



2022 Spring Citizen Research Results

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Council receive this Report and Attachments for the Corporate Record.



HIGHLIGHTS

- The City has completed its annual *Spring Pulse* telephone survey with Calgarians. The results, coupled with additional research findings from citizens over the spring, provide Council with a barometer of citizen opinion on a variety of aspects of The City, including satisfaction with services, The City's performance, and citizen outlook for the future. 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 decision making.
- Why does this 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.
- Highlights will be presented to Council in the context of Council's guiding principles as reflected in Council's Strategic Direction 2023-2026.
- Key takeaways from research conducted over the past few months include:
 - Quality of life ratings remain strong but show a downward trend over the past ten years; perception of Calgary as a great place to make a living has shown significant gain over the past year.
 - Perception of value for municipal property tax dollars show relative stability since Fall 2019.
 - A small majority of Calgarians currently prefer tax increases to service cuts and are seeking more or same investment in all city services .
- 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.

DISCUSSION

- Summary of Findings: *2022 Spring Pulse Survey*
 - The *Spring Pulse Survey* is a representative telephone survey with a large sample size. The findings from this survey are markers of citizen opinions on a variety of aspects of The City and serve as a performance-based report, identifying strengths and opportunities for improvement.
 - Quality of Life:
 - 77 per cent of Calgarians rate the quality of life in Calgary as 'good,' on par with Spring 2021 (78 per cent), though this measure shows a downward trend over the past decade.
 - 65 per cent agree that Calgary is a great place to make a living, up from 56 per cent in Spring 2021.

2022 Spring Citizen Research Results

- Council's Guiding Principle – Strengthen relationships with Calgarians:
 - 67 per cent agree The City practices open and accessible government.
 - The performance of both Council and Administration have remained relatively consistent over the past year.
 - 60 per cent agree The City allows citizens to have meaningful input into decision-making.
- Council's Guiding Principle – Build strong communities:
 - 67 per cent agree The City of Calgary municipal government fosters a city that is inclusive and accepting of all.
 - 84 per cent are satisfied with the job The City is currently doing to protect the environment.
- Council's Guiding Principle – Deliver the right services:
 - 72 per cent agree The City of Calgary makes customer service a priority.
 - 34 out of 44 public-facing services and programs receive satisfaction ratings of 80 per cent or more.
 - The most important issues for Calgarians are infrastructure, traffic and roads (28 per cent), crime, safety and policing (20 per cent) and transit (17 per cent).
- Council's Guiding Principle – Invest in infrastructure:
 - 56 per cent agree The City manages its spending in a responsible way that reflects the needs and priorities of Calgarians.
 - 91% agree the Green Line LRT is important to the future of Calgary, ten years down the road and beyond.
- Council's Guiding Principle – Finance our future:
 - 55 per cent of Calgarians would prefer tax increases to service cuts, though the large majority prefer these increases remain at the inflation rate and not beyond.
- Future Outlook:
 - 73 per cent agree Calgary is on the right track to being a better city ten years from now.
 - 67 per cent agree City Council and Administration work collaboratively to make the best possible decisions for the future of Calgary.
- Summary of Findings: *COVID-19 Snapshot #17*
 - Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, The City has been running recurrent *COVID-19 Snapshot Surveys*. This information is important because it provides Council and Administration a view of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on Calgarians and how the pandemic may influence citizens' views about The City. It also helps inform the pandemic response and the path to recovery.
 - 72 per cent agree we should move on to treating COVID-19 as a part of everyday life.
 - Fewer Calgarians (18 per cent) say the pandemic is a major threat to their personal financial situation compared to March 2022 (24 per cent).
- Summary of Findings: *2022 Economic Perspectives Survey Wave 1*
 - *Economic Perspectives* is another long-standing City survey. It is conducted quarterly and measures citizens' perceptions about the current economy, quality of life and other aspects of the economy, as well as citizen perspectives on City infrastructure spending.
 - 53 per cent of Calgarians rate the economy in Calgary as 'good.'

2022 Spring Citizen Research Results

- 42 per cent agree Calgary is attracting enough investment from outside of the province to help our economy.
- 39 per cent expect the economy in Calgary to be stronger in the next six months.

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). To maintain the integrity of the methodology, citizens cannot self-select to participate in these surveys.

Stakeholders consulted include the City Manager, the Chief Financial Officer, General Manager of People, Innovation and Collaboration Services, Director of Customer Service & Communications, and Corporate Initiatives/One Calgary.

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 inclusivity. In addition, the large sample size for the Spring Pulse Survey allows The City to conduct analysis of sub-groups including equity-deserving communities. A report, under separate cover, is prepared based on those findings.

Environmental

- Findings from the *Spring Pulse Survey* include results related to environmental management.

Economic

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

Service and Financial Implications

2022 Spring Citizen Research Results

No anticipated financial impact

- 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.
- The findings from the 2022 spring citizen research provide insights into citizens' perspectives on many issues and challenges facing Calgarians every day. Ensuring that citizens' perspectives are incorporated into City decisions strengthens sentiments of trust and transparency for The City. By sharing these results publicly, The City is transparent and accountable to citizens for their performance on the measures within.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Background and Methodologies
2. 2022 Spring Citizen Research Results Council Presentation
3. 2022 Spring Pulse Survey Report
4. 2022 Economic Perspectives Survey Wave 1
5. COVID-19 Snapshot #17

Department Circulation

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Chris Arthurs	PICS	Approve
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