

2021 Fall Citizen 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 *Fall Quality of Life and Citizen Satisfaction* telephone survey with Calgarians. The results, coupled with additional research conducted with citizens over the summer and fall, 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 citizens' beliefs and concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The City's Corporate Research Team is dedicated to conducting both corporate-level and business unit-specific research to provide insights to support decision making at The City.
- What does this mean to Calgarians? Citizens have had an opportunity to provide statistically-representative feedback for consideration by Council and Administration in their 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 over the past five months include:
 - Overall satisfaction with City programs and services has declined, with 68 per cent of Calgarians 'satisfied.' This is down from 74 per cent in spring 2021, but consistent with 67 per cent 'satisfied' last fall.
 - Value for tax dollars has leveled off with 55 per cent of Calgarians feeling they receive 'good' value for their tax dollars. And, after a widening gap in preference for tax increases versus service cuts in spring 2021, the gap has narrowed, with 50 per cent preferring tax increases and 43 per cent preferring service cuts, similar to levels seen last fall.
 - 68 per cent of Calgarians express satisfaction with The City's COVID-19 response, according to the latest *COVID-19 Snapshot*.
 - Though almost all Calgarians (94 per cent) agree people in Calgary have opportunities to express and celebrate their unique cultures, the majority (85 per cent) also agree that some people have advantages that allow them to have a better quality of life than others.
- Most recent Council Direction: None as this report is for information.
- Strategic Alignment to Council's Citizen Priorities: A well-run city
- Background and Previous Council Direction is included as Attachment 1.

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DISCUSSION

- Summary of Findings: *2021 Fall Quality of Life and Citizen Satisfaction Survey Report*
 - Perceptions about the quality of life in Calgary remain strong, similar to results seen in fall 2020 and spring 2021. Compared to spring, Calgarians are more likely to agree that 'Calgary is a great place to make a living', while they are less likely to agree they are 'proud to be a Calgarian.'
 - *Infrastructure, traffic and roads* continues to lead the issue agenda, followed by *Crime, safety and policing* and *Transit*.
 - The perceived value for property tax dollars has remained stable over the past year, while the preference for increasing taxes versus cutting services has shown a decline since spring, coming back into line with results seen in fall 2020.
 - Satisfaction with the overall level and quality of City services and programs is down from spring but remains consistent with last fall.
 - The City of Calgary continues to meet the customer service expectations of a large majority of citizens.
 - Trust in The City remains low and identical to spring 2021.
 - Satisfaction with Council's and Administration's performance both collectively and individually is moderate, consistent with results from the spring.
- Summary of Findings: *2021 Calgary Attitudes and Outlook Report*
 - In comparison to those aged 25 and older, young adults:
 - are more likely to identify *environment and waste management* and *respect for others in the community/good relationships* as important issues needing attention from City leaders.
 - are more optimistic about quality of life and the economy.
 - express higher satisfaction with The City overall, as well as with City Administration and Council.
 - are more likely to rate Calgary's 'affordability' and 'employment opportunities' as 'good.'
 - are notably more likely to agree that 'Calgary needs to address racism and discrimination'.
 - The majority of Calgarians indicate that they are likely to remain living in Calgary for at least the next five years with those aged 18 to 24 being slightly more likely to indicate they would leave. Reasons young adults provide for leaving Calgary include: job opportunities, educational opportunities and because they seek a better cost of living and more cosmopolitan atmosphere.
 - In comparison to 2020, young adults express lower importance ratings for the Green Line, Event Centre and Arts Commons expansion, bringing Event Centre and Arts Commons ratings in line with those aged 25 and older. However, young adults place higher levels of importance on the Green Line than older Calgarians.
- Summary of Findings: *2021 Diversity and Inclusion Report*
 - Overall, there is broad agreement that Calgarians view Calgary as an inclusive and welcoming city. However, when results are viewed from the perspective of various sub-groups of the population, clear differences in opinion are revealed.
 - The majority of Calgarians agree that Calgary is moving in the right direction to address issues like social well-being, gender equity, anti-racism, Truth and Reconciliation, mental health and addiction, and support for low-income households.

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- A minority of Calgarians shared personal experiences of inclusion challenges with City services, programs, or facilities.
- Summary of Findings: *COVID-19 Snapshot #12*
 - A majority of citizens are satisfied with The City's COVID-19 response, though satisfaction has declined since summer.
 - Support for Calgary's recently introduced bylaws for Face Coverings and Vaccine Passports is strong.
- Summary of Findings: *2021 Economic Perspectives Wave 3 Report*
 - The view of the current economic situation in Calgary, Alberta and Canada remains consistent with July 2021, which is more optimistic than at the onset of the pandemic.
 - However, optimism for Calgary's economic outlook has waned and only one-quarter of Calgarians feel the economy in Calgary will be stronger six months from now.

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 surveys 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) or online (with online panelists). Citizens cannot self-select to participate in these surveys.
- Stakeholders consulted over the past five (5) months include the City Manager, the Chief Financial Officer, Customer Service & Communications, Corporate Initiatives/One Calgary, and the Emergency Operations Centre.

IMPLICATIONS

Social

- The research is weighted to be representative of 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 *Fall Quality of Life and Citizen Satisfaction 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.

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Environmental

- Findings from the various surveys include results related to environmental management and climate change.

Economic

- The findings 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 and user fees.

Service and Financial Implications

- Other: 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 fall citizen 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.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. 2021 Fall Citizen Research Results Standardized
2. 2021 Fall Citizen Research Results Council Presentation C2021-1375
3. Fall 2021 Quality of Life and Citizen Satisfaction Survey Report
4. 2021 Calgary Attitudes and Outlook Survey Report
5. 2021 Diversity and Inclusion Report
6. COVID-19 Snapshot #12 Report
7. 2021 Economic Perspectives Wave 3 Report

**Chief Financial Officer's Report to
Special Council Meeting
2021 November 8**

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Department Circulation

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