

# Survey Responses

28 October 2024 - 20 November 2024

## 2025 Budget Survey

# Engage Stratford

Project: 2025 Budget



VISITORS					
345					
CONTRIBUTORS			RESPONSES		
136			136		
1	0	135	1	0	135
Registered	Unverified	Anonymous	Registered	Unverified	Anonymous

# 2025 Budget Survey

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## **SURVEY RESPONSE REPORT**

28 October 2024 - 20 November 2024

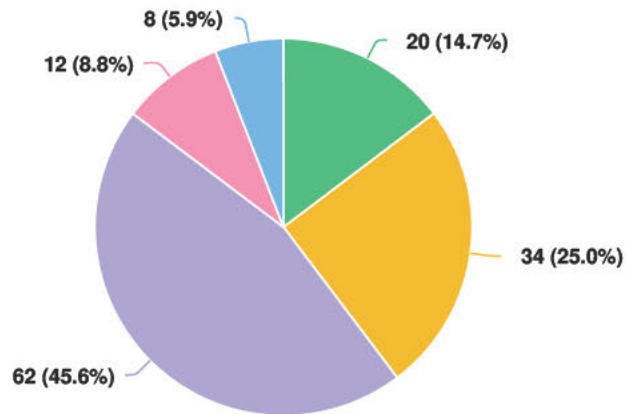
### **PROJECT NAME:**

2025 Budget



SURVEY QUESTIONS

**Q1 | I participate in the City's annual budget process:**



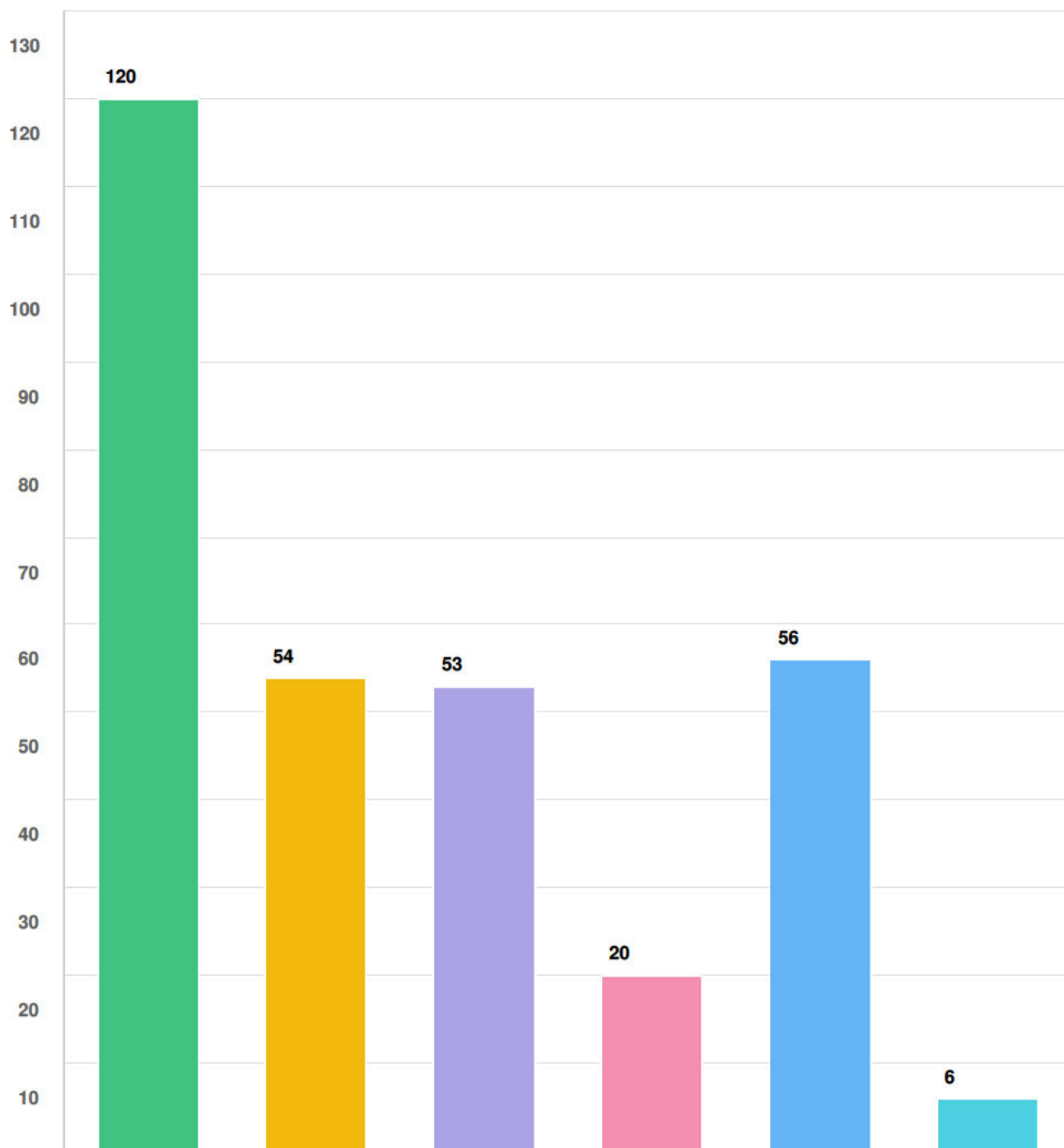
**Question options**

- Always
- Never
- Sometimes
- Only when something interests me
- Other (please specify)

Mandatory Question (136 response(s))  
Question type: Radio Button Question



**Q2** I would be interested in participating or engaging in the following activities related to the annual budget process (select all that apply):



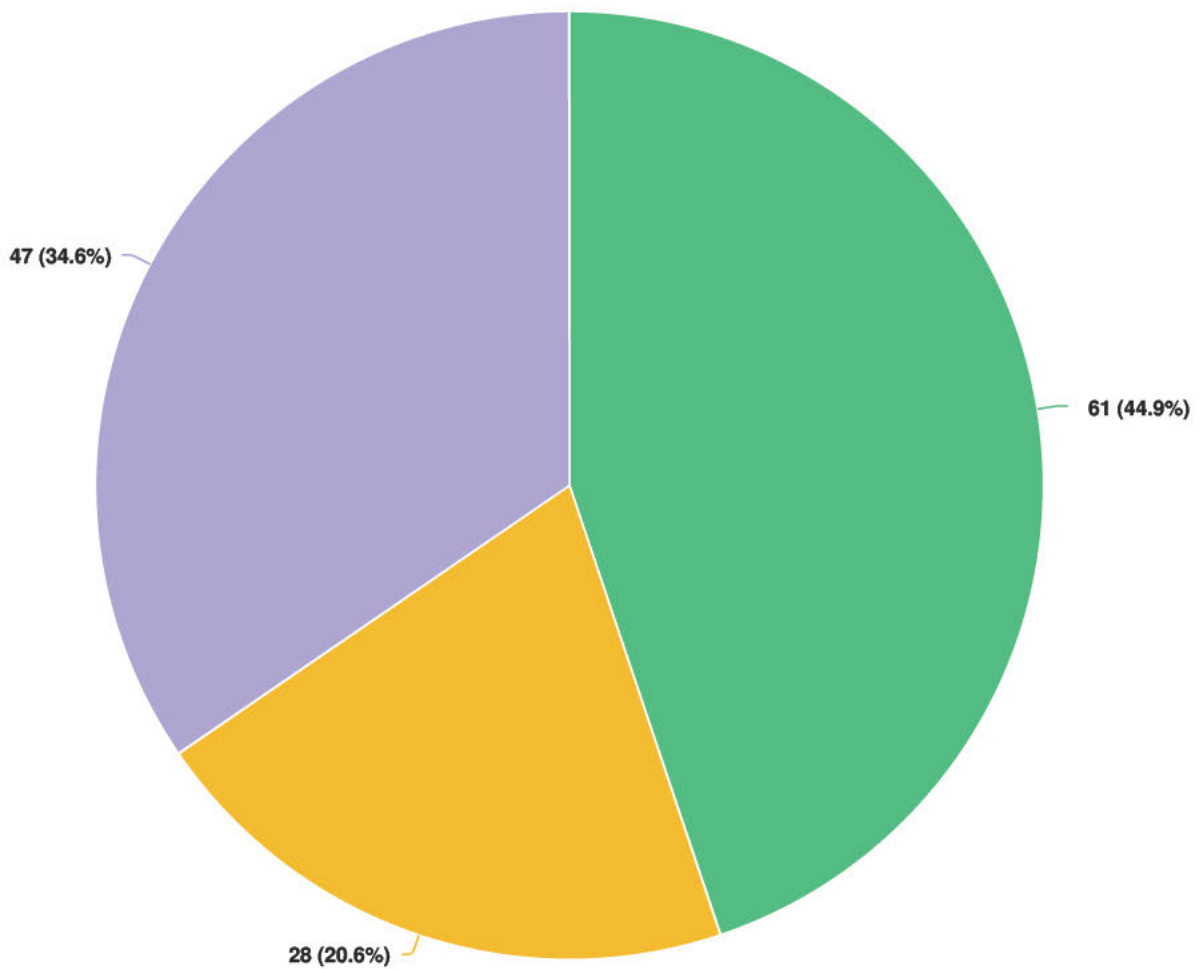
**Question options**

- Completing surveys
- Submitting questions
- Watching budget-related meetings
- Appearing as a delegation at budget-related meetings
- Attending public information sessions related to the annual budget process
- Other (please specify)

Mandatory Question (136 response(s))

Question type: Checkbox Question

**Q3** Results from last year's survey and informal Chat With the Treasurer suggest that citizens are interested in in-person budget information sessions. We are planning to try a few "pop-up" budget info sites, where you can informally chat with the Trea...



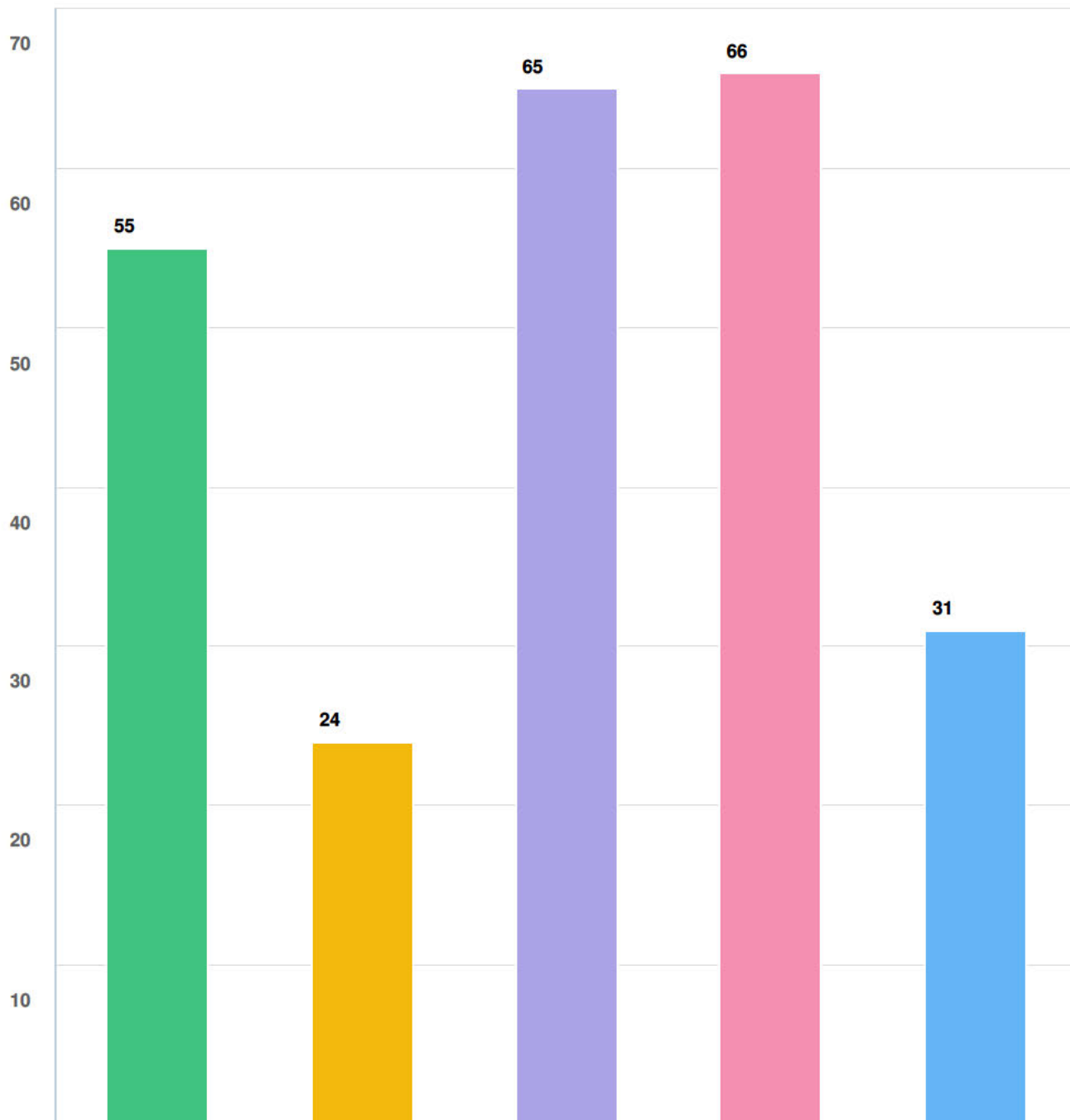
**Question options**

Yes No Not sure

Optional question (136 response(s), 0 skipped)

Question type: Radio Button Question

**Q4** | The City is required by law to balance the budget. A number of strategies are available to accomplish this. Of the following, which would you prefer the City use to balance its annual budget? (select all that apply)



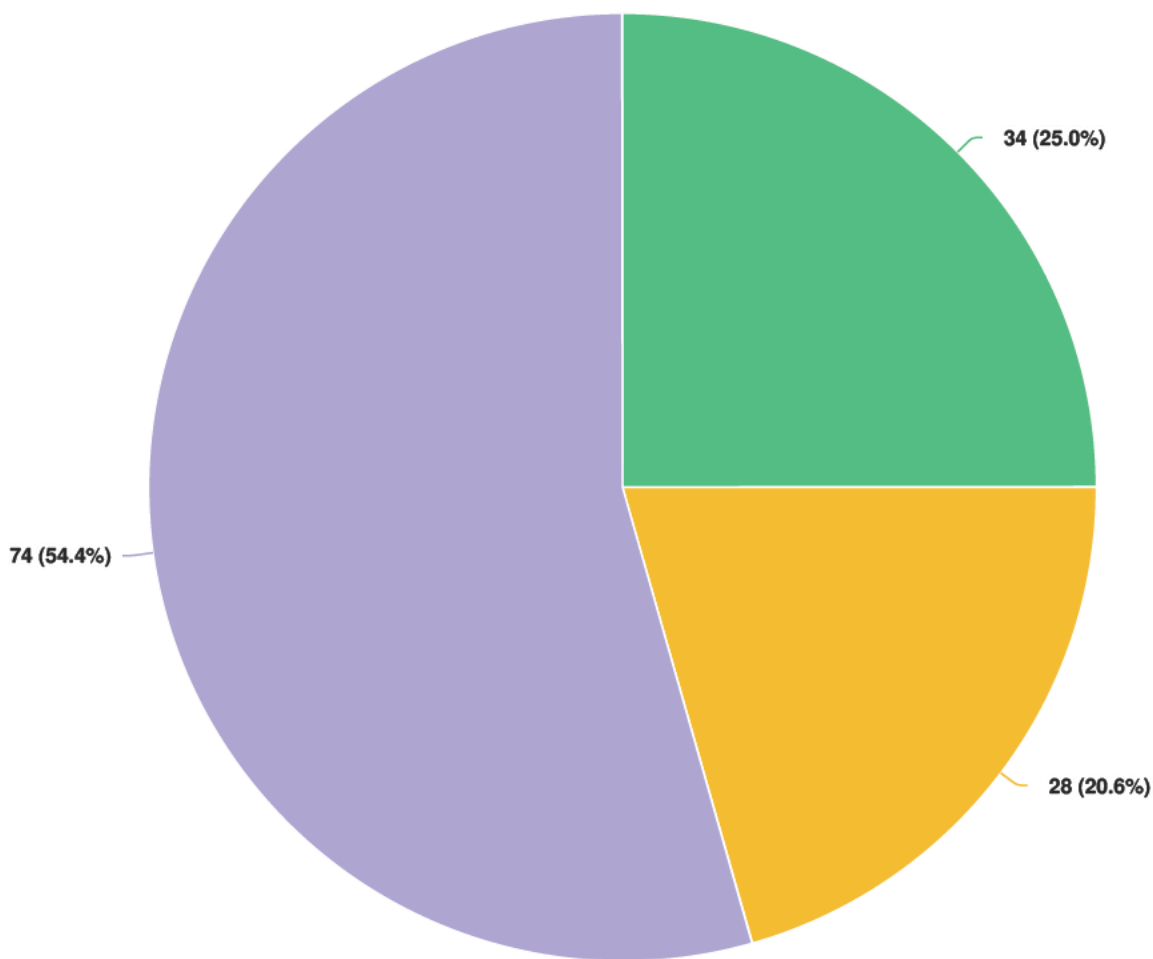
**Question options**

- Reduce the level of services (e.g. reduced hours, frequency)
- Increase property taxes
- Increase user fees (e.g. ice, room and facility rentals, transit, bag tags)
- Introduce new user fees for some City services that currently have no fees
- I have an idea or strategy not listed above (please specify)

Mandatory Question (136 response(s))

Question type: Checkbox Question

**Q5** | Property taxes pay for the delivery of municipal services. This includes maintaining and replacing the assets used to deliver those services. Please choose one of the following statements that you most agree with:

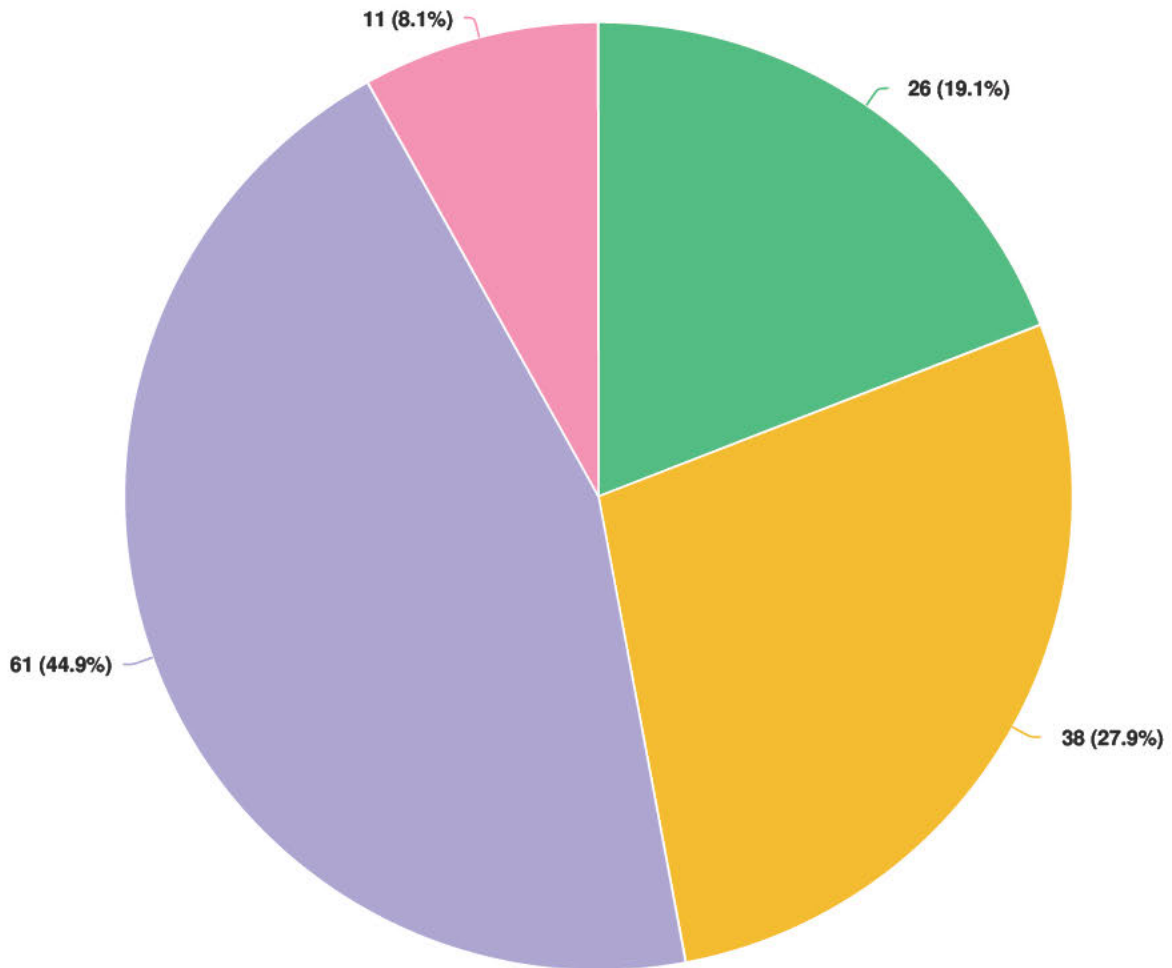


**Question options**

- I support additional tax increases if it means we can take care of our existing assets and keep service levels the same.
- I support additional tax increases if it means enhanced services.
- I want my taxes to stay the same and I am prepared to accept a reduced service level when taxes cannot keep up with asset deterioration.

Mandatory Question (136 response(s))  
Question type: Radio Button Question

**Q6** Please rate your overall level of satisfaction with the services that your tax dollars currently support:

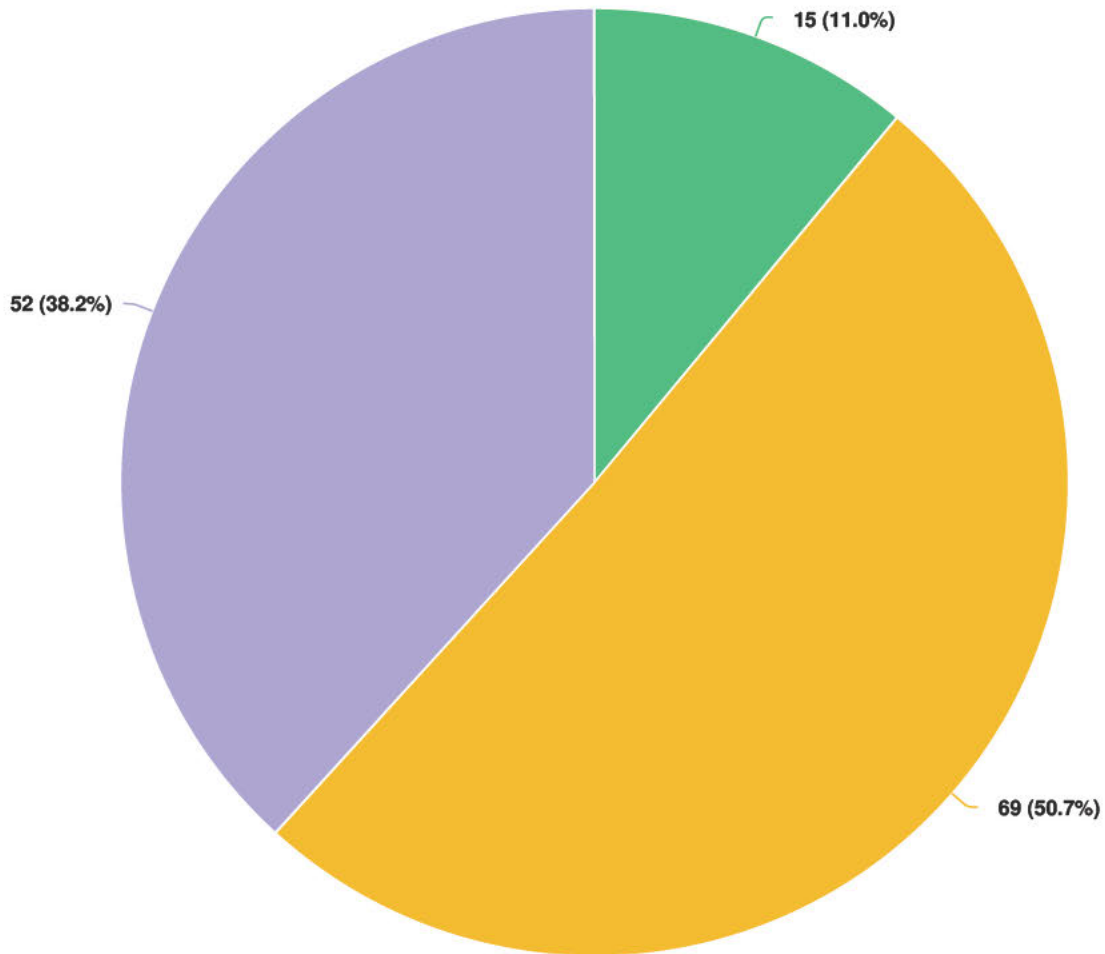


**Question options**

- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Other (please specify)

Mandatory Question (136 response(s))  
Question type: Radio Button Question

**Q7** | Thinking about the part of your taxes that go to Stratford (not including the education portion), how would you rate the overall value you receive for your tax dollars?



**Question options**

● Good ● Fair ● Poor

Mandatory Question (136 response(s))  
Question type: Radio Button Question

**Q8 | What municipal services, if any, would you like to see enhanced, or where would you like to see the City dedicate more resources? (Assuming that this could potentially result in a modest tax increase)**

Anonymous

10/28/2024 03:41 PM

Bag tags are a continued cash grab that we see no reduction in the amount of taxes paid. Where is the HPP money being spent?? Simply paying for hotel rooms instead is fixing the issue

Anonymous

10/28/2024 03:42 PM

The governing city body should take a pay decrease and put the funds saved towards services and road repair. Stop raising our taxes and giving yourself raises when people cant even afford food.

Anonymous

10/28/2024 04:29 PM

The city could solve our unhoused/housing crisis, provide free garbage pickup, decrease crime by 50%, obtain a public walk-in clinic, PROPERLY fix our roads(including PROPER snow removal services), increase public parking availability, to make a few things, WITHOUT raising taxes, if unpopular, and unethical council decisions are held to proper accountability, INCLUDING decisions of fiscal expenditures.

Anonymous

10/28/2024 05:08 PM

Natural environment Parks. Infrastructure like roads, water, sewer. In some cases I'm not sure it needs more staffing but a reallocation of current may help.

Anonymous

10/28/2024 05:23 PM

Extended hours on Saturday at dump

Anonymous

10/28/2024 05:35 PM

None

Anonymous

10/28/2024 06:30 PM

Work within a budget. You just hiked property tax. For example. Deal with the problems. Do not hire lawyers to intimate residents when they have a complaint. Look into issues and fix them.

Anonymous

10/28/2024 07:03 PM

None

Anonymous

10/28/2024 07:51 PM

None - we need to spend less and cut City workers and pay off our debt.

Anonymous

10/28/2024 10:16 PM

Road and sewer replacement

Anonymous

10/29/2024 08:59 AM

Community grants based on programming, not the organization's financial surplus.

Anonymous

10/29/2024 09:49 AM

Reduced fees for garbage tags and dumping fees. Should be included as part of taxes. Increased recycling collection (weekly).

Anonymous

10/29/2024 10:03 AM

Updated sewer and water in older neighbourhoods, road maintenance

Anonymous

10/29/2024 11:01 AM

Better waste services. Better road maintenance. Better snow removal of sidewalks and streets.

Anonymous

10/29/2024 11:38 AM

The old grove is always over grown to [REDACTED] and unusable slot of times because [REDACTED] doesn't give a [REDACTED] about it nor is [REDACTED] educated on trails enough to be the one maintaining them [REDACTED] lies and lies yet still makes a 100k+

Anonymous

10/29/2024 12:07 PM

Homelessness assistance

Anonymous

10/29/2024 02:34 PM

Transit, cycling infrastructure

Anonymous

10/29/2024 08:39 PM

N/A - the budget is already way too high

Anonymous

10/29/2024 08:41 PM

A functional recycling program

Anonymous

10/30/2024 09:37 PM

Affordable housing

Anonymous

11/03/2024 06:38 AM

Road repair



Anonymous

11/04/2024 03:02 PM

Planing? it seems that we rip up the same roads every few years where other roads are neglected. and spend money on creating traffic such as huron street, and traffic hazards such as the Albert and Nile roundabout. It cost how much and was it needed?

Anonymous

11/07/2024 09:03 AM

N/a

Anonymous

11/07/2024 12:37 PM

Law enforcement resources, CCTV cameras to reduce vandalism and improve overall safety. Transit services/light rail transit and bike lane system throughout the municipalities boundaries to reduce parking and traffic and promote a carbon-action sensitive focus. Enhanced recreation facilities including an indoor municipal pool and tennis club complex. Cemetery services including enhanced staffing and software system with GIS, mapping and user interface. Weekly recycling pick-up. Increased Library/Resource center including hours, services and lending resources. Increased youth community services for support and engagement.

Anonymous

11/08/2024 07:34 PM

More road resurfacing.

Anonymous

11/10/2024 05:37 PM

Asset Management and stewardship of the city's assets

Anonymous

11/11/2024 06:52 PM

Roads

Anonymous

11/11/2024 09:10 PM

Transit options, active transportation options, less cars downtown. Less annuals, more perennials. More coordination with not-for-profits around affordability and housing.

Anonymous

11/12/2024 05:41 PM

Lets flip recycling and garbage. Recycling weekly and garbage every other week.

Anonymous

11/12/2024 06:42 PM

Fix our roads cut instead of live plants all over town just have it grass or fake plants the old cooper site is a was of money we also receive some of the worst snow services during winter month that iv seen in all of ontario

Anonymous

Stratford police and garbage collection and by law all provide

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11/12/2024 07:09 PM

horrendous service -Do Not proved them more money enhance the service by proper training and hire competent staff

Anonymous

11/12/2024 07:14 PM

You've got to improve transit.

Anonymous

11/12/2024 08:13 PM

Services cut. We can't afford this right now.

Anonymous

11/12/2024 09:27 PM

Invest in increasing productivity and efficiency of employe

Anonymous

11/13/2024 01:35 AM

access to BETTER mental health care, building newer livable housing, the condition of emily murphy centre is disgusting & most buildings for housing are not safe or taken care of. the amount of people taking advantage of housing & disability is alarming when there are good people who need it more & will treat the building & neighbours respectfully. CRIME - actually putting people in jail instead of catch & release, charges aren't enough to scare people, the amount of guns in this city is terrifying.

Anonymous

11/13/2024 07:39 AM

My road (Stratford st) is absolutely embarrassing. They come along and patch it, which makes the problem even worse! If you're going to increase my taxes by 15% over two years, resurface it at least. Again, it's so embarrassing and damaging to my vehicle.

Anonymous

11/13/2024 08:14 AM

austerity, restraint

Anonymous

11/13/2024 08:28 AM

Indoor swimming pool.

Anonymous

11/13/2024 08:32 AM

Better road maintenance.

Anonymous

11/13/2024 08:47 AM

Repair roads in dire need of repair Snow removal is lacking in many secondary streets

Anonymous

11/13/2024 09:12 AM

Housing, business development, support for existing infrastructure

Anonymous

11/13/2024 09:15 AM

Large item garbage pickup a couple times a yr without needing tags. Wildlife management. I'm a fairly new Stratford resident and I've had many encounters with skunks here which really ruins the outdoors. Would love a way to eliminate or atleast lessen the amount of skunks

Anonymous

11/13/2024 09:37 AM

Quality of service for garbage collection and police and bylaw

Anonymous

11/13/2024 10:09 AM

I would like to see the city look for alternate ways of generating revenue that do not result in tax increases, modest or not. For comparison, in 2022, Facebook cut head count by 13%, and INCREASED sales the following year by 16%. I appreciate that the city is not a tech company, but resources can and should be dedicated to improving operational efficiency.

Anonymous

11/13/2024 11:36 AM

transportation subsidized housing

Anonymous

11/13/2024 12:05 PM

Roads. It's embarrassing. Higher companies that come in on budget and on time.

Anonymous

11/13/2024 03:28 PM

More city run daycare centers similar to Anne Hathaway. Significant upgrades and renovations of the Lions Pool washroom/changeroom. A large playground and splashpad in the north end (possibly in the large empty lot beside the rotary complex?)

Anonymous

11/14/2024 05:39 AM

I would like to see more scrutiny in how City monies are spent. A more critical examination of the benefits received by the spending. Not simply scanning a report but a deep dive into an actual cost/benefit analysis. Listening to the community about the value. And can a similar value occur with spending less?

Anonymous

11/14/2024 08:39 AM

Policing and social services

Anonymous

11/14/2024 10:14 AM

Roads. Healthcare accessibility. Reliable transit.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 10:34 AM

We need to address the housing crisis, the poverty and homeless problem.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 10:35 AM

Public Transit, so we can get regular routes on weekends.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 10:59 AM

Road maintenance eg. Asphalt resurfacing

Anonymous

11/14/2024 11:51 AM

Build more sidewalks. I feel like I'm playing Frogger the way I have to keep crossing the street from side to side for the random sidewalk changes. People of all income levels are trying to use them - poor people who don't have cars, and wealthy people who want more exercise and to lose weight and get outdoors and walk their dogs and get fresh air. People are instead walking in traffic which creates dangerous situations for both drivers and pedestrians.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 11:58 AM

Get rid of the garbage bag tags. They do absolutely nothing to change how much waste is produced in my home. They do however cause me inconvenience in having to remember to go purchase them and arguably cause a negative environmental impact as most residents drive somewhere to purchase the tags. At minimum I would prefer a system like the one Bayham township uses where each home is given 52 tags at the beginning of the year as an acknowledgment that people produce garbage and additional tags can be purchased if the household produces additional waste.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 12:34 PM

I think that you should be able to bring hazardous waste to the dump at any time. Also the bus service needs to be fixed.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 12:45 PM

Road upkeep

Anonymous

11/14/2024 12:58 PM

Please deal with the [REDACTED] homelessness and affordable housing issues!

Anonymous

11/14/2024 01:01 PM

Fix roads that actually need it instead of doing stupid things like reducing lanes on Huron st. Roads in residential areas not just the ones the tourists use.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 02:28 PM

Roads. Housing and addiction services to reduce crime.

Anonymous

I appreciate the services provided by the city and understand the

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11/14/2024 02:39 PM

challenges of balancing the budget. To improve efficiency without raising taxes, I encourage Stratford to explore innovative approaches, like implementing technology for process automation and predictive maintenance, forming partnerships with local businesses to fund community projects, and optimizing underutilized assets through leases or rentals. By focusing on efficiency and alternative revenue sources, the city can maintain or even enhance service quality while keeping costs under control.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 02:52 PM

Fixing roads better than they are doing now

Anonymous

11/14/2024 03:18 PM

The public library is in desperate need of space - would love to see the municipality support a new library at the Grand Trunk.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 03:48 PM

roads, get rid of the street patios

Anonymous

11/14/2024 05:50 PM

More frequent busses Regular bus service on weekends.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 06:00 PM

Year round indoor swimming facility not run by the ymca After school programs for kids Library

Anonymous

11/14/2024 06:20 PM

None. We are a small town with the highest taxes comparatively to other like small towns. People who moved here from larger cities just need to adjust to our population isn't over 300k.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 06:30 PM

Daycare . How can families afford to live here and afford thousands of dollars monthly for private daycare .

Anonymous

11/14/2024 06:32 PM

Advocating for provincial funds - family doctors, greater access to child care, walk in clinics

Anonymous

11/14/2024 07:00 PM

Question 7 is troublesome. I need a proportionate valuation here. If you want people that don't typically engage, a bit more info would be helpful.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 07:01 PM

Pedestrian and cyclist safety (e.g. more designated crosswalks on busy roads; not useless money-wasting things like the roundabout at

Nile and Albert). Pothole repair.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 07:05 PM

Repair Stratford roads properly instead of patching.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 07:34 PM

Transit options out of county such as into Waterloo region and Oxford county, services to support the homeless population. Keeping local bus transit available is most important for me as someone that cannot drive

Anonymous

11/14/2024 09:37 PM

I like how much is dedicated to arts, culture, and events. More of that would be nice. Also city beautification

Anonymous

11/14/2024 09:56 PM

Landfill hours.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 10:42 PM

Aquatic center

Anonymous

11/15/2024 12:15 AM

More indoor courts and a new indoor pool Traffic solutions at dangerous intersections like O'Loane and lorne

Anonymous

11/15/2024 03:05 PM

None

Anonymous

11/15/2024 05:19 PM

Recreation, particularly a municipal indoor swimming pool. Garbage collection - one free bag biweekly, weekly recycling collection



11/15/2024 07:33 PM

90% of the roads in Stratford are below horse and buggy standards. The city is 30 years behind on road repairs (Not talking about the pot heads repair)

Anonymous

11/15/2024 09:02 PM

Repair our roads

Anonymous

11/16/2024 07:23 PM

No comment

Anonymous

infrastructure improvements

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11/17/2024 01:43 AM

Anonymous

11/17/2024 06:36 AM

I think that supervisors with the city need to account for the time that their workers bill for. Productivity from our city staff needs to match that of the private sector or we should be contracting out services that do not meet the threshold.

Anonymous

11/17/2024 09:35 AM

Crosswalks: Downey street at the bus terminal and Huron at Shakespeare garden.

Anonymous

11/17/2024 10:16 AM

I would like to see the city explore more high frequency bus routes that better appeal to shoppers and tourists such as an east/ west route along Huron / Ontario. This service should run every 15 minutes with a quick stop at the main terminal for transfers and not wait for other buses. This would greatly decrease the time it would take to get to one end of the city to another and increase appeal. Currently it is often much faster to walk than wait almost 30 minutes for the bus. Offer more weekend /day pass and easy purchase options including a tap system.

Anonymous

11/17/2024 01:34 PM

Faster sidewalk snow clearing. I hate falling.

Anonymous

11/17/2024 04:01 PM

Road repairs and replacements.

Anonymous

11/17/2024 07:01 PM

Daycare services, support for the homeless, enhancements to our competitive position: annexing land, changing of official plan to accommodate residential densification and investments in preparing GTR site for redevelopment-Environmental on full site, hire a project manager to prepare a RFP

Anonymous

11/17/2024 08:17 PM

Bus service on weekends return to being scheduled routes instead of the unreliable on demand service. It is an embarrassment that a city that is supposed to be progressive lags in transportation. Likewise increased train service is needed.

Anonymous

11/17/2024 09:47 PM

better road maintenance

Anonymous

More roads resurfacing.

11/17/2024 10:00 PM

Anonymous

Homelessness and food security

11/18/2024 12:47 PM

Anonymous

Social services - homelessness. Move the library to the Grand Trunk site. Try and keep up with infrastructure needs.

11/18/2024 05:34 PM

Anonymous

Services for families and children. A pool.

11/18/2024 07:37 PM

Anonymous

Social housing and municipal long term not for profit care homes - not necessarily assuming a tax increase but changing priorities and/or use of revenues from selling City land this year.

11/19/2024 12:37 AM

Anonymous

Service levels are already not good enough and taxes too high.

11/19/2024 08:34 PM

Anonymous

more needs to be dedicated to housing to keep our workforce here.

11/19/2024 08:55 PM

Anonymous

You're over spending. Reduce costs.

11/20/2024 07:00 AM

Anonymous

Road repairs, garbage and recycle back in local hands, housing

11/20/2024 07:41 AM

**Optional question** (100 response(s), 36 skipped)

**Question type:** Essay Question

**Q9 | What municipal services, if any, would you like to see reduced, or where would you like to see the City dedicate fewer resources? (Assuming that this could potentially result in a modest tax decrease)**

Anonymous

Less public vehicles in general and less workers standing around watch work being done.

10/28/2024 03:35 PM

Anonymous

Too much spent on over policing with an over kill of police for simple calls Transit doesn't need to be as large as it is

10/28/2024 03:41 PM



Anonymous

10/28/2024 03:42 PM

The governing city body should take a pay decrease and put the funds saved towards services and road repair. Stop raising our taxes and giving yourself raises when people cant even afford food.

Anonymous

10/28/2024 04:10 PM

Social housing

Anonymous

10/28/2024 04:29 PM

Anything to do with flowers, lights, or any of the other superficial "tourists first" nonsense, that the city uses OUR money, to give the illusion of "class" to out of towners, and any unethical dealings supporting the theatre.

Anonymous

10/28/2024 05:08 PM

Transit. At many times, buses are close to empty. However if the city changes this, then lots of people get upset.

Anonymous

10/28/2024 05:35 PM

Tourism, parks and recreation, policing

Anonymous

10/28/2024 06:17 PM

Transit General Government & Corporate Housing Planning, By-law & Development Council & Committees (we don't need 10 city councilors for a city this size...5 is reasonable)

Anonymous

10/28/2024 06:30 PM

Funding the festival, budget flower spending. Find what is needed to be done. Not build concrete green space. See what a road upgrades are needs. Do everything at 1 time. Not rip the same roads up over and over again. Wasting cash painting bikes on roads! All roads are shared with bikes. Lawyers for everything. Not dealing with the issues. Like housing. As landlords are tired of the trash people you leave to destroying property and causing issues. If a person needs live in support give it to them. Do not take safe housing from others. It adds to the housing crises. As I might loose my rental because of all the damage! As I have a morgage renewal comming up. Really hopping I get it!

Anonymous

10/28/2024 06:32 PM

Bureaucratic processes, Permitting staffing and process, research studies, etc - basically anything that is process-heavy

Anonymous

10/28/2024 07:03 PM

I can't think of any

Anonymous

10/28/2024 07:51 PM

Bus systems (our city is too small for bussing), social services, sports services, stop buying electric vehicles that cost so much, less parks & rec employees and summer help. Less overtime and less road paving where it is not needed (le - Erie st, Huron st, etc).

Anonymous

10/28/2024 08:04 PM

There seems to be a lot of staff with too much to do and some with not enough - this needs to be evened out.

Anonymous

10/28/2024 10:16 PM

Swans, destination Stratford, sidewalk plowing, garbage collection should be bi-weekly , transit

Anonymous

10/29/2024 08:59 AM

Garbage collection every other week.

Anonymous

10/29/2024 11:01 AM

Reduced facility hours/days.

Anonymous

10/29/2024 11:38 AM

Less stupid gardens, the city buses are useless outside of highschool students the amount of people who ride the bus vs cost of operation isn't worth it.

Anonymous

10/29/2024 12:07 PM

Park system

Anonymous

10/29/2024 02:34 PM

Maintaining car infrastructure such as parking lots, especially in the downtown core.

Anonymous

10/29/2024 08:39 PM

Stratford Police costs are a highly disproportionate percentage of the budget and they have not been keeping the crime rate down. When a crime has occurred, they are powerless to do anything about it and have been ineffective in the investigation or filing any charges. OPP for our stretches of highway seem to have nothing better to do than issue speeding tickets (easy money), when it's the erratic drivers and red light runners that should be stopped instead. The green bin and recycling programs only added to the cost of bag tags and neither of them are providing any tangible services in return. Not only are some common items not allowed (though other cities do), a vast amount of said 'recycled' material is still ending up in a landfill even though 'we paid extra for it not to'.

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Anonymous

Police Airport Fire Department

10/30/2024 09:37 PM

Anonymous

Fire, Police

11/01/2024 04:30 PM

Anonymous

Transits should be looked into, I know riders have increased. but is there a way for this to make money?

11/04/2024 03:02 PM

Anonymous

See above re suggestions

11/07/2024 09:03 AM

Anonymous

Consider privatization/contracting out of services that are not municipally mandated such as the Day Care and some Human Resource functions. Stratford Fire Services are very expensive and while community outreach is important sky-scrapers, industrial fires and other such large-scale occurrences are not common. A good portion of their work involves first-response for 911 calls where an ambulance is the primary requirement [reported by fire fighters themselves], smoke detector checks and the like. The aforementioned and others are huge drains on public funds and should be evaluated on alternative service delivery compatibility.

11/07/2024 12:37 PM

Anonymous

I don't mind paying taxes...as long as my money is not wasted or spent recklessly. Ie. Stop planting trees under hydro lines then paying a company to keep trimming them! The city also needs to evaluate the police service to determine if we are getting the value for what we are paying.

11/08/2024 07:34 PM

Anonymous

Sidewalk winter maintenance. Residents can clear their own sidewalks.

11/10/2024 05:37 PM

Anonymous

Transit Airport sell it to a private company but must be kept as an airport

11/11/2024 06:52 PM

Anonymous

Hockey rinks.

11/11/2024 09:10 PM

Anonymous

Flowers! Let's spread wild flowers around the river and reduce the crazy flowers downtown. Let's plant flowers that return every year! I would like to also see how "Lights on Stratford" increased revenue considering most family are dressed for outdoor use and stores are

11/12/2024 05:41 PM

closed at the time. How does this benefit Stratford? Complete waste of tax payers dollars.

Anonymous

11/12/2024 06:42 PM

Trash anything woke and [REDACTED] junk if they want it let them pay for it

Anonymous

11/12/2024 07:00 PM

landscaping contracts and scopes sidewalk snow removal staffing

Anonymous

11/12/2024 07:09 PM

See above response

Anonymous

11/12/2024 08:13 PM

Lights On being charged to tax payers. Advertisements on TV advertising to come to Stratford for the "Free Lights On". How ridiculous to say free when the citizens paid for it.

Anonymous

11/12/2024 09:27 PM

I have seen 6-8 girls in one small flower bed cleaning and watering plants , the wastage of resources by keeping too many extra people for too little work should be audited. The productivity level of the staff is very low and I don't see city ever work on increasing the efficiency. Public transit is operating with very low to empty seats , services should be cut down for local within the city buses.

Anonymous

11/13/2024 01:35 AM

less adding parks & visually pleasing things to create the illusion that stratford is a safe & nice city. less climate action- it's too late for that it's a waste of time & money, we can't undo the damage we've done as human beings. stop putting money into our police service if all they're gunna do is catch & release, that's not good police work, they're not doing anything to protect us. they don't do anything til someone is dead & even then the killer is let out on bail the same week. i realize it's not just the police's fault it's the laws & not having room in jails but i'm scared to go outside at night as a woman & the last people i'd ask for help from is the police

Anonymous

11/13/2024 07:39 AM

No increase in taxes beyond rate of inflation No annual salary increases for city staff beyond the rate of inflation. No ridiculous positions such as a cultural coordinator that is not only unnecessary, but a complete waste of money. No more new vehicles for the city when we can't even take care of our roads. I have to pay for countless repairs for my vehicle due to the poor condition of my road, so me paying for the city to get all new electric trucks does not seem fair at all. There are other ways to cut costs without tax increases, we pay so much on taxes already it's ridiculous

Anonymous

11/13/2024 08:14 AM

cooper development could be a sinkhole of lost money

Anonymous

11/13/2024 08:28 AM

Roadcrews often appear to be over-staffed. Ward system introduced (or returned to?) for city councillors to enhance connection and accountability with citizens. Likely reduced number of councillors, but make them full time perhaps.

Anonymous

11/13/2024 08:47 AM

Reduce number of city gardens. Garden added along Martin street this year was an unnecessary expense. Gardens around gallery Stratford also excessive. Materials and maintenance are unnecessary costs to the city. A thorough horticultural review simply applying the "nice to have versus need to have" assessment needs to be conducted.

Anonymous

11/13/2024 09:12 AM

Fire costs and policing costs are exorbitant and should be better in line with overall budget. Hold the line on these unions

Anonymous

11/13/2024 09:15 AM

Flowers/landscaping. Doing stuff just for tourists that residents dont benefit from. Make home owners responsible for shoveling sidewalks

Anonymous

11/13/2024 09:37 AM

Garbage collection police any bylaw because the quality is not there reduce the wages especially police they make way to much money and do nothing !!!!

Anonymous

11/13/2024 11:36 AM

flowers/decor/ outside decorations

Anonymous

11/13/2024 12:05 PM

Wasteful meetings and traveling by council.

Anonymous

11/13/2024 03:28 PM

Reduced spending on Fire Services. Consider moving to a hybrid of FTE staff and volunteers. Review the amount of total calls fire receives with the number of calls that are actually of an emergency nature. For example, it is my understanding that if there is a fender bender or collision in the City, fire responds and 99% of the time, unhook the batteries of the car. They then get the occurrence number and that goes on their total stats for the year. I think things like this inflate data. If their contract does not allow volunteer staff, at least put on some sort of freeze on hiring and minimize increases if possible to

future negotiations. Most citizens have a negative view of fire services and money spent on FTE staffing given the amount of holidays/sick time and 24 hour shifts. Volunteer hybrid would lower costs and improve public perception of funding towards fire services.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 05:39 AM

Airport, of course we need a safe place for services like orange to operate. I would argue that executives and hobbyists can use London or KW for their needs. So can airport expenses be reduced? Or can we, with a little investment, actually create an airport that breaks even cost wise?

Anonymous

11/14/2024 08:31 AM

Eliminate the Stratford Police service communication personnel. Merge with Waterloo Regional Police. Similar as the Fire Service did. Downsize the Administration level Senior officers. Dismiss the current Police Chief's contract & certainly don't renew it. Eliminate City vehicles being driven by employees to their out of city residences.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 08:39 AM

Consider more contracting out to decrease legacy and benefits costs and look to investing in more technology where practicable

Anonymous

11/14/2024 10:14 AM

Consultation services that spend millions and go nowhere. Small efficiencies that add up in research, travel, networking, conferences, and as stated already, consultants.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 10:34 AM

Thoroughly look at all municipal departments and determine where cuts can be made.. redundancy, efficiencies, amalgamation of services, bulk purchasing, coordination of purchasing with other municipalities or sharing resources.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 10:37 AM

Lights on Stratford Less needless construction on some roads - ie. round-a-bout on Albert St.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 10:59 AM

Transit on demand

Anonymous

11/14/2024 11:51 AM

Police budget doesn't seem correlated to crime rate, should investigate whether the spending there is having a noticeable impact on the city's safety, or whether there is a threshold above which spending is wasted.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 11:58 AM

There are no services I would like to see reduced.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 12:45 PM

City employees not use city trucks for their own personal use

Anonymous

11/14/2024 01:01 PM

Stop doing ridiculous road work, ie huron st. Eliminate redundant staff at city hall. Send tax notices by email for people who would prefer it.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 02:28 PM

Parks and rec, money given to the festival.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 02:38 PM

Police services. Way too much money spent on policing.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 02:39 PM

1. Leverage Stratford's Theatre Tourism for Revenue Generation • Partner with Local Businesses for Sponsorships: Stratford's theatre scene attracts large numbers of tourists each year. The city could collaborate with local businesses to sponsor public spaces or events, providing a unique way to generate revenue. For instance, sponsors could support public benches, bike racks, or charging stations, receiving subtle recognition while enhancing the city's amenities. • Seasonal Fees in High-Traffic Areas: Implement seasonal user fees for facilities that are primarily used by tourists, like prime parking spots during the theatre season. This would generate revenue from non-residents without affecting local taxpayers. 2. Increase Efficiency in Staffing and Operations • Digitize Administrative Processes: Moving permit applications, public record access, and facility booking online could save time and reduce overhead. Residents and businesses would have easier access to city services, and city staff could focus on higher-priority tasks. • Collaborate with Neighboring Municipalities on Shared Services: Consider partnerships for public services such as emergency response training or waste management. Pooling resources with neighboring towns could reduce costs and enhance service quality. 3. Monetize Underutilized City-Owned Properties • Lease or Repurpose Vacant Municipal Buildings or Land: If Stratford has vacant municipal properties, they could be leased for purposes like urban gardens, art installations, or pop-up markets, generating revenue and adding vibrancy to the community. • Community Partnerships for Event Spaces: Partner with local organizations to use underutilized spaces for events or classes, creating a revenue stream without additional taxes. 4. Energy and Sustainability Initiatives • Solar Panels for Municipal Buildings: Investing in solar panels for city buildings could lower energy costs over time. Government grants or subsidies might help cover the initial

costs, with long-term savings on utilities. • Switch to LED Lighting for Public Areas: Replacing streetlights and facility lighting with LED fixtures would reduce electricity costs and require less maintenance, offering immediate savings on energy bills. 5. Expand Community-Based and Volunteer Programs • Community Crowdfunding for Projects: For community-focused projects, like a new public art installation or park improvement, the city could use a crowdfunding platform, allowing residents to contribute directly to initiatives they care about. • Volunteer Programs for Parks and Public Spaces: Establish programs for community members to help with maintenance and beautification of parks or green spaces. This would reduce city expenses while fostering community pride and involvement. 6. Enhance Public Transit Through Local Partnerships • On-Demand Transit Options: Stratford could experiment with on-demand public transit options, especially during off-peak hours, to reduce operational costs while maintaining service flexibility. • Seasonal Transit Coordination with Theatre Venues: During peak tourism times, Stratford could offer special transit options in partnership with theatres and festivals, making it easier for tourists to use public transit and reducing central traffic congestion. 7. Adopt Smart Technology for Maintenance and Utility Management • Predictive Maintenance with Smart Sensors: Install sensors on critical infrastructure to monitor wear and tear, allowing for preventive maintenance before major repairs are needed. This could save on future repair costs and improve infrastructure longevity. • Automate Utility Meter Reading and Billing: Transitioning to automated systems for utility billing could reduce costs and improve convenience for residents, streamlining operations for both residents and city staff.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 02:52 PM

Catering to the tourists

Anonymous

11/14/2024 03:48 PM

NO MORE PATIOS !!!

Anonymous

11/14/2024 05:50 PM

None

Anonymous

11/14/2024 06:00 PM

Hockey and ice time Police services and salaries Council services and committees

Anonymous

11/14/2024 06:20 PM

I am not rich enough to use the airport. Maybe start there.



Anonymous

11/14/2024 06:30 PM

Hockey arenas . Smaller buses .

Anonymous

11/14/2024 06:32 PM

I'm not aware of all the services available.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 07:00 PM

Sidewalk clearing is kind of a nice perk, but is it necessary? I don't know how much this service costs, but if it is significant, perhaps savings could be found there?

Anonymous

11/14/2024 07:01 PM

Grants to outside groups. Diversity equity and inclusion initiatives. Reduce the number of city councilors to be in line with other municipalities of Stratford's size. Woodstock has 6 councilors. Waterloo (much larger than Stratford) has 7. It is ridiculous that Stratford has 10.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 07:05 PM

None

Anonymous

11/14/2024 09:37 PM

Street sweepers go by very often, which does not seem necessary.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 09:56 PM

Arenas. They serve a select part of the community, which is not typically those in lower income brackets. Sidewalk clearing. Make this the responsibility of the tax payer.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 10:42 PM

Remove the DEI department. Reduce the size of city buses during low peak times

Anonymous

11/14/2024 11:03 PM

Consultant and Admin

Anonymous

11/15/2024 08:05 AM

Keep police budgets in check, the portion of the operating budget going to the police is excessive. I sure hope we're not subsidizing police services for other municipalities!

Anonymous

11/15/2024 08:24 AM

Stop. Giving. Money. To . Light. Shows. Including. Hotel. Tax. Money.

Anonymous

City beautification (like flower beds). Snow plowing on non snowy

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11/15/2024 03:05 PM

days.

Anonymous

City Hall staff

11/15/2024 05:19 PM



Reduce the size of employees by 50%. That no joke.

11/15/2024 07:33 PM

Anonymous

Parks

11/15/2024 09:02 PM

Anonymous

Sidewalk plows Parke services

11/16/2024 09:44 AM

Anonymous

Stop running huge empty busses. Go smaller

11/16/2024 07:23 PM

Anonymous

transit service. not very envirometnally friendly. can this service be provided with smaller busses . stratford is not a big city

11/17/2024 01:43 AM

Anonymous

I think that municipal vehicles should not be taken out of the city unless on city business. Supervisors taking vehicles home because they are on call is a joke. The supervisors go straight to the yard when called in. That is when you get out of your personal vehicle and use the city provided vehicle.

11/17/2024 06:36 AM

Anonymous

Nothing

11/17/2024 09:35 AM

Anonymous

Develop any current free parking lots. Reduce free on street parking and monetize it. Introduce digital parking passes geared at frequent users (people who commute in) and weekend tourists. Develop empty spaces in the core and increase density. This will increase tax revenues while not requiring significant infrastructure spend.

11/17/2024 10:16 AM

Anonymous

Null.

11/17/2024 01:34 PM

Anonymous

Id like to see less spent on annual expenses such as flowers when perennials could be used requiring less maintenance and fewer staff required.

11/17/2024 08:17 PM

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Anonymous 11/17/2024 10:00 PM	Reduce taxpayer funded welfare housing
Anonymous 11/18/2024 12:47 PM	Possibly park services could be reduced without an appreciable loss of enjoyment ?
Anonymous 11/18/2024 05:34 PM	None
Anonymous 11/18/2024 07:37 PM	I am uncertain what percentage of the budget all the groundskeeping/flowerbeds entail, but I would rather see services for children and families than flower beds.
Anonymous 11/19/2024 12:37 AM	Reduction of administrative costs i.e. Chief Administrator Officer - projected in 2025 to be 973,339, City Clerk \$1,014,888 and Human Resources \$1,552,097 . Although I support some new initiatives on culture change and working toward better employee retention and more communications.
Anonymous 11/19/2024 08:55 PM	I believe that city upkeep of parks could be reduced by naturalizing some areas. This would also be more environmentally friendly. Obviously, grass is needed for play fields, but not everything needs to be a play field. This technique has been used for borders, large parks, verges and islands in the UK
Anonymous 11/20/2024 07:00 AM	Police, defiantly police. They do not do their job to the satisfaction of the people. They are HIGHLY criticized but to lack of performance. The police will tell you they need more fonts. The police will tell you they need new constables. The police will tell you they need mental health mediators. The police will tell you they need salary increases. The Police will tell you they need new vehicles. the police will tell you so much of things they need, what they are saying is they do not have the capability to do the job correctly.
Anonymous 11/20/2024 07:41 AM	Standing around, sitting in parking lots with Tim Hortons waiting for the clock to run out on a shift. No decrease needed, just need better overall management. [REDACTED] work Im

**Optional question** (96 response(s), 40 skipped)

Question type: Essay Question

**Q10 | Are there any municipal services not currently provided that you would like the City of Stratford to consider adding?**

Anonymous

10/28/2024 03:41 PM

Garbage needs to be included.

Anonymous

10/28/2024 03:42 PM

The governing city body should take a pay decrease and put the funds saved towards services and road repair. Stop raising our taxes and giving yourself raises when people cant even afford food.

Anonymous

10/28/2024 04:29 PM

Public referendums on controversial, or unpopular policies, BEFORE they reach council decision, so you can see EXACTLY how many citizens you're betraying, by voting in favour of passing decisions, citizens overwhelmingly do NOT want.

Anonymous

10/28/2024 05:08 PM

I think the city should explore new sources of revenue rather than increasing the usual fees. If current programs are high demand then price them accordingly.

Anonymous

10/28/2024 05:35 PM

no

Anonymous

10/28/2024 06:30 PM

Proper housing support for the people that need it. Proper support for the people trying. Not \$2400 for a single mother. That turned into adults when time for your kids. Then leave the ones trying with only \$1350 a month. As it makes people need to stop

Anonymous

10/28/2024 07:03 PM

Nope

Anonymous

10/28/2024 07:51 PM

No

Anonymous

10/28/2024 10:16 PM

No

Anonymous

10/29/2024 11:38 AM

A good [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] to cope with living here

Anonymous

10/29/2024 12:07 PM

Enhanced communication regarding staff decisions.

Anonymous

10/29/2024 02:34 PM

Create a BRT line down Ontario and Huron streets

Anonymous

10/29/2024 08:39 PM

Other cities have a community compost pickup site (unmanned, so it's cheap) where the community can freely use the compost created from their tax paid green bin pickup.

Anonymous

11/07/2024 09:03 AM

no

Anonymous

11/07/2024 12:37 PM

Create more walking-mall center locations in Stratford to promote active living in the core, improve pedestrian safety and elevate the city center as a destination for residents and visitors alike as in Europe, U.S. and other Canadian municipalities have

Anonymous

11/08/2024 07:34 PM

No

Anonymous

11/11/2024 06:52 PM

Swimming pool

Anonymous

11/11/2024 09:10 PM

Active transportation. We need a complex and thorough plan to move people more efficiently through the city.

Anonymous

11/12/2024 06:42 PM

You should hire a efficiency committee to keep the city's reckless spending in check

Anonymous

11/12/2024 07:09 PM

Again just improve the quality of what we have

Anonymous

11/12/2024 08:13 PM

Things for kids. Barely anything available for young families to do with young children other than the library.

Anonymous

11/13/2024 01:35 AM

more mental health resources, safer & decent housing, rent control, everything is so expensive in stratford & it's not worth it. million dollar run down old houses that aren't even worth 300k

Anonymous

11/13/2024 08:14 AM

austerity and restraint

Anonymous

11/13/2024 08:28 AM

Hazardous Waste Days year round available as other smaller communities do.

Anonymous

11/13/2024 08:32 AM

Stratford thrives because of culture and I would like to see more arts and cultural funding and more funding for social programmes.

Anonymous

11/13/2024 09:12 AM

Proper organic Easter, environmental items, better active transportation, increasing infrastructure on transition to Ev's

Anonymous

11/13/2024 09:37 AM

Just try and increase the quality of the services we already have

Anonymous

11/13/2024 10:09 AM

I think ice skating on the river would be a huge boon to winter tourism.

Anonymous

11/13/2024 03:28 PM

Gymnastics program of some sort. Mitchell is the closest one. Although it may be a privately owned program.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 05:39 AM

No

Anonymous

11/14/2024 10:14 AM

Accessible healthcare, luring doctors to the area.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 10:34 AM

Shelter for the homeless or underserved.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 10:37 AM

No

Anonymous

11/14/2024 11:51 AM

Retired seniors could be hired at low rates as local street guides during tourist season, to introduce tourists not just to the city's attractions but also shops and businesses

Anonymous

11/14/2024 11:58 AM

Free downtown parking up to 30 minutes for Stratford residents. It annoys me that even to go to the postal outlet, I have to pay for parking. When I know I don't have to carry anything heavy, I walk.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 12:58 PM

Affordable housing

Anonymous

11/14/2024 02:38 PM

Indoor municipal swimming pool

Anonymous

11/14/2024 02:39 PM

Consider expanding recycling and composting options to promote sustainability and reduce landfill use. Additionally, a mobile app for city services could streamline access, allowing residents to report issues, view schedules, and receive city alerts.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 02:52 PM

Providing recycling bins

Anonymous

11/14/2024 03:18 PM

Would love to see an outdoor rink - but that's a want, not a need.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 05:50 PM

Great question. Will have to think about this. At a future session perhaps you can share what similar communities are doing.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 06:00 PM

A swimming pool

Anonymous

11/14/2024 06:20 PM

None.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 07:05 PM

Red light cameras

Anonymous

11/14/2024 09:37 PM

Specific garbage days where you can throw out larger things

Anonymous

11/14/2024 09:56 PM

Not at this moment

Anonymous

11/15/2024 03:05 PM

No

Anonymous  
11/15/2024 05:19 PM

Indoor swimming pool

  
11/15/2024 07:33 PM

No.

Anonymous  
11/15/2024 09:02 PM

Shelter for the unhoused

Anonymous  
11/16/2024 07:23 PM

No

Anonymous  
11/17/2024 10:16 AM

I would like to see the city to continue working with the province and federal government to increase rail connections in frequency and speed. The city needs to be a better advocate. I would also like to see a better bike rental program.

Anonymous  
11/17/2024 10:00 PM

Indoor year round pool facilities

Anonymous  
11/18/2024 07:37 PM

A municipal all-season pool.

Anonymous  
11/19/2024 12:37 AM

New indoor swimming pool

Anonymous  
11/20/2024 07:00 AM

Yes, more activities for local people and flexibility in the cost. Enough with the light pollution. Everything you do is about tourism, but tourism is down dramatically. Numerous tourist are worried about the cities activities and they see it in the new.

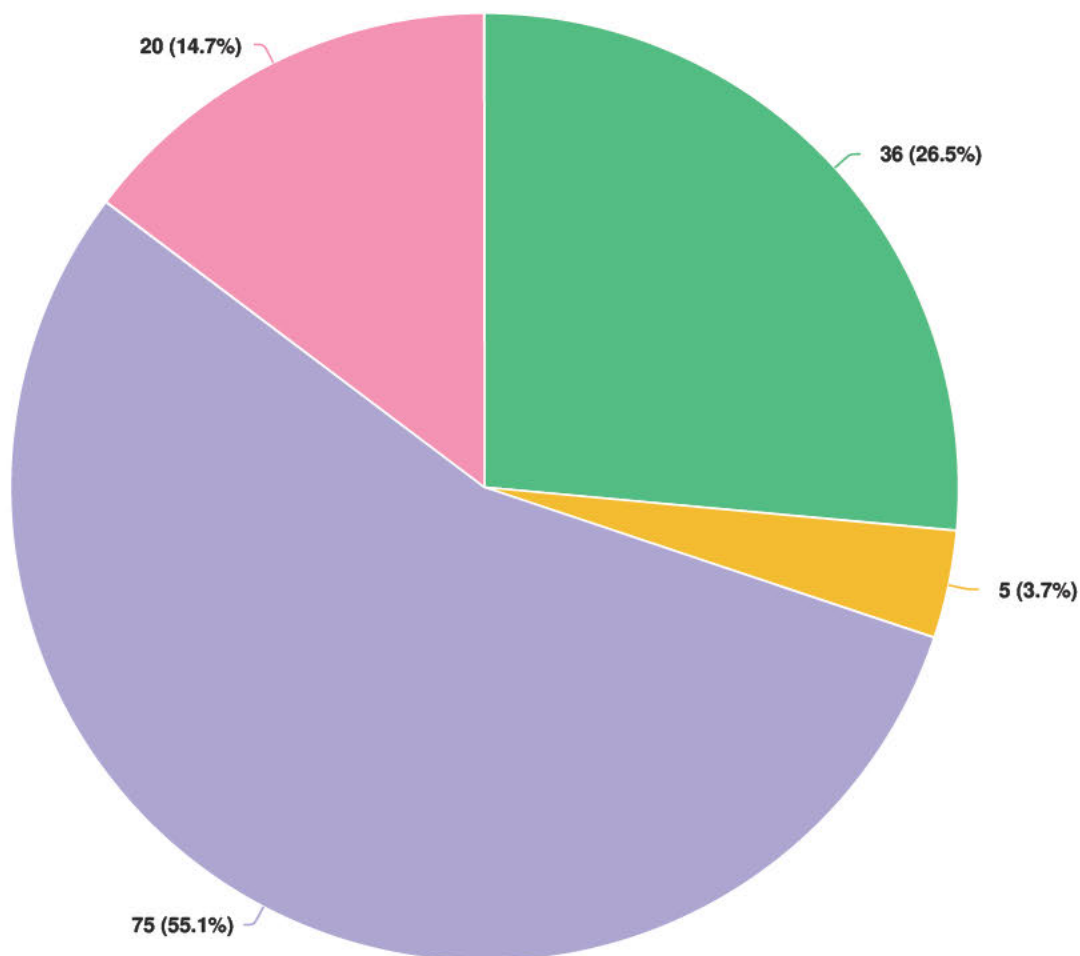
Anonymous  
11/20/2024 07:41 AM

Improves public transit and bike lanes

**Optional question** (57 response(s), 79 skipped)  
**Question type:** Single Line Question



**Q11 | Some services are paid partially by user fees and partially from taxation, such as recreational facility rentals, transit, and waste management. Do you think this combination approach is appropriate?**

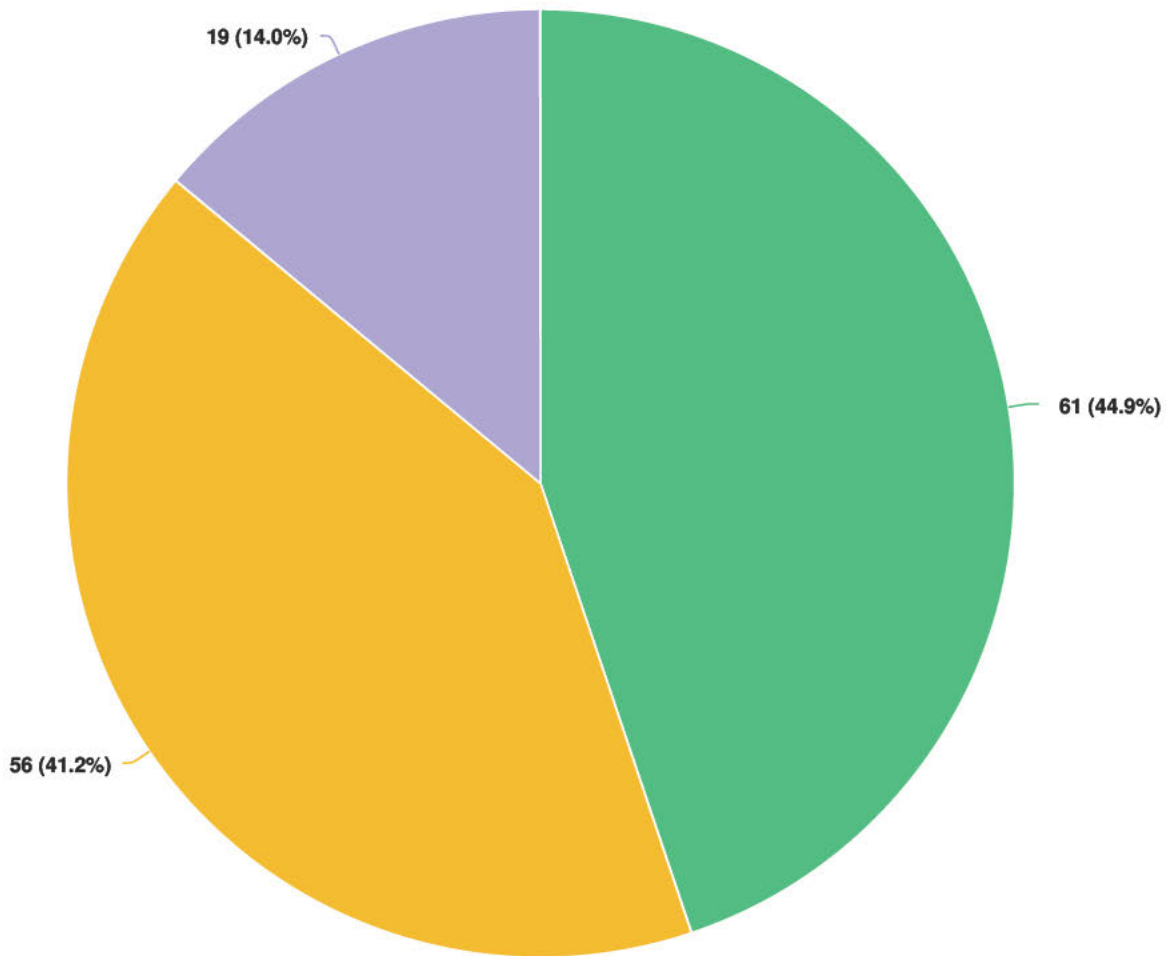


**Question options**

- No. I think all services that have a user fee should be fully user-pay to reduce property taxation subsidization
- No, I think all services should be paid by taxation, and user fees reduced or eliminated, which would result in the tax levy increasing further
- Yes, I think some subsidization from the tax levy is appropriate, like how it is done now
- Other (please specify)

Mandatory Question (136 response(s))  
Question type: Radio Button Question

**Q12** | The City provides subsidized rates for certain community services, user groups and offers community grants to qualifying organizations. Do you support the use of taxation dollars for this type of community subsidy even though it may mean higher fe...



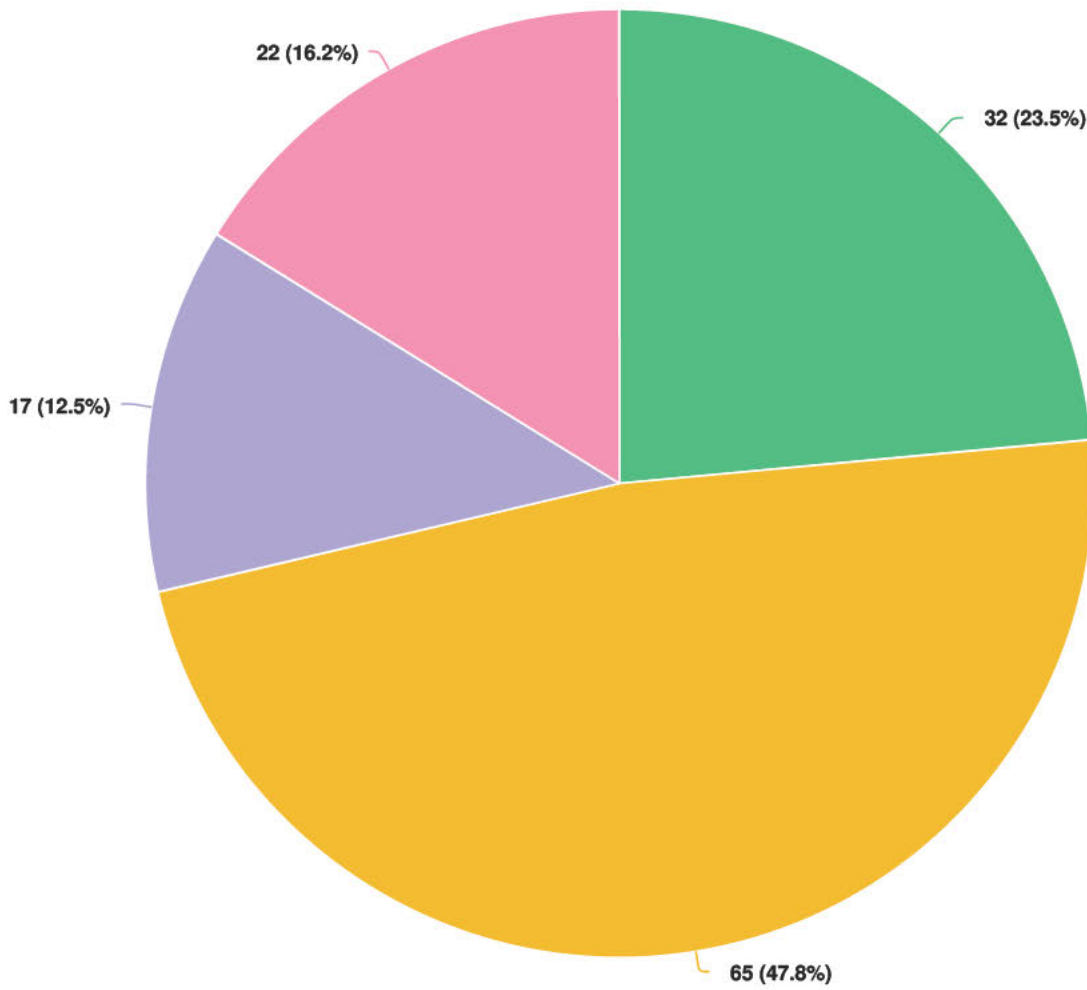
**Question options**

- Yes
- No
- Other (please specify)

Mandatory Question (136 response(s))

Question type: Radio Button Question

**Q13** | To maintain levels of service the City has, until recent years, generally increased property taxes at or less than the rate of inflation. With Canada's current 32-year inflation rate high of 7.6%, costs for standard operations have increased. There...



**Question options**

- 0% increase
- 3% increase (approximate rate of inflation)
- 6% increase
- Other (please specify)

Mandatory Question (136 response(s))

Question type: Radio Button Question

**Q14 | If there's any other feedback you would like to provide us on the City of Stratford's 2025 budget, please include it below:**

Anonymous

10/28/2024 12:52 PM

City vehicles - agree with hybrid vehicles, but wondering ... why not sedans vs SUV's - cheaper, and if just for a single employee to travel, a sedan would seem to be sufficient?

Anonymous

10/28/2024 03:41 PM

Do better. Be better. Council needs to be more responsive and not let staff run council. Staff is not voted in but citizens, council is.

Anonymous

10/28/2024 03:42 PM

Work for the people and stop making it harder to live in this town. Our tax rates and fees are approaching Toronto level and we're nowhere NEAR the same size or importance. This seems like government greed solely.

Anonymous

10/28/2024 04:29 PM

LEARN from last year's failure. Citizens elect our officials, pay the taxes, are simply trying to live, work, and raise our families in the city we love, for which we are currently, and constantly being punished. This ignorance, and dismissal can only last so long, before there the level of public discord, and disapproval reaches critical mass, resulting in the inexorable toppling your house of cards system. It's not too late to fix this, but the first step is to acknowledge it. Or don't, and see how well you do, with public approval, in 2025, and going forward. Good luck! UwU

Anonymous

10/28/2024 05:08 PM

Again, look at new revenue sources. I support higher user fees on programs that can accommodate it. I also realize that taxes need to go up. Nothing is getting cheaper. I encourage staff and council to innovate. I think that use of current resources need to be reviewed. Staffing levels, spending on capital. Funds are limited so use effectively.

Anonymous

10/28/2024 05:35 PM

I understand policing costs significant portion of budget, but I think it is exorbitant and top heavy with significant senior management salaries. How can this change? I would be okay with reduction in services to keep our taxes in check, and avoid another hefty rate increase.

Anonymous

10/28/2024 06:17 PM

Any and every measure must be taken possible to keep land taxes at a reasonable rate (between 2-3% annually). Inflation in Canada has

now stabilized to 2%. The City cannot give the excuse that inflation is to blame any more when we've had several years of significant tax hikes. It is not acceptable for a city the size of Stratford to demand tax increases beyond an inflationary level. 5% tax increases (occasionally) is the most that should be asked of it's citizens. Anything asked more than that makes those who make up the budget look apathetic to how tax increases affect it's citizens. Start at a 5% target for tax increase and work from there - And once you've met that, go over it again and get it even lower.

Anonymous

10/28/2024 06:30 PM

Residents can not afford more. As cost have gone up for everybody! Not just you. We do not get pay hikes like you. Get rid of the non workers. Give credit to the good one. Stop hiring lawyers for everything and work with Residents not against them

Anonymous

10/28/2024 06:32 PM

The size of the City's government has seemingly increased dramatically in the past few decades - and this is eating up a large portion of the tax revenue. City government should focus on become smaller and more efficient. This means less bureaucracy, less bloated processes (approvals, permits, etc). And reducing bloated processes and bureaucracy should mean less staffing is required.

Anonymous

10/28/2024 07:51 PM

I was appaled at the increase of taxes but also our debt level in the City when I saw it last year. This needs to stop.

Anonymous

10/29/2024 09:49 AM

There should be no tax increase in 2025 after last years huge increase.

Anonymous

10/29/2024 11:38 AM

I didn't vote for this horrific mayor or most of these councillors. I don't know who did but they all need ousted immediately they are all delusional and not worthy of such power.

Anonymous

10/29/2024 12:07 PM

Frustratingly expensive tax burden. Poor retail offerings. Told by many independent retailers operating outside Stratford, they would never start up here. Lack of city staff support, high taxes, focus to the exclusion of other opportunities on the Theatre. Stratford is a bureaucratic nightmare. Lack of effort to attract medical practitioners. Don't tell me it's the Hospitals responsibility. It may be, look at what Goderich did to successfully enhance efforts.

Anonymous

N/A

10/29/2024 08:39 PM

Anonymous

11/01/2024 04:30 PM

Inflation in recent years was been dramatic, but temporary within inflation coming down to normal levels now - Stratford's budget has exceeded inflation substantially over the last number of years. Better business cases for staffing additions should be strongly reviewed prior to approving.

Anonymous

11/03/2024 06:38 AM

We carry a large amount of debt. That inhibits choices going forward. When and how is the judgment made about the fiscal structure that includes the capital outlays? The committee struck to examine the usage of the "Cooper site" has been in operation for some time now. Is there a concept? Is there any initial ballparking of cost?

Anonymous

11/03/2024 11:24 AM

Have the industrial facilities start paying their fair share.

Anonymous

11/07/2024 09:03 AM

see above .In the past Council have directed staff to submit a need budget not a want budget .There is nothing wrong with council directing staff to submit a 0% increase .

Anonymous

11/07/2024 12:37 PM

Council should be encouraged to focus on not only efficiencies but community enhancement and growth, responding to local priorities and global issues/trends in order that it not be overwhelmed by deficits, be in a position to pivot for community emergency planning and response. Council should collaborate with staff to ensure that the expertise is utilized and not laser focused on the bottom-line. Stratford is a community of well-being and innovation in industry, agriculture, the arts and beyond. Council and staff should not be apprehensive or hesitant to raise taxes in order to keep pace with justifiable needs of the entire community from cradle to grave. Keep up the good work, there is much to be done but Stratford has the capacity and resources to progress into the new era.

Anonymous

11/10/2024 05:37 PM

Reduce debt and increase reserves to ensure financial sustainability

Anonymous

11/12/2024 06:27 PM

Submit data indicating how Stratford property taxes compare to other similar sized communities. My impression, and that of others I know, is that our property taxes are high compared to other communities..

Anonymous

Are the tax stop wasting our money

11/12/2024 06:42 PM

Anonymous

11/12/2024 07:00 PM

cuts to this ridiculous rates of taxes who can afford to live in stratford

Anonymous

11/12/2024 07:14 PM

Many of my neighbours risk losing their homes if taxes continue to climb. You need more bodies in higher density, paying taxes.

Anonymous

11/12/2024 08:13 PM

Last year was too high. Services need to be cut.

Anonymous

11/12/2024 08:49 PM

Property taxes are too high in this town. They need to be lowered.  
<https://www.secondstreet.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Cost-cutting-options-for-municipalities-Final.pdf>

Anonymous

11/12/2024 09:27 PM

The process should be more transparent and the feedback should be used , the way city is acting from last couple of years makes people feel like the decisions are all taken behind the closed doors with no public say.

Anonymous

11/13/2024 07:39 AM

Resurface roads that desperately need it, and seriously look into our waste pick up situation! Both are horribly executed.

Anonymous

11/13/2024 08:14 AM

austerity and restraint. higher property taxes are a burden on all of us and austerity and restraint must be considered when budgets are drawn up

Anonymous

11/13/2024 08:28 AM

Level of taxation in Stratford encourages our family to look elsewhere. Sense that historical mismanagement has got the city (as well as Provincial downloading) into substantial financial difficulties.

Anonymous

11/13/2024 09:12 AM

You need to get your staffing costs inline. Crazy that we pay for more ineffective and inefficient service and at the director level it's acceptable because city staff are unionized. Deal with this issue. Also I don't understand with the amount of new housing development why the tax base isn't increasing. Charge residential developers more fees, make them provide better homes. There are significant future traffic flow and safety issues with where these new developments are.

Anonymous

11/13/2024 10:09 AM

Stratford is a pretty great place to live, for the most part. But no more tax increases. Enough. Make do with what exists. Canada's inflation rate is no longer 7.6%.

Anonymous

11/13/2024 03:28 PM

I like that the city is considering a multi year budget. This model works in other municipalities and allows for good planning and time for residents to absorb the budget rather than having to do it annually and then turn around and see the next new budget.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 05:39 AM

I would like more transparency and to make it easier for residents to participate.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 10:14 AM

Please be fair and endeavour to rise above and to stop the ridiculous dramatic incidences between angry citizens and city reps and workers getting upset about facial expressions and banning people and canceling meetings because you're acting afraid of an aging mouthy ex-NDPer. It's truly embarrassing and all the City did was give that group clout.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 10:34 AM

We must assess our ability to continue to support many groups within our community. Every organization is suffering and is worthy of support but how do we expect to continue to financially give monies to all those that seek it? Can we not expect the Festival Theatre to pay some form of taxes on the properties they hold? We need their financial support for this community beyond what they currently do. They have to be expected to contribute to the tax base.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 10:37 AM

Stratford's city taxes are already too high. City hall is top heavy and needs to find ways to find more efficiencies.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 10:59 AM

Look at cutting back on police and fire budgets

Anonymous

11/14/2024 11:51 AM

User fees are a regressive tax. For example, the flat, albeit low, cost of garbage tags means that poor people are paying a larger percentage of their income than wealthy people on garbage. For some low income homeowners these user fees can put them in the hole, and exacerbate a financial downward spiral. And this poverty breeds crime and an unhealthy economy. We have taxes and government for a reason, let's use it.



Anonymous

11/14/2024 11:58 AM

As a "new" (2 years) resident of Stratford, I'm generally happy with the services I receive as a homeowner. The two areas that irritate me are: one, trying to remember to buy the stupid bag tags. I'm busy enough trying to earn money and to maintain my property and they do not change how much waste I produce whatsoever, they just result in a last minute drive to the variety store when I realize I'm out again on garbage day morning. Second, having to pay for parking when I want to patronize downtown businesses but it's not feasible to carry more than a few pounds or hot food on the 20 minute walk from downtown to my house. I'd love if taxpayers could get 30 minutes free downtown parking so I can at least pick up a parcel from the post office or get takeout. I don't think that's much to ask when I'm paying over \$4k annually to live here before my other housing costs.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 12:58 PM

Deal with affordable housing ASAP

Anonymous

11/14/2024 02:38 PM

We are already overtaxed compared to neighbouring communities. Find efficiencies!

Anonymous

11/14/2024 02:39 PM

Thank you for considering resident input. I encourage exploring efficiency strategies, such as technology adoption, public-private partnerships, and targeted subsidies, to keep taxes steady while enhancing service quality. A balanced approach will ensure sustainable growth for Stratford.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 02:52 PM

Fix Britannia road from the circle to mornington

Anonymous

11/14/2024 03:48 PM

Please stop the patios, they reduce parking spots, meaning people like me, a disabled senior must go elsewhere to shop.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 04:02 PM

I highly support quickly moving to active utilization of the Cooper space, in particular ensuring that the library and Y have adequate space there, and also building some deeply affordable housing units in the space.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 05:50 PM

If there will be a significant increase this year, is it possible to project something that shows the next few years' projections? People may be more accommodating if they know it can return to the level of inflation after we get these big infrastructure issues under control (or whatever the biggest issues are).

Anonymous

11/14/2024 06:00 PM

I would like to know where our major increase last year went. I haven't seen an increase in services, but I have seen major increases in my bills. I wonder if we're on the hook for past overspending?

Anonymous

11/14/2024 06:30 PM

Why are Stratford's taxes as high or higher than many major cities when we enjoy far fewer services. Our roads are a disgrace, the snow plowing damages the sidewalks, most visitors are stunned that we pay extra over and above the city taxes for garbage pickup. The Y is an embarrassment - look at the facilities in smaller municipalities such as New Hamburg and St Mary's in comparison. There is minimal affordable daycare available to families. Yet more and more housing is being built so presumably the city is receiving larger and larger revenues. Why does Stratford have such large buses that run 99% of the time with 2 people on them. Surely smaller buses would be an economy not only for the budget but also for the environment. My confidence in city hall is at an all time low and the smugness and secrecy of councillors is shocking.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 06:32 PM

So many small businesses are closing in our downtown core. So many middle and lower income families are struggling. I think it's important to consider the implications raising taxes has on people's continued ability to live here. I feel concern that with municipal taxes being so high BEFORE property value reassessments, that when reassessments eventually happen, people will not be able to afford their homes because property taxes will skyrocket so much. Especially considering the influx of people to Stratford during the pandemic and the sharp rise in real estate prices here.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 07:05 PM

You need to do better! People's wages are not increasing enough to pay more taxes.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 09:37 PM

I think the city does a good job generally, with plenty artistic and cultural emphasis in their operations. I just think when it comes to taxing people, they should remember people are being stretched so thin, if they can't afford to live or move here, then that will hurt the city more in the long run.

Anonymous

11/14/2024 09:56 PM

This survey is heavily biased towards the only option for improvements to be in increasing taxes. Typically a balanced budget requires spending cuts. Please work harder on your spending cuts, so native residents like myself with young families, can remain in our hometown and not have to worry about tax increases

Anonymous

11/14/2024 11:03 PM

A lot of teen agers cruising around in city pickup trucks after 6 pm, who's gas

Anonymous

11/16/2024 07:23 PM

Good luck to the bean counters and to all us property taxed residences.

Anonymous

11/16/2024 11:52 PM

The city has already increased property taxes and parking tickets. We are all suffering because of inflation. Please do not raise the tax. It's too much already.

Anonymous

11/17/2024 01:43 AM

if services are not increasing , the tax increase should be at the inflation rate or less. If this is not possible than services have to be cut or wages not increased beyond inflation. \people should be at a status quo at loeast and nto have increased taxes aboce inflation whiel there is not increase or imporvement in the services. no business can operate like that

Anonymous

11/17/2024 09:35 AM

More Crosswalks

Anonymous

11/17/2024 10:16 AM

Speed up development rates and ignore the NIMBYs. Come out with a strong case for economic development and revitalization and people will understand. Building homes, welcoming workers, making it easier for people to connect. Put forward a vision for a strong diverse city based in a welcoming, caring and vibrant community.

Anonymous

11/17/2024 10:00 PM

Policing and fire are two of the highest tax money users. These budgets need to be gone over and streamlined. Get out of the contract for policing St. Mary's and South Perth. Taxpayers are loosing on this

Anonymous

11/18/2024 05:34 PM

Get the Province to provide more funds!

Anonymous

11/18/2024 07:37 PM

I favour increased services that increase equity and reduce the effects of poverty such as improved transit, social and recreations programs/ green spaces for all of stratford especially children, elderly and people with disabilities. I am not in favour of resources going to gardening/ upkeep of ornamental flower beds.

Anonymous

11/19/2024 12:37 AM

Elimination of charity donations from the City's budget - what charities one donates to, if funds are available, should be an individual choice and not included in property taxes.. i.e. Community Grants \$1,196,870 If you are going to use a very particular stat you should provide the source, i.e. "Canada's current 32 -year inflation rate high of 7.6%" . I could not find that number in a short search so I have no idea where it comes from but it seems misleading. "The Consumer Price Index (CPI) rose 3.9% on an annual average basis in 2023 ..." <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/> Question 5 was required to submit the survey but I did not like the tone of the questions or any of the options - talk about forced choice. But to save the other response I made and the time I took I am answering it. My real answer is I want the City to do their best to maintain service levels and manage assets responsibly and avoid major property tax increases. These significant year over year increases are sending my tax bill up substantially i.e. we are getting increases on the increase. And yes I am aware of the various cost factors, etc.

Anonymous

11/19/2024 08:34 PM

Inflation is 2% not 7.6%. With so many new houses being built and extra property taxes coming in, the level of services from the council is disappointing. On question five, I accept none of the options.

Anonymous

11/19/2024 08:55 PM

city staff rates of pay are not in line with the community at large. While I respect the unionized environment and that there are some specialist skills (planning, engineering) in general the city staff rates of pay have outpaced the community at large

Anonymous

11/20/2024 07:00 AM

Replace the entire council.

Anonymous

11/20/2024 07:41 AM

More transparency, more transparency, more transparency Thank you for your service to our community

**Optional question** (67 response(s), 69 skipped)

**Question type:** Essay Question

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [stfdbudget](#)  
**Subject:** Budget  
**Date:** Thursday, November 7, 2024 8:45:40 AM

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**[EXTERNAL EMAIL]** DO NOT CLICK links or attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Again may I offer my suggestion that as a tax payer I find it hard to accept the fact that there are many city employees that have the benefit of driving city vehicles back and forth from their home to work in the morning and noon hours locally and out of town .

I have raised this issue in the past with the CAO and a councilor .One answer from CAO was she was waiting for a grant to install a tracking system .That to me is an unnecessary waste of time !! Surely Department heads have the knowledge of how often a staff person needs the vehicle at home to respond to an emergency and whether having a city vehicle is only way to respond .

Think of the wear and tear on our vehicles and cost of gas we taxpayers must pay .

I do understand the need to continue upgrading infrastructure so a budget increase in that area is understandable but there is nothing wrong with asking staff to look for a minimum increase in their operating budgets .Efficiencies can be found if challenged to do so .

Respectfully submitted

[REDACTED]

We can't help everyone, but everyone can help someone!



# 2025 Budget Survey

RECEIVED  
CITY OF STRATFORD  
NOV 20 2024  
DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE  
SERVICES OFFICE

1. I participate in the City's annual budget process:

- Always
- Never
- Sometimes
- Only when something interests me
- Other (please specify in the space below)

2. I would be interested in participating or engaging in the following activities related to the annual budget process (select all that apply):

- Completing surveys
- Submitting questions
- Watching budget-related meetings
- Appearing as a delegation at budget-related meetings
- Attending public information sessions related to the budget process
- Other (please specify in the space below)

*Any and Anything That I Can Offer  
Information to Improve Life for All. JK*

3. Results from last year's survey and informal Chat With the Treasurer suggest that citizens are interested in in-person budget information sessions. We are planning to try a few "pop-up" budget info sites, where you can informally chat with the Treasurer and/or a member of Council, as well as a budget open house where you can learn more about where your tax dollars go. Would you be interested in attending these types of events?

- Yes *Needed*
- No
- Not sure

over





# 2025 Budget Survey

more wasted money

4. The City is required by law to balance the budget. A number of strategies are available to accomplish this. Of the following, which would you prefer the City use to balance its annual budget? (Select all that apply)

- Reduce the level of services (e.g. reduced hours, frequency) *Already Done*
- Increase property taxes *Alread Done*
- Increase user fees (e.g. ice, room and facility rentals, transit, bag tags) *Exx*
- Introduce new user fees for some City services that currently have no fees
- I have an idea/strategy not listed above (please specify in the space below)

*Stop Creating Jobs To Increase Taxes That Dont not And Have Never Worked*

5. Property taxes pay for the delivery of municipal services. This includes maintaining and replacing the assets used to deliver those services. Please choose one of the following statements that you most agree with:

- I support additional tax increases if it means we can take care of our existing assets and keep service levels the same
- I support additional tax increases if it means enhanced services
- I want my taxes to stay the same and I am prepared to accept a reduced service level when taxes cannot keep up with asset deterioration

*Trick Question Make Proper Use of Fund There*

6. Please rate your overall level of satisfaction with the services that your tax dollars currently support:

- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Other (please specify)

*Biggest Failure Waste of Resources over An Funds Given. Corruption at it Highest*



# 2025 Budget Survey

7. Thinking about the part of your taxes that go to Stratford (not including the education portion), how would you rate the overall value you receive for your tax dollars?

- Good
- Fair
- Poor

Failure of Appointed People

8. What municipal services, if any, would you like to see enhanced, or where would you like to see the City dedicate more resources?  
(Assuming that this could potentially result in a modest tax increase)

No Service There That Specifically Does That  
I Am One See Waste  
\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$

9. What municipal services, if any, would you like to see reduced, or where would you like to see the City dedicate fewer resources?  
(Assuming that this could potentially result in a modest tax decrease)

Keep All ~~the~~ Needed  
Just Get Money's Worth  
Stop Talking Judging  
An Do IT





## 2025 Budget Survey

10. Are there any municipal services not currently provided that you would like the City of Stratford to consider adding?

Mens Shelter

11. Some services are paid partially by user fees and partially from taxation, such as recreational facility rentals, transit, and waste management. Do you think this combination approach is appropriate?

- No. I think all services that have a user fee should be fully user-pay to reduce property tax subsidization
- No. I think all services should be paid by taxation, and user fees reduced or eliminated, which would result in the tax levy increasing further
- Yes. I think some subsidization from the tax levy is appropriate, like how it is done now
- Other (please specify in the space below)

I Think There Enough Funding  
And ITS Wasted On Over Priced  
Back Door Golf Course Deals  
Of People that Corrupte City <sup>over</sup>



## 2025 Budget Survey

12. The City provides subsidized rates for certain community services, user groups and offers community grants to qualifying organizations. Do you support the use of taxation dollars for this type of community subsidy even though it may mean higher fees or taxes for others?

- Yes
- No
- Other (please specify in the space below)

*etc etc etc List of Names to be  
Mayors / Crown Attorney 2  
Stop Employing People Without Knowledge  
or Experience to be failures that are*

13. To maintain levels of service the City has, until recent years, generally increased property taxes at or less than the rate of inflation. With Canada's current 32-year inflation rate high of 7.6%, costs for standard operations have increased. There is an even greater increase in inflation for infrastructure and maintenance at more than 15%. Based on your expectations for service levels, what is your acceptable level of tax increase in 2025?

- 0% increase
- 3% increase (approximate rate of inflation)
- 6% increase
- Other (please specify below)

*Do The Jobs Don't Create A Job  
That is another failure  
Stop Wasting The Money  
example Police Station Mobility Ramp (trap)  
example Bus Washings Machine  
example Bus Routes (Stupid) (Useless)  
example Water Park, City Hall 2 Bus Terminal*





## 2025 Budget Survey

14. If there's any other feedback you would like to provide us on Stratford's 2025 budget, please include it below:

Hours An Hours  
All That I Would  
Point Out IF Given  
Opportunity, Mayor and others  
make Rules An Implement  
Policies (Bend Rules/Laws To Prevent  
That

**Thank you for your feedback.**

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# 2025 Budget Survey

1. I participate in the City's annual budget process:

- Always
- Never
- Sometimes
- Only when something interests me
- Other (please specify in the space below)

new to city, 1st time

RECEIVED  
CITY OF STRATFORD  
NOV 20 2024  
DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE  
SERVICES OFFICE

2. I would be interested in participating or engaging in the following activities related to the annual budget process (select all that apply):

- Completing surveys
- Submitting questions
- Watching budget-related meetings
- Appearing as a delegation at budget-related meetings
- Attending public information sessions related to the budget process
- Other (please specify in the space below)

3. Results from last year's survey and informal Chat With the Treasurer suggest that citizens are interested in in-person budget information sessions. We are planning to try a few "pop-up" budget info sites, where you can informally chat with the Treasurer and/or a member of Council, as well as a budget open house where you can learn more about where your tax dollars go. Would you be interested in attending these types of events?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

over



## 2025 Budget Survey

4. The City is required by law to balance the budget. A number of strategies are available to accomplish this. Of the following, which would you prefer the City use to balance its annual budget? (Select all that apply)

- Reduce the level of services (e.g. reduced hours, frequency)
- Increase property taxes *only above a certain income level.*
- Increase user fees (e.g. ice, room and facility rentals, transit, bag tags)
- Introduce new user fees for some City services that currently have no fees
- I have an idea/strategy not listed above (please specify in the space below)

5. Property taxes pay for the delivery of municipal services. This includes maintaining and replacing the assets used to deliver those services. Please choose one of the following statements that you most agree with:

- I support additional tax increases if it means we can take care of our existing assets and keep service levels the same
- I support additional tax increases if it means enhanced services
- I want my taxes to stay the same and I am prepared to accept a reduced service level when taxes cannot keep up with asset deterioration

6. Please rate your overall level of satisfaction with the services that your tax dollars currently support:

- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Other (please specify)





## 2025 Budget Survey

7. Thinking about the part of your taxes that go to Stratford (not including the education portion), how would you rate the overall value you receive for your tax dollars?

Good

Fair

Poor

8. What municipal services, if any, would you like to see enhanced, or where would you like to see the City dedicate more resources?  
(Assuming that this could potentially result in a modest tax increase)

better pool hours

9. What municipal services, if any, would you like to see reduced, or where would you like to see the City dedicate fewer resources?  
(Assuming that this could potentially result in a modest tax decrease)



## 2025 Budget Survey

**10. Are there any municipal services not currently provided that you would like the City of Stratford to consider adding?**

**11. Some services are paid partially by user fees and partially from taxation, such as recreational facility rentals, transit, and waste management. Do you think this combination approach is appropriate?**

- No. I think all services that have a user fee should be fully user-pay to reduce property tax subsidization
- No. I think all services should be paid by taxation, and user fees reduced or eliminated, which would result in the tax levy increasing further
- Yes. I think some subsidization from the tax levy is appropriate, like how it is done now
- Other (please specify in the space below)



## 2025 Budget Survey

**12. The City provides subsidized rates for certain community services, user groups and offers community grants to qualifying organizations. Do you support the use of taxation dollars for this type of community subsidy even though it may mean higher fees or taxes for others?**

- Yes
- No
- Other (please specify in the space below)

**13. To maintain levels of service the City has, until recent years, generally increased property taxes at or less than the rate of inflation. With Canada's current 32-year inflation rate high of 7.6%, costs for standard operations have increased. There is an even greater increase in inflation for infrastructure and maintenance at more than 15%. Based on your expectations for service levels, what is your acceptable level of tax increase in 2025?**

- 0% increase
- 3% increase (approximate rate of inflation)
- 6% increase
- Other (please specify below)





## 2025 Budget Survey

**14. If there's any other feedback you would like to provide us on Stratford's 2025 budget, please include it below:**

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# 2025 Budget Survey

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- Always
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- Other (please specify in the space below)

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CITY OF STRATFORD  
NOV 20 2024  
DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE  
SERVICES OFFICE

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- Completing surveys
- Submitting questions
- Watching budget-related meetings
- Appearing as a delegation at budget-related meetings
- Attending public information sessions related to the budget process
- Other (please specify in the space below)

**3. Results from last year's survey and informal Chat With the Treasurer suggest that citizens are interested in in-person budget information sessions. We are planning to try a few "pop-up" budget info sites, where you can informally chat with the Treasurer and/or a member of Council, as well as a budget open house where you can learn more about where your tax dollars go. Would you be interested in attending these types of events?**

- Yes
- No
- Not sure



## 2025 Budget Survey

**4. The City is required by law to balance the budget. A number of strategies are available to accomplish this. Of the following, which would you prefer the City use to balance its annual budget? (Select all that apply)**

- Reduce the level of services (e.g. reduced hours, frequency)
- Increase property taxes
- Increase user fees (e.g. ice, room and facility rentals, transit, bag tags)
- Introduce new user fees for some City services that currently have no fees
- I have an idea/strategy not listed above (please specify in the space below)

Homelessness

**5. Property taxes pay for the delivery of municipal services. This includes maintaining and replacing the assets used to deliver those services. Please choose one of the following statements that you most agree with:**

- I support additional tax increases if it means we can take care of our existing assets and keep service levels the same
- I support additional tax increases if it means enhanced services
- I want my taxes to stay the same and I am prepared to accept a reduced service level when taxes cannot keep up with asset deterioration

**6. Please rate your overall level of satisfaction with the services that your tax dollars currently support:**

- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Other (please specify)



## 2025 Budget Survey

7. Thinking about the part of your taxes that go to Stratford (not including the education portion), how would you rate the overall value you receive for your tax dollars?

- Good
- Fair
- Poor

8. What municipal services, if any, would you like to see enhanced, or where would you like to see the City dedicate more resources?  
(Assuming that this could potentially result in a modest tax increase)

Homelessness Housing

Extend Public library Hours

9. What municipal services, if any, would you like to see reduced, or where would you like to see the City dedicate fewer resources?  
(Assuming that this could potentially result in a modest tax decrease)

None





## 2025 Budget Survey

10. Are there any municipal services not currently provided that you would like the City of Stratford to consider adding?

Extend Hours of Stratford Connection Centre

11. Some services are paid partially by user fees and partially from taxation, such as recreational facility rentals, transit, and waste management. Do you think this combination approach is appropriate?

- No. I think all services that have a user fee should be fully user-pay to reduce property tax subsidization
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- Other (please specify in the space below)



## 2025 Budget Survey

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- Yes
- No
- Other (please specify in the space below)

**13. To maintain levels of service the City has, until recent years, generally increased property taxes at or less than the rate of inflation. With Canada's current 32-year inflation rate high of 7.6%, costs for standard operations have increased. There is an even greater increase in inflation for infrastructure and maintenance at more than 15%. Based on your expectations for service levels, what is your acceptable level of tax increase in 2025?**

- 0% increase
- 3% increase (approximate rate of inflation)
- 6% increase
- Other (please specify below)



## 2025 Budget Survey

**14. If there's any other feedback you would like to provide us on Stratford's 2025 budget, please include it below:**

- ① Extend Stratford Library Hours.
- ② Allow Purchasing Public Transit ~~Passes~~ Monthly Passes and tickets.
- ③ Unlock Transit terminal Washrooms at earlier times or make 24 Hour availability.
- ④ Enforce City -By laws of trespassing towards Homeless trespassers.
- ⑤ Reduce Homeless motel access of 28 days to reduce costs.

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RECEIVED  
CITY OF STRATFORD

NOV 19 2024

DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE  
SERVICES OFFICE

# 2025 Budget Survey

## 1. I participate in the City's annual budget process:

- Always
- Never
- Sometimes
- Only when something interests me
- Other (please specify in the space below)

## 2. I would be interested in participating or engaging in the following activities related to the annual budget process (select all that apply):

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- Submitting questions
- Watching budget-related meetings
- Appearing as a delegation at budget-related meetings
- Attending public information sessions related to the budget process

Other (please specify in the space below)

*Should put a date on the last page when the information is to be submitted to the city (NOV 19, 2024)*

## 3. Results from last year's survey and informal Chat With the Treasurer suggest that citizens are interested in in-person budget information sessions. We are planning to try a few "pop-up" budget info sites, where you can informally chat with the Treasurer and/or a member of Council, as well as a budget open house where you can learn more about where your tax dollars go. Would you be interested in attending these types of events?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

over





## 2025 Budget Survey

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- Reduce the level of services (e.g. reduced hours, frequency)
- Increase property taxes
- Increase user fees (e.g. ice, room and facility rentals, transit, bag tags)
- Introduce new user fees for some City services that currently have no fees
- I have an idea/strategy not listed above (please specify in the space below)

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- I support additional tax increases if it means enhanced services
- I want my taxes to stay the same and I am prepared to accept a reduced service level when taxes cannot keep up with asset deterioration

6. Please rate your overall level of satisfaction with the services that your tax dollars currently support:

- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Other (please specify) *VERY important that sidewalks ARE CLEARED of snow for SENIORS, children going to school and dog walkers.* **over**



## 2025 Budget Survey

7. Thinking about the part of your taxes that go to Stratford (not including the education portion), how would you rate the overall value you receive for your tax dollars?

Good

Fair

Poor

8. What municipal services, if any, would you like to see enhanced, or where would you like to see the City dedicate more resources?

(Assuming that this could potentially result in a modest tax increase)

BETTER ROADS, IN INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

9. What municipal services, if any, would you like to see reduced, or where would you like to see the City dedicate fewer resources?

(Assuming that this could potentially result in a modest tax decrease)

NO COMMENTS



## 2025 Budget Survey

10. Are there any municipal services not currently provided that you would like the City of Stratford to consider adding?

1. CROSS COUNTRY SKI TRAILS - GROOMED
2. PUBLIC OUTDOOR SKATING RINK.
3. BRING BACK REGULAR BUS SERVICE ON SATURDAY
4. OPEN UP THE NORTH SHORE WALKING PATH AT THE WEST END
5. PLOUGH THE NORTH SHORE FOR WALKING IN THE WINTER

11. Some services are paid partially by user fees and partially from taxation, such as recreational facility rentals, transit, and waste management. Do you think this combination approach is appropriate?

- No. I think all services that have a user fee should be fully user-pay to reduce property tax subsidization
- No. I think all services should be paid by taxation, and user fees reduced or eliminated, which would result in the tax levy increasing further
- Yes. I think some subsidization from the tax levy is appropriate, like how it is done now
- Other (please specify in the space below)





## 2025 Budget Survey

12. The City provides subsidized rates for certain community services, user groups and offers community grants to qualifying organizations. Do you support the use of taxation dollars for this type of community subsidy even though it may mean higher fees or taxes for others?

Yes

No

Other (please specify in the space below) PLEASE DO NOT FORGET that the city OWENS GALLERY STRATFORD BUILDING AND should be maintained like other city Buildings

13. To maintain levels of service the City has, until recent years, generally increased property taxes at or less than the rate of inflation. With Canada's current 32-year inflation rate high of 7.6%, costs for standard operations have increased. There is an even greater increase in inflation for infrastructure and maintenance at more than 15%. Based on your expectations for service levels, what is your acceptable level of tax increase in 2025?

0% increase

3% increase (approximate rate of inflation)

6% increase

Other (please specify below)



## 2025 Budget Survey

14. If there's any other feedback you would like to provide us on Stratford's 2025 budget, please include it below:

1. OUTDOOR SKATING RINK ~~AT~~ AT THE Festival theatre.
2. HIRE A STAFF LAWYER QUALIFIED IN MUNICIPAL LAW THAT PERSON COULD GO TO ALL MEETINGS AND GIVE ADVICE - DO NOT CONTRACT OUT.
3. ENFORCE BYLAWS TO GET MORE REVENUE
4. UPDATE OLD BYLAWS. 10 to 20 YEARS OLD.
5. BETTER SIGNAGE AT CHILDRENS PLAYGROUND. (William St) - speeding on STREET. & PARKING IN FRONT OF CURRENT SIGNS.

---

**Thank you for your feedback.**

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*time deadline*



RECEIVED  
CITY OF STRATFORD

NOV 10 2024

DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE  
SERVICES OFFICE

# 2025 Budget Survey

**1. I participate in the City's annual budget process:**

- Always
- Never
- Sometimes
- Only when something interests me
- Other (please specify in the space below)

**2. I would be interested in participating or engaging in the following activities related to the annual budget process (select all that apply):**

- Completing surveys
- Submitting questions
- Watching budget-related meetings
- Appearing as a delegation at budget-related meetings
- Attending public information sessions related to the budget process
- Other (please specify in the space below)

**3. Results from last year's survey and informal Chat With the Treasurer suggest that citizens are interested in in-person budget information sessions. We are planning to try a few "pop-up" budget info sites, where you can informally chat with the Treasurer and/or a member of Council, as well as a budget open house where you can learn more about where your tax dollars go. Would you be interested in attending these types of events?**

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

over



## 2025 Budget Survey

4. The City is required by law to balance the budget. A number of strategies are available to accomplish this. Of the following, which would you prefer the City use to balance its annual budget? (Select all that apply)

- Reduce the level of services (e.g. reduced hours, frequency)
- Increase property taxes
- Increase user fees (e.g. ice, room and facility rentals, transit, bag tags)
- Introduce new user fees for some City services that currently have no fees
- I have an idea/strategy not listed above (please specify in the space below)

5. Property taxes pay for the delivery of municipal services. This includes maintaining and replacing the assets used to deliver those services. Please choose one of the following statements that you most agree with:

- I support additional tax increases if it means we can take care of our existing assets and keep service levels the same
- I support additional tax increases if it means enhanced services
- I want my taxes to stay the same and I am prepared to accept a reduced service level when taxes cannot keep up with asset deterioration

6. Please rate your overall level of satisfaction with the services that your tax dollars currently support:

- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Other (please specify)

*less legal fees - work things out*

over



# 2025 Budget Survey

7. Thinking about the part of your taxes that go to Stratford (not including the education portion), how would you rate the overall value you receive for your tax dollars?

Good

Fair

Poor

8. What municipal services, if any, would you like to see enhanced, or where would you like to see the City dedicate more resources?  
(Assuming that this could potentially result in a modest tax increase)

*None, we need to keep taxes down!*

9. What municipal services, if any, would you like to see reduced, or where would you like to see the City dedicate fewer resources?

(Assuming that this could potentially result in a modest tax decrease)

*I think that Invest Stratford doesn't need the amount of money spent on conferences abroad, like Dubai. We need to be more local and zoom calls save money and time. Businesses are finding ways to do just that, saving time and money. Destination Bfd. could also do with less money. Lights On doesn't not bring as many people from far away. The method of using phone numbers for attendance is not accurate as I know people from Toronto and Ottawa & Toronto that <sup>now</sup> live here. This is not a reasonable way to count attendance. If I went to Events, I may counted 5%. Perhaps numbers should be divided <sup>over</sup> picture.*





## 2025 Budget Survey

10. Are there any municipal services not currently provided that you would like the City of Stratford to consider adding?

*We don't need more, we need to live with less and keep taxes down -*

11. Some services are paid partially by user fees and partially from taxation, such as recreational facility rentals, transit, and waste management. Do you think this combination approach is appropriate?

- No. I think all services that have a user fee should be fully user-pay to reduce property tax subsidization
- No. I think all services should be paid by taxation, and user fees reduced or eliminated, which would result in the tax levy increasing further
- Yes. I think some subsidization from the tax levy is appropriate, like how it is done now
- Other (please specify in the space below)



## 2025 Budget Survey

12. The City provides subsidized rates for certain community services, user groups and offers community grants to qualifying organizations. Do you support the use of taxation dollars for this type of community subsidy even though it may mean higher fees or taxes for others?

Yes

No

Other (please specify in the space below)

*Only as needed!*

13. To maintain levels of service the City has, until recent years, generally increased property taxes at or less than the rate of inflation. With Canada's current 32-year inflation rate high of 7.6%, costs for standard operations have increased. There is an even greater increase in inflation for infrastructure and maintenance at more than 15%. Based on your expectations for service levels, what is your acceptable level of tax increase in 2025?

0% increase

3% increase (approximate rate of inflation)

6% increase

Other (please specify below)

*or between 0+3 = 1.5% or 2%*



## 2025 Budget Survey

14. If there's any other feedback you would like to provide us on Stratford's 2025 budget, please include it below:

Taxpayers want to know how much is spent on lawyers' fees and on what. I feel it is time to have a full-time lawyer on staff, which could be less expensive. Knowing where the fees are going, checking policies, litigation, advice, etc. would help figure this out. Also, I feel that the lawyer should be at council meetings that are open to give legal advice for the public in an open, transparent and accountable manner for taxpayers!

---

**Thank you for your feedback.**

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*When,*

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# 2025 Budget Survey

RECEIVED  
CITY OF STRATFORD  
NOV 20 2024  
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY  
SERVICES OFFICE

1. I participate in the City's annual budget process:

- Always
- Never
- Sometimes
- Only when something interests me
- Other (please specify in the space below)

2. I would be interested in participating or engaging in the following activities related to the annual budget process (select all that apply):

- Completing surveys
- Submitting questions
- Watching budget-related meetings
- Appearing as a delegation at budget-related meetings
- Attending public information sessions related to the budget process
- Other (please specify in the space below)

3. Results from last year's survey and informal Chat With the Treasurer suggest that citizens are interested in in-person budget information sessions. We are planning to try a few "pop-up" budget info sites, where you can informally chat with the Treasurer and/or a member of Council, as well as a budget open house where you can learn more about where your tax dollars go. Would you be interested in attending these types of events?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

over



## 2025 Budget Survey

**4. The City is required by law to balance the budget. A number of strategies are available to accomplish this. Of the following, which would you prefer the City use to balance its annual budget? (Select all that apply)**

- Reduce the level of services (e.g. reduced hours, frequency)
- Increase property taxes
- Increase user fees (e.g. ice, room and facility rentals, transit, bag tags)
- Introduce new user fees for some City services that currently have no fees
- I have an idea/strategy not listed above (please specify in the space below)

**5. Property taxes pay for the delivery of municipal services. This includes maintaining and replacing the assets used to deliver those services. Please choose one of the following statements that you most agree with:**

- I support additional tax increases if it means we can take care of our existing assets and keep service levels the same
- I support additional tax increases if it means enhanced services
- I want my taxes to stay the same and I am prepared to accept a reduced service level when taxes cannot keep up with asset deterioration

**6. Please rate your overall level of satisfaction with the services that your tax dollars currently support:**

- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Other (please specify)



## 2025 Budget Survey

7. Thinking about the part of your taxes that go to Stratford (not including the education portion), how would you rate the overall value you receive for your tax dollars?

Good

Fair

Poor

8. What municipal services, if any, would you like to see enhanced, or where would you like to see the City dedicate more resources?  
(Assuming that this could potentially result in a modest tax increase)

TRANSPORT ACCESS - MOBILITY

9. What municipal services, if any, would you like to see reduced, or where would you like to see the City dedicate fewer resources?  
(Assuming that this could potentially result in a modest tax decrease)

NOT SURE



## 2025 Budget Survey

10. Are there any municipal services not currently provided that you would like the City of Stratford to consider adding?

IMPROVE MOBILITY BUS  
AVAILABILITY

11. Some services are paid partially by user fees and partially from taxation, such as recreational facility rentals, transit, and waste management. Do you think this combination approach is appropriate?

- No. I think all services that have a user fee should be fully user-pay to reduce property tax subsidization
- No. I think all services should be paid by taxation, and user fees reduced or eliminated, which would result in the tax levy increasing further
- Yes. I think some subsidization from the tax levy is appropriate, like how it is done now
- Other (please specify in the space below)



## 2025 Budget Survey

**12. The City provides subsidized rates for certain community services, user groups and offers community grants to qualifying organizations. Do you support the use of taxation dollars for this type of community subsidy even though it may mean higher fees or taxes for others?**

- Yes
- No
- Other (please specify in the space below)

**13. To maintain levels of service the City has, until recent years, generally increased property taxes at or less than the rate of inflation. With Canada's current 32-year inflation rate high of 7.6%, costs for standard operations have increased. There is an even greater increase in inflation for infrastructure and maintenance at more than 15%. Based on your expectations for service levels, what is your acceptable level of tax increase in 2025?**

- 0% increase
- 3% increase (approximate rate of inflation)
- 6% increase
- Other (please specify below)





## 2025 Budget Survey

**14. If there's any other feedback you would like to provide us on Stratford's 2025 budget, please include it below:**

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# 2025 Budget Survey

RECEIVED  
CITY OF STRATFORD  
NOV 20 2024  
DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE  
SERVICES OFFICE

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- Always
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- Sometimes
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- Other (please specify in the space below)

3. Results from last year's survey and informal Chat With the Treasurer suggest that citizens are interested in in-person budget information sessions. We are planning to try a few "pop-up" budget info sites, where you can informally chat with the Treasurer and/or a member of Council, as well as a budget open house where you can learn more about where your tax dollars go. Would you be interested in attending these types of events?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

over



## 2025 Budget Survey

**4. The City is required by law to balance the budget. A number of strategies are available to accomplish this. Of the following, which would you prefer the City use to balance its annual budget? (Select all that apply)**

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**6. Please rate your overall level of satisfaction with the services that your tax dollars currently support:**

- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Other (please specify)



## 2025 Budget Survey

7. Thinking about the part of your taxes that go to Stratford (not including the education portion), how would you rate the overall value you receive for your tax dollars?

- Good  
 Fair  
 Poor

8. What municipal services, if any, would you like to see enhanced, or where would you like to see the City dedicate more resources?  
(Assuming that this could potentially result in a modest tax increase)

9. What municipal services, if any, would you like to see reduced, or where would you like to see the City dedicate fewer resources?  
(Assuming that this could potentially result in a modest tax decrease)



## 2025 Budget Survey

**10. Are there any municipal services not currently provided that you would like the City of Stratford to consider adding?**

**11. Some services are paid partially by user fees and partially from taxation, such as recreational facility rentals, transit, and waste management. Do you think this combination approach is appropriate?**

- No. I think all services that have a user fee should be fully user-pay to reduce property tax subsidization
- No. I think all services should be paid by taxation, and user fees reduced or eliminated, which would result in the tax levy increasing further
- Yes. I think some subsidization from the tax levy is appropriate, like how it is done now
- Other (please specify in the space below)



## 2025 Budget Survey

**12. The City provides subsidized rates for certain community services, user groups and offers community grants to qualifying organizations. Do you support the use of taxation dollars for this type of community subsidy even though it may mean higher fees or taxes for others?**

- Yes
- No
- Other (please specify in the space below)

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- 0% increase
- 3% increase (approximate rate of inflation)
- 6% increase
- Other (please specify below)



## 2025 Budget Survey

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# 2025 Budget Survey

RECEIVED  
CITY OF STRATFORD  
NOV 20 2024  
DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE  
SERVICES OFFICE

1. I participate in the City's annual budget process:

- Always
- Never
- Sometimes
- Only when something interests me
- Other (please specify in the space below)

First time

2. I would be interested in participating or engaging in the following activities related to the annual budget process (select all that apply):

- Completing surveys
- Submitting questions
- Watching budget-related meetings
- Appearing as a delegation at budget-related meetings
- Attending public information sessions related to the budget process
- Other (please specify in the space below)

attending public info sessions virtually

3. Results from last year's survey and informal Chat With the Treasurer suggest that citizens are interested in in-person budget information sessions. We are planning to try a few "pop-up" budget info sites, where you can informally chat with the Treasurer and/or a member of Council, as well as a budget open house where you can learn more about where your tax dollars go. Would you be interested in attending these types of events?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

over





## 2025 Budget Survey

**4. The City is required by law to balance the budget. A number of strategies are available to accomplish this. Of the following, which would you prefer the City use to balance its annual budget? (Select all that apply)**

- Reduce the level of services (e.g. reduced hours, frequency)
- Increase property taxes
- Increase user fees (e.g. ice, room and facility rentals, transit, bag tags)
- Introduce new user fees for some City services that currently have no fees
- I have an idea/strategy not listed above (please specify in the space below)  
*incorporate Volunteer opportunity's in compatible services, could lower costs and give students more opportunities.*

**5. Property taxes pay for the delivery of municipal services. This includes maintaining and replacing the assets used to deliver those services. Please choose one of the following statements that you most agree with:**

- I support additional tax increases if it means we can take care of our existing assets and keep service levels the same
- I support additional tax increases if it means enhanced services
- I want my taxes to stay the same and I am prepared to accept a reduced service level when taxes cannot keep up with asset deterioration

**6. Please rate your overall level of satisfaction with the services that your tax dollars currently support:**

- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Other (please specify)



## 2025 Budget Survey

7. Thinking about the part of your taxes that go to Stratford (not including the education portion), how would you rate the overall value you receive for your tax dollars?

Good

Fair

Poor

8. What municipal services, if any, would you like to see enhanced, or where would you like to see the City dedicate more resources?  
(Assuming that this could potentially result in a modest tax increase)

- assistance with housing
- the connection center
- better transit
- more services, in general.
- community programs
- food programs
- support programs

9. What municipal services, if any, would you like to see reduced, or where would you like to see the City dedicate fewer resources?  
(Assuming that this could potentially result in a modest tax decrease)

- tourism related services
- City beautification



## 2025 Budget Survey

10. Are there any municipal services not currently provided that you would like the City of Stratford to consider adding?

Actually ~~and~~ <sup>properly</sup> and accessibility listing services  
Do our taxes pay for any thing besides the bare minimum? more support services are needed.

also, some kind of ~~to~~ <sup>phone</sup> service for those in employment and housing crisis. You have ~~to~~ have a phone to get a job these days.

11. Some services are paid partially by user fees and partially from taxation, such as recreational facility rentals, transit, and waste management. Do you think this combination approach is appropriate?

- No. I think all services that have a user fee should be fully user-pay to reduce property tax subsidization
- No. I think all services should be paid by taxation, and user fees reduced or eliminated, which would result in the tax levy increasing further
- Yes. I think some subsidization from the tax levy is appropriate, like how it is done now
- Other (please specify in the space below)



## 2025 Budget Survey

**12. The City provides subsidized rates for certain community services, user groups and offers community grants to qualifying organizations. Do you support the use of taxation dollars for this type of community subsidy even though it may mean higher fees or taxes for others?**

- Yes
- No
- Other (please specify in the space below)

**13. To maintain levels of service the City has, until recent years, generally increased property taxes at or less than the rate of inflation. With Canada's current 32-year inflation rate high of 7.6%, costs for standard operations have increased. There is an even greater increase in inflation for infrastructure and maintenance at more than 15%. Based on your expectations for service levels, what is your acceptable level of tax increase in 2025?**

- 0% increase
- 3% increase (approximate rate of inflation)
- 6% increase
- Other (please specify below)



## 2025 Budget Survey

**14. If there's any other feedback you would like to provide us on Stratford's 2025 budget, please include it below:**

Too much investment in the upper class. We need to raise the bottom line. Stratford's current cost of living is estimated to be \$22 an hour. Most citizens don't make that much, and for those in rental agreements it's too much. Rent has skyrocketed, it's time to raise property taxes. People need help; we need to raise the bottom line.

---

**Thank you for your feedback.**

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# 2025 Budget Survey

RECEIVED  
CITY OF STRATFORD  
NOV 20 2024  
DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE  
SERVICES OFFICE

1. I participate in the City's annual budget process:

- Always
- Never
- Sometimes
- Only when something interests me
- Other (please specify in the space below)  
*First time*

2. I would be interested in participating or engaging in the following activities related to the annual budget process (select all that apply):

- Completing surveys
- Submitting questions
- Watching budget-related meetings
- Appearing as a delegation at budget-related meetings
- Attending public information sessions related to the budget process
- Other (please specify in the space below)

3. Results from last year's survey and informal Chat With the Treasurer suggest that citizens are interested in in-person budget information sessions. We are planning to try a few "pop-up" budget info sites, where you can informally chat with the Treasurer and/or a member of Council, as well as a budget open house where you can learn more about where your tax dollars go. Would you be interested in attending these types of events?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

over



## 2025 Budget Survey

**4. The City is required by law to balance the budget. A number of strategies are available to accomplish this. Of the following, which would you prefer the City use to balance its annual budget? (Select all that apply)**

- Reduce the level of services (e.g. reduced hours, frequency)
- Increase property taxes
- Increase user fees (e.g. ice, room and facility rentals, transit, bag tags)
- Introduce new user fees for some City services that currently have no fees
- I have an idea/strategy not listed above (please specify in the space below)

*Do: A. Tourism. Tax.  
Actually this time.*

**5. Property taxes pay for the delivery of municipal services. This includes maintaining and replacing the assets used to deliver those services. Please choose one of the following statements that you most agree with:**

- I support additional tax increases if it means we can take care of our existing assets and keep service levels the same
- I support additional tax increases if it means enhanced services
- I want my taxes to stay the same and I am prepared to accept a reduced service level when taxes cannot keep up with asset deterioration

**6. Please rate your overall level of satisfaction with the services that your tax dollars currently support:**

- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied (VERY)
- Other (please specify)



## 2025 Budget Survey

7. Thinking about the part of your taxes that go to Stratford (not including the education portion), how would you rate the overall value you receive for your tax dollars?

Good

Fair

Poor

8. What municipal services, if any, would you like to see enhanced, or where would you like to see the City dedicate more resources?  
(Assuming that this could potentially result in a modest tax increase)

- better, more affordable, public transit
- housing and poverty PREVENTION services
- NOT bandaids solutions for show. You know what I mean.

9. What municipal services, if any, would you like to see reduced, or where would you like to see the City dedicate fewer resources?  
(Assuming that this could potentially result in a modest tax decrease)

- tourism
- enough with the flowers already
- maybe invest in something more sustainable than tourism?!!
- let the actual citizens see the benefits of our taxes
- okay I'm done





## 2025 Budget Survey

**10. Are there any municipal services not currently provided that you would like the City of Stratford to consider adding?**

Increased support services.

Support for crisis and poverty prevention services, such as Safe Haven Perth.

**11. Some services are paid partially by user fees and partially from taxation, such as recreational facility rentals, transit, and waste management. Do you think this combination approach is appropriate?**

- No. I think all services that have a user fee should be fully user-pay to reduce property tax subsidization
- No. I think all services should be paid by taxation, and user fees reduced or eliminated, which would result in the tax levy increasing further
- Yes. I think some subsidization from the tax levy is appropriate, like how it is done now
- Other (please specify in the space below)

Reduce both. Figure it out.



## 2025 Budget Survey

**12. The City provides subsidized rates for certain community services, user groups and offers community grants to qualifying organizations. Do you support the use of taxation dollars for this type of community subsidy even though it may mean higher fees or taxes for others?**

- Yes
- No
- Other (please specify in the space below)

**13. To maintain levels of service the City has, until recent years, generally increased property taxes at or less than the rate of inflation. With Canada's current 32-year inflation rate high of 7.6%, costs for standard operations have increased. There is an even greater increase in inflation for infrastructure and maintenance at more than 15%. Based on your expectations for service levels, what is your acceptable level of tax increase in 2025?**

- 0% increase
- 3% increase (approximate rate of inflation)
- 6% increase
- Other (please specify below)



## 2025 Budget Survey

**14. If there's any other feedback you would like to provide us on Stratford's 2025 budget, please include it below:**

If you implement or reinforce a support or service that helps those who make less wages and upsets the upper class...

↪ Don't care in when they whine about it.  
Again.

People who are already in good financial and resource rich situations will survive if they take a hit. They won't lose their homes. But there are too many people who are one missed pay cheque away from homelessness. All hyperbole aside.

---

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