

**EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 17, 2015**

## 2 2014 CITIZEN SURVEY RESULTS

- 1) That the recommendation contained in the following report of the Commissioner of Strategic and Corporate Services and the Senior Manager of Strategic Planning, dated January 23, 2015, be approved; and
- 2) That the presentation by the Senior Manager of Strategic Planning and Mr. Leo Hussey, Vice President of Client Services, Forum Research Inc., Bloor Street West, Toronto, and C1, presentation material, entitled "*City of Vaughan: 2014 Citizen Survey Results FAA Presentation*", dated January 23, 2015, be received.

1. That the presentation material entitled "*City of Vaughan: 2014 Citizen Survey Results Presentation*", by Forum Research be received.

The Citizen Survey provides information on issues of concern to citizens, with specific topics related to environmental sustainability, including quality of life, clean environment, parks, open space and greenery.

There are no economic impacts associated with this report. However, the survey results can inform discussions regarding the 2015 Budget and the 2016-2018 Plan as a tool to assisting prioritizing financial resources amongst City programs/services.

The survey results will be presented publically at the Finance, Administration and Audit Committee meeting. Further, a press release and online communications will be used to communicate the results of the survey. The survey results will also be posted on the City's website.

The purpose of this report and presentation by Forum Research is to inform Committee, staff and the public on the key findings of the 2014 Citizen Survey Results.

Surveys are an important source of statistically valid, reliable and relevant feedback from citizens. Gathering residents' opinions on a number of key questions helps to inform strategic decision making processes for the Corporation by ensuring that the priorities which are set are aligned with the citizen needs/expectations/key issues of concern. The City of Vaughan has conducted citizen surveys since 2007 to assess citizen satisfaction with existing programs and services provided by the City, and to prioritize issues to improve municipal service delivery.

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The last Citizen Survey was conducted in February 2012 with 500 telephone surveys administered by Ipsos Reid. Questions were formulated to determine the most important issues facing the community, the quality of life in Vaughan, satisfaction and importance with service delivery, value for resident's tax dollars, and information requirements.

To build on the previous work, the City undertook a 2014 citizen survey initiative. The 2014 iteration included key questions from the previous surveys for benchmarking purposes, as well as new questions intended to address specific City issues.

The objectives of the 2014 Citizen Surveys were to:

- determine the overall impressions and identify top-of-mind issues toward the quality of life in the City of Vaughan;
- determine the level of satisfaction of services provided by the City of Vaughan (i.e. gap analysis);
- identify citizen perceptions and expectations concerning specific municipal planning priorities given current rapid growth;
- determine the level of satisfaction and importance with City communications, including how citizens would like to receive information and preferred ways of engagement in the future; and
- benchmark the results of the 2014 Citizen Survey with previous iterations.

As per Council direction, the City solicited proposals from qualified consultants in late August 2014 for the provision of professional citizen survey services. Forum Research Inc. has been awarded the contract. 800 telephone surveys were administered by Forum Research from November 19<sup>th</sup> to December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2014. The survey results are accurate to within +/- 3.45 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. This margin of error means that the results are applicable to the City population at large.

The Survey included questions on:

- Quality of life
- Satisfaction with delivery of services
- Interaction with City personnel
- Accessing Services online
- Financial Sustainability
- Communication with the city

#### Key Findings:

- 95% of respondents felt the quality of life in the City was very good or good;
- 90% of respondents were very or somewhat satisfied with the services provided overall;
- Fire services was rated as the most satisfied services with a combined score of 99% very or somewhat satisfied rating; in contrast, transportation network (including traffic flow and control) has the lowest combined satisfaction score of 39%;
- 80% of respondents were very or somewhat satisfied with the staff who provided the services;
- 72% of respondents believed they were receiving fairly good or very good value for their tax dollars, ;
- 46% of respondents indicated that the City of Vaughan should not increase taxes or user fees, even if it meant cuts to service;
- Key online programs/services of interest to citizens included online bill payments and program registration; and
- Preference towards the City's website as a way to receive information continues to strengthen.

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Respondents were asked to identify the most important issue they feel should receive the greatest attention from Council. The top 5 most important issues identified by respondents in 2014 and 2012 were:

2014	2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic congestion (29%)</li> <li>• Public transit transportation/subways (16%)</li> <li>• Taxes too high in general (7%)</li> <li>• Road maintenance (7%)</li> <li>• Overdevelopment/too much construction (5%)</li> <li>• Building the new hospital (5%)</li> <li>• Safety in my neighborhood/crime/drugs (5%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation (40%)</li> <li>• Taxation/municipal government spending (20%)</li> <li>• Healthcare (19%)</li> <li>• Education (8%)</li> <li>• Municipal government services (7%)</li> </ul>

The top 5 services delivered by the City of Vaughan deemed very or somewhat satisfactory in 2014 and 2012 were:

2014	2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire services (99%)</li> <li>• Vaughan Public Libraries (94%)</li> <li>• Recreation and fitness service programs (92%)</li> <li>• Recreation and fitness service facilities (92%)</li> <li>• Online services (91%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire Services (99%)</li> <li>• Vaughan Public Libraries (92%)</li> <li>• Garbage, recycling and green bins (91%)</li> <li>• Road snow removal (91%)</li> <li>• Recreation and fitness service programs (88%)</li> </ul>

When compared to historical results, the data showed statistically significant changes in satisfaction scores on the following services:

Service	2012	2014	Changes in Satisfaction Score
Arts and Culture	78%	90%	+12
Recreation and Fitness Service programs	88%	92%	+4
Parks and Green space	86%	90%	+4
End of driveway snow removal*	83%	76%	-7
Road snow removal*	91%	84%	-7
Sidewalk snow removal*	87%	77%	-10

\*The intensity and duration of the 2013/2014 winter season as well as the early start to the 2014//2015 winter season may explain the change in score between the two survey periods since the level of service has remained consistent.

The information gathered through the citizen survey will be used by staff to inform various planning processes (e.g. strategic planning, resource allocation, financial planning/budgeting, business planning and other initiatives such as the Program Review) to assist Council with decision making and policy direction.

#### Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020/Strategic Plan

The citizen survey provides feedback on the City's implementation of the Vaughan Vision 2020 strategic plan as well as satisfaction with city programs/services, and key issues facing the City moving forward.

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**Regional Implications**

Any regional implications will be identified in the survey results and shared with relevant staff at the Region.

**Conclusion**

The 2014 Citizen Survey provides citizen feedback on key issues and services that is statistically valid. This information can be used in the strategic planning process, decision making and in particular, confirming the strategic direction for the City.

**Attachments**

N/A

**Report prepared by**

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