




**CITY OF HAMILTON**  
**CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE**  
**Digital, Innovation & Strategic Partnerships**

<b>TO:</b>	Deputy Mayor and Members General Issues Committee
<b>COMMITTEE DATE:</b>	November 18, 2020
<b>SUBJECT/REPORT NO:</b>	Our City Survey 2019 Results and Next Steps (CM20009) (City Wide)
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	City Wide
<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	Louisa Wong 905 546-2424 ext. 6091 Brigitte Minard 905-546-2424 ext. 3107 Lisa Zinkewich 905-546-2424 ext. 5312
<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	Cyrus Tehrani Chief Digital Officer City Manager's Office
<b>SIGNATURE:</b>	

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- (a) That Report CM20009, respecting the Our City Survey 2019, be received.
- (b) That the survey sample size be decreased to 1,500 to ensure survey costs and staff resources are accommodated within the existing budget. City level results would be accurate to +/-2.5% at the 95% confidence level which is well below the typical target survey sample margin of error of +/-5%. Ward level results would be accurate to +/-9.8% at the 95% confidence level; and
- (c) That the frequency of conducting the Our City Survey in the future be moved to a triennial (every three years) cycle as opposed to the current biennial (every two years) cycle, to provide sufficient time for results to be actioned and improvements made. With a triennial cycle, the next survey would be conducted in the second half of 2022.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Our City Survey was conducted in late 2019. Both a telephone and online survey were conducted. The telephone survey had 5,771 completed surveys. The phone

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OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

survey results are accurate within +/-1.3% at the City level, 19 times out of 20. The online survey had 3,374 respondents.

Most survey respondents (63%) were very satisfied or satisfied with City services overall. There has been no significant change to this result since the 2018 survey.

For the first time, detailed ward level analysis was able to be performed. Ward level data has been compared to city level data to highlight how each ward is different. The survey results varied between wards, which highlights that resident experiences differs across the city. The ward level analysis found that satisfaction with City services varied significantly by ward.

### **Alternatives for Consideration – See Page 13**

### **FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**Financial:** If the recommended option is accepted, the existing annual operating budget for the Our City Survey would be maintained.

Should the recommended option not be accepted, to continue to undertake the Our City Survey at its existing ward level margin of error and biennial survey frequency, an annual increase of \$10,000 would be required. This increase does not include staffing costs required to manage and administer the survey or analyze the data (estimated at \$45,000 for the next survey cycle), which would require a separate budget enhancement.

**Staffing:** If the recommended option is accepted, the existing annual operating budget for the Our City Survey would accommodate required staff resourcing.

Should the recommended option not be accepted, and Council choose to maintain Option 2 (status quo), a separate budget enhancement to accommodate staff resource requirements would be required

**Legal:** None.

(Options analysed are highlighted in Table 2 on page 14 of Report CM20009).

### **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

At the General Issues Committee Budget Meeting on February 28, 2019, the Our Citizen Survey Business Case (BC-08) was approved at \$130,000 on a biennial basis (\$65,000 annually) as part of the 2019 Operating Budget process. This funding was again approved as part of the 2020 Operating Budget process.

### Survey Name Change

The survey name has been changed from “Our Citizen Survey” to “Our City Survey” to be more inclusive of all Hamilton residents and illustrate a connection to City Services.

### Background

The Our City Survey is a resident satisfaction survey, completed via telephone interviews and online, to:

- Understand resident satisfaction with City services and help identify areas for improvement
- Understand resident’s perception of quality of life in Hamilton and their interactions with the City
- Understand similarities and differences of Hamiltonian’s feedback across the 15 wards
- Measure trends over time

The 2019 Operating Budget approved funding to increase the sample size of telephone surveys so that a statistically valid sample with a margin of error of +/-5%, 19 times out of 20 could be achieved with the ward level results. The survey is to be completed on a biennial basis starting in 2019, with a target of about 5,775 (about 385 per ward) completed telephone surveys (subject to ongoing operating budget approval). The 2018 survey was completed at the City-wide level only with a smaller sample size of 550 completed telephone surveys.

Survey results are posted on the City’s web-based Trust and Confidence Report ([www.hamilton.ca/trustandconfidence](http://www.hamilton.ca/trustandconfidence)) and released as part of an open data-set (accessible via [www.hamilton.ca/ourcitysurvey](http://www.hamilton.ca/ourcitysurvey)). Given the increase in the 2019 Survey sample size, ward-level results are included in this report (Appendix “A” to Report CM20009) and are also part of the open data-set that has been released, in addition to the City-wide data.

Due to COVID-19 Pandemic, and staff redeployments related to priority pandemic support, the data analysis and issuance of this report was unavoidably delayed to Q4 of 2020

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS**

None.

## **RELEVANT CONSULTATION**

The City Manager's Office, and the Healthy & Safe Communities departments worked collaboratively to execute this project. Feedback was received from the subject matter experts for the service areas. In addition to this, Procurement, and Information Management (Privacy) staff were consulted during the initial survey development and/or the 2019 Our City Survey.

## **ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

### 2019 Survey Results Were Less Positive than 2018 Results

Overall, the City-wide results for the 2018 Our Citizen Survey were very positive, particularly regarding satisfaction with quality of life and with some of our city's most essential services.

Some areas of the 2019 Our City Survey had positive results, but overall the City-wide results were less positive when compared to 2018. Full, detailed results of the 2019 Our City Survey and a comparison with the 2018 Our Citizen Survey can be found in Appendix "A" to Report CM20009.

### Survey and Methodology

The telephone survey (cellular and land line) was administered via random calls by a contracted third party, Metroline Research Group Inc., between September 9, 2019 and January 8, 2020. The targeted completion date for the telephone survey was December 15, but this timeline was extended so that all ward-level completion targets could successfully be achieved as some Wards required more contact calls to achieve the required survey counts.

To supplement the telephone interviews and allow more residents to participate in the survey, an online version of the survey tool was available on the City's website between September 9, 2019 and December 31, 2019.

Both the telephone and online versions of the survey were available in English and French.

The telephone survey had 5,771 completed surveys. The phone survey results are accurate within +/-1.3% at the City level, 19 times out of 20. To achieve this target, over 273,100 phone call attempts were made to 134,287 randomized Hamilton-based residential and cellular phone lines. To qualify for the survey, respondents had to be an adult age 18 years or older and residing in Hamilton.

The telephone survey is a statistically representative sample of the Hamilton population. The 2019 Our City Survey telephone survey can provide ward-level results due to the increased sample size of the telephone survey. Ward level results have a margin of error of about +/-5%, 19 times out of 20.

The online survey results are a supplementary source of information, and results from the two data sources should not be compared due to differences in survey methodologies. The online survey may be subject to self-selection bias and the collected surveys cannot be determined to be a statistically representative sample of the population. The online survey collected 3,374 surveys where a response was provided for at least one (1) survey question.

The focus areas of the survey were:

- Quality of City services
- Well-being/Quality of Life in Hamilton
- Customer Service and Service Channel preferences

The survey also asked residents:

- Preferred method for communicating with City of Hamilton
- Experience and satisfaction with contacting the City
- Ways the City can improve

For more details on the survey methodology, please refer to the Our City Survey 2019 Report (Appendix “A” to Report CM20009).

### Survey Results

For complete survey findings for both the telephone and online survey, please refer to the Our City Survey 2019 Report (Appendix “A” to Report CM20009). There were some differences between the telephone survey and the online survey, but generally the distribution of the results followed similar patterns. Results from the two data sources should not be compared due to differences in survey methodologies. **Results included below are from the telephone survey because it is a representative sample of Hamilton residents.**

1. Quality of City Services

Most survey respondents (63%) were very satisfied or satisfied with City services overall. There has been no significant change to this result since the 2018 survey.

The services most rated excellent, very good or good by respondents were:

- Fire Department 97%
- Libraries and Bookmobiles 92%
- Paramedic Services 91%
- Cemetery 89%
- Parks and Open Space 87%

The services most rated poor by respondents were:

- Social Housing 45%
- Roads and Sidewalks 35%
- Services for Seniors including Long Term Care 30%
- Traffic Flow and Roadway Safety 27%
- Wastewater Management 26%
- Building Permits 26%

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The most notable changes between the 2018 and 2019 survey were:

<b>Service</b>	% rating service as good, very good or excellent		
	Phone 2019	Phone 2018	Change
Cemetery	89%	83%	<b>+6%</b>
Hamilton Street Railway (HSR) Buses	66%	60%	<b>+6%</b>
Arts, Culture and Heritage	83%	79%	<b>+4%</b>
Paramedic Services	91%	88%	<b>+3%</b>
Traffic Flow and Roadway Safety	47%	54%	<b>-6%</b>
Public Health	74%	79%	<b>-6%</b>
Child Care Services	57%	65%	<b>-8%</b>
Stormwater Management	58%	69%	<b>-11%</b>
Social Services	52%	65%	<b>-13%</b>
Wastewater Management	60%	75%	<b>-15%</b>
Services for Seniors (including Long-term Care)	44%	67%	<b>-23%</b>

Tax Level versus Service Levels

A strong majority of respondents indicated that the City should maintain taxes and current service levels.

In delivering services to you and the community, the City typically pays for them through taxes and user fees. Based on this, do you think the City should:

- Increase taxes, improve services 15%
- Maintain taxes/current service levels 72%
- Decrease taxes, deliver fewer services 13%

## 2. Well-being/Quality of Life

### Health

Results were steady between the 2018 survey and the 2019 survey for health. 89% of respondents self-assessed their health as good, very good or excellent. This was not a significant change from the 2018 survey.

### Satisfaction with Life

87% of respondents indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their life overall. This represents a significant decrease since 2018, where 92% of respondents indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their life overall.

### Quality of Life

Hamilton is a great place to... (% that agree or strongly agree)

- Live 84% (2018, 87%)
- Work 67% (2018, 69%)
- Play 78% (2018, 77%)
- Learn 85% (2018, 88%)

There have been no significant changes to these results since the 2018 survey, results are steady.

In the last two years, the quality of life in the city of Hamilton has...

- Improved 23% (2018, 35%)
- Stayed the same 45% (2018, 46%)
- Worsened 32% (2018, 18%)

In 2019, 68% of respondents said that quality of life has stayed the same or improved. This is a significant change from the 2018 survey, when 81% of respondents said that quality of life has stayed the same or improved. The results for this question are trending negatively over time.

### Engaging with the City of Hamilton

Two new questions were included in the 2019 survey asking about resident engagement. The 2019 results are the City's baseline data and no trend analysis can be performed at this time.

- The City of Hamilton uses input from residents in decision-making about City programs, services and initiatives 32% (agree or strongly agree)
- The City of Hamilton engages residents in the decision-making process for City programs, services and initiatives 33% (agree or strongly agree)



### 3. Customer Service and Service Channel Preferences

Most respondents who had contacted the City of Hamilton in the past year felt that their overall experience was positive (72%).

Overall positive experience 72% (2018 83%) \*

Timely response received 74% (2018 79%)

Staff knowledgeable 79% (2018 81%)

Staff courteous 86% (2018 88%)

Question answered 74% (2018 80%) \*

\*denotes a significant change between the 2019 and 2018 survey

Resident service channel preferences were as follows:

- Residents prefer to use the phone when asking questions or making a complaint
- Residents most prefer to pay their property taxes through their bank or via a pre-authorized withdrawal
- For other interactions (registering and paying for recreation programs, applying for licenses, booking city facilities and parks), residents prefer to complete on the website or in person

Residents have a broad range of preferences for how they like to get information about the City of Hamilton's programs, initiatives, news and events. The top five methods are:

- Local television station
- Local newspaper
- [www.hamilton.ca](http://www.hamilton.ca)
- Internet search engines
- Local radio station

### 4. Ward Level Analysis

Ward level data has been compared to city level data to highlight how each ward is different. Detailed results are shared in the report (Appendix "A" to Report CM20009) and an infographic has been created for each of the 15 wards (Appendix "C" to Report CM20009). Ward level data is also part of the project's open data release (open data sets can be accessed via [www.hamilton.ca/ourcitysurvey](http://www.hamilton.ca/ourcitysurvey)).

The survey results varied between wards, which highlights that resident experiences differs across the city. This year's results are the baseline ward-level data for the City of Hamilton. Trend analysis can be performed when the next survey is performed (subject to operating budget approval).





































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The ward level analysis shows that satisfaction with City services varied significantly by ward.

- 63% of Hamilton residents were satisfied or very satisfied with City services overall.
- Eight (8) of the 15 wards had overall service satisfaction levels that were significantly different from the city.
- The overall service satisfaction levels by ward ranged from 46% to 72%.

Table 1 shows the services where ward level ratings varied the most from the city.

Table 1: Sample of ward level results

Service	% rating service as excellent, very good or good		Ward level result														
	City of Hamilton	Ward level range	 ward level result is significantly higher than COH  ward level result is significantly lower than COH														
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Hamilton Street Railway (HSR) Buses	66%	27% to 80%															
Emergency Management	79%	59% to 84%															
Police Services	81%	62% to 87%															
Traffic Flow and Roadway Safety	47%	33% to 56%															
Building Permits	52%	41% to 61%															
Recreation	84%	71% to 90%															
Snow Plowing and Salting of Roads	59%	52% to 69%															

Survey Costs

The total survey costs were \$145,000, consisting of procuring contractual services for the administration of the phone survey and a license fee for the online survey tool. Conducting live telephone interviews enables a random sample that can be statistically

representative to be obtained but involves a lot of people power, this is the main driver of the contractual services costs associated with this project. The City of Hamilton does not operate an outbound call centre, so this project component was unable to be insourced. The survey development, data analysis and reporting work was all conducted in-house by staff to keep the costs as low as possible.

Following a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process, the successful proposal was \$143,000 for the administration of the telephone survey. The remainder of the costs (\$2K) was for the license fee for the online survey tool. The accepted bid was \$13,000 over the total original approved budget of \$130,000 for the survey (\$65,000 per year budgeted, survey occurring biennially). In accordance, with the Council-approved Budget Control Policy, the variance was addressed by re-allocating an uncommitted consulting budget line from within the survey's home Division (Strategic Partnerships and Communications Division) budget in order to ensure the successful delivery of the project.

The proposals received during the Request for Proposal procurement process had a wide range of variation in pricing. The proposals received ranged from \$143,000 to \$248,000. There are procurement/pricing risks associated with future survey editions, if the low range of pricing is unable to be obtained in the future.

### Project Management

#### In-Sourcing Focus

The survey development, data analysis and reporting work was all conducted in-house by staff to keep the costs as low as possible. The 2019 Our City Survey project management staffing requirement was funded from the remaining 2018 survey capital (Citizen Engagement & Marketing capital - 3381757506) and the data specialist resource was accommodated within an existing resource assigned from Healthy & Safe Communities to the City Manager's Office temporarily to assist.

#### Social Procurement

The project team worked with the City of Hamilton's Procurement Section to include a social procurement component in the project's competitive RFP process. As a result, a small number of local jobs were created by the survey vendor, with a focus on improving the lives of single parents, people living with a disability, and people experiencing poverty in Hamilton.

Ten local Hamilton residents were hired by the survey vendor, and at the end of the project, four of these individuals were still working for the vendor. The vendor, Metroline Research, was planning to continue working with those four individuals after the Our City Survey project was completed.

### Sharing Results and Next Steps

Survey results have been shared with the Senior Leadership Team and results will also be shared broadly with all City staff via email, eNET, and in divisional team meetings.

From a resident-facing perspective, the survey findings will be incorporated into the City's web-based Trust and Confidence Report ([www.hamilton.ca/trustandconfidence](http://www.hamilton.ca/trustandconfidence)) and updated as future iterations of the survey are conducted (subject to budgetary approval). Ward specific results will be incorporated as part of the ward profiles: (<https://www.hamilton.ca/city-initiatives/strategies-actions/ward-profiles>). Open data files of the results can be found at [www.hamilton.ca/ourcitysurvey](http://www.hamilton.ca/ourcitysurvey).

A communications plan has also been created for further public outreach and includes a media release and social media posts.

A one-page infographic sheet has also been created as a quick-reference tool and can be utilized for a general snapshot of results. Please refer to Appendix "B" to Report CM20009 for the City-wide infographic. Ward level infographics were also created for each of the 15 wards to summarize ward-level results. Please refer to Appendix "C" to Report CM20009 for the ward-level infographics.

Next steps include the following actions:

- Regularly conduct this survey (biennially or triennially) with a sample size and margin of error and ward-level results as directed by Council (subject to operating budget approval)
- Linking strategic and business plans to survey results, demonstrating that the City is listening and acting on resident feedback
- Service owners reviewing and actioning results to improve resident satisfaction

### Recommendation

In order to ensure that the existing operating budget accommodates the costs associated with undertaking future iterations of the Our City Survey, and that there is sufficient time to review the survey results and action improvements between survey cycles, it is recommended that the:

- Current margin of error at the ward level (+/- 5%) be increased to be in the range of +/- 9.8%

Increasing the margin of error reduces the required sample size for the telephone survey from 5,775 completed surveys to 1,500 surveys and the cost of the survey significantly (the difference in cost from the 2018 survey with a sample size of 550 to the 2019 survey with a sample size of 5,775) as a result of

this change in the sample size and margin of error was about \$132,000).

- Frequency of conducting the Our City Survey in the future be moved to a triennial (every three years) cycle as opposed to the current biennial (every two years) cycle, to provide sufficient time for results to be actioned and improvements made.

With a triennial cycle, the next survey would be conducted in the second half of 2022.

## **ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION**

### Future Budget Impact

The current approved operating budget funding is not sufficient to cover survey costs and staff resources required to complete the survey in its current format. Based on the 2019 competitive procurement process bids (Request for Proposal), the successful proposal was \$143,000. This was an increase of about \$130,000 from the 2018 survey. The increase can be attributed to expanding the sample size from 550 completed surveys to 5,775 completed surveys to achieve a low margin of error (about +/-5%) at the ward level. The 2018 survey results did not include ward level data. The additional cost of conducting this 2019 survey on a per ward basis was about \$9,700 per ward.

Although the original intention was to undertake the survey on an annual basis, due to the increased cost associated with achieving the desired margin of error at both a City-wide and ward level, the survey frequency was changed to biennial (every 2 years) as part of the 2019 Operating Budget: Our Citizen Survey Business Case (BC-08) Report CM19002.

Projecting forward, it is anticipated that the cost of the next Our City Survey will be \$150,000, based on 2019 costs and inflation. As such, the current annual operating budget, which only accounts for the cost of undertaking the survey itself, is inadequate by \$10K annually (from \$65K to \$75K). It is important to note that required staffing resources (a project manager and data specialist) to support the regular management and analysis of a biennial survey are not included in current the Our City Survey operating budget.

Therefore, the need to ensure an adequate survey operating budget and long-term resourcing requirements to support the management, administration and analysis requirements of the Our City Survey on an on-going basis needs to be addressed. In addition, having now completed the survey twice, with minimal time between surveys to action and implement improvements within the service areas to address community feedback, the most appropriate survey frequency has also been reviewed.

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Table 2 highlights the difference between the recommended option versus the status quo and the impact of margin of error (MOE) on sample size and subsequent impact on survey cost, is attached as Appendix D to Report CM20009.

Table 2: Our City Survey Options

<b>Option</b>	<b>1 (Recommended)</b>	<b>2 (Status Quo)</b>
<b>Frequency</b>	Triennial every 3yrs (match Our People Survey frequency)	Biennial every 2yrs
<b>Next Survey Date</b>	Q4 2022	Q4 2021
<b>Total Sample Size</b>	1,500	5,775
<b>City-wide MOE</b>	+/- 2.5%	+/- 1.3%
<b>Ward-level MOE</b>	+/- 9.8%	+/- 5%
<b>Additional Annual Operating Budget Required</b>	\$0K (no change)	+ \$10K (to existing)
<b>Staff Resources</b>	\$45K every survey cycle  Accommodated within budget	\$45K every survey cycle  Requires separate budget enhancement
<b>Notes</b>	Maintains reasonable ward-level MOE with existing budget accommodating staff resource requirements and provides sufficient time for results to be actioned and improvements made.	Additional budget required to cover cost to continue to obtain required sample size at ward level and requires additional budget enhancement to accommodate staff resource requirements. Does not provide sufficient time for results to be actioned and improvements made.

## **ALIGNMENT TO THE 2016 – 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN**

### **Community Engagement & Participation**

*Hamilton has an open, transparent and accessible approach to City government that engages with and empowers all citizens to be involved in their community.*

### **Healthy and Safe Communities**

*Hamilton is a safe and supportive city where people are active, healthy, and have a high quality of life.*

### **Our People and Performance**

*Hamiltonians have a high level of trust and confidence in their City government.*

## **APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED**

Appendix “A” to Report CM20009: Our City Survey 2019 Summary Report

Appendix “B” to Report CM20009: Our City Survey 2019 Results City-Wide Infographic

Appendix “C” to Report CM20009: Our City Survey 2019 Results Ward Infographics

Appendix “D” to Report CM20009: Our City Survey Sample Size and Margin of Error Information