

## 2019 Citizen Survey results released

(Penticton, BC – June 28, 2019) – The complete results of the 2019 Citizen Survey are now available for residents to review at [shapeyourcitypenticton.ca](http://shapeyourcitypenticton.ca). An overview of the findings will be presented at the Council meeting on July 2.

“We’re thrilled that so many citizens took the time to give us their feedback,” says Mayor John Vassilaki. “The findings confirmed Council’s view that feelings of safety and security in the city is the most pressing concern. They also showed that we need to pay attention to how we manage growth and how we impact the environment as we look ahead.”

The survey was voluntary and ran from April 18 to May 3. It was completed by 1,171 citizens and included many of the same questions as the last survey conducted in 2013. Participants were asked to evaluate elements of the quality of life in the city, provide their views on the importance and performance of City services, and give feedback on possible strategic priorities for Council. As the methodology used for the 2019 Citizen Survey is different than the 2013 version, the findings cannot be generalized across the population and comparisons with 2013 results are provided for illustration purposes only. Some of the key findings include:

- Overall, 68 per cent of participants rate their quality of life in Penticton as good (4/5) or excellent (5/5) although 58 per cent believe it has decreased over the past three years. The 2019 average rating (3.8/5) is slightly lower than the 2013 results (3.9/5).
- Participants were asked to rate Penticton as a place to retire, holiday, raise a family, find a job, start a business and as a safe place to live. The ratings in these areas were fairly consistent with the 2013 results with the exception of the perception of Penticton as a safe place to live which declined from an average score of 4 out of 5 in 2013 to 2.9 in 2019. Thirty-six per cent of participants gave Penticton a good (4/5) or excellent (5/5) rating as a safe place to live.
- All City services were rated in the top quartile meaning that perceptions of importance and performance all scored an average rating above 3 out of 5 on a scale of 1 to 5. Services that saw the biggest increases in terms of perception of importance and performance when compared to 2013 include Economic Development, Planning, Transit, Fire Department and Online Services. Perceptions of the performance of Police services declined over 2013.
- The City’s performance in other areas improved in 2019. The 2019 average ratings for *understanding of how the City spends tax dollars* (3.1/5), *listening to citizens* (3.0/5), and *belief that the City is doing a good job* (3.2/5) increased over 2013. The average rating for *receiving good value for taxes* (3.1/5) remained the same as 2013.

- The top three priorities for the future that received the most interest from the list provided include *improving safety and security* (84 per cent), *smart growth and development* (75 per cent) and *advancing environmental initiatives and practices* (70 per cent).
- A group of high school students was also asked to rate their interest in the same priorities for the future. Of the 56 responses, 95 per cent were interested or very interested in the City prioritizing *environmental practices and initiatives*. Initiatives that *improve safety and security* generated the second highest level of interest at 62 per cent of the responses.
- Participants were also asked their preference to fund the rising costs of services. *Encouraging growth to share costs across a larger tax base* was the most preferred option followed by *passing fees on to users* and *increasing taxes*. *Reducing service levels* was the least preferred of the four options.

"It's been several years since the last Citizen Survey was conducted and it was important to give residents an opportunity to provide feedback that would help Council set their priorities for the next few years," says Engagement Strategist JoAnne Kleb. "The survey results were provided to Council to consider in the development of their strategic priorities and to staff as they prepare their plans for the upcoming budget season."

Residents are encouraged to visit [shapeyourcitypenticton.ca](http://shapeyourcitypenticton.ca) to see the full results.

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