



ENGAGE COBOURG

Your voice, your town.

Public Engagement Report

2021 Operating and Capital Budget

Date: January 21, 2021

Prepared by: Communications Department

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Background

Each year, the Town of Cobourg undergoes an annual budget process to create budgets that support town operations and deliver the programs and services required to maintain the high quality of life we enjoy in our community, and offers residents an engagement opportunity to review and comment on financial priorities.

Through the budget process, choices are made to ensure Town of Cobourg services provided to citizens align with the priorities in Cobourg's 2019-2022 Strategic Plan which were grouped under five pillars: People, Places, Programs, Partnerships and Prosperity. These were then broken down into 28 strategic actions.

Municipal Council and Town staff gathered feedback from citizens to identify areas of focus for the Town's current and long-term financial priorities. The 2021 Financial Framework Survey provided an opportunity for Cobourg residents to engage in the municipal financial planning process as staff prepare a draft budget and updated long-term financial plan for Council's review and consideration.

Objectives

The public engagement objective for the 2021 Operating and Capital Budget was to:

- Gather feedback and input from residents on the budget.
- Identify areas of focus for the Town's current and long-term financial priorities.

2021 Budget

Each year, the Town of Cobourg undergoes an annual budget process to create budgets that support town operations and deliver the programs and services required to maintain the high quality of life we enjoy in our community.

Through the budget process, choices are made to ensure Town of Cobourg services provided to citizens align with the priorities in Cobourg's 2019-22 Strategic Plan which were grouped under five pillars: People, Places, Programs, Partnerships and Prosperity. These were then broken down into 28 discrete actions.

Work to determine the Cobourg's 2021 budget is underway. Please follow the updates and discussion on Engage Cobourg to learn more about how the Town of Cobourg determines its annual budget. You can also view the Town of Cobourg's **Five Step Process** for a quick and easy way to understand our budget process.

2021 BUDGET

Each year the Town of Cobourg undergoes an annual budget process to create a budget that supports Town operations and delivers the programs and services required to maintain the high quality of life we enjoy in our community.

Budgets Approved by Municipal Council

Our Five Step Process

1. Set budget priorities
2. Develop budget alternatives
3. Review and refine budget alternatives
4. Council approves budget and public feedback
5. Council approves the final budget

Timeline: November 16, 2020 - January 14, 2021

cobourg.ca/budget

NEWS FORUM SURVEY

Town of Cobourg Releases 2021 Draft Operating and Capital Budget

STAY INFORMED

Subscribe for project updates

Subscribe

1 member of your community is following this project

Who's listening

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more...

Engagement Schedule

Inform
To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist in understanding the problems, alternatives and/or solutions.

Consult
To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.

Involve
The final outcomes of the consultation are documented here and may include a summary of all contributions collected as well as recommendations for future



Town of Cobourg 2021 Financial Framework Survey

The Town of Cobourg Municipal Council and Staff are seeking feedback from citizens to identify areas of focus for the Town's current and long-term financial priorities.

The 2021 Financial Framework Survey provides an opportunity for Cobourg citizens to engage in the municipal financial planning process as staff prepare a draft budget and updated long-term financial plan for Council's review and consideration this December.

Every year, the Town of Cobourg offers engagement opportunities for residents to review and confirm financial priorities. Projects and resources advanced through annual budgeting processes ultimately align with these priorities. To help the Town of Cobourg shape these priorities, citizens are invited to complete a survey, open now until December 14, 2020 on www.EngageCobourg.ca.

This survey will take approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete.
Thank you for your participation!

Survey starts Finish

CLOSED: This survey has concluded.

All fields marked with an asterisk (*) are required.

1. Knowledge of the Town of Cobourg Budget is not necessary to participate in this survey. Answers to the following questions will help us identify any further resources and tools we might provide to support the community's understanding of both the Town budget process and the programs and services we deliver. *

How familiar are you with how the Town develops its annual budget?

Very Familiar Somewhat Familiar Not At All Familiar

Some municipally-provided programs and services are funded by the Town, while others are

Engagement Strategy & Approach

The engagement approach for the 2021 Operating and Capital Budget project was comprised of the following public engagement tools on Engage Cobourg (www.engagecobourg.ca), the Town of Cobourg's online engagement platform.



Survey



Open-ended forum

An online forum was also launched for residents to provide further comments, opinions or feedback on the Draft 2021 Operating and Capital Budget once it was released on December 22, 2020. The forum question asked:

1

Share your thoughts on the Draft 2021 Municipal Operating and Capital Budget.

To enhance the success and reach the greatest audience, the Communications Department retained last year's budget branding to continue a consistent brand and clear messaging, and launched the Financial Framework survey for a period of four-weeks from November 16, 2020 to December 14, 2020.

Online marketing materials were created and distributed across the Town of Cobourg's online platforms including all social media outlets and the website. All community stakeholders were asked to help share these materials across their own online platforms to ensure the Town of Cobourg was reaching the widest audience demographic possible.

A targeted social media campaign was launched simultaneously to support the online engagement, further raising awareness of the outreach process and garnering interest across a wide range of citizens.

Public Engagement Timeline

4 Weeks

**November 16, 2020 to
December 14, 2020**

Engagement Process

The 2021 Operating and Capital Budget public engagement process was launched on the Town of Cobourg's online engagement platform, Engage Cobourg. Powered by Bang the Table, a complete end-to-end online platform driving inclusive, transparent and measurable community engagement that empowers collaborative learning, discussion, and debate.

Interested members of the public were encouraged to review the documents and complete the Financial Framework survey. Once the draft budget was released on December 22, 2020, residents were asked to share comments through the online forum. Background information through the document library was provided to offer more details on the budget process. The Communications Department provided hands-on assistance to the community to ensure their registration experience was successful and the platform was accessible to all residents.

A press release to drive residents to the Engage Cobourg online public engagement platform was managed by the Communications Department through a variety of communication vehicles and tactics, including:

- ✓ Press Release
- ✓ Print advertisement in local newspaper Northumberland News
- ✓ Online posts through social media including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram
- ✓ Website notices on the municipal homepage
- ✓ Highlighted in the Town of Cobourg's monthly *Hello Cobourg!* Newsletter
- ✓ Targeted local media interviews with Northumberland News, MBC Radio and Consider-This
- ✓ Editorial from Budget Chief Suzanne Séguin in the Northumberland News newspaper and online at www.northumberlandnews.com

Key Values of the Engagement Process

The Engagement Spectrum that the Town of Cobourg follows is a globally recognized standard for identifying levels of participation, which has been adopted from the International Association of Public Participation.



The spectrum outlines the Town of Cobourg's objectives for each type of engagement process delivered. As the 2021 Operating and Capital Budget project progress through the engagement spectrum, the Town of Cobourg can ensure citizens understand their role in the decision-making process.

IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum - Increasing Level of Public Impact				
Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
<i>Public Participation Goal:</i>	<i>Public Participation Goal:</i>	<i>Public Participation Goal:</i>	<i>Public Participation Goal:</i>	<i>Public Participation Goal:</i>
To provide the public with balance and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
<i>Promise to Public:</i>	<i>Promise to Public:</i>	<i>Promise to Public:</i>	<i>Promise to Public:</i>	<i>Promise to Public:</i>
We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
<i>Example Tools:</i>	<i>Example Tools:</i>	<i>Example Tools:</i>	<i>Example Tools:</i>	<i>Example Tools:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fact Sheets Web Sites Open Houses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public comment Focus Groups Surveys Public Meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshops Deliberate Polling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citizen Advisory Committees Consensus-building Participatory decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citizen Juries Ballots Delegated Decisions

Communication and Marketing Materials

The Communications Department continued to utilize budget brand and visual identity for the 2021 Operating and Capital Budget project that was used across all marketing collateral. The marketing collateral maintained consistency with the images and design of the project page to create a unique and friendly identity for surveying. This identity further helped enhance the concise messaging for the public engagement process.

Newsletter

Budget 2021

CALENDAR

- NOV 16 Public Engagement Begins**
Help identify areas of focus for the Town's current and long-term financial priorities.
- NOV 23 Public Submission Meeting**
Council will review public submissions.
- DEC 7 Community Grant Presentations**
Applicants present information to Council.
- Division Staff Presentation Meetings**
All meetings begin at 1:30 p.m. via Zoom Videoconference.
- DEC 8**
 - Planning and Development Services
 - General Government Services
 - Economic Development
 - Venture 13 Innovation Centre
 - Public Library
 - Art Gallery of Northumberland
- DEC 15**
 - Protection Services - Fire Department
 - Public Works
 - Environmental Services
- DEC 17**
 - Protection Services - Police Services
 - Community Services
- DEC 22 Draft Budget Released**
The 2021 Draft Budget will be released for public review and feedback.
- JAN 21 Special Council Budget Session**
The 2021 Draft Budget is reviewed in its entirety by Council from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. If a second session is needed, it will be scheduled for January 22, 2021 beginning at 10 a.m.
- FEB 16 Final Budget Approved**
The 2021 Draft Operating and Capital Budget is submitted for final approval by Council.

Budgets Approved by Municipal Council

There are many factors when planning budgets including:

- Actual spending for 2020
- New projects that require financing
- Potential new staffing requirements
- New equipment like trucks, computers, tools, etc.

Until December 14, residents can log on to **Engage Cobourg** to complete the Town of Cobourg 2021 Financial Framework Survey that helps your Municipal Council and Staff to identify areas of focus for the Town's current and long-term financial priorities.

Share your input on the 2021 Budget.

We want to hear from you. All feedback and ideas shared through **EngageCobourg** will be included in a report to Council.

Take the Survey
Join the Forum

cobourg.ca/budget

All meetings will be available for livestream at www.cobourg.ca/subscribe

EngageCobourg 905-269-1560 engage@cobourg.ca

Suzanne Séguin, Deputy Mayor

Calendar

2021 BUDGET
Town of Cobourg

CALENDAR

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cobourg.ca/budget

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Poster: Five-Step Budget Process

2021 BUDGET
Town of Cobourg

Each year the Town of Cobourg undergoes an annual budget process to create a budget that supports Town operations and delivers the programs and services required to maintain the high quality of life we enjoy in our community.

Budgets Approved by Municipal Council

General Government, Protection, Public Works, Cultural, Parks and Recreation

Our Five Step Process

1 Set budget timeline	2 Division staff presentations	3 Release draft budget for public review and input	4 Council reviews budget and public comments	5 Council approves the final budget
Outlines the public consultation schedule and dates for review and approval of the budget.	Directors and managers present their budget to Council and the public.	Draft budget is released for public review and comment.	Council reviews the draft budget in its entirety.	The final budget is submitted and approved by Council.
November 16, 2020	December 2020	December 22, 2020	January 21, 2021	February 16, 2021

cobourg.ca/budget

Ad Block: Northumberland News

Town of Cobourg News

Budgets Approved by Municipal Council

General Government, Protection, Public Works, Cultural, Parks and Recreation

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cobourg.ca/budget

Hello Cobourg! Subscribe today! cobourg.ca/newsletter

Cobourg Toques Now Available
Cobourg toques are now available for purchase, while quantities last. Order Today! cobourg.ca/toques

Next Council Meeting

Facebook Post

Town of Cobourg, Ontario
Published by Mabelle Forestell • December 10, 2020

COUNCIL: The 2021 Municipal Operating and Capital Budget meetings started this week with the Community Grant Presentations and the first round of Division Staff Presentations. Residents are always invited to watch the meetings LIVE or view past meetings at www.cobourg.ca/subscribe.

EngageCobourg We've launched a survey to help us identify areas of focus for the Town's current and long-term financial priorities, which will be considered throughout budget deliberations.

Question #8 of the survey asks residents to select whether or not they would be supportive of an increase in property taxes to maintain or expand levels of services. Take the survey to share your response at www.engagecobourg.ca

Join us next week as we complete the Division Staff Presentations. Learn more here www.cobourg.ca/budget

Share your feedback on the 2021 Budget.
engagecobourg.ca

Twitter Post

Town of Cobourg, Ontario
Published by Mabelle Forestell • December 22, 2020 at 4:29 PM

BUDGET: The Draft 2021 Municipal Operating and Capital Budget has now been released and is available online for public input and feedback.

View the draft budget at www.cobourg.ca/budget

Share your feedback at www.engagecobourg.ca

The next Special Council Budget Session will be held on Thursday, January 21, 2021 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. where Council will review and discuss the draft budget in its entirety. The agenda and livestream video will be available at cobourg.ca/budget.

Draft 2021 Operating and Capital Budget Released

Share your feedback! engagecobourg.ca

cobourg.ca/budget

Editorial

NorthumberlandNews.com

It's budget time: Have your say in Cobourg

Deputy Mayor Suzanne Séguin breaks down the budget process

NOTES TO READERS: Register now to support our local journalist!

For many residents, the Town of Cobourg's municipal budget process does not generate a lot of interest.

However, during 2020 – the year most of us would like to forget – we are hard at work crunching numbers and preparing the 2021 operating and capital Budgets. Until Dec. 14, residents can log on to www.EngageCobourg.ca to complete the town's 2021 Financial Framework survey which helps your municipal council and staff to identify areas of focus for the town's current and long-term financial priorities.

Marketing Analytics

DIGITAL PROMOTIONS



PLATFORM	POSTS	REACH	ENGAGEMENT	CLICKS
Facebook	6	5,884	13	89
Twitter	7	5,325	48	30
	13	11,209	61	119



PLATFORM	FEATURED	REACH	OPENS	CLICKS
Hello Cobourg! <i>Town's Newsletter</i>	1 edition <i>December 2020</i>	1,080	716	375
	1	1,080	716	375

PRINT PROMOTIONS



PLATFORM	FEATURED	CIRCULATION
Northumberland News <i>Town's Weekly Ad Block</i>	8 editions <i>November 19, 26</i> <i>December 7, 10, 17, 24, 31</i> <i>January 4</i>	224,000 <i>28,000 each week</i>
	8	224,000



ENGAGE COBOURG
Your voice, your town.

2021 Operating and Capital Budget

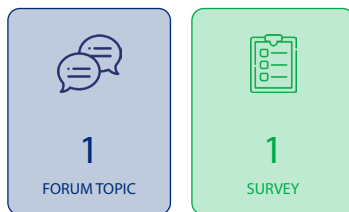
Engagement Results



Summary of Project Engagement

This section presents a summary of the public engagement received for the 2021 Operating and Capital Budget project through the Town of Cobourg's online public engagement platform, Engage Cobourg, outreach results.

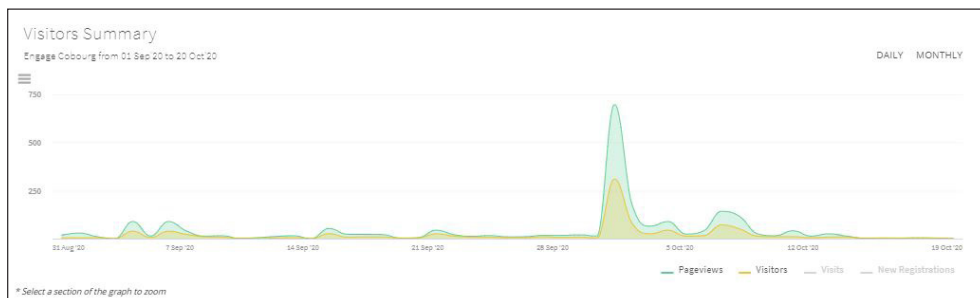
Engagement Tools Utilized:



Participant Summary

The engagement for the project was measured in three distinct variables:

- **Aware:** Unique visitors who have visited the site page but have not opened a document or participated in an engagement tool.
- **Informed:** Unique visitors who have visited the site and opened a document, looked at an image, read the project page but have not actively participated in an engagement tool (survey, forum, etc.).
- **Engaged:** Unique visitors who have actively participated in completing a survey or providing feedback in a forum, etc.



TOTAL PROJECT
VISITS
383

TOTAL PROJECT
CONTRIBUTIONS
58

*including multiple user comments, replies and votes

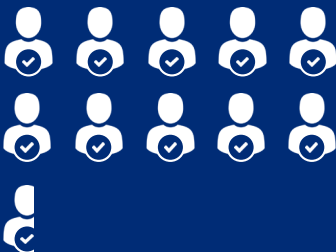
Summary of Survey Engagement

According to the analytical data provided by HQ Engagement the 2021 Financial Framework survey had 167 visitors and 58 contributors.

[Take Survey](#)



1
SURVEY



58
PARTICIPANTS

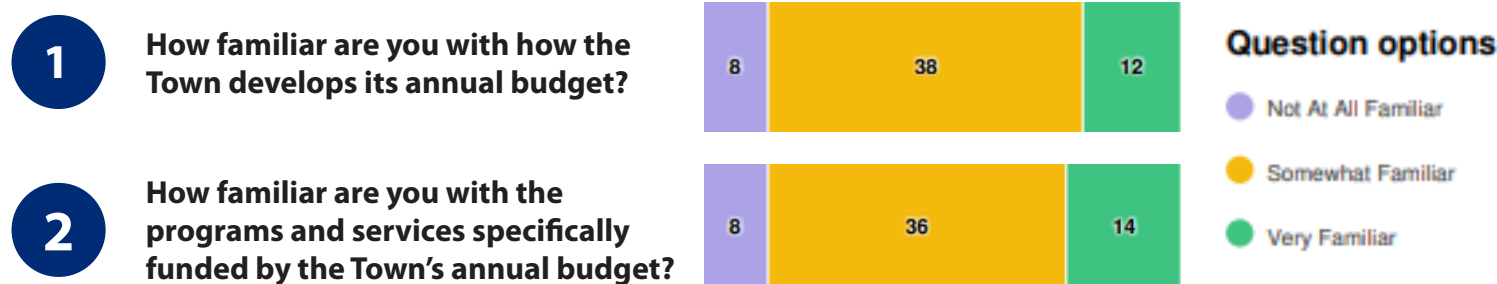
Survey Results

Budget 2021: Survey Respondent Information

How did you find out about this survey?



In order to gauge resident knowledge of the Town's budget process, we started the survey with the following two questions:



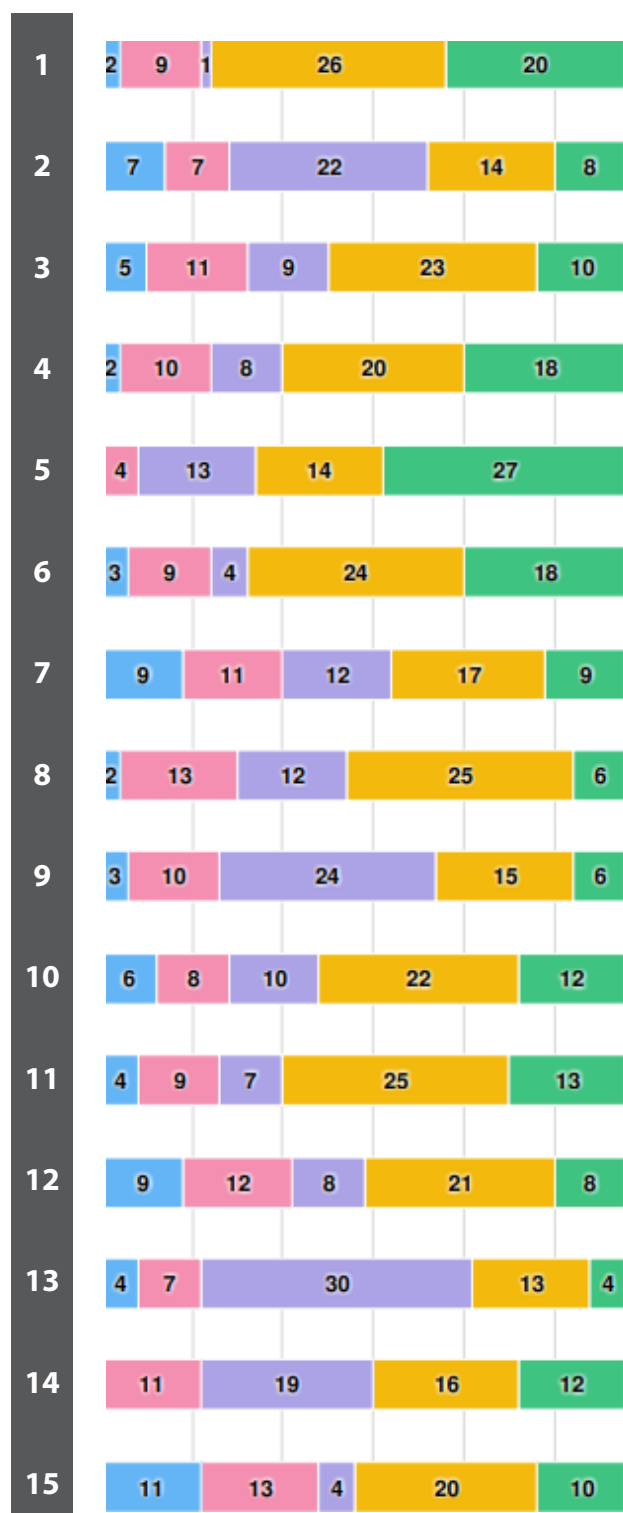
Survey Results *(continued)*

Budget 2021: Satisfaction of Municipal Services

To better understand resident priorities and thoughts on how the Town currently manages its finances, we asked participants to rank each Town-provided program/service between "very satisfied" and "very dissatisfied". Here are the results:

1. How satisfied are you with how these Town-provided services/programs are currently being delivered within our community?

1. Infrastructure Services
2. Public Transit
3. Licensing, Bylaw and Enforcement
4. Police Services
5. Fire Department, Prevention and Emergency Planning
6. Parks Maintenance and Development
7. Managing Tax Dollars
8. Planning Heritage Conservation, and Residential, Commercial and Industrial Development
9. Permits, Inspections and Enforcement
10. Customer Service
11. Information-sharing and Community Engagement
12. Promoting Economic Development
13. Small Business Supports
14. Community Emergency Preparedness
15. Management of the Cobourg Beach, Marina and Waterfront



Survey Results *(continued)*

Budget 2021: Satisfaction of Municipal Services

Open-ended survey question:

Please use the space below to share any additional feedback about why you selected certain answers in the previous question.

Here's what the community told us:

There seems to be zero happening on Economic Development or if there is, there's no visibility. — CobourgJohn

The questions so far are designed to support requests for more funds. Satisfied....keep doing this or unsatisfied....spend more to improve No questions about should the Town be providing this service. eg transit. Some facilities/services grouped together when they should be separate. eg Beach, Marina, Waterfront. Why is the VPC (campground) excluded? This facility needs major upgrading (cost \$\$\$\$). — B

For undecided, primarily because there has been too often heard that an 'operations' matter justifies insufficient reporting to Council (public) on impacts and adequacy of implementing policy. And frankly, much work by various departments is very good (what can be seen by public or personal experience with service) but sometimes could be better. Exception is communications which is getting too complicated (e.g. needing many links or taps to get where you want to go) and needs clearer focus on the 'business' aspect of town services i.e. day to day matters. — miriam.m

It would be helpful to have a category for don't use/don't know; i.e. I don't use transit and don't know much about it other than hearsay. I gave infrastructure a lower score because of the state of broken pavers on the East Beach Promenade. In addition, in my area of town, I find the sidewalks narrow, uneven and very dark; i.e. trip hazards if I want to walk after dark. Re: Small Business Supports - I am aware of the County initiative but nothing town-related? Kudos to the town for the HUGE improvement in information sharing/community engagement. It is so much better than it was under the previous council. I am especially looking forward to the new CAO's implementation plan following up the KPMG report. Re: Customer service - I gave it somewhat satisfied because Brent Larmer, Teresa Behan and Laurie Wills give EXCELLENT service. A lot of website info has been really poor; e.g. I could not find any info on public skating at the CCC. I had to call them Nov. 27th. — Lydia

We need to start increasing user fees. Transit and CCC fees have not increased but taxes have been increasing every year. Need to look at transit and reduce service levels to match usage. Empty buses cost money and does not help reduce the effects on climate change. — CobourgProud

I think the trailer park is a waste of money and used by only a select few. The closure of Victoria beach caused a major upheaval for residents and the heritage harbour pollution/closures added to the problems. Overall the waterfront in Cobourg is poorly managed. The boat storage area is a waste of space. Money was spent on special bylaw officers that would have been spent on making beach accessible for residents. It's a shame how many businesses have closed and shuttered in Cobourg. — EcoGreen

Stricter enforcement of property standards and parking in neighborhoods is required. Bylaws must be enforced 24/7. Overall I'm very happy with fiscal management of the town. Police and Fire, in particular, do an excellent job and do considerable community outreach. — Smsat

The town needs to adapt to modern citizen expectations. — CWILL

1. Public works - excellent 2. Police - not great service considering the very high cost 3. Waterfront / Parks maintenance -- not good when considering sidewalk pavers missing or sink holes, grass missing in waterfront park, pot holes in parking lots, dredging and cleaning of boat ramp 4. Public engagement is very limited. Communication is good but communication is not engagement. Communication is a monologue which is somewhat limited whereas engagement means "to mesh" and can be very productive 5. Tourism should be paid for by those who benefit, the businesses, and not the taxpayer 6. Management of the marina. One question - who is managing the marina, Exactly who, and what is their mandate or guiding principles. It is clear that maintenance and development are two very different things (as question ahead). — Ted Williams

Why didn't the Town opt for electric or hybrid busses? Wasted opportunity. We spend too much on Police Services and not enough on helping residents. — Eastender

I keep a sailboat at the marina. Over the past 35 years I have kept a variety of boats at a number of different marinas in Ontario and Cobourg is one of the best. — Mike H

Survey Results *(continued)*

Budget 2021: Satisfaction of Municipal Services

Open-ended survey question (continued):

Please use the space below to share any additional feedback about why you selected certain answers in the previous question.

Here's what the community told us:

Improved paths connecting west beach boardwalk with the marina sidewalks. On busy days, it can be harrowing trying to cross the parking lot at the marina. In terms of sustainable economic development, it seems to be a waste of resources to allow new stores to be built when there are so many empty facilities in town. — Alyson

The CCC is a financial drain and its budget should be cut drastically. Upgrades to the beach and marina should proceed slowly and forego any talk of a travel lift. — Jhilll

Large buses drive around town always empty. Another system needs to be devised. Why was a grant given to John Lee to replace windows at his pub when he owes the town so much money. This was a very poor decision and he should never have received these funds. Why are there no curbs on Bond Street? There are no heritage street signs at corner of James and Bond Streets. — Sally Wade

Personally, I find the town is excellent shape. A garden town with trees, clean, with any assistance required from the town staff or the police dealt with in kindly, friendly and efficient manner. — Maggie's Mom

I feel that the police services costs are too high...there should be sharing between Port Hope and Cobourg... Emergency calls should not be shunted so far away that the dispatcher does not know the town and valuable time is lost trying to explain just where the bandshell is in Victoria Park. — VJT

Town Council seems like where good ideas get turned into unnecessary Bylaws. There are so many legacy issues that the town doesn't deal with. We lead the Province in so many unsavory categories that it is really difficult to call ourselves 'the feel good town' anymore. — D.S.

Tourism and Arts and Culture should be a separate category. — Greg

Lack of enforcement of some by-laws. — ffletcher3

The process by which residents can gain access to council or to specific departments is most cumbersome and take far too long. — verbum

Though good in certain areas, the Town has not made a genuine commitment to carrying out any overall waterfront plan. — Richard Pope

Many roads need resurfacing. Do not agree with the money spent promoting the beach and tourism. Too many people come to the beach and bring their own food and spend nothing in town. We then have to clean up the mess. Lets help the homeless or women at the Centre of Violence. — Mandy

I would like to see fewer restrictions on development because of the priority given to heritage. We are not a museum. — Maureen Dowling Holloway

Infrastructure Is the current infrastructure in Cobourg city capable of withstanding flooding in east, west north and south. What modifications to infrastructure need to be completed to manage risks for tax payers? What is the plan? Public Transit could be modified as recommended in KPMG survey results to minimize costs. Police Services Managing these services for the safety of all taxpayers is appreciated and the new "netting infrastructure" is appreciated. Random graffiti in Cobourg takes away from the beauty of the community. Establish a place for graffiti in Cobourg so that graffiti art can be appreciated in an appropriate environment. Ensure random graffiti is minimized. Surveys should have a mandatory number of participants in order to be representative of taxpayers. Marketing of survey should be completed by the consultant and metrics established for participation. If heritage is an important aspect of Cobourg then homes designated heritage that are also vacant should have processes for owners to compel them to maintain these homes at heritage standards or pay the Community of Cobourg upfront to maintain them. Promotion of Economic Development. Cobourg needs new business. Cobourg is a small community that needs to manage its costs, so the division of responsibilities between county and city should be reviewed and things that are out of reach of the city might be better considered by the county i.e. grants for developing housing modifications. — P Hacking

Survey Results *(continued)*

Budget 2021: Satisfaction of Municipal Services

Open-ended survey question (continued):

Please use the space below to share any additional feedback about why you selected certain answers in the previous question.

Here's what the community told us:

generally I feel there is too much money spent on hiring town employees and services provided do not improve. Also some services are extraneous such as event planners etc hired by Dean Hustwick who is now fortunately gone and is hopefully not replaced. If he is replaced this steady building of the community services dept needs to be reigned in and is the constant promotion of town employees. I listened to the head engineering (who I think is now head of public works) request more engineering staff as 1/3 is off sick at any given time. The hiring of additional planners is also not needed, the position of heritage planner should be 1/2 time and the other 1/2 regular planner. I see the public works, sewer, parks and rec, bylaw trucks driving around the trailer park and the parking lots in the vicinity doing absolutely nothing. The marina staff driving around from the marina to the trailer park office and hiding in there. This working from home is a load of baloney and we the tax payer is paying for this. Thousands of private sector employees have been laid off yet not one town of cobourg staff member has. Why can't they be laid off and collect cerb, EI like everyone else if they are not needed? And the sick leave allowances make ME sick . If the engineering dept has that many sick so does every other dept. — northumberlan

Survey should have included a 'choice = Don't know' for instance Community Emerg Prep. Also, given the contentious issues of the marina and waterfront in general I would have preferred that be separated from 'Beach'. — Participation

Street lights are poor. — Suellen

I would suggest that a 6th response be included with a potential header / title of: "Not Applicable". An example of where I would have utilized this response would have been for "Public Transport" as I have never utilized this municipal service. — Ron Smith

Enforcement is lacking in the park-bylaws not adhered to. Building permits are not handed out equally to residents Towns bylaws are not consistent and can be altered at will. — Francis

The main bylaw officer spends the summer watching Netflix using the marina wifi right outside my residence. I have hours of him doing so on camera. So many staff members are focussed on finding problems rather than solutions. There are always studies, consultants and surveys without tangible results. The beach could be a money maker and have space for summer kiosks and youth employment. There is no creative thinking in this town. So many resources are wasted. — AlisonS

The magnificence of our waterfront could be purposed to be economically healthy for other than strictly commercial/tourist purposes which only entertain or distract. We are heading into an existential climate crisis where Cobourg could become a leading centre offering ideas, courses, and education on how to navigate our way into the very near future with hope that is coupled with actionable strategies that are attractive to all. I have loads of ideas. — Beach Sanctuary

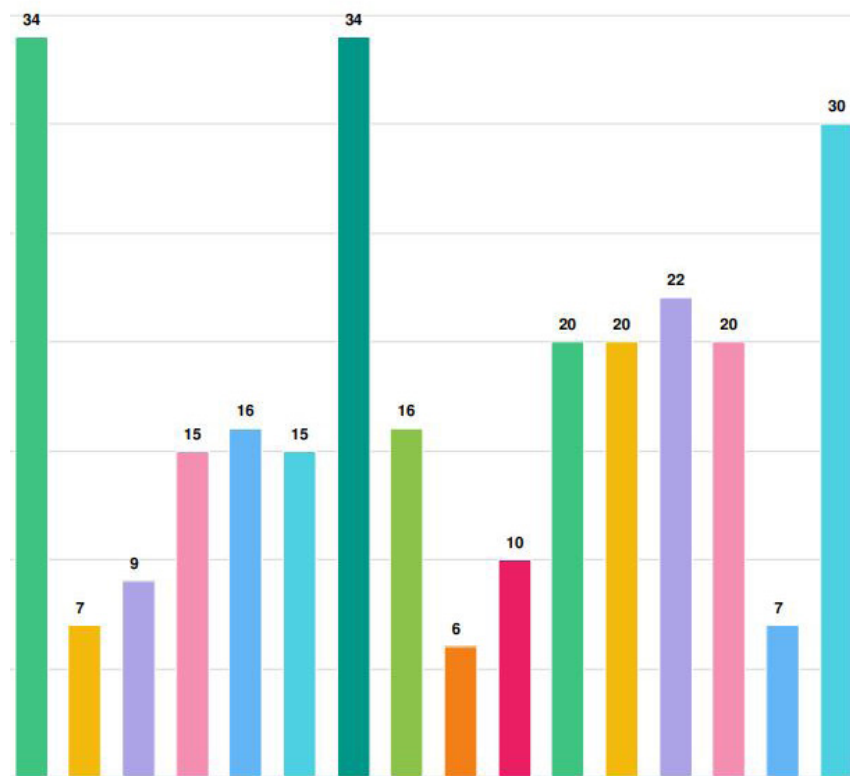
Poor police service, officers do not help when you are a victim. — Cobourgresident

Survey Results *(continued)*

Budget 2021: Priorities Moving Forward

As the Town moves forward with long-term financial planning, we asked residents to identify programs and services that should be priority areas of focus. **Here are the results** (listed below from highest priority to lowest priority based on survey results):

- 1. Infrastructure Services
- 2. Managing Tax Dollars
- 3. Management of the Cobourg Beach, Marina and Waterfront
- 4. Small Business Supports
- 5. Information-sharing and Community Engagement
- 6. Promoting Economic Development
- 7. Stimulating Development of Affordable Housing
- 8. Fire Department, Prevention and Emergency Planning
- 9. Planning Heritage Conservation, and Residential, Commercial and Industrial Development
- 10. Parks Maintenance and Development
- 11. Police Services
- 12. Customer Service
- 13. Licensing, Bylaw and Enforcement
- 14. Public Transit
- 15. Community Emergency Preparedness
- 16. Permits, Inspections and Enforcement



**The services on the left are listed from highest priority to lowest priority based on the survey results. The order does not correspond with the graph above. Instead, please refer to the colour legend.*

Survey Results *(continued)*

Budget 2021: Priorities Moving Forward

Open-ended survey question:

Please use the space below to share any additional feedback related to the previous question.

Here's what the community told us:

Infrastructure work is good but does not need enhancing; economic development should either be done more effectively or give up on it. — CobourgJohn

Once again, the questions are biased towards INCREASING spending. No questions about REDUCING service or better yet IMPROVING efficiency. Some facilities/services grouped together when they should be separate. eg Beach, Marina, Waterfront. Why is the VPC (campground) excluded? This facility needs major upgrading (cost \$\$\$\$). Police cost are excessive but the Town has no means to control this. Budget set by CPSB. Is the Town lobbying the province to change how police funding and accountability is handled? — B

Cobourg is on growing edge of the GTA and needs to improve planning and development services (more staff, more expertise in specific areas) to reflect increasing pressures from GTA savvy developers. Otherwise we will be preyed upon by development proposals which will unfairly burden public services like emergency response/support and housing affordability. — miriam.m

I did not select Promoting Ec Dev because I don't think municipal government should be involved in this other than to create a business-friendly environment; i.e. cut through the red tape and get out of competition with local real estate agents. Businesses should look after their own interests; i.e. figure out what customers want and give it to them to bring them in. This is not a taxpayer's role. — lydia

Budgeting and managing finances need to be significantly improved. Expenditures should be shown in the month/quarter that they occur. Quarterly reporting should be done on a schedule and not 3 to 6 months after. — CobourgProud

No more investment in the marina - ie travel lift. or the trailer park. — EcoGreen

Support police in dealing with drug enforcement. Support by law by holding vacant landlords accountable for the condition of their property, driving housing values down. Support local businesses. — CWIII

Some of these are done at the County level. Why duplicate services? — Spiritdancer

We have a beautiful waterfront and our focus should be maintenance and not development. Please Open the Beach to locals on week-days. Please Parks spending has been in "run away mode" for some years. Let's stop and see where we are in keeping up what we have. We need to stop with the large busses - I haven't studied this area but there must be a better way (including wheel trans). Once Covid is done we should initiate town hall meetings — Ted Williams

We should go to a 100% volunteer Fire Services model. I don't want to see any money going to Marina. — Eastender

Every possible step should be taken to keep downtown vibrant and occupied. Sprawl is very damaging. You do not want to mirror Ajax, my past place of residence. — Mike H

Affordable and supported housing are urgently required to ensure people are not sleeping on the streets of Cobourg. — Alyson

Cooperation with the County on housing should be the main objective. Stop making Northumberland a patchwork in housing provision. Let the County Housing Corporation do its job. — Jhill

See above re police services. I feel too much emphasis is given to encouraging tourism at the cost of local business... — VJT

The CCC loses 7 figures a year/Brookside pays minimal property tax/Sidmore the same. Until it was sold to a newco with 120% take-back financing, our Mall was Timbercreek's REIT's one insolvent property investment in their multi-national portfolio. This in the period of Cobourg's greatest property boom. The Mall should/could be one of our greatest commercial taxpayers. Our population is the same as the mid 1990's but, the demographics have changed: the business exodus (and tax base is eroded); Fleming College that used to boast 1000 students in 2011 now has none. - compared to other communities along the 401 corridor (Belleville/Ajax) our Econ Dev and new business development is NON existent. -more than 50% of our population is over 50. -our labour participation rate just passed 60% for the first time. -we lead the province in

Survey Results *(continued)*

Budget 2021: Priorities Moving Forward

Open-ended survey question (continued):

Please use the space below to share any additional feedback related to the previous question.

Here's what the community told us:

OAS/Disability claims. -8 of our top 10 employers are government or gov't agencies. -we have one of the lowest high school graduation rates in the Province with no post secondary skills training. -other Ontario communities our size use the OPP not a local Police Force.(our biggest expense) -our local V13 small business incubator competes with the County. -the CCC competes with the not-for-profit YMCA. - we are totally maxed-out in terms of providing water/waste provision for new development ...etc.... — D.S.

The town should be looking at ways to reduce the tax cost. With the level of activity at the fire department the town should be looking at reducing this high cost footprint. — Paul Whitehead

Council and all departments have to be as transparent as possible under the current laws— Greg

Small businesses are going to need local support coming out of 2020 — ffletcher3

Council and staff need to focus on the town's future, which does not lie solely on tourism—on which there is too much emphasis. Cobourg residents pay higher taxes than areas of Toronto which is absurd. The town needs a preparedness plan for emergencies such as pandemics and flooding. — Verbum

Believe costly police & fire departments are overstaffed. Need more rationale for budgets and manpower — Brian Wynn

We desperately need affordable rental housing. — Mandy

Try to keep the taxes of tax payers lower so that people can afford to live here for years to come and so that we attract new residents. The current amenities that Cobourg offers i.e. hospital, library, health services, access to via rail and 401, waterfront and safety are welcome. I am happy for the councillors and mayor in Cobourg who are trying to make the right decisions. Embrace the community opinion in a range of forums because it is through diversity of opinion that we become better at decision making and arrive at the best results for a community of this size. Keep bringing in new business without tax reductions please. — P Hacking

There needs to be more affordable housing. — Cobourgresident

Survey Results *(continued)*

Budget 2021: **Most Important Issues**

We asked residents to rank the issues they believe to be the most important issues facing the Town of Cobourg at the present time.

Here are the results:

**Listed below from most important to least important based on survey results.*



Economy / Jobs / Economic Issues



Property Taxes



Safety and Crime Prevention



Environmental Issues / Sustainability



Cost of Living



Access to Housing / Accommodations



Governance and Transparency

eg. Bylaws, Government Relations, Community Engagement



Quality of Transportation Infrastructure



Community Emergency Preparedness



Culture and Heritage Conservation

Survey Results *(continued)*

Budget 2021: Most Important Issues

Open-ended survey question:

Recognizing that not all issues fall under the Town of Cobourg jurisdiction, if you believe the most important issue facing the Town at the present time was not listed above, please identify this issue below.

Here's what the community told us:

Providing facilities/services efficiently and appropriate for the residents ability to pay. Cost of living is an important consideration, but one that the Town has little ability to control other than keeping its fees/taxes in line. — B

On quality of transportation infrastructure I take this to include active transportation as part of this item. Accessibility and integrated transport network for individual self-determination in day to day living (getting to work, shopping, school, etc.). Aim for a community and transport system suitable — miriam.m

I think the most important thing is to continue to foster a culture of community and accountability. I have heard residents described as apathetic. My experience has been that they have become resigned because they weren't being heard/considered. I would like to see the knowledge base of our community harnessed for the good of Cobourg. I would also like staff to be more accountable. We all make mistakes. My experience has been that they have rarely been acknowledged - possible out of fear/cover your butt? I would like to see them used as teaching moments that would lead to overall improvement/excellence. — Lydia

Recommendations from the KPMG report need to be emphatically addressed. There are many good insights and they need to be implemented. — CobourgProud

I didn't want to have to number all of them, because I see some of them as irrelevant. — Spiritdancer

I believe our taxes could be reduced. Can we not use our residents talent and time to volunteer to fill in some of the things we want to accomplish. Example - tree planting. This would build a more fulfilling community. — Ted William

Relocating the Transition House shelter to a better location where overflow people can be accommodated without negatively impacting surrounding neighbours. — Alyson

Waste collection, maintenance of county roads such as Elgin, Burnham streets. — Maggie's mom

Involving young people in their community... — VJT

Waterfront Management and generating tourism dollars. — MJ

Our Conservative MPP is the Parliamentary Secretary for Colleges and Universities--yet, his riding is the one community along the 401 corridor between Ottawa and Windsor that does NOT have any post secondary skills training. Fleming had 1000 students in 2011 and zero now. Why did we let that go?....Where do our kids go when they finish high school?....where do they go to work and pay taxes?....Sadly, unless they are a teacher, or nurse or fireman---not locally. In addition--It was the student labour that kept businesses like Weston here. Not accidentally-- Weston just expanded it's Kingston and Belleville facilities.... - By far, our largest employers are Provincial Agencies and we lead the Province in residents receiving gov't benefits. Long term this has not been and cannot be NOT a growth strategy in the future. We absolutely need to create an environment that attracts PRIVATE Capital investment and not always government support. Redpath Sugar just announced it's going to Belleville...Google is opening in Durham.....Amazon in Ajax..... Q:What do these lakeshore communities alongthe 401 have that we don't? A: they've created an Econ Dev value proposition at all levels of gov't that is attractive to private industry. (tax/labour/land/access/infrastructure) - Other examples?--my "local" dentist lives in Toronto; my "local" Doctor lives in Ajax' my "local" Eye Doctor lives in Belleville; ----these professionals don't pay taxes here if they don't live here. — D.S.

Improvement of efficiency in labour intensive departments. — Paul Whitehead

I wish I could have listed more as irrelevant to the town, for example the county is involved in providing affordable the town does not need to be — northumberlan

Survey Results *(continued)*

Budget 2021: **Most Important Issues**

Open-ended survey question (continued):

Recognizing that not all issues fall under the Town of Cobourg jurisdiction, if you believe the most important issue facing the Town at the present time was not listed above, please identify this issue below.

Here's what the community told us:

Don't feel the Town of Cobourg should subsidize housing when it is the County's responsibility — Francis

Water and sewer infrastructure is as or more important than transportation infrastructure. So it's really my number one. The rest as noted. Affordable housing i feel ultimately lies outside of the town's responsibility, but I recognize the town has a role to play and also it goes hand in hand with cost of living, policing and environment/sustainability. — mchatten

We need to impliment a well trained and experienced procurement dept. to deal with all spending over \$500.00 with appropriate staff reductions in the key dept. in order to save money and purchase smarter. — StanBGray

I nearly quit this survey right here on #6. Why insist that every item be ranked? Note that my #1,2,3 ranks are sincere and #4-10 were barely reflected on. — Beach Sanctuary

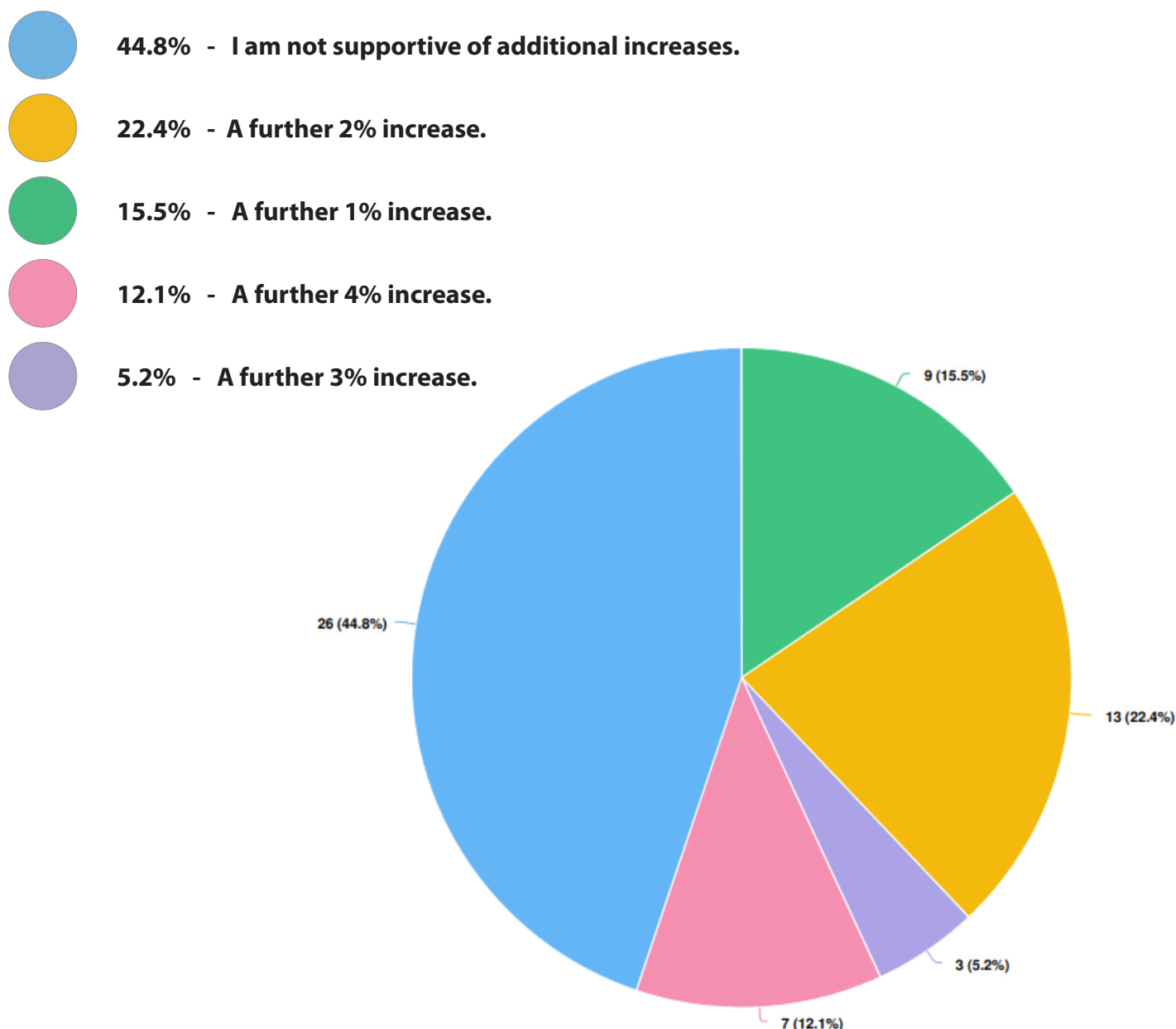
Parks and recreation updates, police misconduct — Cobourgresident

Survey Results *(continued)*

Budget 2021: Targeted Tax Increase

We informed survey participants that the Town is targeting a tax increase in the range of 0 to 1% for the 2021 budget year. In the face of budget pressures, we asked residents if they would be willing to pay a further increase in your property taxes to maintain or expand levels of services? Here are the results:

Would you be willing to pay a further increase in your property taxes to maintain or expand levels of services?



Survey Results *(continued)*

Budget 2021: Additional Considerations

Open-ended survey question:

Are there any other key considerations you would like staff to keep in mind during the financial planning process?

Here's what the community told us:

Cobourg is a great place to live - let's not mess that up. — CobourgJohn

Q8. Presenting the question using trivialized data is very misleading. State what the TOTAL dollar impact is. This question "assumes" an average property tax of about \$1,165. This seems unrealistically LOW. This survey seems to be biased towards INCREASING the tax levy rather than reducing it. — B

A tax increase should not be on top of additional tax collected because property value went up. First determine how much additional tax would be collected due to enhanced property values town wide, i.e. 0 as base line. And, I hope keeping a building vacant does not warrant a tax deduction anywhere, any class type. — miriam.m

I would like them to look at ways they could eliminate waste (time and effort) while improving efficiencies and customer service. Staff and their departments should be recognized/rewarded for these efforts so they would start to think in those terms. Having sold to government departments during my career, those departments who didn't spend their budget were often punished by having their budgets cut the following year. That way of thinking really needs to change. — lydia

Not to present a wish list but really look at those items that are really essential. Look at partnering with companies and institutions. (eg. Capitol Theatre in Port Hope has Cameco as a significant sponsor). We should do something similar with the CCC (eg. lease the naming of the CCC to a company). — CobourgProud

Try to find some ways to attract businesses to downtown Cobourg. — EcoGreen

Taxes in Cobourg are already high. — Spiritdancer

Hire new home "inspectors" I have heard horror stories. Lets hire inspectors who affect our biggest investment instead of hiring consultants for cultural master plans. — Ted Williams

We need to rein in Police Services spending. We should reduce the size of Council by eliminating 2 Councillor positions. We need stop taxpayer funding of Marina and dredging. We should curtail Parks spending on plants, trees and flowers for 2021 and concentrate on maintenance. We need to come up with a plan to get downtown business and building owners to maintain their properties or face fines. — Eastender

Illicit drugs and the collateral damages from them. Support to our policing (better training to bring them up to OPP training level, resources, etc) — Cattiva

Let's go to zero based budgeting. — Jhill

It will be important to ensure small businesses survive the COVID pandemic. Assistance should be provided to them if required. — Sally Wade

Any chance that sidewalk clearing and scooping of snow so as not to block the driveways can be considered. The equipment does exist and is in use by other municipalities. — Maggie's mom

attract more industrial and commercial businesses to increase the tax base. Residents especially Seniors can't support and carry extra tax burden. Develop eco friendly businesses — MJ

We are one of the most over-taxed citizen groups in Ontario. That is okay if we 1) have a growth and development plan. 2) can demonstrate good corporate governance. 3) can deal with legacy issues that get kicked down the road by each consecutive council. 4) we undertake some timely reporting and disclosure of financials (including related holdco's) 5) Projects don't sit in our Planning Dept for decades. — D.S.

Survey Results *(continued)*

Budget 2021: Additional Considerations

Open-ended survey question (continued):

Are there any other key considerations you would like staff to keep in mind during the financial planning process?

Here's what the community told us:

The financial requirements of each department may be above or below the tax increases in the budget and as long as the total tax increase is maintained some departments may need more funds and others less. I believe that all of the department heads need to have regular monthly meetings to discuss their departments needs. I have been informed that this is not common practice as of now. — Greg

Compared with other areas Cobourg taxes are high — ffletcher3

Look at charging visitors for various services such as lifeguards, beach access, etc. Many other jurisdiction do this. — Verbum

Detailed comparison analysis of police/fire department/staff manpower & budgets to similar 20,000 population towns — Brian Wynn

Reduce funding on Tourism — Mandy

Restrain spending until the community is in a better place for making improvements. Recognize the deficits and build up the reserves. — P Hacking

stop hiring and promoting and being sick — northumberlan

This is the era of Covid, lost jobs, reduced disposable income, significant spending on our behalf to prop up hospitals, people and economy. — Participation

Each department should start with a 0 budget and need to justify every penny in there budget and not just to say they need a certain amount of money. Just asking for a increase percentage is not good enough. — Francis

We pay too much and get too little. The town needs to spend some time coming up with streams of revenue and selling off items that cost rather than earn. Creative thinking is required rather than doing the same thing repeatedly year after year. — AlisonS

Stop adding structural on going departments and staff to the town, ie. communication dept has gone from virtually 0 to \$200K without a value assessment. — StanBGray

Due to Covid this is not a year to be adding new services, infrastructure or staff. Keep spending to a minimum. — Kevin

I am rather skeptical of further police/security issues that are invasive of privacy. For example, I am opposed to blanketing this lovely town in cameras for endless surveillance. I sincerely wonder just how much threat "gangs from Toronto" pose to Cobourg and how cameras might deter that. — Beach Sanctuary

I want to provide some input regarding this item in the draft 2021 budget. I must admit that I was surprised to see this item had reappeared..... thought it had been discarded some time ago. The draft budget includes \$30,000 for it, with the comment that the Town feels it's worth \$10,000 in order to receive a government grant of \$20,000. I strongly oppose this rationale.....why waste \$10,000 of Cobourg Residents' money to receive a grant that, together will be a total waste. I moved to Cobourg from Brampton 16 years ago. A few years prior, Brampton installed a rather elaborate system whereby a series of outdoor exercise equipment was set up. The initial enthusiasm very soon wore off. Town staff were required to maintain it but soon the equipment became overgrown with weeds etc. I am confident that if we have similar equipment here, the same thing will happen! — Keith Matthews

Survey Results *(continued)*

Budget 2021: Comments and Suggestions

Open-ended survey question:

Please share any further comments or suggestions you have about any of the topics covered in this survey.

Here's what the community told us:

Surveys are good - but participation needs to be significant - at least 1000 responses. — CobourgJohn

Overall, I think the Town of Cobourg has been managed well financially. It is a fine balance to maintain and protect what makes Cobourg unique and a good place to live while delivering quality services with a vision for a strong and resilient future. I would like to see less emphasis on attracting tourists and more about making Cobourg visitable for both citizens and visitors. And, designated reserves may need more attention in light of increasing need to consider sustainability and impacts of climate change. — miriam.m

Good for you that you are doing this survey and giving residents a chance to have their say. Well done! — lydia

Cobourg is the best place we have ever lived in. We need to keep it affordable and not spend it on expensive undertakings. Most people are quite happy with keeping the waterfront in its natural state and we should do that. Also, I have always found the town staff very helpful and willing to make things better. I am pleased with their customer service. — CobourgProud

Why are there no questions about promoting diversity in this survey? As a visible minority I can tell you that there is plenty of discrimination and racism in Cobourg. Your existing waterfront and business policies promote and cater to a primarily white, wealthy and elderly population. Cobourg has established itself up as a refuge for white elite fleeing the diversity of the "hordes" of Toronto. We will never grow and thrive until we reflect the changing demographics of our country. — EcoGreen

I hope the restoration of the pier is in the plans for the near future. Understanding COVID-19 may force a delay, the area needs to be restored before it becomes a much larger issue. Thank you all for your care and participation in our community. — Mike Jone

Thank you for the opportunity to participate. — Spiritdancer

This is one of the best surveys I have seen. It was thoughtfully created and allowed personal suggestions. I so admire the work of both council and staff. I wish there was a way to get back to basics and reduce the long council meetings. It is becoming difficult for the public to stay interested over a 3 hour meeting. With thanks — Ted William

Continual focus on promoting the Town as a Destination because of the beach and a run down downtown has been proved to be ineffective. The town needs an economic base that provides well paying jobs not government assisted support offices to hand out monthly support payments. Until the Council stops being run like a high school and puts in place personnel to provide a vision based on solid business acumen we're doomed to more of the same....raise taxes and look for government handouts. Shame on councils past and present for looking for the easy way out. —wraybae

The change in Mayor and police chief to the current has been a GREAT thing. — Cattiva

The Mayor and Councillors do an excellent job representing the citizens of Cobourg. Thank you for your service. — Sally Wade

I believe the town is doing excellent job on our behalf. I also understand and am willing to pay more in property taxes to maintain the quality of life we have in Cobourg. — Maggie's mom

I would like to see more effort made for any changes to the town be for the residents not tourists...the Cobourg resident should be the priority of the Town employees..Council...police services... — VJT

new creative ideas and ingenuity will make Cobourg a leader in the area. — MJ

Survey Results *(continued)*

Budget 2021: Comments and Suggestions

Open-ended survey question (continued):

Please share any further comments or suggestions you have about any of the topics covered in this survey.

Here's what the community told us:

Several years ago, I sold my business located in Peterborough and Belleville. In those communities our company was actively engaged in recruiting & training several hundred staff and servicing corporate clients. We worked in co-operation with the Colleges and Municipal gov't for everyone's benefit. We grew fast. After the sale, my family moved here 5 years ago. We launched a small business here that now employs 20 and that is regrettably as large as it may get. We joke that the best way to make a million dollars in business in Cobourg is to start with \$2 million..... while that might seem trivial, there are real reasons for that. For example--while the Woodlawn Inn might not make it as a B&B , it might make it as a Rehab Clinic. That is how private capital has to make decisions and I think we have to start thinking about supporting whatever those decisions might be(or not interfere with them) because we've spent the last couple decades handing out Heritage Plaques to absentee landlords while other lakeshore communities like Ajax, Oakville and Belleville grow and prosper. Thank you— D.S.

Improvement of efficiency in labour intensive departments. — Paul Whitehead

I believe that transparency provides the best form of governance. — Greg

Identify areas for meaningful cost reductions vs. 2019/2020 — Brian Wynn

town council must get control of tax spending and stop pandering to staff. — northumberlan

Applaud the CTA website for letting me know of this survey. — participation

Communication is very poor between departments and the public. — Francis

We need some fresh and bold new thinking to meet the fast and furious tipping points this century will bring. — Beach Sanctuary

Homelessness in Cobourg more need to be done to help the homeless. — Cobourgresident