



2022 BUDGET SURVEY

Budget priorities. What we heard.



Esker

In 2000, the Kawartha Rotary Club, in partnership with the City of Peterborough, commissioned the installation of Esker at Millenium Park. The piece reflects on the history of its location on the Otonabee River, while also expressing the idea that everything begins, and ends, with nature.

Artists: Michael Belmore/Mary Anne Barkhouse

Medium: Bronze/Granite

Date Installed: 2001



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Budget Consultation

WHAT WE HEARD

The City engages with residents to gather ideas and feedback as it drafts the budget each year for City Council's consideration. The City consults with the community throughout the budget process – at the beginning when setting the guideline, when the draft budget is released, and before Council considers approving the budget. This "What We Heard" report outlines the community input from the consultation at the beginning of the process for the drafting of the 2022 Budget, which is provided to Council ahead of setting the guidelines for preparing the draft 2022 Budget.

Budget Roadshow

With the COVID-19 pandemic limiting in-person gatherings, City Council's Budget Roadshow became more of a "homeshow" this year with residents attending the meetings virtually or by phone from their home or wherever it was convenient for them to join the drop-in sessions.

Switching to an online or by-phone meeting was a bit of a departure from the informal, conversational drop-in sessions that have been held in previous years. Even with the new format, the sessions provided an opportunity for residents to share their ideas and priorities with Council members and Finance staff.

Council held three Budget Roadshow meetings on March 31, April 7 and April 21, 2021. Attendees spoke about priorities such as roads, recreational amenities, climate change, planning, the police budget, and property taxes. Video recordings of the meetings have been posted online for people to watch when it's convenient for them.

The Budget Roadshow was part of a community engagement approach that also included a survey and the traditional contacts between Council, City staff, and the community.

Survey

The budget survey was open for four weeks from March 25 to April 22, 2021. The survey offered broad, high-level topics and questions as one way for residents to engage in the budget process at this early stage of drafting the budget. There were **503 responses** to the survey.

Respondent Demographics

The City asked for some basic demographic information as part of the survey in order to compare the demographics of survey respondents with the overall demographics of the community. For example, 73.5% of respondents indicated they own their home, while the 2016 census put homeownership in the City of Peterborough at 63%.

This chart compares the ages of the survey respondents with the 2016 Census information for our community.

Age	Survey	2016
15-19	1.6%	5.5%
20-29	10.7%	14.4%
30-39	18.1%	11.7%
40-49	14.5%	10.8%
50-59	17.7%	13.9%
60-69	23.6%	13.2%
70-79	11.9%	8.6%
80+	1.6%	7.3%

Budget Roadshow

RESULTS OVERVIEW: SERVICES

Community Issues by Ranking

Survey respondents ranked the most important issues facing the community, recognizing that not all these issues are within the City's control.

The following is the overall ranking from most important to least important (previous year's ranking in brackets):

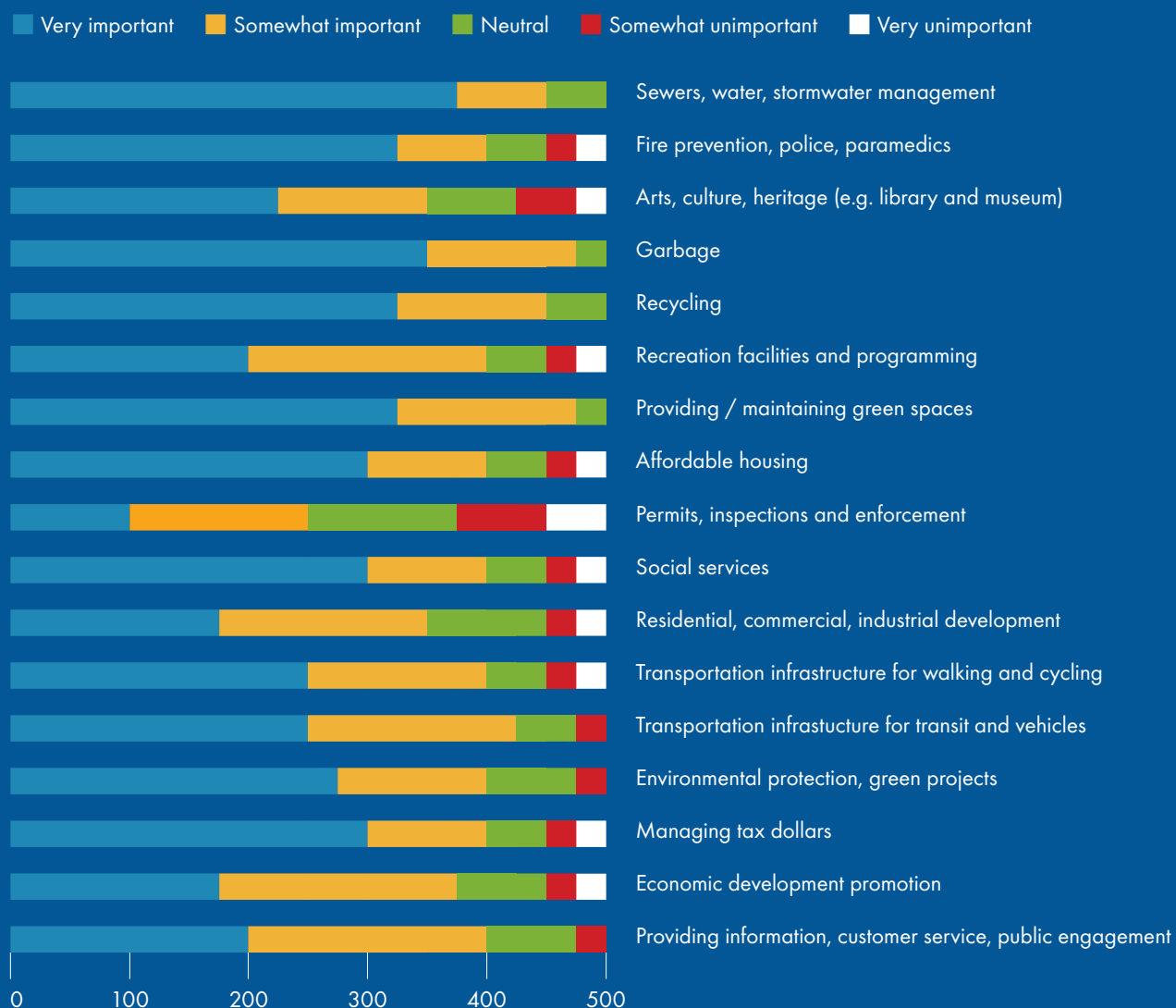
1. Social issues (e.g. poverty, social services and resources, child care) (2)
2. COVID-19 recovery (not ranked in 2020)
3. Housing/accommodations (1)
4. Economy/jobs/economic issues (6)
5. Health/public health (e.g. addiction services/healthy communities initiatives) (5)
6. Cost of living (3)
7. Environment/climate change/sustainability (4)
8. Crime/criminal activity (8)
9. Infrastructure/transportation (7)
10. Arts, culture and heritage (12)
11. Provision of recreation facilities (9)
12. Governance and transparency (e.g. bylaws, resident-government relations, community engagement activities) (11)

In a comments section, respondents specified other topics they believe are most important to the community including property taxes, road conditions, addiction services, new recreational facilities, climate action, a new skatepark, organic waste collection and composting, pickleball courts, and sidewalks.

Municipal Services

Survey participants were asked how well the City is doing in terms of service delivery and to indicate the importance of specific types of municipal services. For the third consecutive year, the following municipal service groups had the highest percentage of very important or somewhat important responses:

- Sewers, water, stormwater management
- Fire prevention, police, paramedics
- Garbage
- Recycling

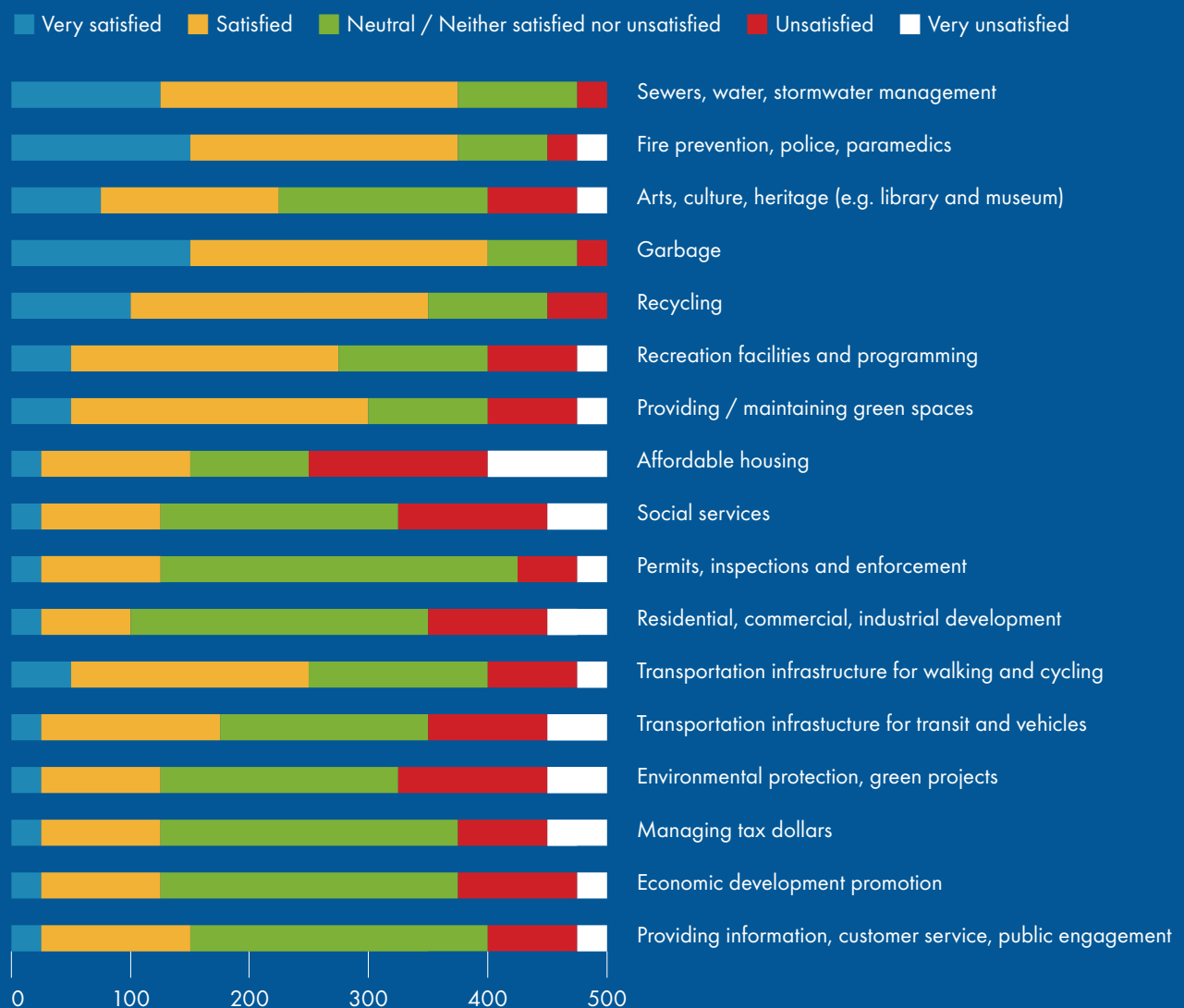


Service Delivery

In terms of how well the City is delivering services, most respondents were either very satisfied or satisfied with the following municipally-funded services:

- Garbage
- Fire prevention, police, paramedics
- Sewer, water, stormwater management
- Providing and maintaining green spaces
- Recycling

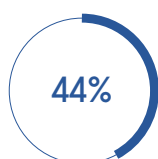
The only category with most respondents indicating they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied was enabling affordable housing.



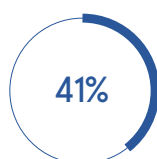
RESULTS OVERVIEW: BUDGET

Balancing the Budget

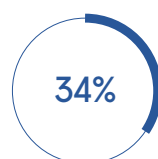
Participants were asked to consider some of the broad tools that the City has available for balancing its budget, as required by law. They could select one option or a mix of up to three options (previous year's response for each question provided in brackets).



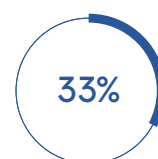
Introduce new user fees
for some City services
that currently have no fees
(46%)



Increase user fees for
City services that
currently have fees
(46%)



Selected increase
property taxes
(39%)



Reduce service levels
(28%)

Property Taxes and Service Levels

Respondents indicated what they think the property tax change should be in 2022 based on their expectation for infrastructure and service levels (previous year's response for each option provided in brackets).

Infrastructure and Service Levels	Property Tax Change	Current	Previous
Generally maintain most existing levels of service	2% to 2.5% increase	26.4%	(20.7%)
Maintain existing levels of service keeping pace with inflationary increases and legislated requirements	2.5% to 3% increase	19.2%	(18.5%)
Increase investments in infrastructure/services	4% increase	16.5%	(17.9%)
Other (responses included comments such as eliminate the use of consultants, wage freezes, increasing revenue outside of property taxes, increasing taxes on large corporations, and reducing spending on non-essential services)	N/A	12.8%	(7.9%)
Reduce service levels and infrastructure maintenance	0% increase	11.3%	(9.3%)
Will require reduction in services and infrastructure investments when accounting for inflationary increases and legislated requirements	1% increase	10.5%	(8.9%)
Substantial decrease in services and investments in infrastructure	Decrease	3.3%	(3.6%)

RESULTS OVERVIEW: COVID-19

COVID-19 Recovery

Respondents were asked to share their ideas on actions specific to the municipality that could be considered to support COVID-19 recovery as the City works with Peterborough Public Health, the Province and the Federal Government.

There were 236 responses to this question. In the comment box provided, respondents shared ideas such as:

- Enhancing support for the most vulnerable
- Taking measures to prevent future pandemics
- Reducing spending
- Improving transportation
- Providing tax relief
- Supporting mental health and addiction services
- Financial assistance for businesses
- Investing in housing

RESULTS OVERVIEW: CONSULTATION & COMMUNICATION

Future Consultation

Beyond the core questions on budget priorities, the City also asked questions about how respondents learned about the survey and how they want to get information about the budget to help us plan future consultations.

Providing Budget Information

For how residents would like to get information on the budget, respondents indicated strong support for the use of the City's website, budget summaries and guides, as well as the use of social media. Respondents showed that people are getting their information from a range of sources with 20.7% of respondents saying they learned about the survey from family or friends, 19.5% through Facebook, 17.3% from other sources such as community groups, 12.2% from news media, and 10.4% directly from the City's website.

Future Consultation Methods

Survey respondents could choose up to three methods for how they would prefer to interact with the City (2020 results for each option provided in brackets):

- 71% would prefer to engage with the City through online surveys (71%)
- 46% asked for email communications (39%)
- 19% showed support for public meetings or open houses (29%)
- 25% supported engaging through a web-based discussion forum (24%)
- 9% would participate in a random telephone survey (10%)

The survey was one touch point for residents who want to engage in the budget process. This is the beginning of the process. There are several public meetings scheduled through the budget development process, with final approval of the budget expected in December 2021. Information on engagement opportunities are posted online at peterborough.ca/budget, distributed to local media, and promoted through the City's various communications channels.

SURVEY QUESTIONS

- Q1 Do you have a home or business in the City of Peterborough?
- Q2 You don't need to be familiar with the City's budget to take part in this survey. We would like to understand how familiar the community is with the budget, this way we can work to provide the information people want and need.
- Q3 How important do you think the following services/programs are to the community?
- Q4 Please rate the following municipal services based on how well you think the municipally-funded services are being delivered in our community, taking into consideration of changes in service levels related to the public health measures in place during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Q5 From your perspective, and recognizing that not everything is within City control, what are the most important local issues facing the City at the present time? (On a scale of 1-12, with 1 being the most important)
- Q6 If the most important issue facing the City at the present time was not listed in the question above, please tell us what it is.
- Q7 As the City works with Peterborough Public Health, the Province, and the Federal Government, please share any ideas on actions specific to the municipality that could be considered to support COVID-19 recovery.
- Q8 To balance the 2022 Budget as required by law, the City of Peterborough has a number of options to consider. Which of the following options would you prefer the City use to balance its budget? (Note: User fees are monies you would pay to the City to access specific services, facilities and utilities, such as licences, permits for using City-owned facilities such as arenas and recreation centres, and utilities such as stormwater management.) You can select one option or up to three options.
- Q9 To maintain levels of service, the City has typically increased taxes at about 2% annually. Based on your expectations for infrastructure and service levels, please tell us what you think the all-inclusive (municipal, education, and sewer surcharge) property tax level should be in 2022.
- Q10 How did you find out about the 2022 Budget questionnaire?
- Q11 What ways would you like to be able to get information about the City's annual budget? (please select your top five)
- Q12 Thanks for sharing your experience with the City. We'd like to check in on how you would prefer to interact with us. From the list below, please tell us which channels you are most likely to participate in. Please select up to three.
- Q13 Do you own or rent your current place of residence?
- Q14 In which area of the City is your home address located (you don't need to consider any official boundaries - just choose how you identify the area where your home is located)?
- Q15 In which age category do you fall?
- Q16 Do you identify as...?
- Q17 And, finally, the City of Peterborough wants to know if you have any further comments or suggestions to add about any of the topics covered in this survey. Please type your comments in the space provided.



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