

2020 Budget Priorities Public Engagement Summary

November 18, 2019



2020 Budget Process Public Engagement

- Public input opportunities included a month long social media campaign, an online public survey, a dedicated webpage and blog on the City's website and a Budget Priorities Open House on November 13, 2019
- 815 responses to the survey were received compared to 1,573 versus a year ago (VYA -48.5%)
- 6 members of the public attended the Budget Open House compared to 14 who attended in January 21, 2019

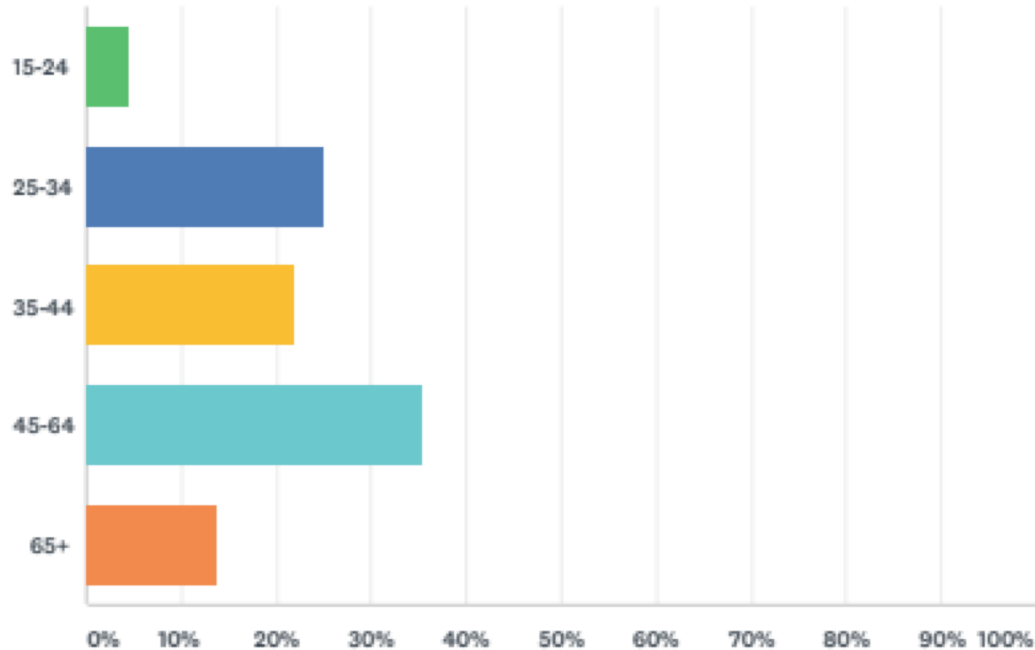
2020 Budget Priorities Survey

- In field from **October 14, 2019 – November 15, 2019**
- 16 questions total – estimated time to complete: 11 minutes
- Promoted in editorial newsprint, paid newsprint, on brantfordexpositor.ca, and on the City's website and social media platforms
- Useful to highlight trends versus a year ago for questions that were identical to the 2019 Budget Survey
- Provides insights that can be used by Council and staff to explore issues and feedback further

Sample size, statistical validity and confidence level

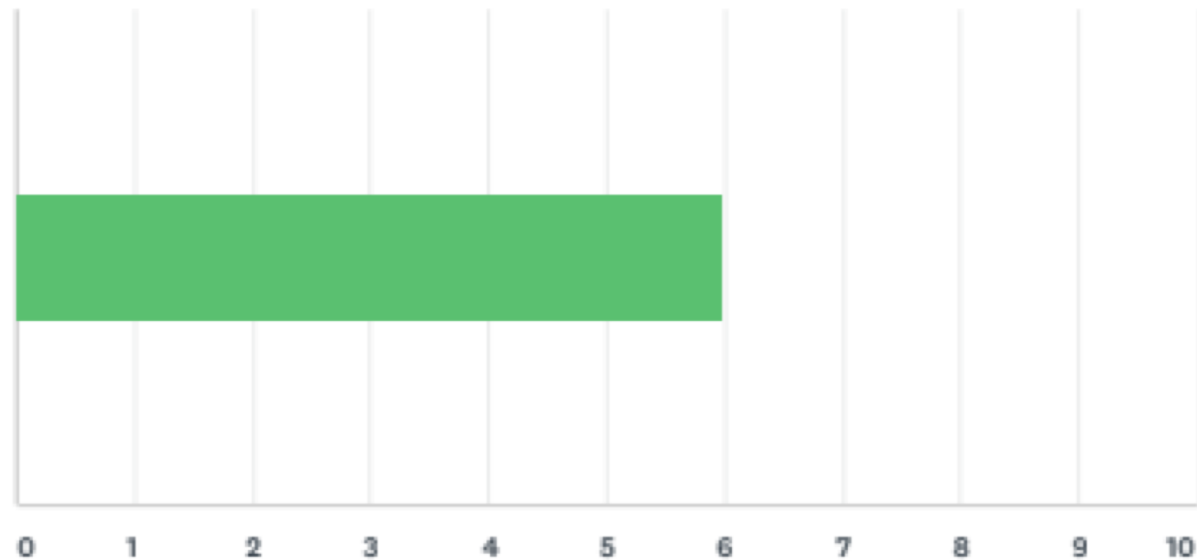
- Based on the City's population of 97,000, a random sample size of a minimum of 500 respondents is required to achieve statistical validity and a confidence level of 95%, plus or minus 5%.
- The 2020 Budget Priorities Survey was conducted to gauge public opinion about the City programs and services that are most important to citizens.
- Findings highlight trends that remained the same or changed versus results of last year's budget survey.
- The objective is to help inform the Estimates Committee during the 2020 Budget Process by providing insights about public priorities.

Demographic Profile



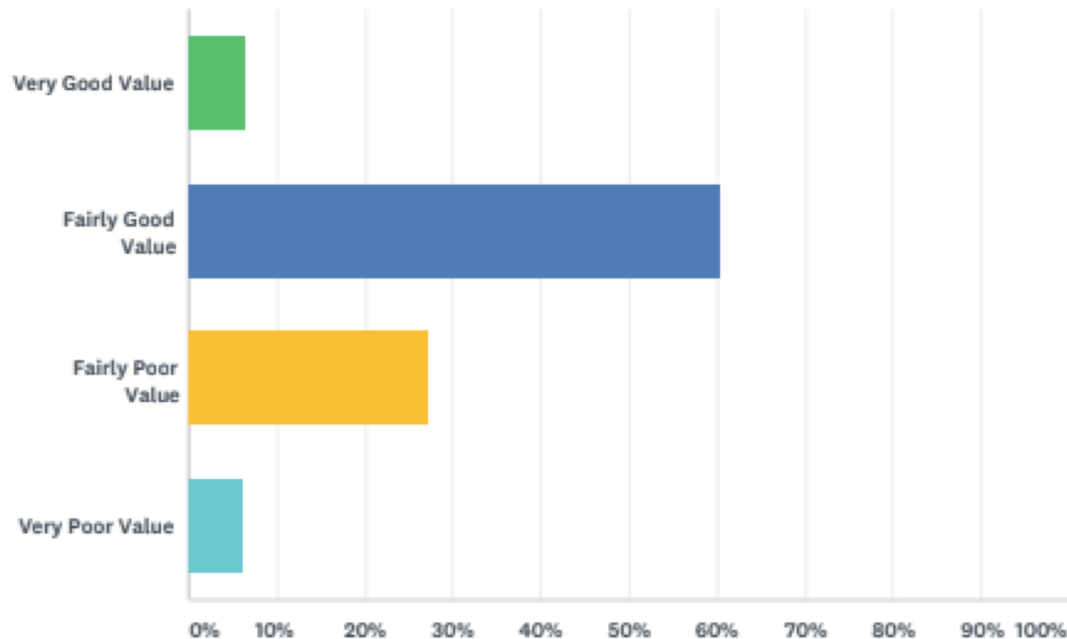
- 35.3% of respondents were aged 45-64 (VYA 40.4%)
- The group least likely to respond were those aged 15-24 at 4.3%
- 97.8% identified as Brantford residents – 72.6% of those for over 11 years

Satisfaction Level



- Average satisfaction level with City services – 6 out of 10
- Similar to previous years 2017, 2018

Value for Tax Dollar



- 66.8% felt they received fairly good or very good value
(down from 69.7% in 2019 vs. 74% last year)
- 33.3% felt they received fairly poor or very poor value
- 6% indicated value for their tax dollar was very poor (5% last year)

OPERATING BUDGET



Comparing Importance of City Services

Ranked highest priority of 26 service areas

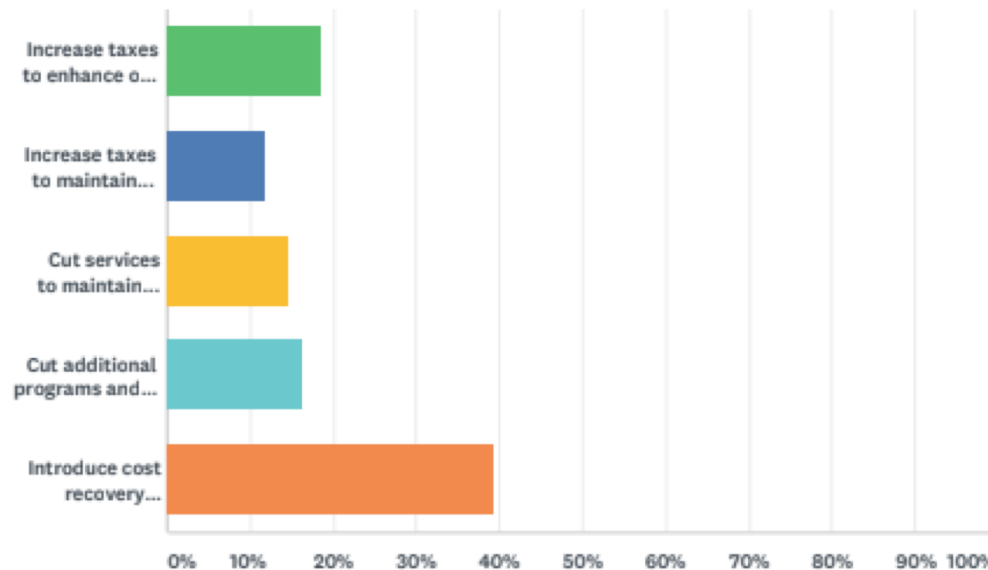
1. Police Services 8.77 (also #1 last year)
2. Brantford Fire – 8.66 (also #2 last year)
3. Roads, Bridges, Sidewalks, Cycling Lanes – 7.82 (also #3 last year)
4. Solid Waste- 7.6 (# 5 last year)
5. Water and Waste water -7.44 (#4 last year)

Other categories ranked with high importance: Housing (7.42), Economic Development (7.28), Storm water Management (7.26) and Social Assistance and Homelessness (7.13)

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

- Brantford Police 53.4% (Up from 37.3% VYA)
- Housing 49.8% (Up from 30.4% VYA)
- Social Assistance and Homelessness 46.3% (Up from 30.4% VYA)
- Child Care 35.3% (Up from 27.1% VYA)
- Roads, Bridges, Sidewalks, Cycling 33.9% (Down from 38.3% VYA)

Balancing Taxation and Service Delivery



- 39.3% (majority) favoured cost recovery and user fees to reduce taxes (VYA 34%)
- 16.1% favoured tax and service reductions (VYA 19.7%)
- 18.5% favoured tax increase in exchange for enhanced services levels (VYA 14.5%)
- 11.7% favoured tax increase to maintain current service levels (VYA 15.7%)

Most Popular Options for generating additional revenue

1. Increase fees for use of City roads (commercial vehicles), – 74.6% support
2. Increase or new development application fees – 78.5% support
3. Increase City parking lot fees – 57.3% support

Notable Trend: Same rankings as last year

Least Popular Options for generating additional revenue

1. Increase fees for Brantford Transit – 65.1% oppose
2. Increase or new fees for parks access and recreational programming – 45.2% oppose
3. Introduce fees for downtown and street parking– 40.4% oppose

Notable Trend: Same rankings as last year

Preferred discretionary spending areas

1. City Parks and Trails – 78.0% support
2. Community Health and Wellness Programs – 69.6% support
3. Brantford Library - 67.8% support
4. Snow Windrow Removal Program – 67.4% support
5. Economic Development – 65.9% support

Notable Trend: Same top 5 discretionary areas as year ago

CAPITAL BUDGET



Infrastructure Maintenance

- 51.8% of respondents support spending on infrastructure now to avoid higher redevelopment costs in the future
- 6.6% of respondents support deferring maintenance
- 37.8% were not sure
- 2.9% responded that it did not matter to them

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

1. Roads, Bridges, Sidewalks, Cycling Lanes – 61.76%
2. Housing – 56.35%
3. Water/Wastewater – 47.38%
4. Transit – 28.93%
5. Solid Waste – 24.53%
6. John Noble Home – 23.69%
7. Storm water – 21.66%
8. Community Recreation and Centres – 17.26%
9. Parks and Sports Fields – 13.54%
10. Sports Facilities – 9.64%
11. Brantford Airport – 4.06%

*Respondents were asked to choose their top 3

Open Ended Survey Feedback

- 31.4 % of respondents (254) completed the open ended question to provide feedback on any matter of importance to them (Up 4.4% VYA)
- 68.6% of respondents did not provide additional feedback
- Of those that provided open ended feedback, 60% of the comments were constructive

Open Ended Survey – Word Cloud

- Most referenced words in open ended feedback

better support increase parked many reducing crime Brantford stop
police issues city program crime community need will
people community centre areas funding drug keep housing see
reduce

Digital media reach and engagement

- **Social Media Reach**
33,328 followers reached, educated and made aware
- **Social Media Engagement**
3,486 click throughs, 110 shares, 96 comments, 387 likes
- **City Budget webpage**
Over 25,000 impressions
- **Budget Blog**
Over 5,000 impressions, 21 engagements

Observations

- Opened ended comments on the City's social media pages, the dedicated budget blog and the survey all indicated an increased importance of Policing, Housing, Social Assistance, Homelessness and the opioid crisis
- This finding is further evidenced by increase in survey participant acceptance to increase in taxes to enhance services in the above noted areas (Slide 10)
- Continued trend in high importance rankings of Emergency Services
- Continued support for discretionary funding towards City's aging infrastructure as well as parks and trails

Questions

