

# 2016 Citizen Satisfaction Survey Results

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Committee of the Whole (Working Session)  
Wednesday, March 8th



# 2016 Citizen Satisfaction Survey

Presentation to the City of Vaughan

March 2017

**PRESENTER:**

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## BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

- Since 2007, the City of Vaughan has conducted citizen surveys to assess satisfaction with existing programs and services provided by the City and to prioritize issues in order to improve municipal service delivery.
- The objectives of the 2016 Citizen Satisfaction Survey are 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;
  - Identify citizen perceptions and expectations concerning specific municipal planning priorities given current rapid growth; and
  - Benchmark the results of the 2016 Citizen Survey with those from previous surveys.

# METHODOLOGY AND REPORTING CONVENTIONS

## Methodology

- The survey was conducted by telephone (CATI) between November 1 and 13, 2016.
- The survey was conducted among 800 respondents 18 years of age and older living in the City of Vaughan.
- The margin of error for a sample of n=800 completed interviews is +/- 3.5 %, nineteen times out of twenty.
- The results of the survey have been weighted based on age, gender and sub-region within the City of Vaughan to match the general population of the City of Vaughan based on 2011 Census data.

## Normative Comparisons

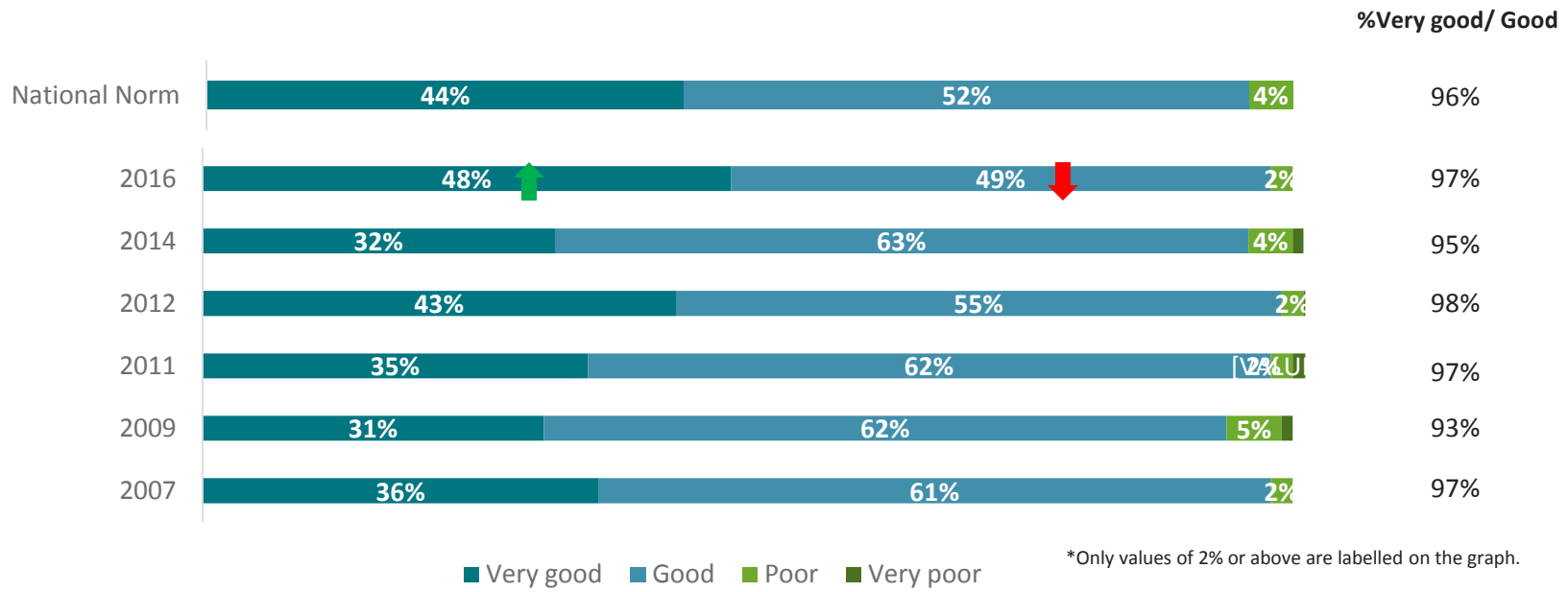
- Comparisons have been made between the results of the 2016 Vaughan Citizen Satisfaction Survey to Ipsos' database of municipal normative data where possible.
- This normative database is comprised of survey findings for select questions from other municipal government from across the country.

# ASSESSMENT OF LIFE IN VAUGHAN

# QUALITY OF LIFE

The overall perception of quality of life remains high (97% say very good or good) and is similar to 2014. But the proportion of residents who believe it is “very good” has increased significantly to half of residents (up 16 points from 2014).

Overall quality of life is similar to the national norm (97% vs. 96%, respectively), but the perception that it is very good is slightly higher (48% vs. 44%).



Q2. How would you rate the overall quality of life in the City of Vaughan today? Base: All respondents (excl. Dk/NA) 2016 (n=796); 2014 (n=797); 2012 (n=498); 2011 (n=500); 2009 (n=300); 2007 (n=300)

# MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES FACING COMMUNITY

Transportation-related issues continue to be top-of-mind among Vaughan residents. Six in ten (62%) residents cite transportation as the most important issue facing their community. One in ten each mention taxation and municipal government spending (13%), healthcare (11%) or growth or development (11%). Since 2014, there have been increases in mentions of many issues, particularly transportation.

	2014	2016
Transportation (NET)	50%	62% ↑
Taxation/ Municipal Government Spending (NET)	10%	13%
Healthcare (NET)	6%	11% ↑
Growth (NET)	7%	11% ↑
Parks/ Recreation/ Culture (NET)	-	6% ↑
Education (NET)	2%	5% ↑
Municipal Government Services (NET)	4%	4%
Crime (NET)	5%	4%
Social (NET)	2%	3%
Economy (NET)	1%	3%
Environment (NET)	-	1%

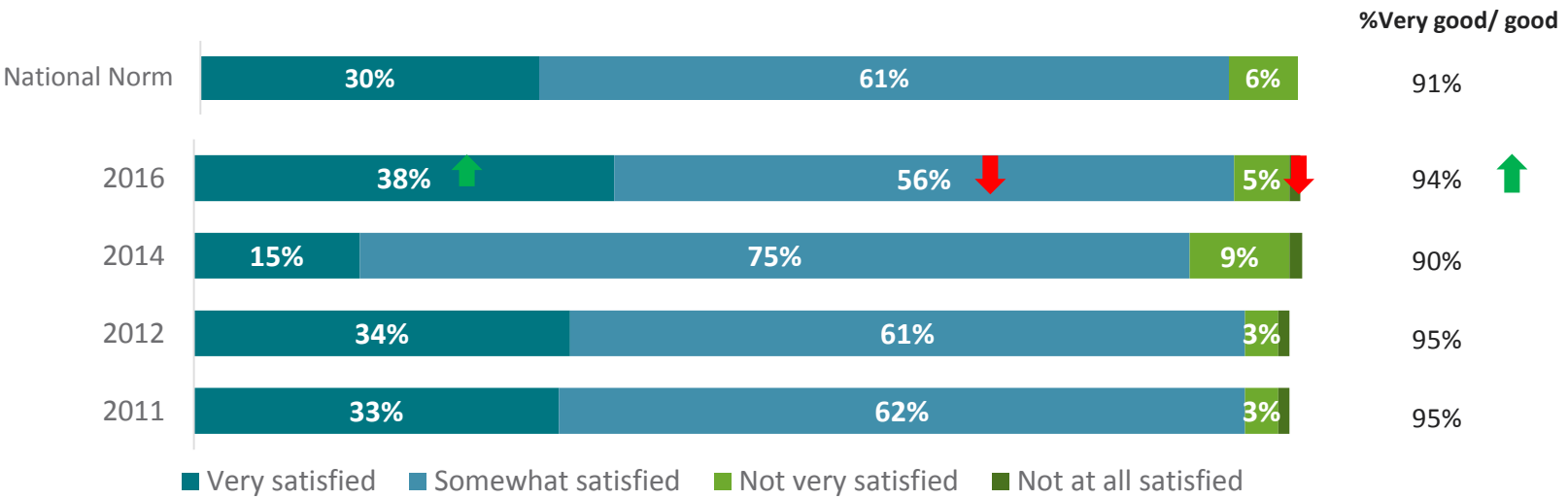
# SERVICE SATISFACTION



# OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH SERVICES

Satisfaction with City services continues to be very high. Currently, 94% of residents indicate that they are satisfied with the delivery of all services provided by the City of Vaughan; this figure is up four points from 2014. Moreover, there has been a significant increase of 23 points in the proportion who are “very satisfied.”

Overall satisfaction with services is on par with the national norm (94% vs. 91%, respectively), but the proportion of Vaughan residents who are “very satisfied” is significantly higher than the national norm (38% vs. 30%).



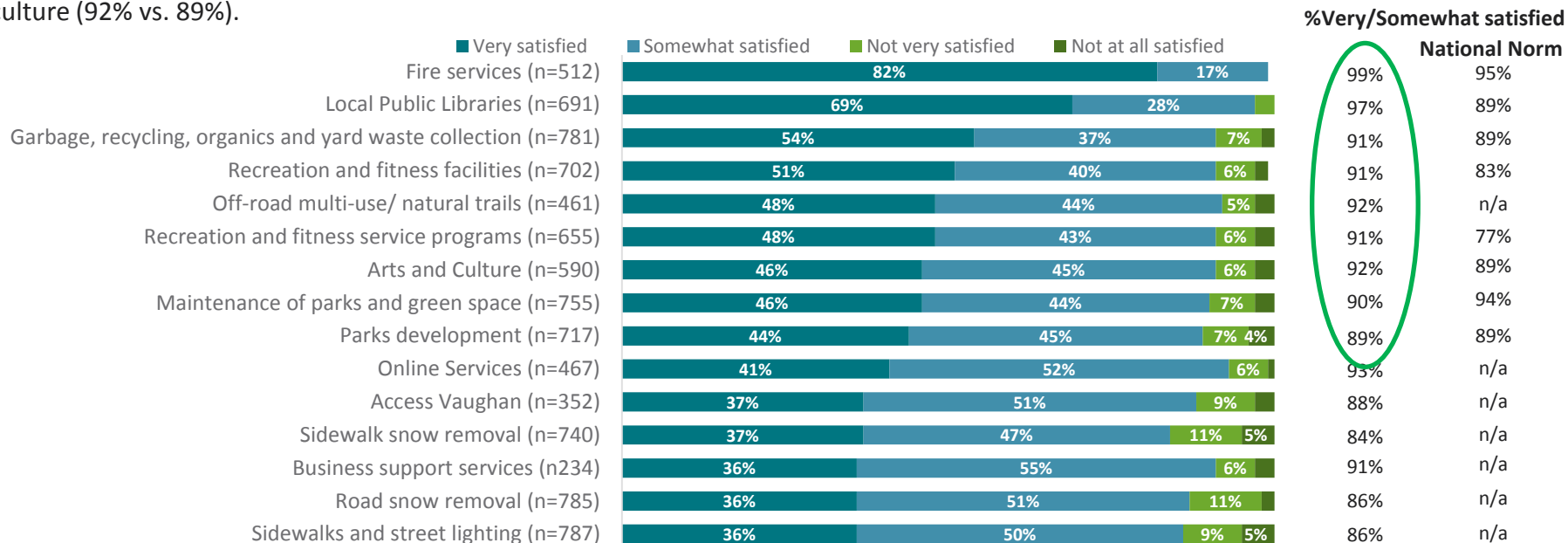
\*Only values of 3% or above are labelled on the graph.

Q3. Overall, how satisfied are you with the delivery of all the services provided by the City of Vaughan? Base: All respondents (excl.dk/na) 2016 (n=795); 2014 (n=780); 2012 (n=498); 2011 (n=500)

# SATISFACTION WITH INDIVIDUAL SERVICES (1)

Majorities of two-thirds of residents or more are satisfied with 23 out of 24 services provided by the City of Vaughan. Residents are most satisfied with fire services and Local Public Libraries (82% and 69%, respectively are “very satisfied”). More than half are also very satisfied with garbage, recycling, organics and yard waste collection (54%) and recreation and fitness facilities (51%).

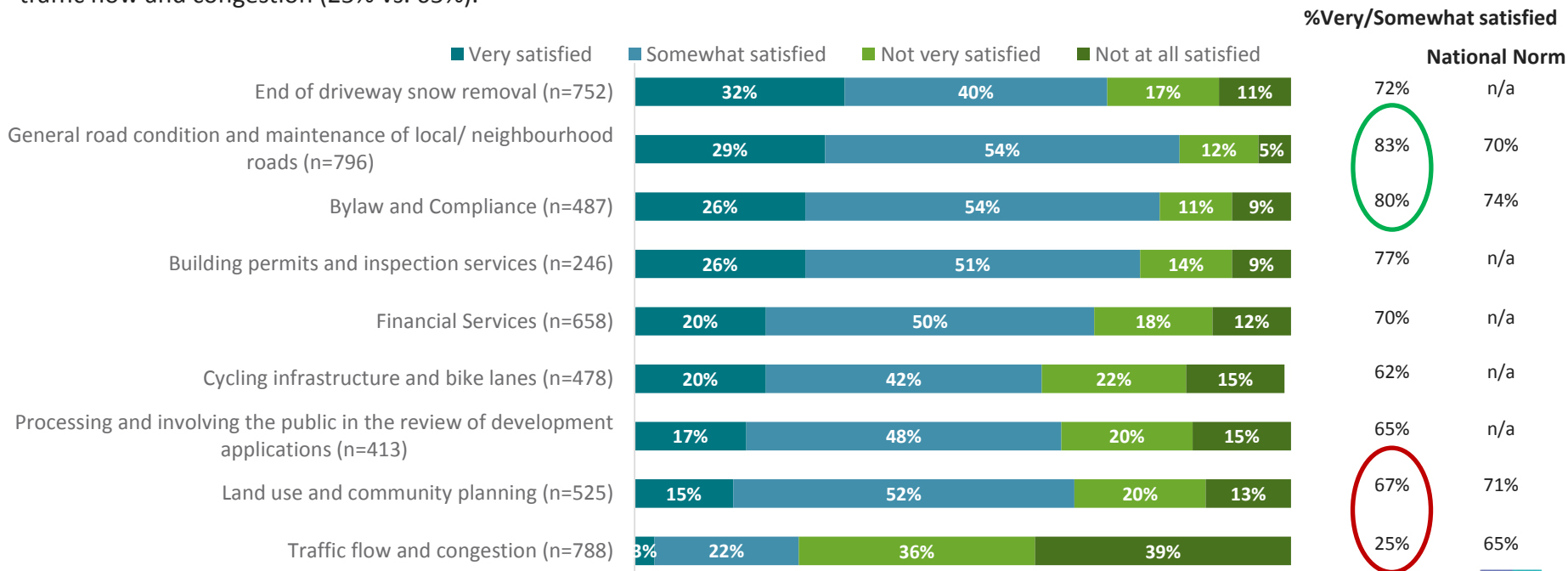
The City of Vaughan scores higher than the national norm on fire services (99% vs. 95%, respectively), recreation and fitness service programs (91% vs. 77%) and facilities (91% vs. 83%), Local Public Libraries (97% vs. 89%), lower on maintenance of parks and green space (90% vs. 94%), and on par on garbage, recycling, organics and yard waste collection (91% vs. 89%), parks development (89% vs. 89%), and arts and culture (92% vs. 89%).



## SATISFACTION WITH INDIVIDUAL SERVICES (2)

The lowest satisfaction level is found for traffic flow and congestion, with only one-quarter expressing satisfaction and only three percent being “very satisfied.”

The City of Vaughan scores higher than the national norm on general road condition and maintenance or local/ neighbourhood roads (83% vs. 70%, respectively) and bylaw and compliance (80% vs. 74%), lower on land use and community planning (67% vs. 71%) and especially on traffic flow and congestion (25% vs. 65%).

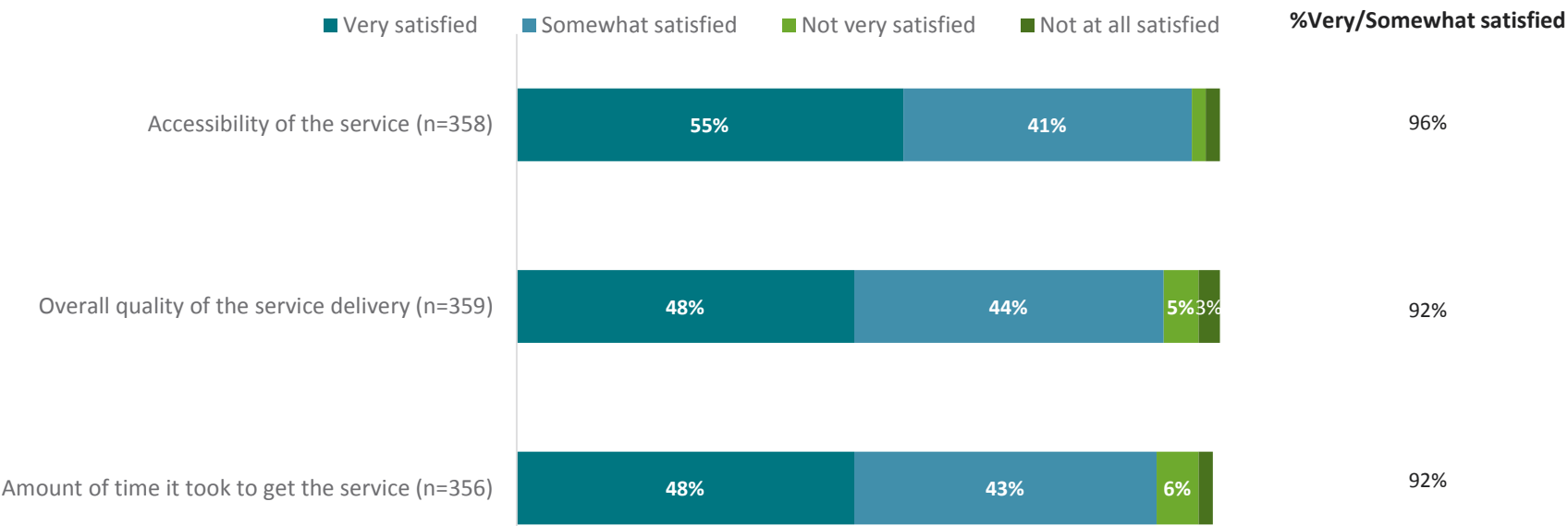


Q4. Please tell me how satisfied you are with each of the following services provided by the City of Vaughan. For each service provided please tell me if you are very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied. If you don't know or have not had any experience with the service to provide a rating, please say so. How about .... Base: All respondents (excl. dk/na/ not enough experience) 2016 (Bases vary)

# INTERACTION WITH THE CITY

# SATISFACTION WITH CITY SERVICES

Among those who accessed or used services or programs provided by the City, large majorities of more than nine in ten express satisfaction with their most recent experience with the City. Residents are most satisfied with accessibility of the service (55%), followed by overall quality of the service delivery (48%) and amount of time it took to get the service (48%).

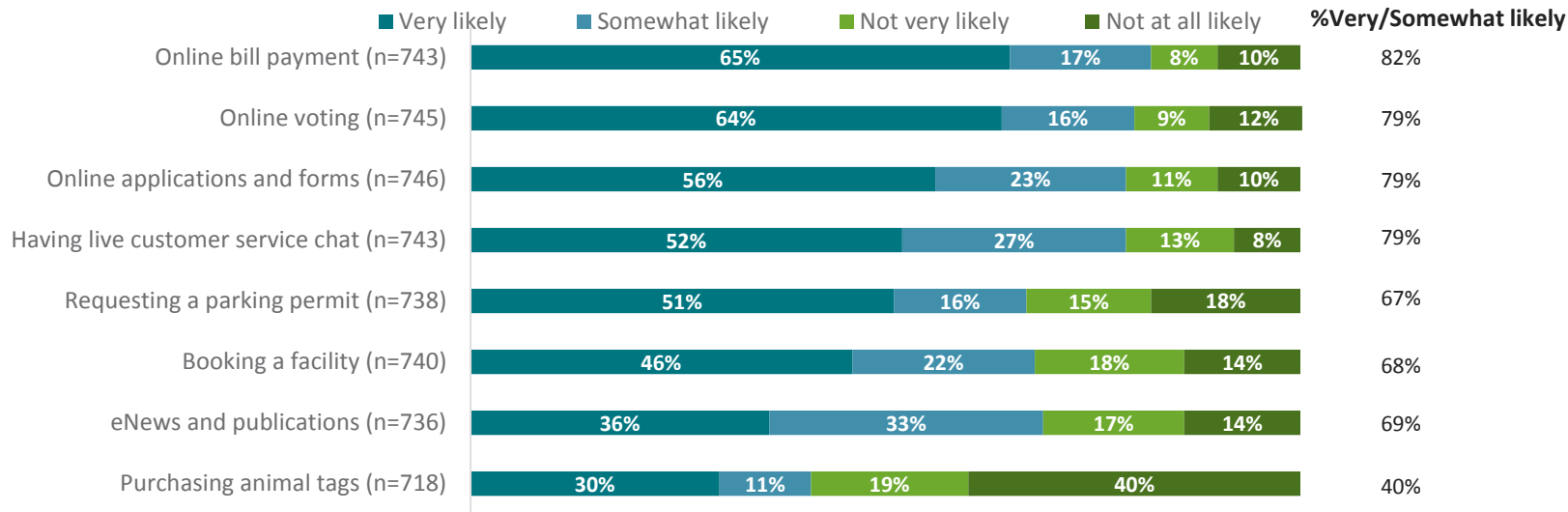


Q10. Based on this most recent experience with the City, how satisfied were you with the [insert statement]? Base: Respondents who accessed services or programs provided by the City of Vaughan in the past 12 months (excl. dk/na) 2016 (Base varies)

# LIKELIHOOD TO USE ONLINE SERVICES

Residents were informed that the City of Vaughan is considering expanding how it delivers services online and asked the likelihood of using specific services online.

Among those who use these services, large majorities of two-thirds or more indicate that they are likely to use nearly all these services online. Residents are most likely to say they would use online bill payment (65% say very likely) and online voting (64%) and least likely to purchase animal tags (30%), with 40 percent indicating they are “not at all likely” to use this online service.



Q11. The City of Vaughan is considering expanding how it delivers services online. Thinking about this, how likely would you be to use the following online services? If you do not have Internet access on a regular basis, please say so. Base: All respondents (excl. dk/na and those with no Internet access) 2016 (Bases vary)

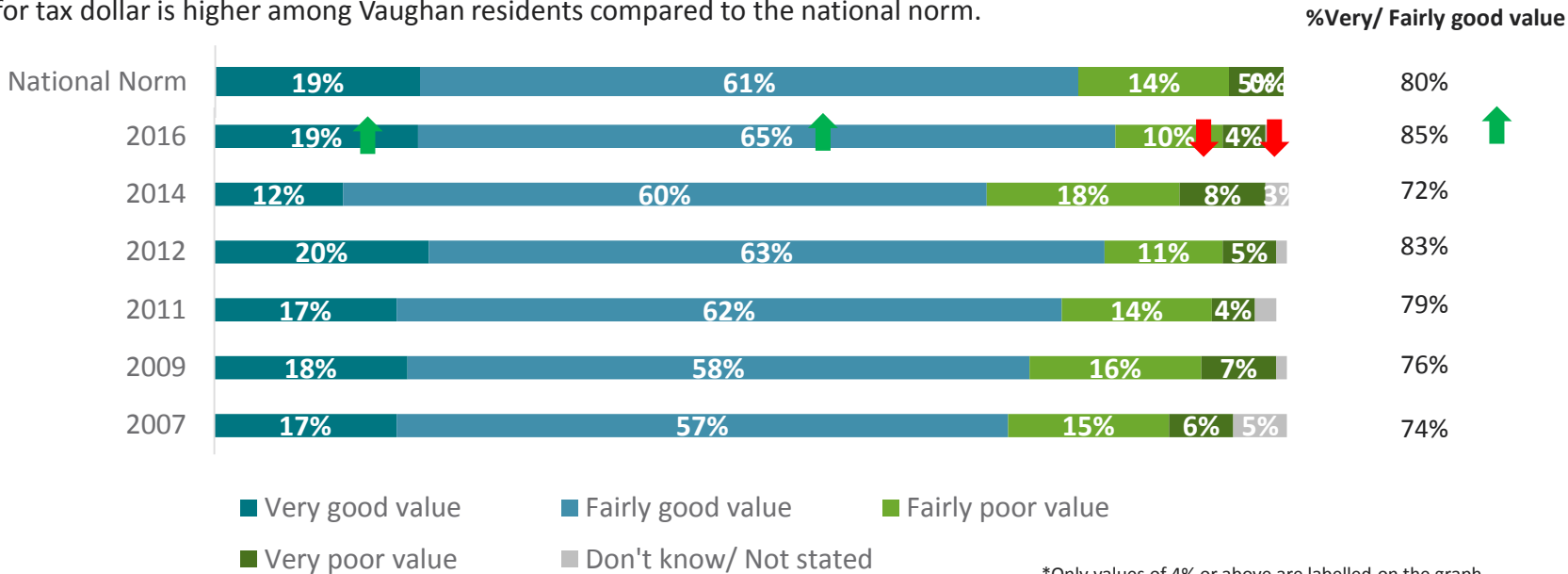
# TAXES AND SERVICE COSTS

# VALUE FOR TAX DOLLARS

After a significant decline in 2014, the proportion of residents who believe they receive good value for their tax dollars has rebounded and is now at the highest level recorded. At present, 85 percent agree that they receive at least fairly good value for their tax dollars, up significantly by 13 points from 2014. Moreover, the proportion who say “very good value” is up seven points to 19%

The perception of good value for tax dollars is slightly higher than the national norm (85% vs. 80%).

Value for tax dollar is higher among Vaughan residents compared to the national norm.



\*Only values of 4% or above are labelled on the graph.

Q12. Thinking about all of the programs and services you receive from The City of Vaughan, would you say that overall you get good value or poor value from your tax dollars? Is that ... Base: All respondents  
2016 (n=800); 2014 (n=800); 2012 (n=500); 2011 (n=500); 2009 (n=300); 2007 (n=300)

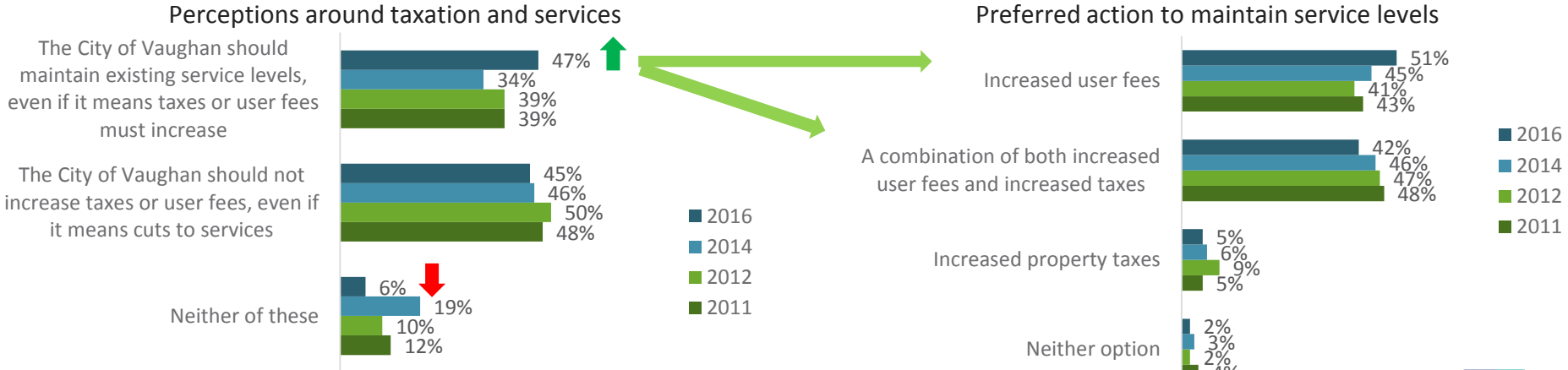


# BALANCE OF TAXATION AND SERVICES

Residents were informed that Vaughan City Council has committed to a maximum tax rate increase of not more than three percent per year and presented with two options regarding taxation and services.

There has been an increase of 13 points in the proportion, now 47% of residents, who prefer that the City of Vaughan should maintain existing service levels even if it means an increase in taxes or user fees. This figure is now on par with the 45% who say the City should not increase taxes or user fees, even if it means cuts to services.

Among those who believe the City should maintain current service levels, attitudes are divided as to how to pay for the cost increases: 51% (now at the highest level recorded) favour increased user fees, while 42% (now at the lowest level recorded) prefer a combination of both increased user fees and increased taxes. As in past waves, few (5%) opt for increased property taxes.

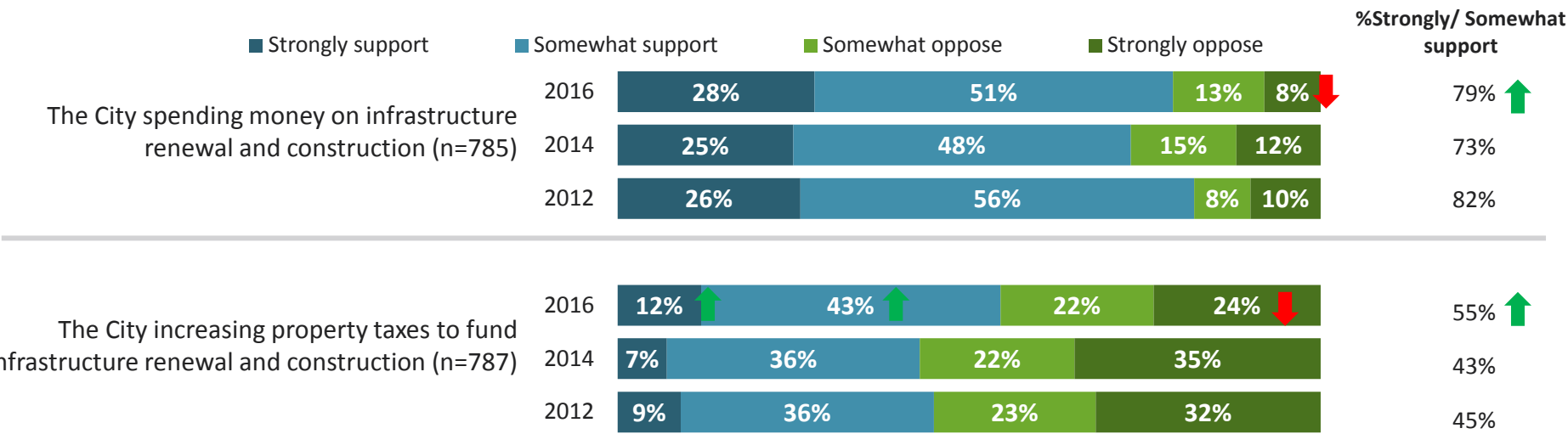


Q13. As you may know, Vaughan City Council has committed to a maximum tax rate increase of not more than three per cent per year. Which of the following comes closest to your own point of view? Base: All respondents 2016 (n=800); 2014 (n=800); 2012 (n=500); 2011 (n=500)  
Q14. If maintaining service levels meant an increased cost to provide these services, which of the following options would you most prefer? Base: Those who said the City of Vaughan should maintain existing service levels even if it means taxes or user fees must increase 2016 (n=375); 2014 (n=275); 2012 (n=194); 2011 (n=194)

# SPENDING ON INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL

A large majority of eight in ten residents (79%) say they would strongly (28%) or somewhat (51%) support the City spending money on infrastructure renewal and construction. Overall support has increased six points from 2014 and similar to the level found in 2012.

Residents continue to be less supportive of the City increasing property taxes to fund infrastructure renewal and construction, with just over half (55%) saying they would strongly (12%) or somewhat (43%) support this action. Overall support is up 12 points from 2014 to the highest level recorded, with strong support up five points and those who are somewhat supportive up seven points.

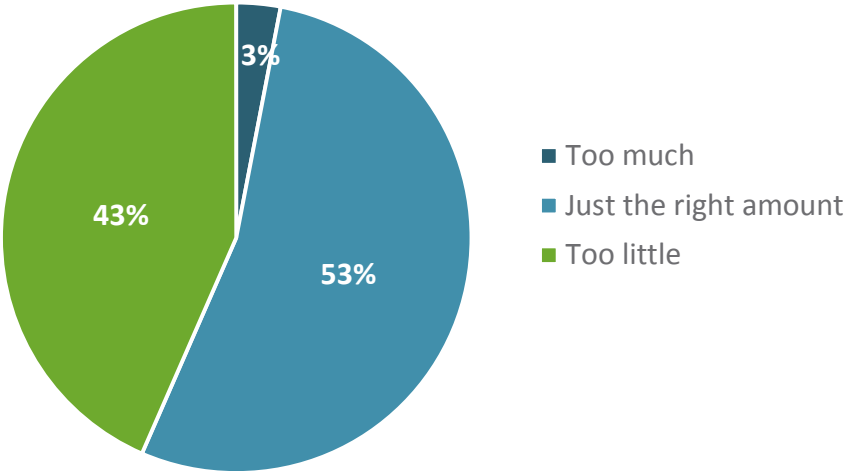


Q15. Property taxes in the City of Vaughan in part allow the City to spend money to renew infrastructure. By infrastructure we mean assets like roads, bridges, storm sewers, parks, recreation centres, arenas, libraries and other City facilities. In the future the City may need additional funds to maintain City assets. Do you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose the following... Base: All respondents (excl. dk/na) 2016 (Varied bases); 2014 (Varied bases); 2012 (Varied bases)

# COMMUNICATIONS

# PERCEIVED AMOUNT OF INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM THE CITY OF VAUGHAN

Most residents (53%) think they receive just the right amount of information from the City of Vaughan. A sizeable proportion of 43% think they receive too little information, while only three percent think they receive too much.

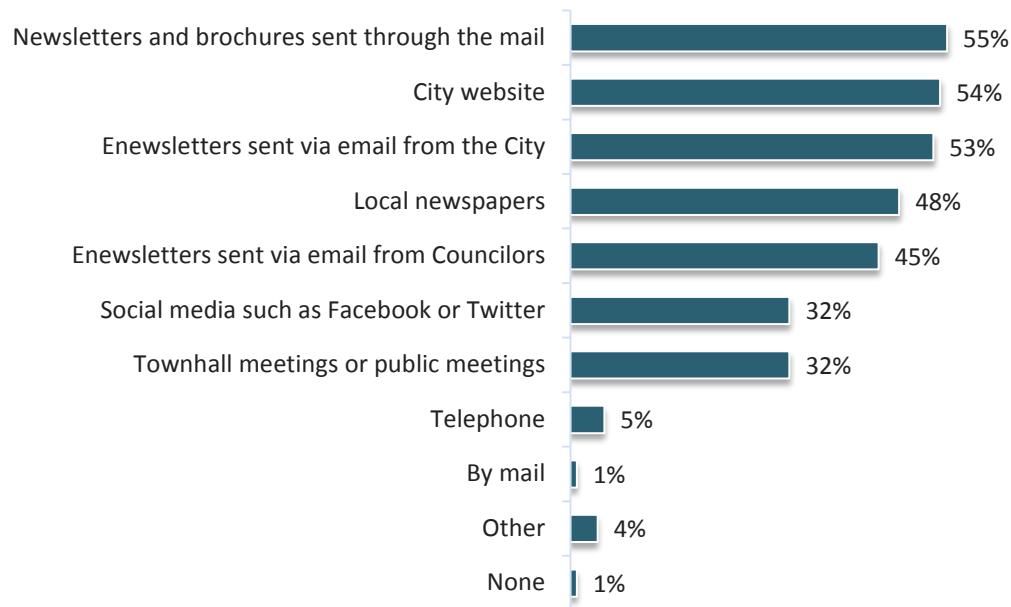


\*Only values of 1% or above are shown in the graph.

Q16. In your opinion, do you currently receive (READ LIST) information from the City of Vaughan? Base: All respondents 2016 (n=800)

# PREFERRED METHODS OF CONTACT WITH THE CITY OF VAUGHAN

Newsletters and brochures sent through the mail, the City website and Enewsletters sent via email from the City/ Councilors, and local newspapers are the most preferred ways of contact with the City of Vaughan.



Methods of Contact	Age		
	18-34	35-54	55+
Newsletters and brochures sent through the mail	51%	51%	64%
City Website	58%	58%	44%
Enewsletters sent via email from the City	59%	59%	41%
Local newspapers	45%	48%	50%
Enewsletters sent via email from Councilors	50%	48%	38%
Social media such as Facebook or Twitter	55%	29%	16%
Townhall meetings or public meetings	26%	34%	34%
Telephone	4%	5%	5%
By mail	1%	1%	1%
Other	3%	4%	3%

Q17. What are your preferred methods for City of Vaughan communicating with you? Base: All respondents 2016 (n=800)

# ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

# METHODOLOGY AND REPORTING CONVENTIONS FOR ONLINE SURVEY

## METHODOLOGY

- The survey was conducted online by open-link survey between November 1<sup>st</sup> and November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016. The survey was programmed and hosted by Ipsos.
- The survey was conducted among n=156 respondents online who are 18 years of age and older live in the City of Vaughan.

## CONSIDERATIONS

- While the surveys run parallel to each other, the methodological differences between the two surveys prohibit formal comparisons in the body of this report.
- The telephone survey offers the only true representative sample and therefore it is recommended that the results of the telephone survey, not the online survey, be used to assist the City when identifying key trends and issues of importance.

# ONLINE VS REPRESENTATIVE TELEPHONE SURVEY

## **Satisfaction:**

- The level of satisfaction is generally lower in the online survey than it was in the telephone survey.
- While positive perceptions of quality of life remain at a very high level (90%) in the online survey, the proportion of residents who perceive it to be “very good” is significantly lower in the online survey (31%) than it was in the telephone survey (48%).

## **Taxes and Services Costs:**

- Significantly more believe they are receiving value for their tax dollars in the telephone survey (85%) than in the online survey (77%).

## **Communications:**

- Significantly more respondents list the local newspaper as the preferred method of contact with the City of Vaughan in the telephone survey (48%), than in the online survey (28%). Town halls or public meetings are also listed as the preferred method of contact by significantly more in the telephone survey than in the online survey (32% versus 17%).



# CONCLUSIONS

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- Residents hold very positive perceptions of the quality of life in the City of Vaughan, in fact perceptions have improved since 2014 and are higher in the City of Vaughan compared to the national norm.
- The City of Vaughan continues to do an excellent job in delivering services to residents as satisfaction with the services provided by the City is very high and in many cases, in fact higher than ratings provided by residents in other communities across the country in many cases.
- As a growing community, residents are most concerned about issues associated with traffic, congestion, and to a lesser degree land use and planning. Although these issues are not having a significant impact on perceptions of quality of life today, these issues should be closely monitored and addressed in order to maintain these historically high levels of satisfaction among residents.
- Residents show a strong appetite for accessing more City services and information through the Internet, however traditional source of information about the City (such as through the mail and in paper) are still often very much preferred methods of communication.
- For the first time since 2011, an equal proportion of residents believe that City provided services should be maintained at existing service levels, even if it means increasing user fees or property taxes as opposed to not increasing taxes or fees, even if it means cuts to services. In the past, residents were less likely to prefer maintaining service levels, if it meant increasing taxes and fees and more likely to prefer cuts.

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**PRESENTER:**

Martin Hrobsky, Vice President