

2021 Spring Research Results

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Council receive this report and attachments for the Corporate record and Council discussion.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The City has completed its annual *Spring Pulse* telephone survey with Calgarians. The results, coupled with additional research conducted with citizens over the spring, provide Council with a barometer of citizens' opinions on a variety of aspects of The City, including satisfaction with services, The City's performance as well as citizen beliefs and concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- What does this mean to Calgarians? Citizens have had an opportunity to provide statistically-representative feedback that will be considered by Council and Administration in decision making.
- Why does it matter? When making decisions on municipal matters, the opinions and priorities of the general population can be an important consideration. In addition, performance-related responses provide The City with an opportunity to identify strengths as well as opportunities for improvement.
- Key takeaways from research conducted this spring include:
 - Perceived value for tax dollars has increased, with 57% of Calgarians feeling they receive a 'good' value for their tax dollars compared to 53% in fall 2020. And, after more than four years of split preferences between increasing taxes or cutting services, the gap has widened with 57% preferring tax increases and 39% preferring service cuts, levels similar to those last seen in 2015.
 - Satisfaction with the overall level and quality of City services and programs has shown improvement compared to last fall (74% vs. 67%).
 - Nearly three-quarters (73%) of Calgarians are satisfied with The City's COVID-19 pandemic response, while 83% support the face coverings bylaw (down from 90% in January 2020).
- Most recent Council Direction: Not applicable
- Strategic Alignment to Council's Citizen Priorities: A well-run city
- Background and Methodologies are included as Attachment 1.

DISCUSSION

- Summary of Findings: *2021 Spring Pulse Survey*
 - Perceptions about the quality of life in Calgary remain strong, similar to results seen in spring and fall 2020.
 - *Infrastructure, traffic and roads* continues to lead the issue agenda, followed by *Transit*, and *Crime, safety and policing*.
 - The perceived value of property tax dollars has increased to its highest level in two years, while the preference for increasing taxes vs. cutting services continues to grow.

2021 Spring Research Results

- Satisfaction with the overall level and quality of City services and programs is up from fall but remains lower than in spring 2020.
- Satisfaction with The City's customer service shows a decline since fall 2020.
- Perceptions of City communications as 'good' have remained stable since spring 2020.
- Trust in The City remains low and similar to fall 2020.
- Satisfaction with Administration's performance remains strong and is consistent with results from one year ago; perceptions related to Council's performance are up from fall 2020 and back in line with results seen in spring 2020.
- Summary of Findings: *COVID-19 Snapshot #9*
 - 73% are satisfied with The City's response to the COVID-19 pandemic
 - 49% rate their mental health as worse than prior to the pandemic, 39% rate their physical health as worse and 38% rate their personal financial situation as worse.
 - 57% agree The City is sufficiently enforcing the Face Coverings Bylaw.
 - 61% believe the worst of the pandemic is behind us.
 - 73% intend to be vaccinated, while 6% say they have already received the vaccine.
- Summary of Findings: *2021 Economic Perspectives Survey Q1*
 - 24% rate the current economic situation in Calgary as good.
 - 87% agree it is important for Calgary to find more of a balance between oil and gas and other types of business in its local economy.
 - 66% trust The City to make the right decisions when it comes to infrastructure.
 - 60% agree The City is taking appropriate measures to assist in Calgary's economic recovery.
 - 40% agree The City is making an effort to reduce the cost of local government.
- Stakeholders consulted on the Corporate Research Team's research activities over the past three (3) months include the City Manager, the Chief Financial Officer, Customer Service & Communications (CSC), Corporate Initiatives/One Calgary, Emergency Operations Centre (EOC), and the COVID-19 Governance Committees.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION (EXTERNAL)

- Public Engagement was undertaken
- Public Communication or Engagement was not required
- Public/Stakeholders were informed
- Stakeholder dialogue/relations were undertaken

Public engagement was not conducted in advance of the research presented in this report. Though the results of these surveys will be communicated to citizens, public communication did not take place prior to conducting the survey, as the methodology employed was random digit dialing (telephone survey of random Calgary-based cell phone and landline phone numbers). Citizens cannot self-select to participate in these surveys.

2021 Spring Research Results

IMPLICATIONS**Social**

- The research conducted is weighted to be representative of the Calgary's population on the whole, ensuring an equitable distribution of responses according to age, gender and quadrant of residence. In addition, demographic questions are asked to ensure that the data can be viewed with a lens for specific sub-groups.
- Results related to the Social Wellbeing Policy included in this presentation are mental health and diversity/inclusion. In addition, the large sample size for the Spring Pulse Survey allows The City to conduct analysis of sub-groups including equity-seeking communities. A report, under separate cover, is prepared based on those findings.

Environmental

- Findings from the various surveys presented include results related to environmental management.

Economic

- The findings presented serve to inform Council and contribute to decision making on a number of economic-related topics, including citizens' priorities such as infrastructure spending and taxes.

Service and Financial Implications

- The findings from this research are intended to inform decision making at all levels but consequent actions are left to the service owners.

RISK

- Listening to Calgarians and better understanding their needs, values, attitudes, and aspirations is critical, especially when considering the well-run city Citizen Priority, which highlights that listening to citizen feedback and using it in the decision-making process is key to improving City programs, services, and quality of life. The One Calgary service plan for Citizen Engagement and Insights highlights the provision of safe, fair and accessible opportunities for citizens to give meaningful and actionable insights to inform City decision making, mitigate risks, and drive continuous improvement. By sharing these results publicly, The City is transparent and accountable to citizens for their performance on the measures within. The findings from the 2021 spring research provide insights into citizens' perspectives on many issues and challenges facing Calgarians every day. Ensuring that citizens' views and perspectives are incorporated into City decisions strengthens sentiments of trust and transparency for The City.

**Chief Financial Officer's Report to
Combined Meeting of Council**

**ISC: UNRESTRICTED
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Page 4 of 4**

2021 Spring Research Results

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. 2021 Spring Research Results Standardized Attachment
2. 2021 Spring Research Results Council Presentation
3. 2021 Spring Pulse Survey Report

Department Circulation

General Manager/Director	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
Jennifer McMurtry	CFOD	Approve
Carla Male	CFOD	Approve
David Duckworth	CMO	Consult
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