)
- 14 members of the public attended the Budget Town Hall in January 2019 compared to 43 who attended in September 2018
- Topics raised at the Town Hall included, infrastructure maintenance and future planning, downtown development, animal control, green initiatives, questions about how the City's taxes compared to the provincial average, and what the City's process is to determine increases

2019 Budget Priorities Survey

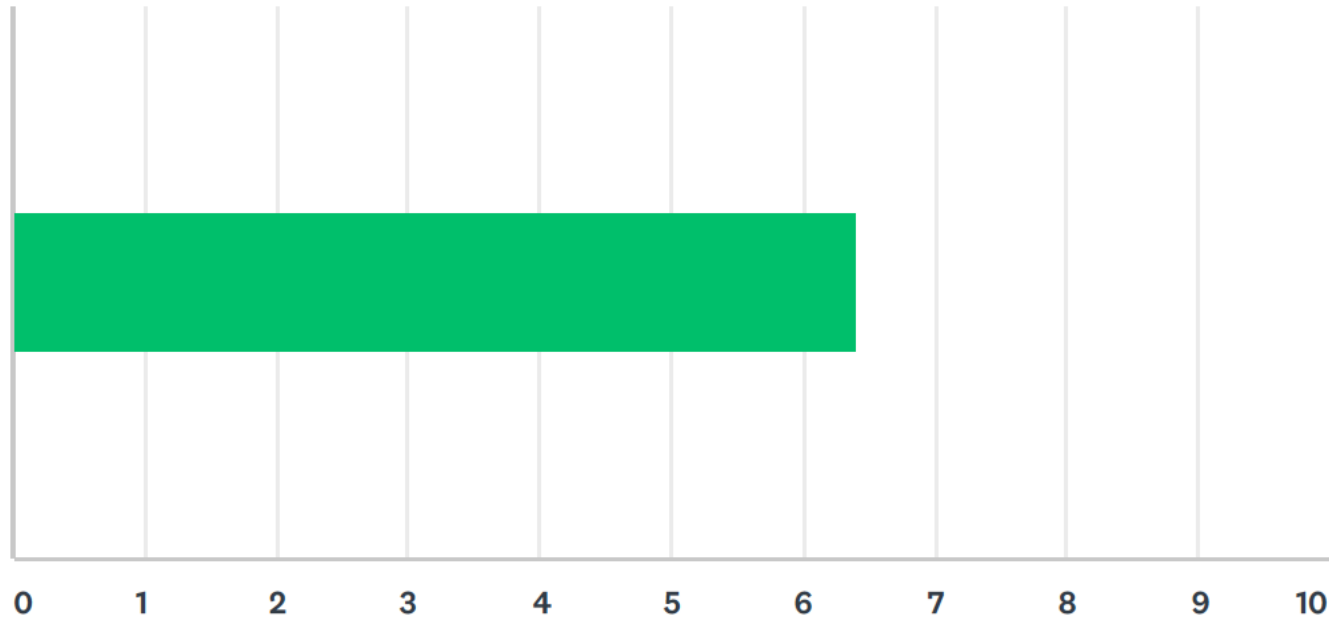
- Promoted in paid and editorial newsprint, on brantfordexpositor.ca, and on the City's website and social media platforms
- In field from December 19, 2018 – January 14, 2019
- Responses received are a reflection of public sentiment
- Useful to highlight trends versus a year ago for questions that were identical to the 2018 Budget Survey
- Provides insights that can be used by Council and staff to explore identified issues further
- Changes to the survey questions VYA included adding proposed budget figures and related % of tax levy for top 26 service areas. Questions related to Capital budget were also added.
- 16 questions total – estimated time to complete: 13 minutes

Demographic Profile



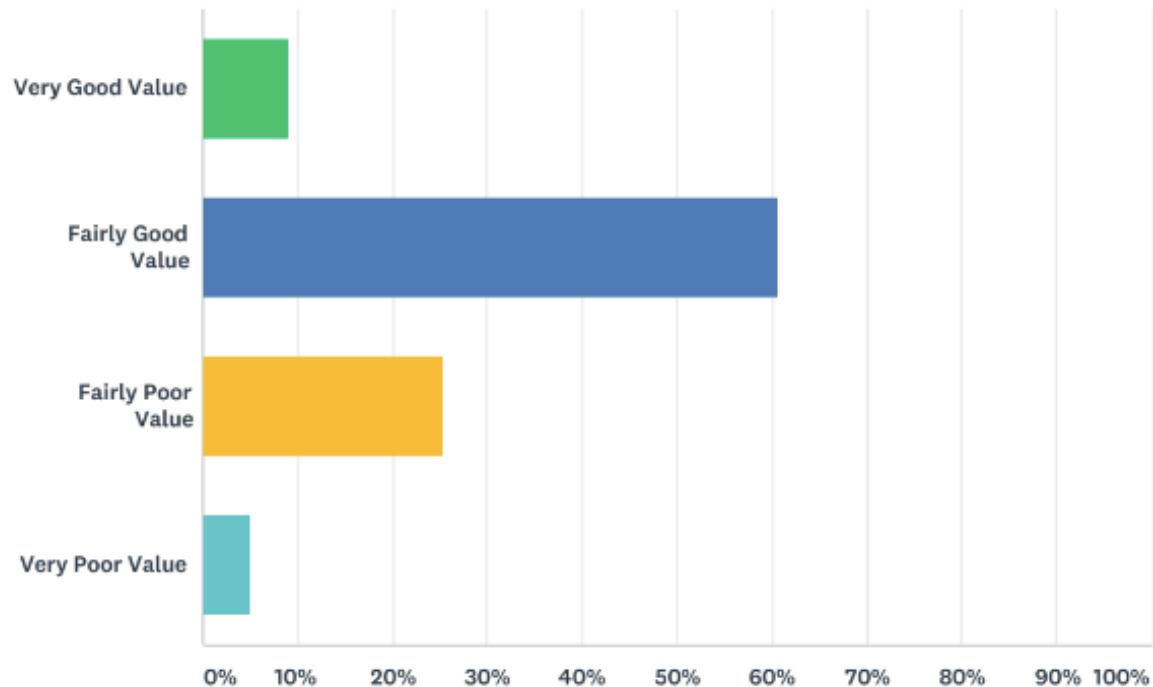
- 40.4% of respondents were aged 45-64 (VYA 42.5%)
- The group least likely to respond were those aged 15-24 at 3.7%
- 95.2% identified as Brantford residents - 75.7% of those for over 11 years

Satisfaction Level



- Average satisfaction level with City services – 6.3 out of 10
- Similar to previous years 6.4 (2018) and 6.0 (2017)

Value for Tax Dollar



- 69.7% felt they received fairly good or very good value (down from 74% in 2018)
- 30.3% felt they received fairly poor or very poor value
- 5% indicated value for their tax dollar was very poor (up .3% from 4.7% in 2018)

OPERATING BUDGET



Comparing Importance of City Services

Ranked highest priority of 26 service areas

1. Police Services 8.69 (#2 last year)
2. Brantford Fire - 8.55 (#1 last year)
3. Roads, Bridges, Sidewalks, Cycling Lanes – 7.88 (not in top 5 last year)
4. Water and Waste water -7.69 (same ranking as last year)
5. Solid Waste- 7.54 (not in top 5 last year)

2018 Top 5 not on 2019 list – Attracting & Retaining Jobs and Winter Maintenance

Comparing Importance of City Services

Ranked lowest priority of 26 service areas

1. Brantford Airport – 3.59
2. Tourism and Culture – 5.46
3. Brantford Resource Centre – 5.48
4. Cemeteries – 5.61
5. Farmers Market – 5.66

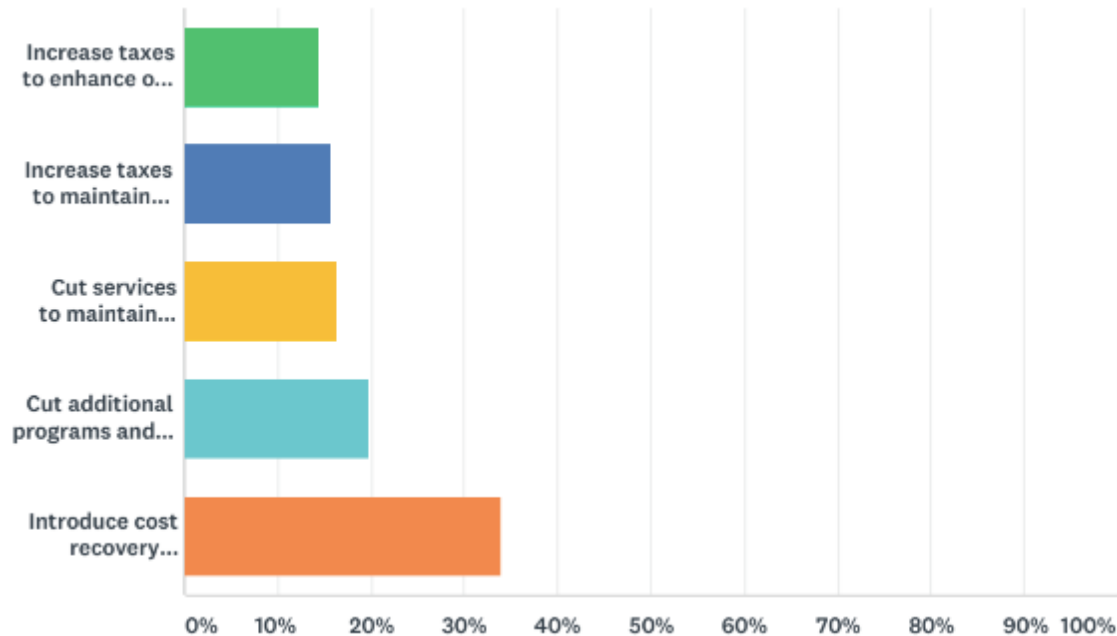
Areas that received most support for increase in taxes to maintain/enhance current service level

- Roads, Bridges, Sidewalks, Cycling lanes
38.3% support tax increase to maintain/enhance current service levels
- Brantford Police
37.3% support tax increase
- Housing
30.4% support tax increase
- Social Assistance and Housing
30.4% support tax increase
- Child Care
27.2% support tax increase

Areas that received least support for increase in taxes to maintain/enhance current service level

- Brantford Airport
52.4% do not support increase to maintain/enhance current service levels
- Tourism and Culture
52.3
- Business Resource Centre
48.2%
- Communications and Community Engagement
42.9%
- Farmers Market
33.5%

Balancing Taxation and Service Delivery



- 33.98% (majority) favoured cost recovery and user fees to reduce taxes (VYA 38.31%)
- 19.68% favoured tax and service reductions (VYA 17.63%)
- 14.46% favoured tax increase in exchange for enhanced services levels (VYA 17.98%)
- 15.66% favoured tax increase to maintain current service levels (VYA 14.15%)

Most Popular Options for generating additional revenue

1. Increase fees for use of City roads (commercial vehicles), – 73.2% support
2. Increase or new development application fees – 73.0% support
3. Increase City parking lot fees – 51.8% support

Least Popular Options for generating additional revenue

1. Increase fees for Brantford Transit – 59.7% oppose
2. Increase or new fees for parks access and recreational programming – 48.1% oppose
3. Introduce fees for downtown and street parking– 46.2% oppose

Preferred discretionary spending areas

1. City Parks and Trails - 77.80% support
2. Community Health and Wellness Programs – 67.35% support
3. Brantford Library - 66.86% support
4. Economic Development - 63.58% support
5. Snow Windrow Removal Program – 60.64% support

Same top 5 discretionary areas as year ago

Least preferred discretionary spending areas

1. Municipal Golf Courses – 56.33% oppose
2. Brantford Airport – 51.81% oppose
3. Discretionary Social Assistance Benefits- 37.66% oppose
4. Downtown Revitalization Program- 36.05% oppose
5. Minor Sports Discounted Rates – 30.81% oppose

CAPITAL BUDGET



Infrastructure Maintenance

- 52.14% of respondents support spending on infrastructure now to avoid higher redevelopment costs in the future
- 6.9% of respondents support deferring maintenance
- 37.68% were not sure
- 3.28% responded that it did not matter to them

Asset Management 1.5% dedicated tax increase

- 41.84% of respondents supported a dedicated 1.5% budget increase dedicated to funding the rehabilitation of City assets and infrastructure
- 32.24% did not support a dedicated 1.5% increase for this purpose
- 21.21% said they were unsure
- 4.71% did not consider this to be important to them

Asset Management – Ranking of services that require the most capital investment*

1. Roads, Bridges, Sidewalks, Cycling Lanes – 65.38%
2. Water/Wastewater – 53.65%
3. Housing – 37.13%
4. Storm water – 26.99%
5. Solid Waste – 25.06%
6. Transit – 21.79%
7. Community Recreation and Centres – 19.78%
8. John Noble Home – 19.03%
9. Parks and Sports Fields – 18.69%
10. Sports Facilities – 16.6%
11. Brantford Airport – 4.02%

*Respondents were asked to choose their top 3

Open Ended Feedback

- 29% of respondents (463) completed the open ended question to provide feedback on any matter of importance to them (down 10% VYA)
- 71% of respondents did not provide additional feedback
- Of those that provided open ended feedback, over 50% of the comments were constructive
- A majority of the comments were detailed and in several cases comprehensive suggestions with respect to waste management, water service, transit improvements, homelessness, parks and trails, street signs, flood control, crime statistics and road enhancements.
- 35% of open ended comments were complaints about services or taxes in general
- 10% were not constructive at all

Trends

- Continue to see that the community is interested in engagement if it's made easy for them to do so
- Continued enthusiasm for City parks, trails and open spaces – mentioned frequently as a point of pride in open ended comments
- Continued trend in high importance rankings of Emergency Services in qualitative portion of the survey
- Open ended comments continue to express need for public transit improvements and displeasure with increases in taxes

Questions

