

Report to Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee

To: Chair and Members
Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee
From: Lynne Livingstone, City Manager
Subject: 2022 Resident Satisfaction Survey
Date: December 12, 2022

Recommendation

That on the recommendation of the City Manager, the report, including the attached 2022 Resident Satisfaction Survey, **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Executive Summary

The 2022 Resident Satisfaction Survey was conducted by Forum Research Inc. between September 23 and October 17, 2022. The survey was conducted by telephone and the sample was drawn using random digit dialling among City of London residents, which included both landline and cell phone only households. A total of 500 interviews were completed among residents 18 years of age and older. Results throughout the report have been statistically weighted by age and gender to reflect the population of London based on the 2021 Census and comparisons to other similarly sized municipalities have been included where possible.

The survey provides Londoners with an opportunity to share their perspectives and perceptions of key issues in our community. It covers a wide range of topics including top of mind issues, priorities over the next four years, quality of life, value for tax dollars, satisfaction with municipal services and experiences with City staff, and welcoming and belonging.

Survey findings provide data-driven and performance-based reporting for Council, administration, and the public. The Resident Satisfaction Survey is a critical tool to gather opinions on a number of key questions to help inform strategic decisions and ensure that organizational priorities are aligned with the needs of residents.

Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan

Council's 2019-2023 Strategic Plan includes the Strategic Area of Focus 'Leading in Public Service.' This includes the Expected Result 'The City of London is trusted, open, and accountable in service of our community' and the Strategy 'Improve public accountability and transparency in decision making.'

Analysis

1.0 Background Information

1.1 Previous Reports Related to this Matter

Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee (SPPC): August 31, 2015, July 25, 2016, August 21, 2017, November 19, 2018, August 26, 2019, November 30, 2021.

2.0 Discussion and Considerations

2.1 Background

Each year the City of London undertakes a resident satisfaction survey as part of our efforts to improve service to our community, noting that survey was paused in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The survey provides Londoners with an opportunity to share their perspectives and perceptions of key issues in our community. It covers a wide range of topics including top of mind issues, quality of life, value for tax dollars, satisfaction with municipal services and experiences with City staff, and welcoming and belonging. In order to support the development of Council's 2023-2027 Strategic Plan, the 2022 survey also asked residents to share their thoughts on priorities for our community over the next four years.

Survey findings provide data-driven and performance-based reporting for Council, administration, and the public. The Resident Satisfaction Survey is a critical tool to gather opinions on key questions to help inform strategic decisions and ensure that organizational priorities are aligned with the needs of residents.

These surveys are one of many tools the City uses to measure performance. Other tools include ongoing internal performance measurement processes (e.g., Strategic Plan Annual Performance Reports, Strategic Plan Impact Assessments, budgeting, business planning, measurement of operational activities and services within individual Service Areas), participation in sector benchmarking initiatives (e.g., the Financial Information Return), and through external assessments (e.g., Macleans Best Places to Live reports).

2.2 2022 Survey Results

The 2022 Resident Satisfaction Survey, attached as Appendix A, was conducted by Forum Research Inc. between September 23 and October 17, 2022.

The survey was conducted by telephone and the sample was drawn using random digit dialling among City of London residents, which included both landline and cell phone only households. A total of 500 interviews were completed among residents 18 years of age and older. Results throughout the report have been statistically weighted by age and gender to reflect the population of London based on the 2021 Census and comparisons to other similarly sized municipalities have been included where possible.

While satisfaction scores for quality of life, City services, and interactions with City staff remain relatively high, 2022 saw an overall decrease in satisfaction scores over the 2021 scores. Civic Administration continues to closely monitor this data as well as service specific data that is collected (contact centre performance data, satisfaction with recreation facilities and programming, etc.) to determine mechanisms to improve satisfaction scores, particularly related to customer service.

Top of Mind Issues

- Poverty is identified as the most important issue facing the city as identified by nearly 1 in 2 (47%) of residents. This is driven by mentions of homelessness which increased from 27% in 2021 to 44% in 2022.
- Transportation is identified as the next most important issue as identified by 30% of respondents. Mentions of transportation include traffic, road congestion, traffic lights, inadequate public transit/transportation, and rapid transit.
- Around three in ten (30%) of residents identified development and infrastructure as a key issue facing the city, which is consistent with previous years. Mentions of development/infrastructure include roads, road repair, snow removal, poorly maintained roads, lack of affordable housing, infrastructure, development, urban sprawl, loss of green space and parking.
- One in five (20%) residents identified health as the most important issue, driven by mentions of mental health and addictions.
- One in five (20%) residents also say that the economy is the most important issue facing the city, driven by mentions of high interest rates.

Priorities Over the Next Four Years

When asked what priorities City Council should focus on in the next four years, residents identified the following top five priorities:

1. Poverty (36%)
2. Economics (26%)
3. Transportation (26%)
4. Development / Infrastructure (21%)
5. Health / Wellbeing (17%)

Quality of Life

- Compared to other municipalities, the City of London ranks close to the average rating of quality of life. 82% of Londoners say their quality of life in London is good or very good, with around one in five (18%) residents saying it is very good.
- The most common reason for residents having a good quality of life in the city is because it is a good, friendly, or nice city (20%).
- There was a five percent decrease in the number of residents who indicate that they have a good quality of life compared to 2021 (from 87% in 2021 to 82% in 2022).
- 15% of residents rate their quality of life in London poorly. Factors contributing to poor quality of life include homelessness (41%); cost of living (36%), and crime/public safety/policing (30%).

City Service Assessment

- Most residents (77%) say they are satisfied with the overall level and quality of services provided by the City of London, with one in six (16%) saying they are very satisfied. When compared to other Canadian municipalities, the City ranks slightly below the average rating of City service satisfaction.
- The number of residents satisfied with City services has decreased since 2021 (from 82% to 77%). One in six (16%) of residents say they are very satisfied while around one in five (21%) say that they are not satisfied with City services.
- Residents are most satisfied with the quality of service delivery from the City (71%), followed by the accessibility of services (70%), and the time it takes to receive services (57%). Overall satisfaction with these factors has decreased since 2021.
- The majority of London residents are satisfied with 23 out of 33 services provided by the City of London. Residents are most satisfied with public libraries (95%), drinking water (93%), parks and other green spaces (89%), recreation facilities (89%), and stormwater management (88%).

Gap Analysis

- The gap analysis shows the difference between resident satisfaction with various City services and the perceived importance of each service.
- The gap analysis chart identifies areas for improvement and maintenance and is used for illustrative purposes to indicate the relative placement of the various services to other services, and not as a statistical placement of data.
- Primary areas for improvement are revitalization of older neighbourhoods, social services, city expansion / protection of farmland, public transit, and roads.

Value for Tax Dollars

- Most residents (76%) believe that they receive good value for their tax dollars, including 13% who believe they receive very good value.
- The number of residents who perceive good value for tax dollars has remained steady over the past three years. When compared to other municipalities, the City of London is on par with the average.

- When asked how to help the City balance taxation and service delivery levels, 23% of residents said they would prefer to increase taxes to enhance or expand services, 30% said they would prefer to increase taxes to maintain current service levels, 18% said they would prefer to cut services to maintain current tax levels, and 12% said they would prefer to cut services to reduce taxes.
- Compared to 2021, there has been an increase in the number of residents who prefer to increase taxes, which is driven by an increase in those who prefer to increase taxes to enhance services (from 18% to 23%).

Experience with City Staff

- 67% of residents who contacted the City were satisfied with the services they received, compared to 68% in 2021.
- Of residents who interacted with the City, 52% say they received all of the service or support they needed, while 17% said they received partial support.
- 81% of residents who had contact with the City thought that staff were courteous, 81% thought they were treated fairly, and 79% felt that staff were knowledgeable. About half (52%) said staff went the extra mile.

Welcoming and Belonging

- 81% of residents believe that London is a welcoming community and that they have a strong sense of belonging to the city (79%).
- It is important to note that results of the Resident Satisfaction Survey are statistically weighted by age and gender to reflect the population of London based on the 2021 Census. Of those participating in the survey, 72% self-identified as white. If the survey was completed with a higher number of participants from equity-denied communities, the results would likely show a lower percentage of Londoners experiencing London as a welcoming community.

Conclusion

Surveys are an important tool used by municipalities to assess residents' attitudes, needs, priorities and satisfaction levels. This data can support Council decision-making, inform the work of Administration, and contribute to an overall understanding of the London community. The Annual Resident Satisfaction Survey is also a key component of Council's 2019-2023 Strategic Plan and the commitment to "Improve public accountability and transparency in decision making," in the service of Londoners.

Prepared and Submitted by: Rosanna Wilcox, Director, Strategy and Innovation

Recommended by: Lynne Livingstone, City Manager