

# Report to Council



**Date:** January 14, 2019

**File:** 0410-15

**To:** City Manager

**From:** Kari O'Rourke, Community Communications Manager

**Subject:** 2018 Citizen Survey Results

Prepared as supplemental to the presentation by Ipsos Public Affairs

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## **Recommendation:**

THAT Council receives, for information, the Report from the Community Communications Manager dated January 14, 2019 with respect to the results of the 2018 Citizen Survey.

## **Purpose:**

To present the results of the 2018 Citizen Survey.

## **Background:**

Collecting and comparing previous survey results allows elected officials, staff and other community stakeholders to understand how citizens' attitudes and priorities are changing, identify new or emerging issues facing the community and assess the progress the City is making in addressing key issues through statistically significant methodology. The outcomes complement the ongoing engagement and conversations with citizens on a variety of initiatives throughout the year. The previous Citizen Survey was completed in September 2017.

Council directed staff at its Regular Meeting on November 6, 2017, to conduct the 2018 Citizens Survey in the fall of 2018 to coincide with the new four-year Council term and that subsequent surveys be scheduled every two (2) years.

The 2018 telephone survey was conducted through cell phone and landline methodology with the final sample size of 300 adult Kelowna residents, split 62 per cent cell phones and 38 per cent landlines. Quotas were established in order to get more representative data both geographically and demographically by establishing age, gender and postal code information. The overall survey results are accurate within + or – 5.7 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. The final data has been weighted to reflect the actual population in Kelowna according to 2016 Census data. Ipsos Public Affairs was

selected to conduct the survey in order to benchmark Kelowna against other BC municipalities as part of its database of municipal norms.

The 2018 survey focused on seven key areas:

1. Quality of Life
2. Issue Agenda
3. Community Safety
4. City Services and Infrastructure
5. Financial Planning
6. Priority Setting
7. Customer Service

## **Overall results**

Results are generally positive and residents remain largely satisfied with the services the City provides.

- Good quality of life
- Safe community
- Satisfied with services
- Good value for tax dollars
- Satisfied with customer service

Overall, perceptions of quality of life remain high at 94 per cent. Where we see a change is in the percentage of citizens saying the quality of life has 'worsened' (36%) than 'improved' (21%); the same is also true when asked about community safety. Noted as a distant third from the top issues facing the community, some citizens feel less safe now as compared to three years ago, a waning from 94 per cent to 87 per cent.

## **Top community issues**

Open-ended responses from respondents mentions the primary issues facing the community is social issues taking the top position once again over transportation, with crime and safety and growth and development as secondary issues.

- Social issues at 51 per cent
- Transportation at 43 per cent
- Crime at 11 per cent
- Growth and development at 10 per cent

It is worth noting that social issues made a statistically significant gain from 16 per cent in the 2015 and 40 per cent in 2017.

## **Community Safety**

Perception of Community Safety remains strong with 87 per cent of residents describing Kelowna as a safe community. Results indicate a slight deterioration of 7 percentage points lower than 2015 and is slightly lower than the municipal norm of 93 per cent.

Increased homelessness, break-in/thefts and increase in crime were the top mentions by residents who responded that community safety has worsened.

## **Top investment priorities**

The paired choice analysis identifies priorities for City investment. In consideration of social issues taking the top position in the 2017 survey, 'Address social issues such as homelessness, mental health and addiction' was an item added to the suite of investment choices and was selected as the top investment priority chosen 78 per cent of the time. Other priorities include traffic flow management (68%), drinking water (64%) and encouraging a diverse supply of housing (62%).

The City of Kelowna's water utility provides drinking water to over half of residents; the majority of the remaining drinking water supply is provided by five independent irrigation districts and 25 small water utilities.

When asked about investing capital dollars into building new or renewing existing infrastructure, respondents were split with renewing at 58 per cent and building new at 40 per cent. However, recent results indicate an appetite to see new infrastructure investment.

## **Value for taxes**

Value for taxes is consistent with the previous year's results demonstrating 79 per cent of respondents think the overall services and programs are very good to fairly good value and options to increase taxes to enhance or to maintain services at current levels was reported at 55 per cent.

Complete results of the 2018 Citizen Survey are posted on [kelowna.ca](http://kelowna.ca).

## **Internal Circulation:**

Acting Director of Corporate Strategic Services

Submitted by:

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Approved for inclusion:

