

Report to Council

Report Title: Budget Consultation 2020 Feedback

Prepared By: Sarah Johnson, Junior Deputy Clerk

Department: Clerk's

Date: February 18, 2020

Report Number: CLK2020-06 **File Number:** C11CL, F05

Attachments: N/A

Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby receives Report Number CLK2020-06 – Budget Consultation 2020 Feedback, prepared by Sarah Johnson, Junior Deputy Clerk, for information purposes.

Report:

Background:

The Municipality of Brockton launched the Budget Consultation 2020 project on our community engagement website, [Build Your Brockton](#) on January 24, 2020. The Budget Consultation 2020 project includes information about how the Municipality develops its budget, municipal tax payments, and property tax bill information.

The project also included the key dates of the 2020 Budget Meetings, 2020 Non-Tax Supported Budget document, and 2020 Tax Supported Budget document.

Members of the public were able to interact with staff through three platforms: a 2020 Budget Survey, Q&A, and Ideas tool.

Analysis:

Staff have analyzed the data received from the public regarding the Budget Consultation 2020 project from January 24, 2020 to February 14, 2020.

Overall Budget 2020 Project Feedback:

The Budget Consultation 2020 Project launched on Build Your Brockton, had a total of 112 visits, 22 engaged visitors, 64 informed visitors, and 91 aware visitors. Broken down further:

- Out of the 22 engaged participants, 19 participated in the Budget 2020 Survey, and 8 contributed to the Ideas tool.

- Out of the 64 informed participants, 16 downloaded a document, 1 visited the key dates page (Budget 2020 Meeting dates), 41 visited multiple project pages, and 22 contributed to a tool (becoming an engaged participant).
- The 91 aware visitors simply visited the project page.

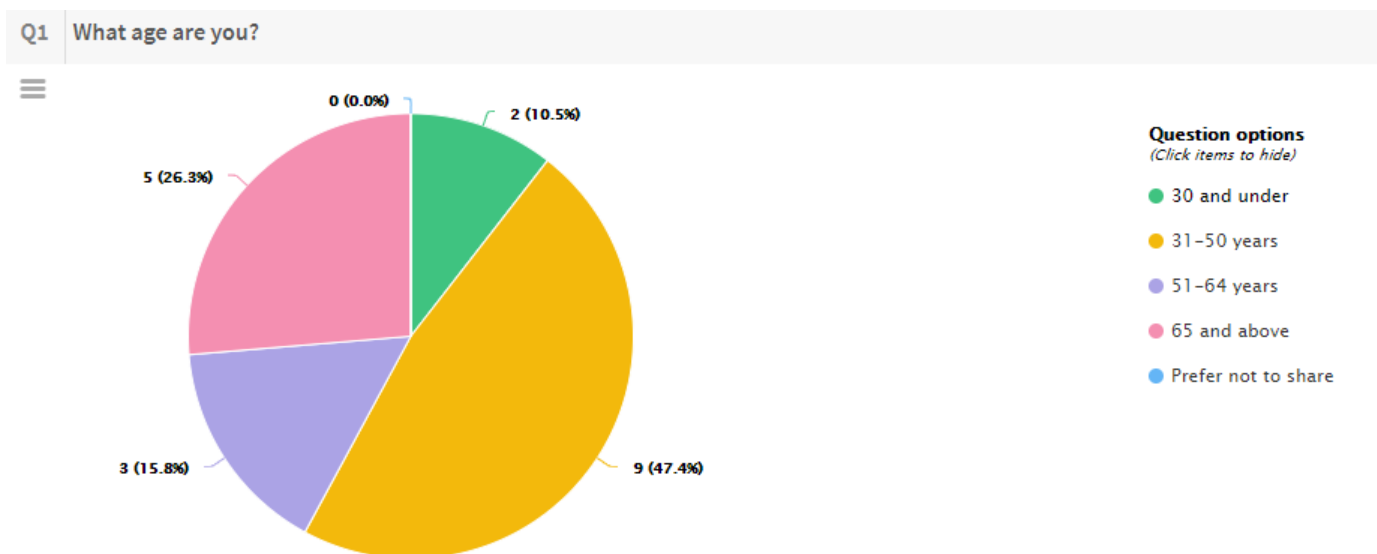
Five (5) Documents were uploaded to the project page. The Understanding Municipal Taxation document was downloaded 8 times; the 2020 Tax Supported Budget was downloaded 4 times, and the 2020 Non-Tax Supported Budget was downloaded 4 times.

The Budget Consultation 2020 Project page on Build Your Brockton was viewed through eight (8) different sources of traffic, with the main sources identified as mobile phones, Facebook, and Google.

Budget 2020 Survey Feedback:

19 Individuals completed the Budget 2020 Survey, which consisted of eight (8) questions.

Out of those 19 participants, the highest percentage of respondents (47.4%) were between the ages of 31-50 years.



Respondents identified that their top two sources for information about the Municipality's budget were the Municipal website, and local newspaper or radio.

The majority of respondents who completed the survey own urban residential property in Brockton; however, responses were received from residents who own rural residential, agricultural, commercial, and multi-residential (owner or tenant) properties.

Respondents were pleased with the value of programs and services offered by the Municipality they receive for their tax dollars.

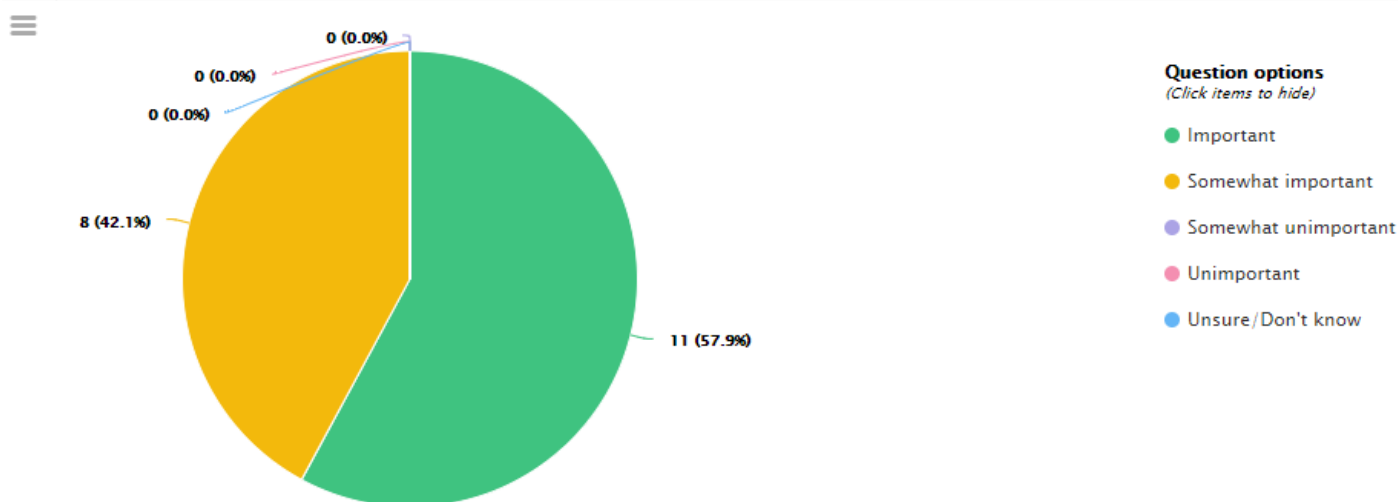
When asked to rank their preference for options of dealing with increased costs to pay for Municipal services, respondents identified their most desired option as a combination of increasing property taxes and user fees. (Note: "Avg. Rank" represents the most preferred option, with the lowest number being the most preferred).

Q7 There are only a few ways to deal with increased costs to pay for Municipal services. Please rank the options (in order from 1 to 6 - 1 being most important, and 6 being least important) to balance the budget.

OPTIONS	AVG. RANK
Combination of increase in property taxes and user fees	2.26
Increase user fees	2.58
Combination of cutting service levels and small increase in taxes and user fees	3.16
Increase property taxes	3.74
Cut existing service levels to maintain current taxes	4.47
Cut existing service levels to reduce taxes	4.79

Respondents were also asked if they identify as important the setting aside of funds to replace infrastructure to ensure existing levels of service can be provided in future years. 57.9% stated they felt it was important, and the remaining 42.1% stated it was somewhat important.

Q8 How important is it to you that funding is set aside to replace infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and buildings to ensure existing levels of service can be provided in future years?



In summary, Brockton residents enjoy the programs and services provided, are familiar with the budget process, are in favour of increasing property taxes and user feeds to pay for Municipal services, and feel it is important to set aside funding for future infrastructure replacement.

Ideas Tool Feedback:

Eight (8) members of the public also voiced their suggestion in the Ideas tool, asking that Council resurface the tennis courts in Walkerton due to their poor deterioration. Staff advised the Finance and Recreation Departments of this suggestion. Given the responses provided, staff believe that this inquiry warrants further investigation, since the quality of the tennis courts were not included in the Walkerton Community Centre or Walkerton Centennial Pool Needs Assessments.

Staff are further proposing to investigate the needs at the tennis court in Walkerton. Any projected costs could be included in the 2021 Municipal Budget, unless immediate attention is warranted, which would be presented to Council in a separate Report.

Sustainability Checklist:

What aspect of the Brockton Sustainable Strategic Plan does the content/recommendations in this report help advance?

- | | |
|---|-----|
| • Do the recommendations help move the Municipality closer to its Vision? | Yes |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to achieving Cultural Vibrancy? | N/A |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to achieving Economic Prosperity? | N/A |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to Environmental Integrity? | N/A |
| • Do the recommendations contribute to the Social Equity? | Yes |

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding:

- Do the recommendations represent a sound financial investment from a sustainability perspective?
N/A

Reviewed By:



Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer

Respectfully Submitted by:



Sarah Johnson, Junior Deputy Clerk

Reviewed By:



Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer