

Engage Hamilton Portal Urban Online Survey Results

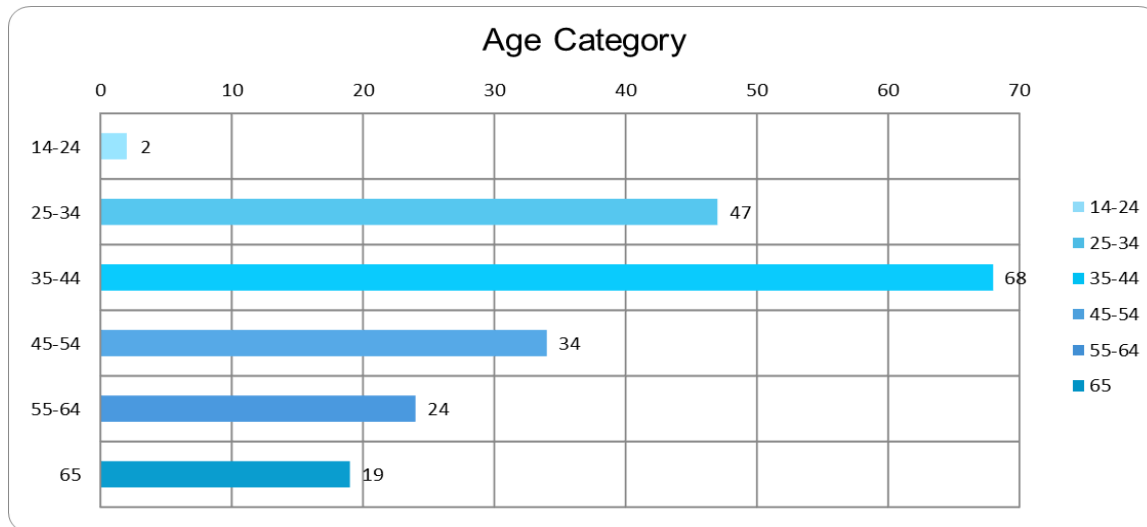
As part of the public engagement process for the Secondary Dwelling Unit (SDU) project, an Urban Area online survey was conducted via the Engage Hamilton Portal. The purpose of the survey was to seek feedback from the general public on key themes and regulations for SDUs in the Urban Area. It was based on three typologies: internal to the principal dwelling; newly constructed detached SDU; and, converted SDU. The following paragraphs include a discussion of general observations of the survey, and Urban Area survey results. The Rural Area Online Survey results are found in Appendix “L-2” to Report PED20093(a).

1.0 Demographics of Urban Area Survey Participants

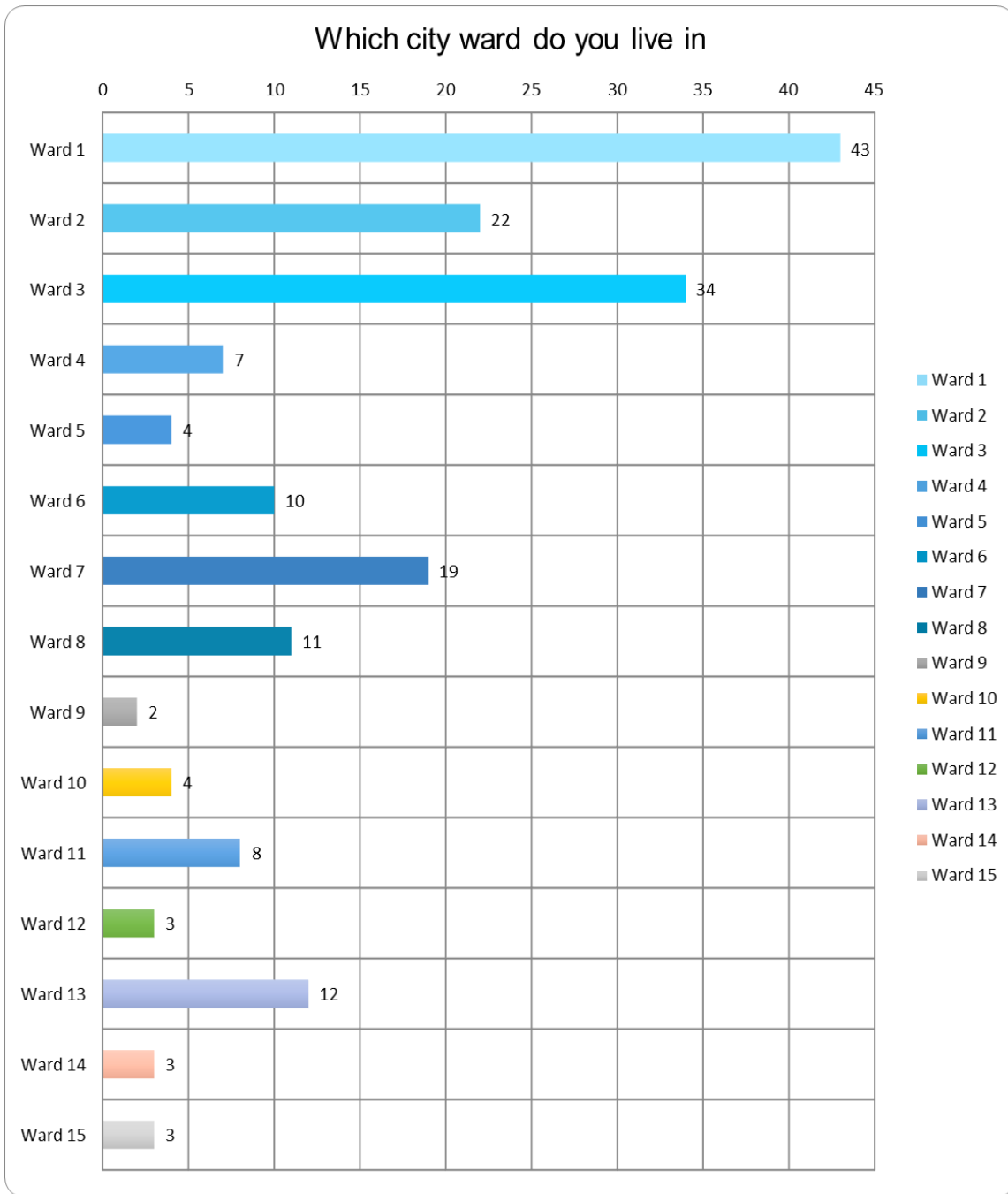
All participants were required to be registered with the Engage Hamilton portal (<https://engage.hamilton.ca/>). The online surveys were well received with 194 unique submissions for the Urban Area survey.

1.1 Urban Area Online Survey

Due to the pandemic, staff are employing online methods to engage the public on City initiated projects. The Urban Area online survey, as shown in the bar chart below, the majority of respondents (68%) were in the 25 to 54 age groups, with fewer number of respondents over 55 years old (24%). The data suggest the number of visitors to the SDU project’s online page who endeavour to participate in surveys, are spread across many age groups.



As shown in the chart, almost two-thirds of respondents reside in Wards 1, 2, 3, and 7. The rest of the respondents reside mostly in Wards 4, 5, 6, 8, and 13.



One question at the end of the survey asks whether the respondent is a homeowner or renter. Of the respondents, 10% are renters living in the Urban Area, and 63% are homeowners. The rest identify themselves as “others” and might either live in the Rural Area, or do not live in Hamilton.

Another question asks if the homeowner wishes to construct an SDU. Of the respondents who identified themselves as homeowners (120 of the 189 participants),

101 of them would like to build an SDU which signifies interest within the broader community of SDUs.

A second question further breaks down the type of SDU a homeowner wishes to construct. There is a rough split between constructing an SDU internal to the dwelling, a newly constructed detached SDU (which garnered the most), and converted detached SDU.

2.0 Urban Area Online Survey Results

Survey questions explained the participant's preference based on themes such as performance standards (setbacks, height, maximum gross floor area), design, and parking. The following paragraphs summarize the survey findings.

Overall, SDUs are supported with minimal regulations. These regulations are intended to mitigate potential neighbourhood impacts.

2.1 Minimum Size of Internal Secondary Dwelling Unit

Participants were asked about regulations dealing with a minimum size of Secondary Dwelling Unit (SDU) that are internal to the principal dwelling. A total of 54% of respondents agreed that a minimum gross floor area should be applied, and 45.5% of respondents indicated there should be a minimum.

A second question was, if a minimum size of SDU is implemented, then what would be the ideal size? A total of 52% indicated that the ideal minimum size of an internal SDU is 50 square metres, whereas 27% indicated a minimum 65 square metres (which is the currently minimum standard for converted dwellings in Hamilton Zoning By-law No. 6593. The remainder said "other" which ranges from a minimum of 23 square metres to 74 square metres.

2.2 Maximum Size of Internal Secondary Dwelling Unit

There is no maximum size of SDUs internal to the principal dwelling contemplated.

A total of 70.3% of respondents supported this approach by indicating that a maximum gross floor area should not be applied; 29.6% of respondents agreed there should be a maximum.

A second question was if a maximum size of the internal SDU is implemented, what would be the ideal size? Only 27% of respondents identified 50 square metres as the maximum size, with the rest as "other". A few respondents suggested the maximum should be restricted to bedrooms instead of floor area. Others suggest up to 100 square metres, or depending on the size of the house, a percentage of the floor area of the main dwelling.

2.3 Entrances to Internal Secondary Dwelling Unit

The proposed regulation would require the entrance for the internal SDU to face the rear or side yard. The intent is to avoid “two front doors” that face the street, which may alter the appearance from the street appearance. A total of 66.7% of respondents chose “doesn’t matter”, indicating there is an indifference to the regulation. A total of 29.7% of respondents prefer to see the entrance to be to the rear or the side of the house, and only 4% prefer having two front doors.

2.4 Maximum Size of Detached Secondary Dwelling Unit

To maintain community integration, a proposed regulation would restrict the size of the detached SDU to 50 square metres. The survey asks participants whether there should be a maximum size of detached SDUs, where 54% said yes and 46.8% said no.

A second question was asked: what would be the ideal maximum size of the detached SDU? A total of 19% identified that 50 square metres should be the maximum, and the rest of the respondents indicated the size should be based on a percentage of the total lot. During the public engagement process, feedback received via email indicated that 50 square metres was too small as a maximum size.

2.5 Maximum Height of Detached Secondary Dwelling Unit

The proposed regulation for detached SDUs is to restrict the building height to 6.0 metres, which is equivalent to two floors with a flat roof. Note that the definition of height varies depending on the definition in each Zoning By-law. A total of 57% of respondents indicate their preference is to have the same height as the main house (10.5 m), and 26.5% of respondents agree with the proposed 6.0 metres in maximum height. Finally, 16% prefer to reduce the maximum height to 4.5 metres, which is equivalent to a one-storey SDU.

2.6 Windows above the First Floor

A survey question was asked respecting permitting windows above the first floor. A vast majority of respondents would want windows to be permitted above the first floor. A follow up question asks respondents where the window could face; a total of 52.7% responded with the backyard, and 30% responded facing the street. Only 17% of respondent would like to see windows face the side yard.

2.7 Balcony and Rooftop Patios above the First Floor

Similar to the above mentioned design regulation, one proposed regulation is to prohibit balconies and rooftop patios above the first floor. Two-thirds of respondents indicate that balconies and rooftop patios should be permitted on the second floor and the rest do not agree. A follow up question asked respondents where the balcony or rooftop patio could face. A total of 58% said that it should be able to face the backyard, and 32.2% indicate it could face the street. Only 9% said it could face the side yard.

2.8 Additions to Converted Detached Secondary Dwelling Unit

Additions to a converted detached SDU is permitted subject to the proposed regulations. A fundamental question asked in the survey was whether additions should be permitted. A total of 89% of respondents said additions should be permitted, and 11% indicated it should not be permitted, and whatever the size and height of the accessory building is, is what would be allowed to be converted.

A second question is if yes, then under what circumstances would additions be permitted. A total of 50.9% of respondents said there should be no limit as long as the setbacks are the same. A total of 25% said additions should be permitted if the existing accessory building is smaller than the maximum gross floor area and within the maximum height of 6.0 metres. Finally, 24% indicated no limit at all.

2.9 Parking Exemptions for Secondary Dwelling Unit

A survey question was asked whether SDUs be exempt from providing one additional on site parking space for each dwelling unit? A total of 62% said yes, 22% said no, and 15% said yes but only in certain areas of the City.