



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE COMMUNITY SATISFACTION SURVEY

Final Report
March 24, 2020



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the community satisfaction survey was to gauge residents' satisfaction with City services and overall quality of life, to provide a benchmark for future work, and to identify current community priorities. The results of the survey show that the quality of life in Cambridge is high and residents are satisfied with living in the City. A majority of residents feel positively about quality of life in the City as well as its various services. However, there are some indications that residents are feeling as though life in the City may be declining, and, as a result, residents are more likely to say they would not recommend the City than say they would. The current outlook may be connected to residents' top-of-mind issues, including homelessness and drug addiction, which are most often mentioned as the concerns residents want the City to address.

Cambridge's programs and services receive a warm reception across the board. To determine which services most drive resident satisfaction, Forum undertook two research approaches in order to identify two main areas where the City could focus: roads/transportation planning and economic development. These areas recur throughout our analyses. Both are areas that are important to residents, but where respondents show less satisfaction. Economic development in particular is a key driver for "passives," those who are on the fence about recommending Cambridge as a place to live.

The City is performing strongly in the areas of customer service and communications. Residents are overwhelmingly positive about their experiences contacting the City and the level of customer service they receive when they do. The City's current communications strategy is well-aligned with residents' preferences. Generally, residents say they prefer using online resources to find information about City programs and services and identify the City website as the most-accessed communications option. Additionally, it seems that those who wish to reach out by phone are also able to be successful in doing so.

Residents are positive across the board in their feelings about Cambridge as a community. Most residents agree that Cambridge is a welcoming community in

which they are proud to live. For the most part, residents have confidence in their municipal government, with three-quarters of residents saying they receive good value for their tax dollars considering the programs and services provided by the City.

Overall, the City is performing well, and these results are overwhelmingly positive. Areas of potential growth have been identified and improvement in those areas may lead to even better outcomes in the future. As summed up by its residents when asked to come up with one word to describe Cambridge, the City remains “beautiful” and “growing.”

METHODOLOGY

Forum Research was commissioned to undertake the first Community Satisfaction Survey for the City of Cambridge. The survey was conducted amongst residents of Cambridge, 18 years of age or older, who are not employed by the City. The purpose of the community satisfaction survey was to gauge residents' satisfaction with City services and overall quality of life, to provide a benchmark for future work, and to identify current community priorities.

Forum used a random digit dial (RDD) methodology, which means that everyone in Cambridge had an equal chance of being contacted, regardless of whether they use a landline or cell phone.

Fieldwork: February 10 th – February 15 th , 2020		
Survey mode	Total number of responses	Margin of error (+/- 19 times out of 20)*
Telephone	<i>n</i> = 400	4.9%
Note: * Margin of error for sub-sample groups will be higher.		

All results in this report (except the drivers of satisfaction analysis and the word cloud) are weighted by age and gender to accurately reflect the demographics of Cambridge as reported in the 2016 Census.

Throughout this report, results from the community satisfaction survey are measured against a municipal benchmark where available. The benchmark is comprised of average scores drawn from a handful of similarly-sized Canadian cities, and is intended to provide a relative position for Cambridge to comparable communities on important metrics.

Additionally, the results of this survey are also occasionally compared to a point-in-time online survey (*n* = 387) conducted concurrently with the telephone survey. As noted throughout, online respondents tend to be less positive about the City in general, though this is common in municipal research and is not unique to Cambridge.

Analysis of survey responses was done using a “Top 2” and “Bottom 2” scoring approach. The Top 2 score (referred to as TOP2) is a research-wide accepted practice and is the best way to understand a measure when using a four- or five-point scale. It is simply the net percentage of the highest categories on the rating scale. For example, when the scale is: very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, and very dissatisfied, the combined number of respondents who answered either “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” would be reported as the TOP2 score, or “satisfied”. Conversely, the Bottom 2 score (referred to as BTM2) is the net percentage of respondents of the lowest categories on the rating scale. Using the same example scale as above, the combined number of respondents who answer “somewhat dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” would be grouped together to represent the BTM2 score, or “dissatisfied.”

Due to rounding, numbers presented in this document may not add up to the totals provided. For example, sometimes the sum of all question values may add up to 101% instead of 100%. Similar logic applies to TOP2 and BTM2 groupings.

KEY INSIGHTS

Survey results demonstrate that, overall, the quality of life in Cambridge is good, with large majorities of residents saying they are satisfied with living in Cambridge and that they feel positively about their quality of life, with about seven in 10 residents saying so. Some groups are more satisfied than others though, which this report highlights throughout. In these high-level indicators, older residents and those with higher levels of education tend to be the most positive, while parents are much more negative (a trend that will continue throughout the entire report).

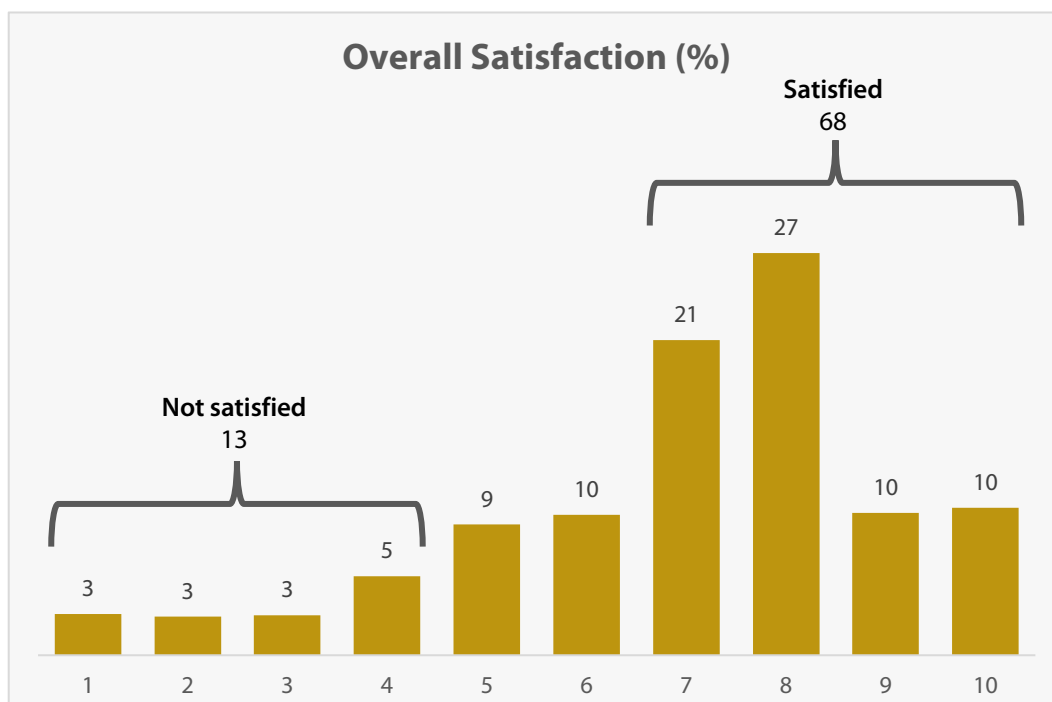
While life in Cambridge is good, there are some indicators of concern; for example: when asked which areas related to quality of life improved over the past three years, almost half of residents say “nothing” had improved. This is reflected in the net promoter score (NPS) analysis, where residents are more likely to say they would not recommend the City than say they would.

Residents’ top concerns give some insight into why their outlooks are worsening. In multiple questions, residents raise homelessness and drug addiction as their top concerns for the City. These and other concerns are potential causes for residents’ muted outlook.

Overall Satisfaction

Most residents are satisfied with living in Cambridge. Seven in 10 (68%) are satisfied, rating their satisfaction seven or greater out of 10. One-fifth (18%) of respondents are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Online respondents are more negative, with only four in 10 (37%) rating themselves as satisfied.

There is a clear trend between satisfaction and level of education. Residents with more schooling are more satisfied with life in Cambridge. About eight in 10 (84%) residents with post-graduate degrees are satisfied compared to just over half (58%) of residents with high school educations.** Residents aged 65 and up are the most satisfied age group, with three-quarters (76%) saying they are satisfied. Those with children at home (59%) are less satisfied than those without (72%).*



Question: Overall, how satisfied are you with living in Cambridge? Please use a number from 1 to 10, where 1 is not satisfied at all, and 10 is extremely satisfied.

Sample size: 400

Framework: All respondents

** T-test results indicate this relationship is accurate at the 99%+ threshold.

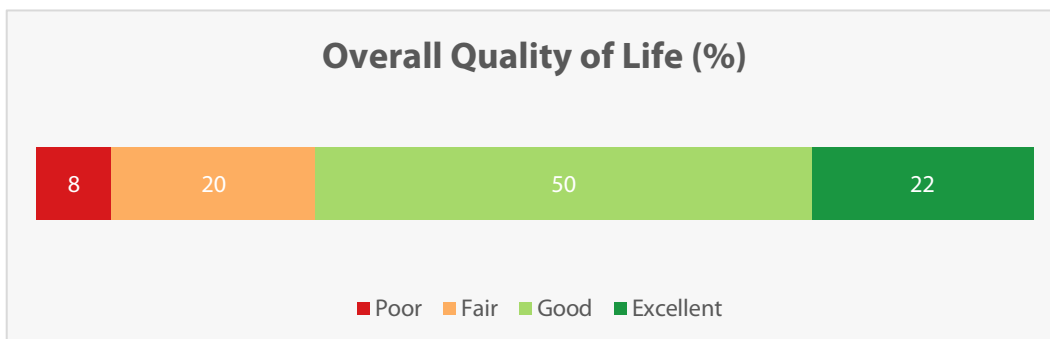
* T-test results indicate this relationship is accurate at the 95%+ threshold.

Quality of Life

The vast majority of residents feel positively about quality of life in Cambridge. When asked to rate their overall quality of life, seven in 10 (TOP2: 72%) say their quality of life is good, with one in five (22%) saying their quality of life is excellent. Online respondents, however, are much less positive: less than half (TOP2: 47%) of that group feel that quality of life is good.

When compared to the municipal benchmark, the City scores just slightly below the average on quality of life (TOP2: 84%).

Residents with higher levels of education are more likely to rate their quality of life as good, as residents with post-graduate degrees are the most likely (TOP2: 84%) and high school graduates the least (TOP2: 62%) likely to do so.* Residents with children in the household (TOP2: 65%) are less positive than residents without children (TOP2: 76%).*



Question: How would you rate the overall quality of life in Cambridge? Would you say it is...?

Sample size: 398

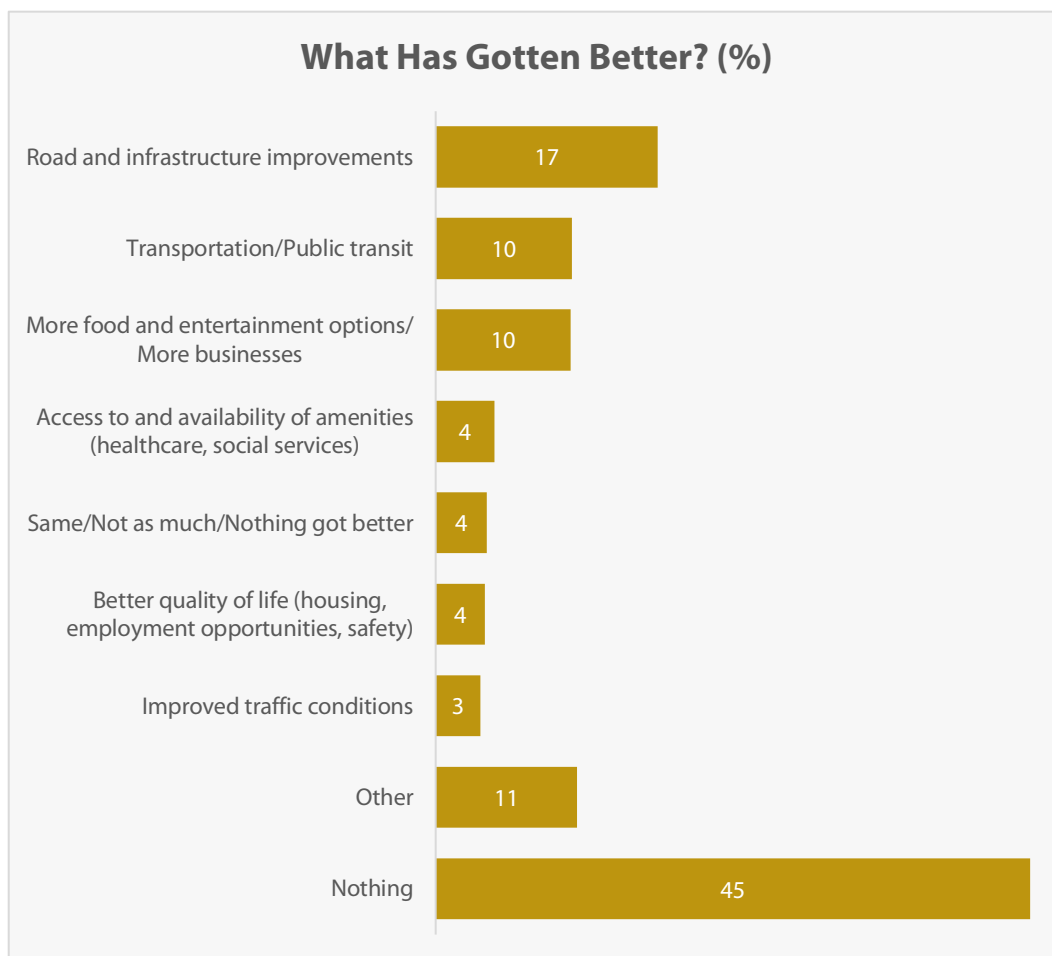
Framework: All respondents, excluding "don't know"

When asked to reflect on what has improved in the City over the past three years, residents most commonly mentioned improvements in roads and infrastructure (17%). The next most common improvements are transportation and public transit (10%) and an increase in businesses, food options, and entertainment options (10%). Clustered below these are access to and availability of amenities (healthcare, social services) (4%), generally improved quality of life (housing,

* T-test results indicate this relationship is accurate at the 95%+ threshold.

employment opportunities, safety) (4%) and improved traffic conditions (3%). A small portion of residents say that things have remained the same (4%).

The most common response, however, is that nothing has improved, with about half of respondents (45%) saying that nothing has improved in the past three years. This finding may indicate a feeling among many residents that life has not improved in the past three years.



Question: Thinking about the quality of life in Cambridge over the past three years, what, if anything, has gotten better? (multi-mention)

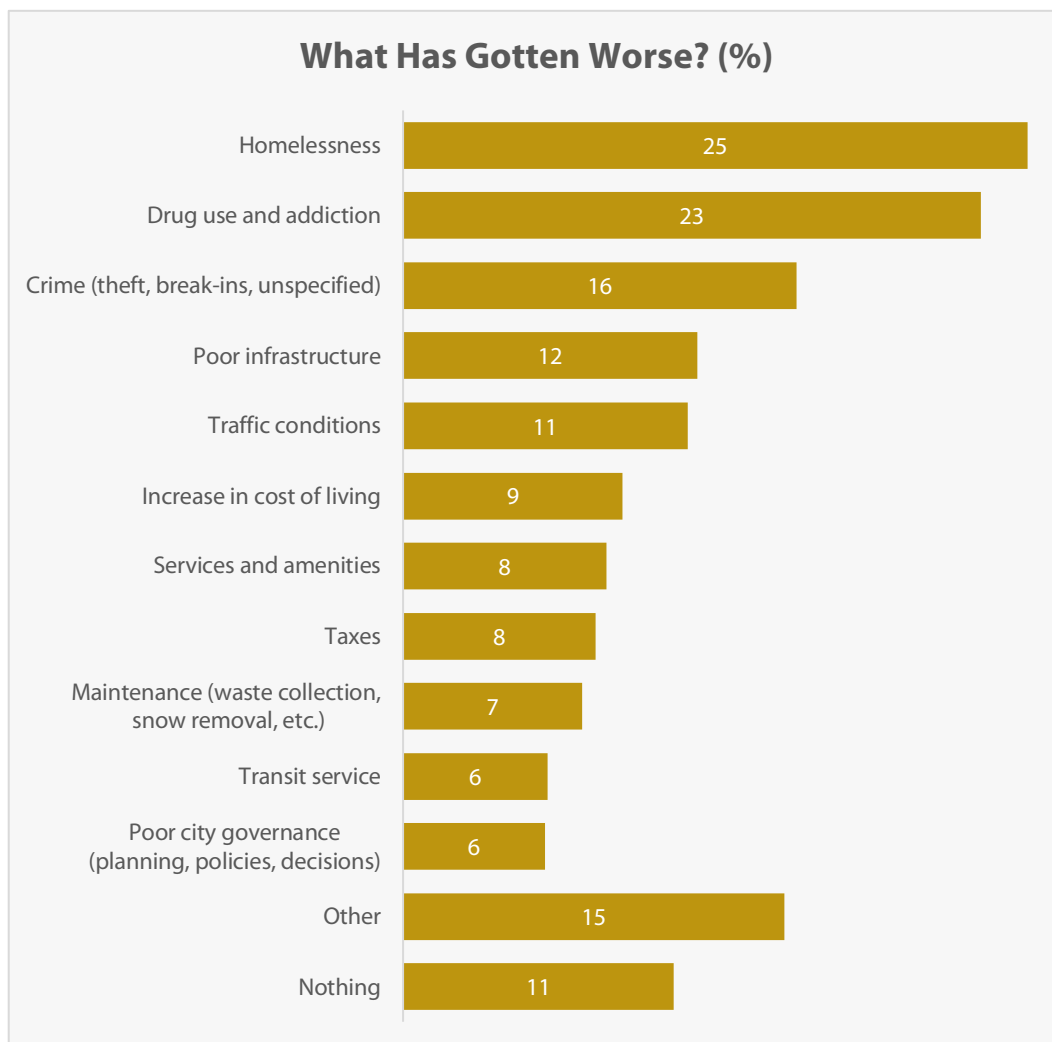
Sample size: 314

Framework: All respondents, excluding "don't know" and "prefer not to say"

Residents have much more varied opinions about what has worsened in the past three years when it comes to quality of life. At the top of their list of concerns is

homelessness, which was mentioned by a quarter (25%) of residents, which is tied with drug use and addiction (23%). Crime (16%), poor infrastructure (12%), and traffic conditions (11%) round out the top five.

Only one in nine (11%) residents say that nothing has worsened. Compared to the much higher level of residents who say nothing has improved (45%), this again points to a general feeling among residents that life has worsened in the past three years.



Question: Once again, thinking about the quality of life in Cambridge over the past three years, what, if anything, has gotten worse? (multi-mention)

Sample size: 365

Framework: All respondents, excluding "don't know" and "prefer not to say"

Net Promoter Score (NPS) Analysis

A net promoter score (NPS) assesses loyalty. The NPS is measured by asking residents to rate their likelihood of recommending Cambridge as a place to live, on a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being not at all likely and 10 being extremely likely. Based on the score provided, residents are classified as promoters, passives, or detractors of the City of Cambridge brand.

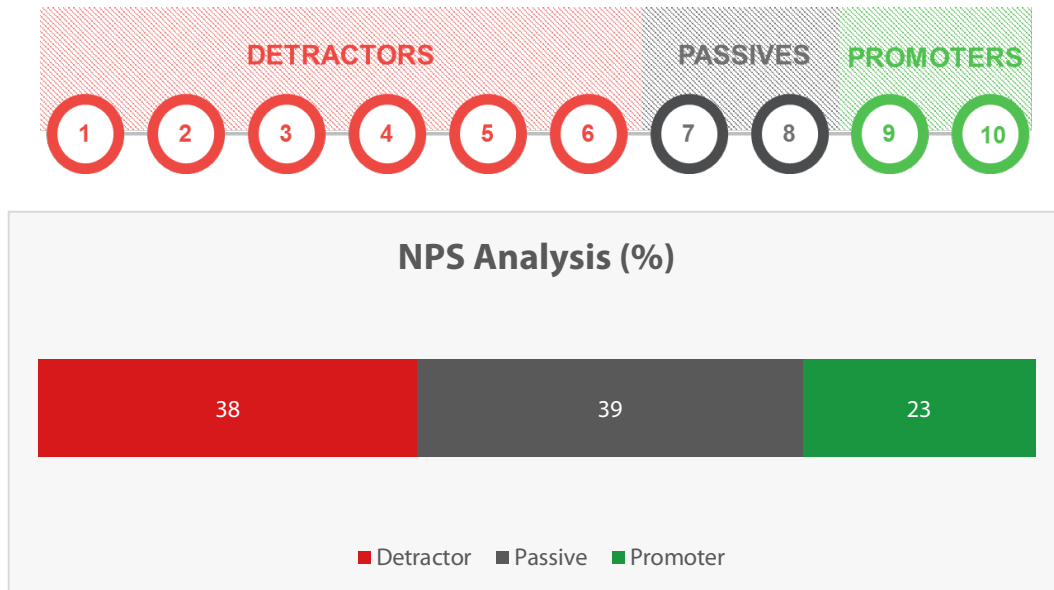
Residents who provided a score of 9–10 are considered promoters, i.e., those who would be seen as strong ambassadors for Cambridge. Residents who provided a score of 7–8 are considered passives, i.e. they feel Cambridge is doing okay, but wouldn't actively promote it. Residents who rated a 6 or lower are considered detractors, i.e., those who would not speak highly of Cambridge, and perhaps even malign it.

To find the NPS score, passives are removed. Then, detractors are subtracted from promoters and the resulting value is considered the net promoter score (promoters – detractors).

Forum's NPS analysis for Cambridge produced a negative NPS of –15, which means that residents are more likely to say they would not recommend the City than say they would. Like before, residents with children are more negative (–28) than those without kids, and online respondents are far more negative than telephone respondents (–58).

Compared to the municipal benchmark, Cambridge's NPS is slightly lower, with the average NPS score of the benchmark being –5. As a result, the percentage of promoters in Cambridge (23%) is lower than the municipal benchmark (32%) and the percentage of detractors (38%) is higher than the benchmark (27%).

We also found that a sizeable segment of the population are passives. Four in 10 (39%) residents are on the fence about recommending Cambridge as a place to live. This is comparable to the municipal benchmark of 41%. The next section of this report will focus specifically on these passives and which areas to address to potentially improve Cambridge's NPS.



Question: How likely would you be to recommend Cambridge as a place to live to a friend or colleague?

Sample size: 400

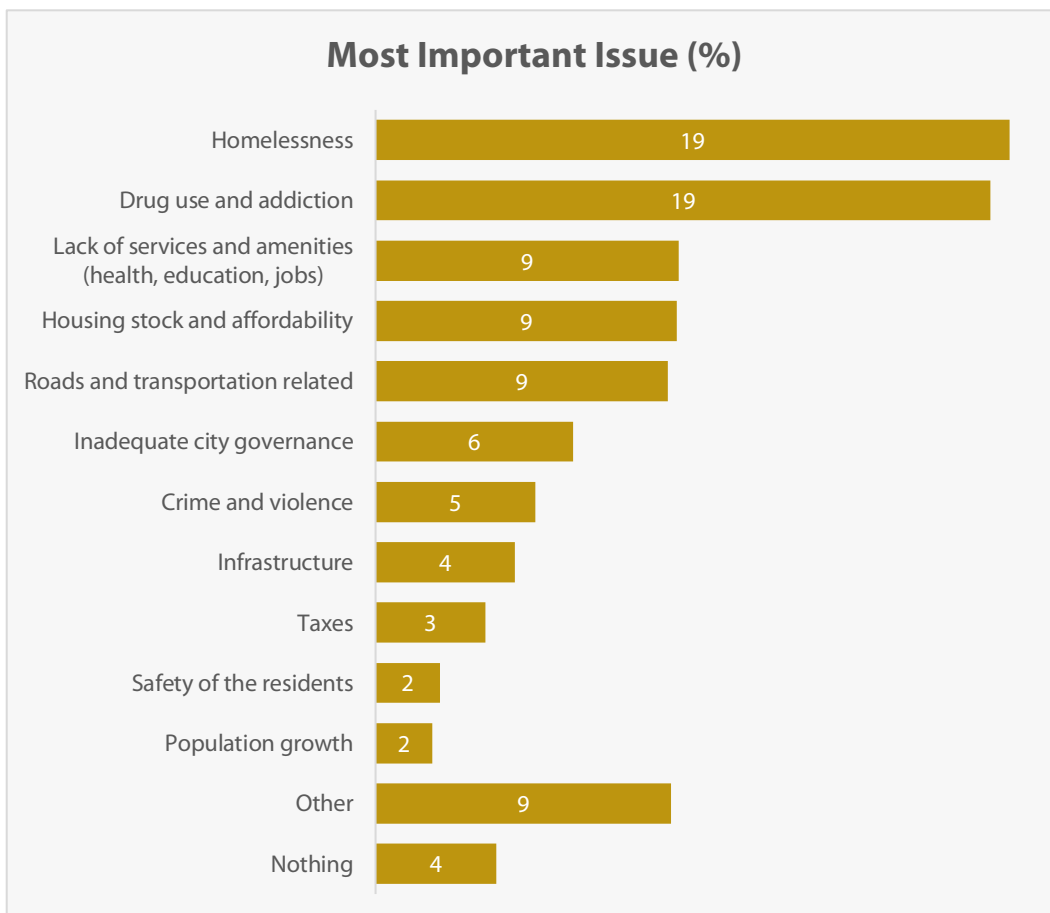
Framework: All respondents

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Net Promoter Score} &= 23\% - 38\% \\ &= -15\end{aligned}$$

Most Important Issue

Two issues are top-of-mind for City residents. When asked for the single most important issue facing the City today, one-fifth (19%) of residents say homelessness and another fifth (19%) say drug use and addiction. This mirrors residents' opinions on what has worsened in the City over the past three years. We are seeing a rise in levels of concern about homelessness and drug use across the country.

Following these two issues are lack of services and amenities (9%), housing stock and affordability (9%), and roads and transportation (9%) to round out the top five.



Question: In your opinion, what, if anything, is the single most important issue facing the City of Cambridge today?

Sample size: 366

Framework: All respondents, excluding "don't know" and "prefer not to say"

CORE SERVICES

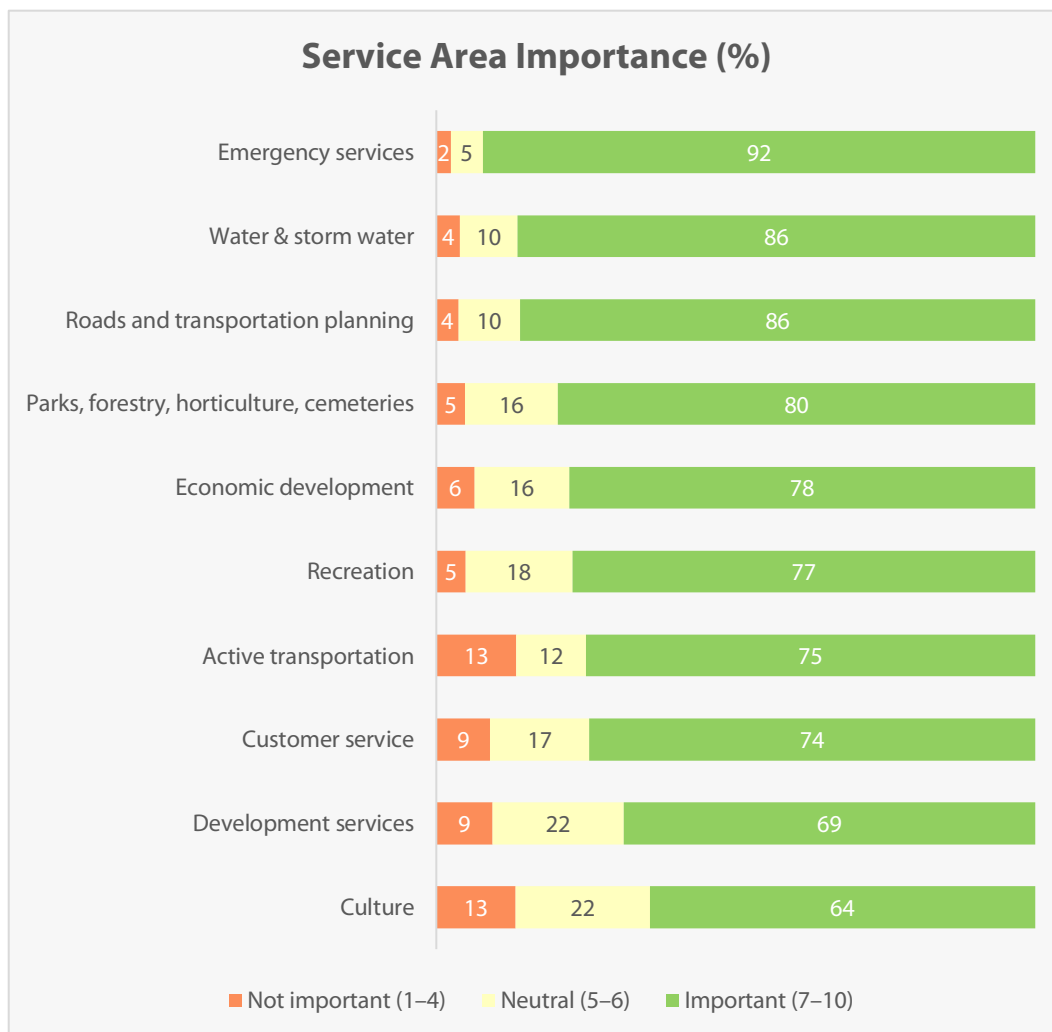
Services in Cambridge are generally performing well, with majorities of residents satisfied with most service areas. However, to take a deeper dive into service satisfaction and help the City understand where improvements would be most effective, Forum took two different approaches.

First is an importance vs. satisfaction grid, which plots respondents' stated importance and stated satisfaction on a grid to find areas that are of high-importance to residents but are receiving relatively low-satisfaction scores. This analysis finds two areas—roads/transportation planning and economic development—which meet these criteria: considered highly important, but with relatively low satisfaction. There are also successes to highlight from this analysis. Emergency services, water/storm water, and parks, forestry, horticulture, and cemeteries receive both high importance and high satisfaction ratings from respondents.

Forum's second approach is to use a relative weights analysis to find the drivers of overall satisfaction. While survey respondents may rate certain areas as important, research shows that this is not the most reflective of what is really driving overall satisfaction. The relative weights analysis overcomes this problem using statistical methods. This approach finds development services, roads/transportation planning, and economic development to be the main drivers of overall satisfaction with the City. Our driver analysis also paid particular focus to passives specifically and found that their satisfaction is mostly driven by economic development.

Importance

Service areas that are generally seen as the most essential to municipal operations are rated as the most important by residents. Emergency services, water, and roads are all things a City cannot function without, and this is reflected in the importance scores for these services. Closer to the bottom of residents' priority lists are areas like culture, development services, and customer service. While these are not *unimportant* by any means—a majority of residents still say they are important—they are relatively lower priorities for residents.



Question: We'd like to ask about the City's services once again. This time, we'd like to know how important each service is to you. When answering, please use a number from 1 to 10, where 1 means not important at all, and 10 means extremely important. You may also say you don't know.

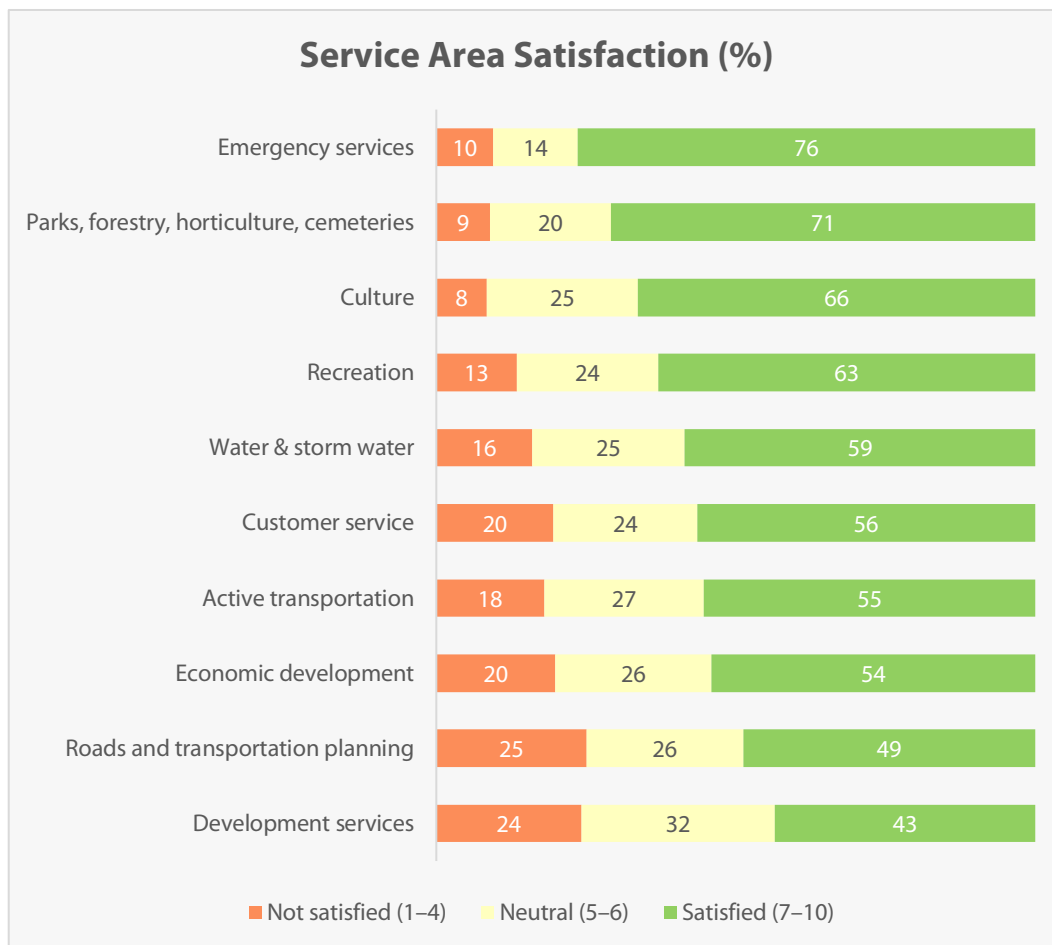
Sample size: Varies

Framework: All respondents, excluding "don't know" and "prefer not to say"

Satisfaction

Residents have a wide range of satisfaction levels with various service areas. Topping the list is emergency services, with which three-quarters (76%) of residents say they are satisfied. Parks, forestry, horticulture, and cemeteries (71%) and culture (66%) follow closely behind.

Residents were least satisfied with development services (43%), roads and transportation planning (49%), and economic development (54%), all areas critical to overall satisfaction with the City as a whole.



Question: As you know, the City of Cambridge provides a number of services to its residents. Now, we'd like to ask about your satisfaction with these services. When answering, please use a number from 1 to 10, where 1 means not satisfied at all, and 10 means extremely satisfied. You may also say you don't know.

Sample size: Varies

Framework: All respondents, excluding "don't know" and "prefer not to say"

Importance vs. Satisfaction

This next section explores the importance of core services to residents versus their level of satisfaction with those services.

Successes are services that are considered important to residents *and* have a high level of satisfaction.

Targets are services that are considered important by residents *but* have a lower level of satisfaction.

Secondary areas are services that enjoy a high level of satisfaction amongst residents but are seen as less important, overall.

Thresholds are established by finding the median values (average) for each of the importance and satisfaction scores.

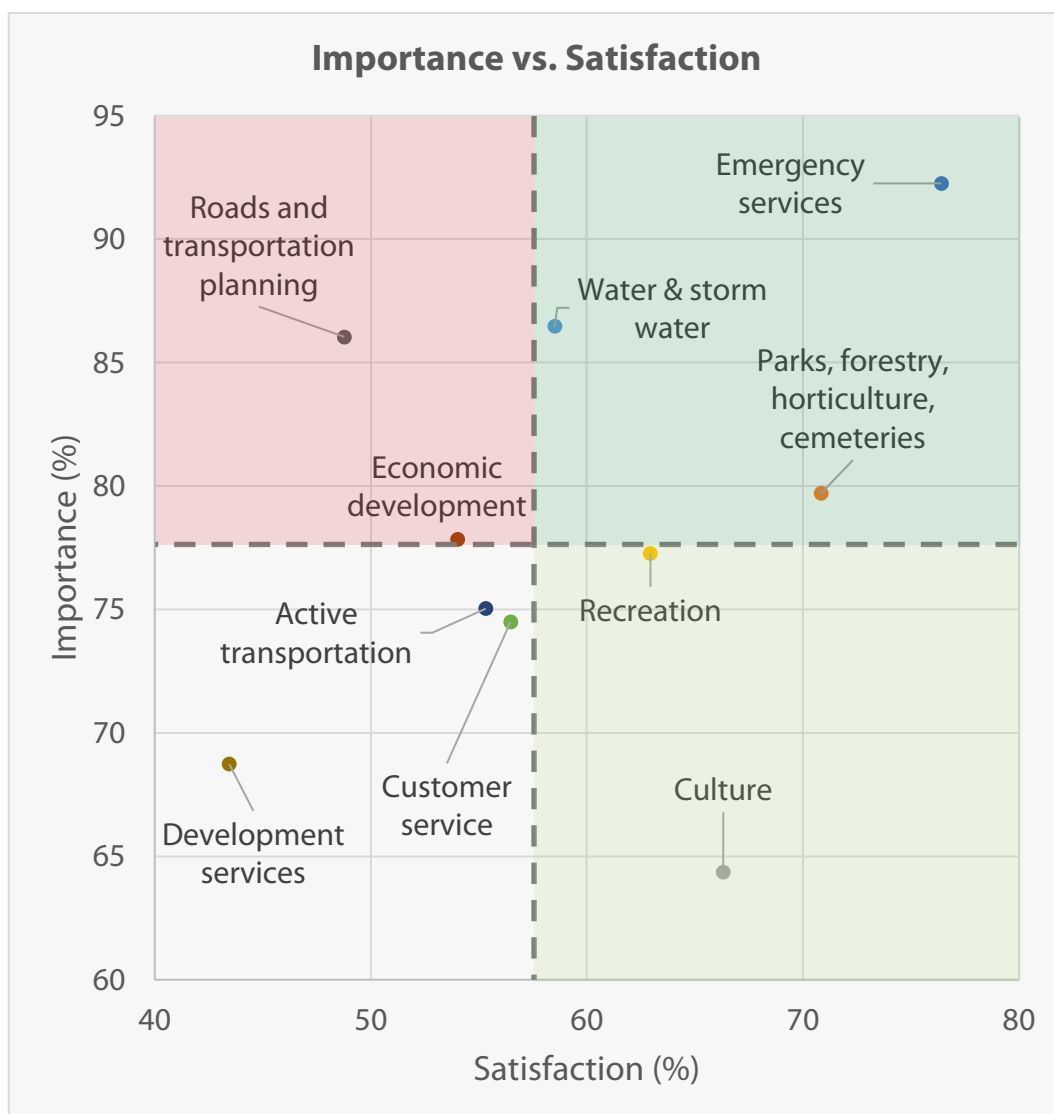
These median values determine the grid quadrants:

- The median satisfaction for services is 57.5.
- The median importance for services is 77.5.



Our importance vs. satisfaction analysis is displayed in the grid on the following page. Three areas are identified as **successes**: emergency services, water and storm water, and parks. These are areas residents say are very important to them, and also where satisfaction is correspondingly high. Recreation and culture are **secondary areas**, less important areas where satisfaction is high.

Our analysis identifies two **target** areas: roads and transportation planning and economic development. These are important to residents but suffer from low satisfaction. Raising satisfaction in these areas may improve overall satisfaction.



Drivers of Satisfaction

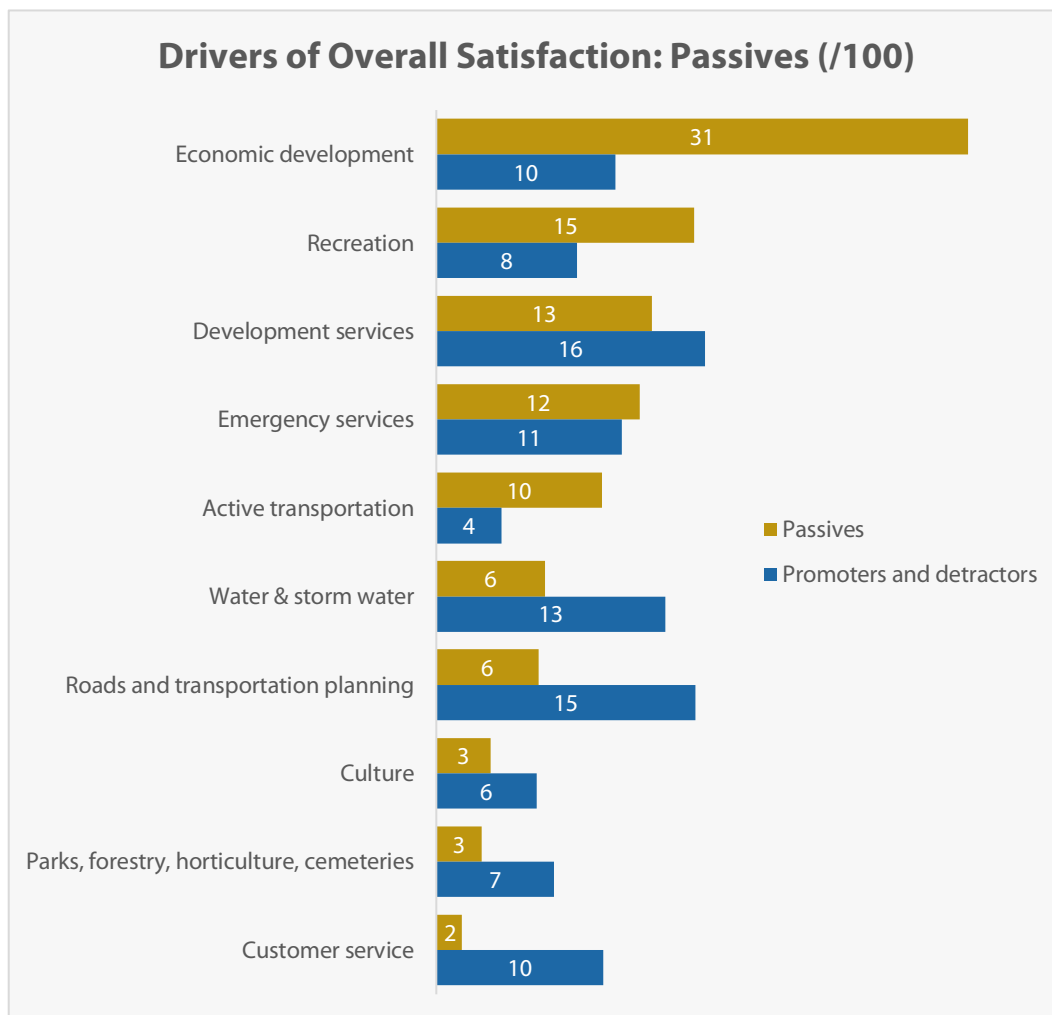
While respondents might *state* how important service areas are to them, Forum can use a relative weights analysis to understand what is really driving their overall satisfaction. A relative weights analysis takes a battery of questions (in this case, questions about specific service areas) and calculates how much each individual question influences residents' responses to a question of interest (in this case, overall satisfaction with living in the City). These areas are then broken down into values which sum to 100 for easier interpretation.

Our analysis shows how residents' stated importance might not reflect how important something truly is in driving their overall satisfaction. While residents *say* development services are less important, it is actually the most powerful driver of overall satisfaction. This means that out of all the service areas, a resident's satisfaction with development services is the most important in determining that resident's overall satisfaction.

The figure below shows that residents take a broad perspective in evaluating their overall satisfaction with Cambridge. No area dramatically overshadows the others in driving satisfaction. Still, the City can use the following to assist in identifying priorities going forward.



Using this same statistical approach, the priorities of passives can specifically be examined in more detail. Looking at the figure below, it is clear that passives have slightly different priorities than their promoter and detractor counterparts. Economic development is the main driver of overall satisfaction amongst passives, and dwarfs other service areas in this regard (31/100). Economic development includes BIA/core area support, business attraction & retention, community development, Film Cambridge, small business centre, tourism promotion and visitor info. To target passives, and thereby potentially improve the City's net promoter score, focusing on improvements to areas of economic development like the ones mentioned above may drive passives toward being promoters.



CUSTOMER SERVICE & COMMUNICATIONS

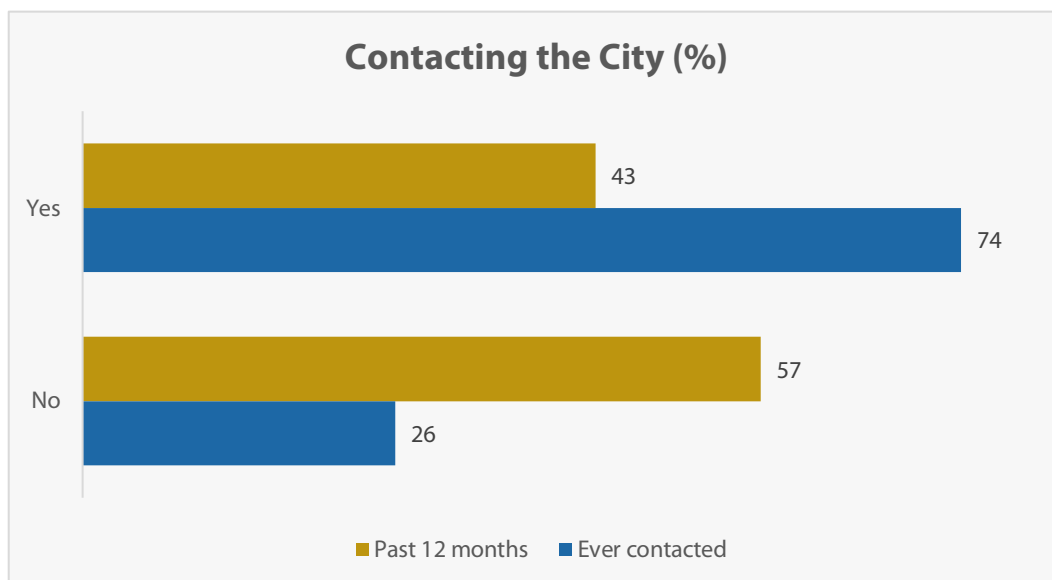
The survey results show that the City of Cambridge is doing a commendable job engaging with residents through customer service and communications. Of the residents who contacted the City, the vast majority are satisfied with the level of customer service they received.

When it comes to modes of communication, two broad categories dominate the results. For contacting the City, residents overwhelmingly prefer to call the City by phone, either calling a direct line or using a switchboard to find the help they need. For just getting information from the City about programs and services, residents overwhelmingly use the City website over other options, with both desktop/mobile browsing of the City website the top choice of residents who want more information. When asked about how they prefer to receive information, residents still choose the City website, showing that the current communications set-up is well-aligned with residents' current preferences.

Contacting the City

Two in five (43%) residents contacted the City in the past year, compared to three-quarters (74%) of residents who say they contacted the City at some point in the past. This section will focus on those who say they have contacted the City and their experiences interacting with the municipality.

Residents with children in the household are more likely to have contacted the City in the past year than those without children in the house. About half (53%) of residents with children in the house contacted the City recently, compared to about four in 10 (38%) of those without.** Online respondents are much more likely to contact the City: three in five (60%) of online respondents contacted the City in the past year and two-thirds (67%) of online respondents contacted the City at some point.



Questions: In the past year, have you contacted the City of Cambridge?

Have you ever contacted the City of Cambridge?

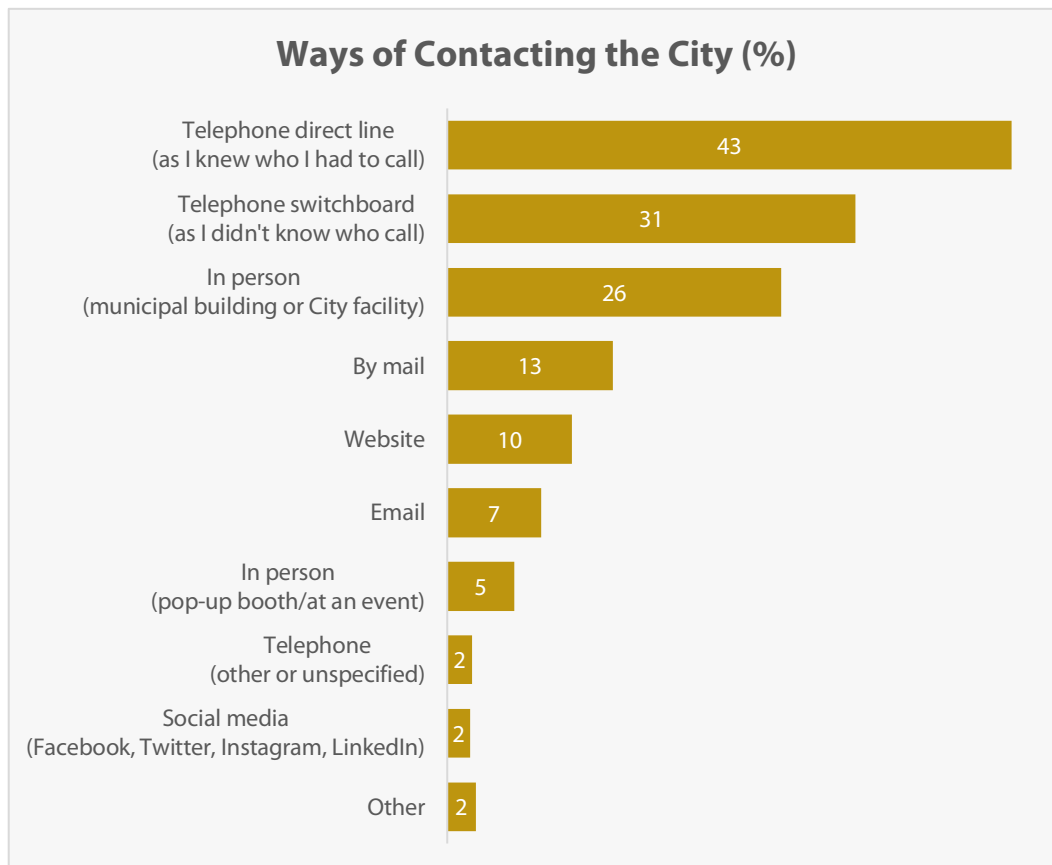
Sample size: 396, 397

Framework: All respondents, excluding "don't know"

** T-test results indicate this relationship is accurate at the 99%+ threshold.

Ways of Contacting the City

Most residents who contacted the City did so over the phone. Calling the direct line (43%) or the switchboard (31%) are the most popular ways of connecting with the City. This is followed by in-person at City buildings (26%), by mail (13%), and through the City website (10%). These are generally comparable to the municipal benchmark, where telephone is usually the most popular way to contact the municipal government.



Question: How did you contact Cambridge? If you tried more than one way, please tell me each. (multi-mention)

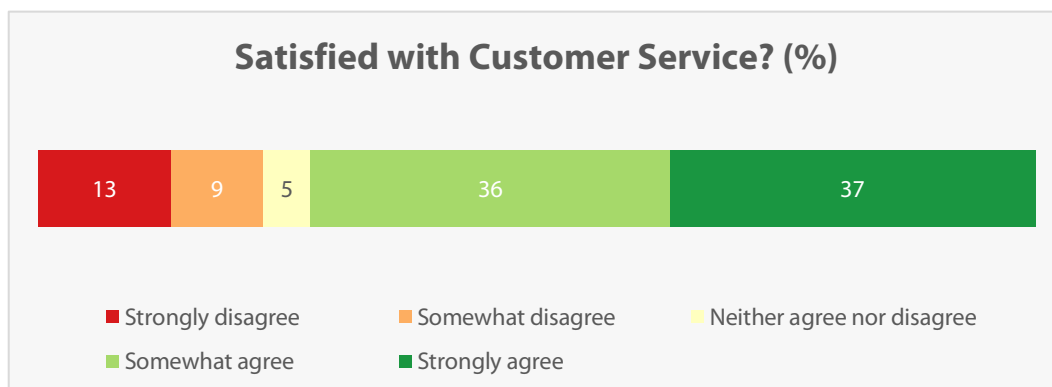
Sample size: 292

Framework: All respondents who have ever contacted the City, excluding "don't remember"

Customer Service

Of those residents who contacted the City, most agree that they are satisfied with the level of customer service they received. Three-quarters (TOP2: 73%) say they were satisfied at the time with the City's customer service. Only half (TOP2: 53%) of online respondents say the same.

Residents aged 65 and up are the most-satisfied age group (TOP2: 82%). This shows that the City is doing excellent outreach with this demographic. Once again, residents with children in the household were much less positive (TOP2: 61%) than other groups. ** This points to either a general dissatisfaction among this group creeping into their perceptions of customer service, or that the City's customer service operation is not well-equipped to handle the specific concerns of parents.



Question: Overall, do you agree or disagree that you were satisfied with the customer service you received when you contacted the City?

Sample size: 291

Framework: All respondents who have ever contacted the City, excluding "don't know"

** T-test results indicate this relationship is accurate at the 99%+ threshold.

Finding Information About City Services

Currently, most residents say they use the City website to find information about the City's services. Browsing the website on the desktop (55%) or on a mobile device (32%) are the most popular options. Trailing behind are traditional local media like CTV, CBC, or the *Cambridge Times* (11%). Although results from other municipalities are not directly comparable, Cambridge is in line with the general trend where online sources—some combination of city websites and social media—are the most popular, followed by traditional media like newspapers.

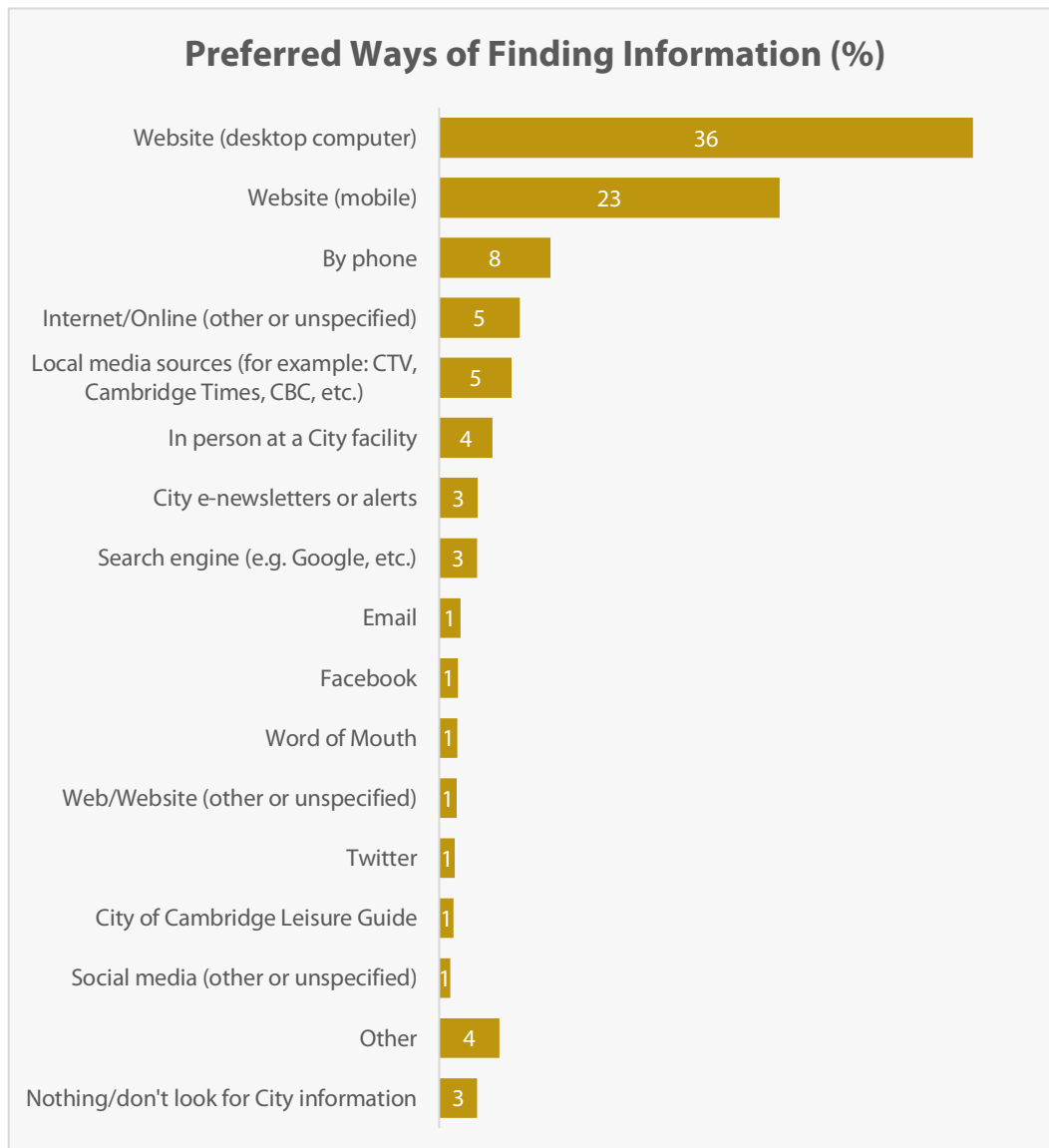


Question: What are the main sources that you *currently* use to find information about City of Cambridge services? (multi-mention)

Sample size: 293

Framework: All respondents who have ever contacted the City

When asked for their preferred way of finding information about City services, the City website was again the top choice by a wide margin, with both desktop browsing (36%) and mobile browsing (23%) being popular choices for residents. The next most popular is finding out information by phone, which is preferred by only about one in 10 (8%) residents.



Question: What would be your *preferred* way to find information about City of Cambridge services?

Sample size: 293

Framework: All respondents who have ever contacted the City

CITIZEN OUTLOOKS

In the areas of community and governance, respondents are positive across the board in their feelings about Cambridge. Most respondents feel that Cambridge is a welcoming community, in which they are proud to live. For the most part residents have confidence in the municipal government but would appreciate more transparency from the City.

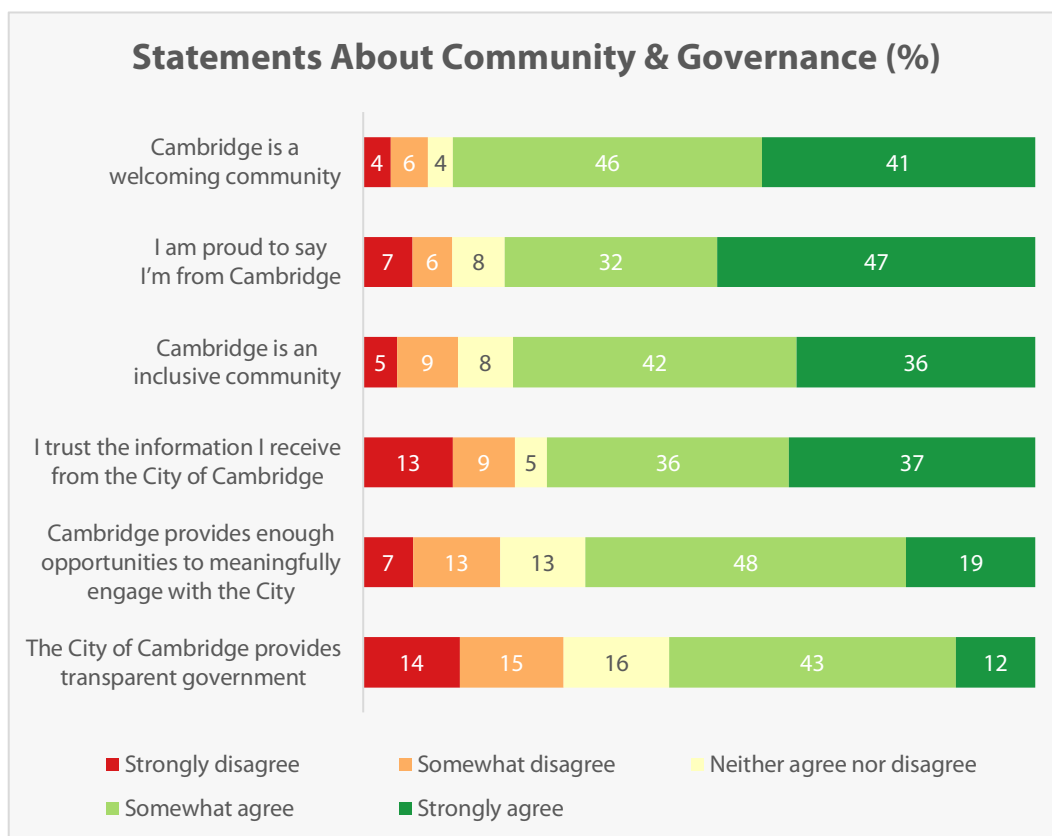
Three-quarters of residents feel they receive good value for their tax dollars considering the programs and services provided by the City. Residents with higher levels of education, and those with middle incomes feel they get better value than other education and income groups.

Examining the City's strategic goals, most are valued by residents and receive high evaluations from residents about the City's performance in those areas. One potential area of improvement identified in this section is "supporting and promoting a strong, dynamic and innovative local economy."

Community & Governance

The vast majority of respondents feel positively about the community in which they live. Positive statements about the community generate widespread agreement, showing that people are happy and proud of their City. Residents are generally confident in and trusting of the City, however, government transparency is the lowest of the statements tested.

When presented with a list of statements about community and governance in the City, "Cambridge is a welcoming community" receives the most agreement from residents, with nine in 10 residents agreeing (TOP2: 87%). Residents agree the least that the City "provides transparent government," with just over half (TOP2: 54%) indicating agreement.



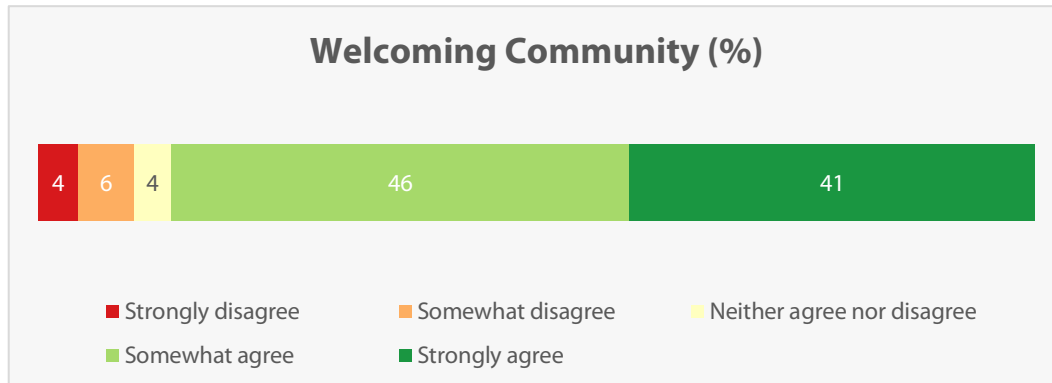
Question: I'm going to read you a list of statements, and I'd like to know how much you agree or disagree with each. You may strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. You may also say don't know.

Sample size: Varies

Framework: All respondents, excluding "don't know"

“Cambridge is a Welcoming Community”

The vast majority of residents agree with the statement “Cambridge is a welcoming community.” Nine in 10 (TOP2: 87%) agree with the statement.



Question: I’m going to read you a list of statements, and I’d like to know how much you agree or disagree with each. You may strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. You may also say don’t know. ... “Cambridge is a welcoming community.”

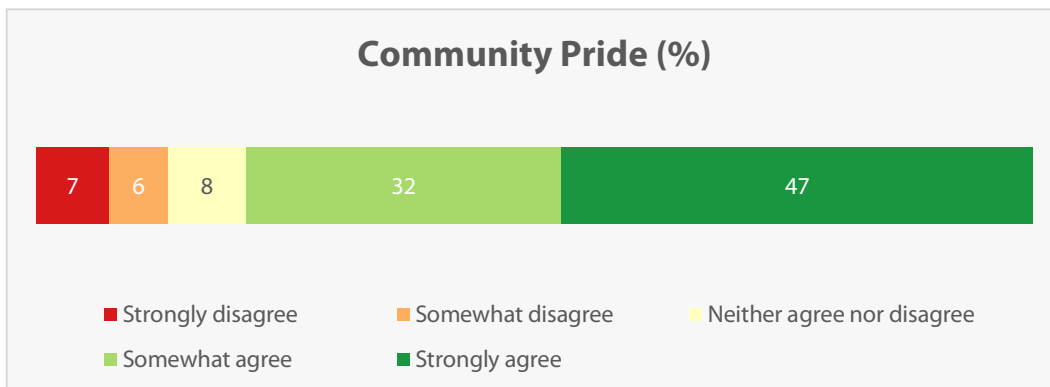
Sample size: 394

Framework: All respondents, excluding “don’t know”

"I am Proud to Say I'm from Cambridge"

Most respondents are proud to live in Cambridge, with eight in 10 (TOP2: 79%) agreeing with the statement "I am proud to say I'm from Cambridge." Residents who have lived in Cambridge for longer are more likely to share in this civic pride. Long-time residents of over 20 years (TOP2: 80%) are more likely to agree than those who have only lived in Cambridge five to ten years (TOP2: 69%).

Unsurprisingly, almost all promoters are proud to live in Cambridge (TOP2: 99%). Passives are still very proud of living in the City (TOP2: 91%), though slightly less than promoters. Slightly more than half (TOP2: 55%) of detractors say there are proud to live in Cambridge.



Question: I'm going to read you a list of statements, and I'd like to know how much you agree or disagree with each. You may strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. You may also say don't know. ... "I am proud to say I'm from Cambridge."

Sample size: 396

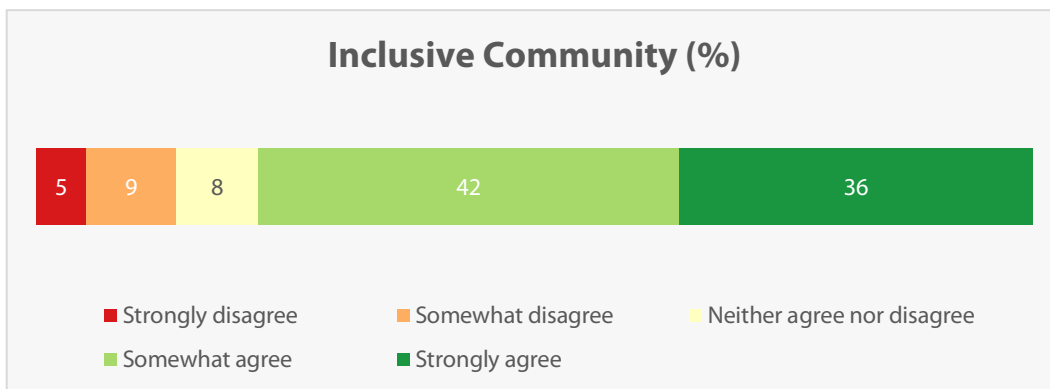
Framework: All respondents, excluding "don't know"

“Cambridge is an Inclusive Community”

High numbers of respondents also agree with the statement that “Cambridge is an inclusive community,” with eight in 10 (TOP2: 78%) residents agreeing with the statement.

Residents with higher levels of education tend to agree more with this statement, as residents with post-graduate degrees (TOP2: 84%) are more likely to agree than residents with a high school education (TOP2: 69%).

There is also a moderate gender gap. Men (TOP2: 80%) are slightly more likely than women (TOP2: 75%) to say that the community is inclusive.



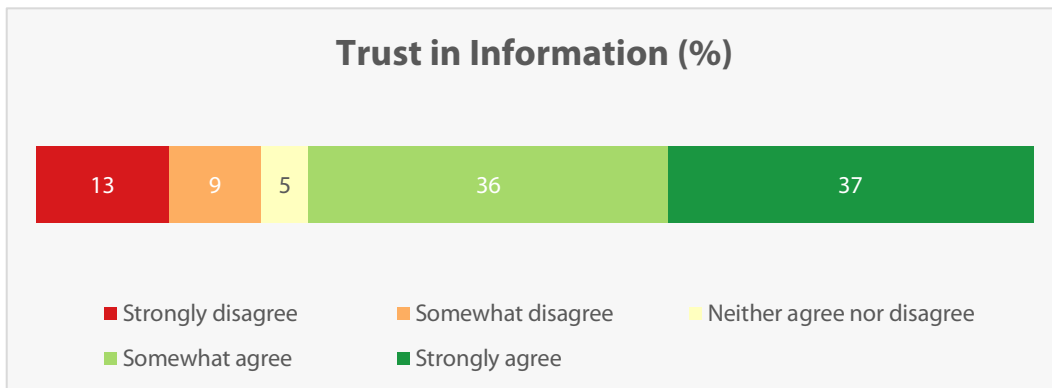
Question: I’m going to read you a list of statements, and I’d like to know how much you agree or disagree with each. You may strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. You may also say don’t know. ... “Cambridge is an inclusive community.”

Sample size: 378

Framework: All respondents, excluding “don’t know”

"I Trust the Information I Receive from the City of Cambridge"

Residents are generally trustworthy of the information they receive from the City. Seven in 10 (TOP2: 73%) agree that they "trust the information [they] receive from the City of Cambridge."



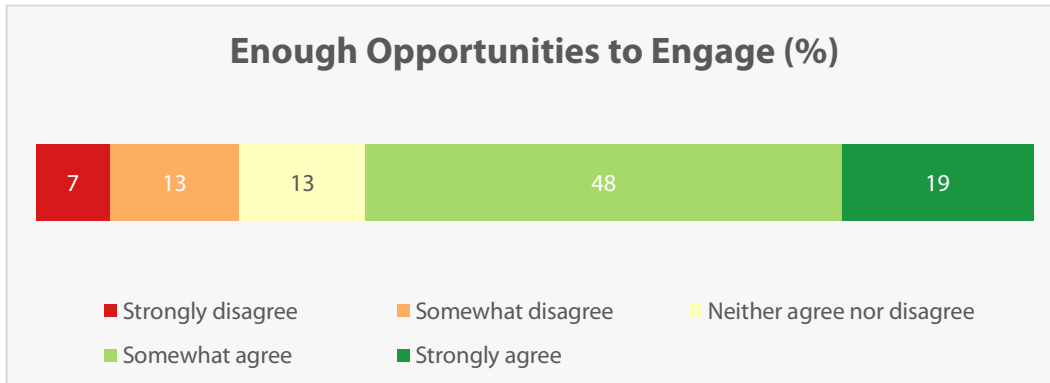
Question: I'm going to read you a list of statements, and I'd like to know how much you agree or disagree with each. You may strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. You may also say don't know. ... "I trust the information I receive from the City of Cambridge."

Sample size: 388

Framework: All respondents, excluding "don't know"

“Cambridge Provides Enough Opportunities to Meaningfully Engage with the City”

A majority of residents agree that the City provides enough opportunities to meaningfully engage with the municipal government. Two-thirds (TOP2: 67%) of residents agree with the statement.



Question: I'm going to read you a list of statements, and I'd like to know how much you agree or disagree with each. You may strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. You may also say don't know. ... "Cambridge provides enough opportunities to meaningfully engage with the City."

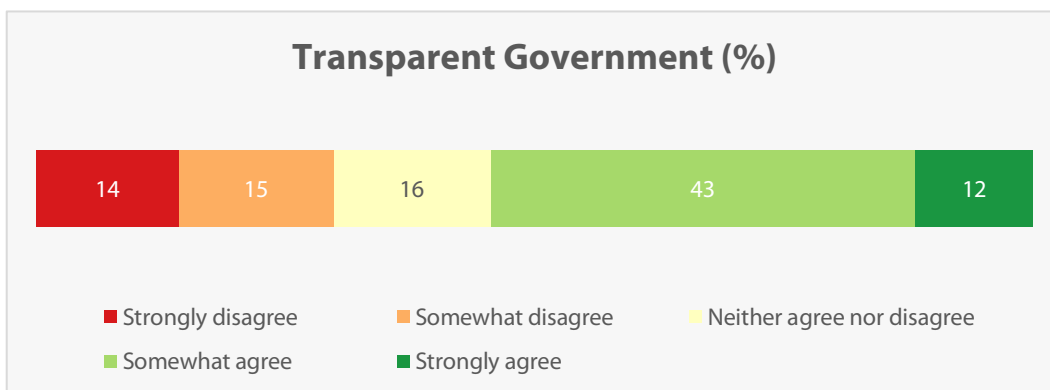
Sample size: 367

Framework: All respondents, excluding "don't know"

“The City of Cambridge Provides Transparent Government”

Compared to other statements, far fewer residents agreed that the City provides transparent government. Just over half (TOP2: 54%) of residents say they agree with that statement. This may suggest that some residents perceive City government as lacking transparency.

Once again, there is an education gradient. Residents with post-graduate degrees agree the most with the statement (TOP2: 66%), while high school graduates agree the least (50%). Residents who have lived in the area for longer are *not* more likely to agree, meaning that this may not just be a simple case of people not being familiar with how the City works—even long-time residents share concerns about transparency.



Question: I'm going to read you a list of statements, and I'd like to know how much you agree or disagree with each. You may strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree. You may also say don't know. ... "The City of Cambridge provides transparent government."

Sample size: 336

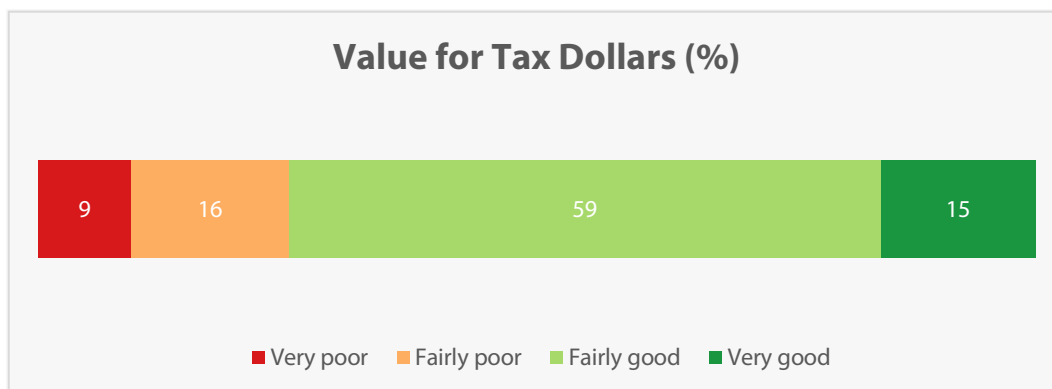
Framework: All respondents, excluding "don't know"

Taxation

Considering the programs and services provided by the City, most residents feel that they get good value for their tax dollars, with three-quarters (TOP2: 75%) of residents agreeing that they receive good value for their taxes. Online respondents are much less positive, with four in 10 feeling that they receive good value (TOP2: 44%).

The score received by Cambridge on value for taxes is comparable to the municipal benchmark (TOP2: 73%).

Education appears to be connected to residents' views on taxes. Post-graduates (TOP2: 86%) are much more positive about the value they get than high school graduates (67%).** There is no clear trend for income, but residents making \$80,000 to \$100,000 per year are the most positive (TOP2: 87%).



Question: Thinking about the programs and services provided by Cambridge, would you say that you receive good value, or poor value for your tax dollars? Is it...?

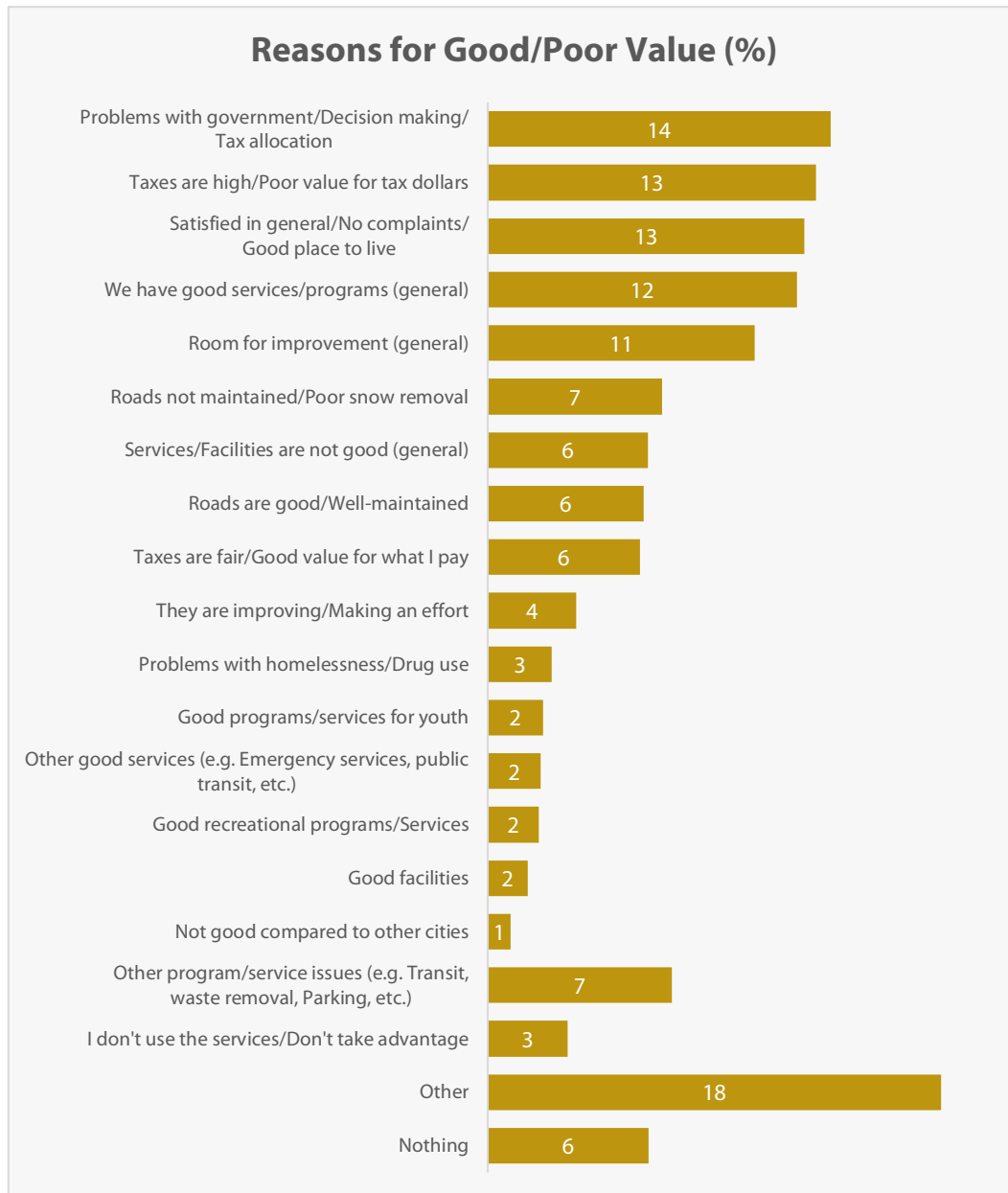
Sample size: 384

Framework: All respondents, excluding "don't know"

Residents have a variety of different reasons for why they feel they receive good or bad value for their taxes. Chief among the reasons for poor value are complaints about the functioning of government, the decision-making process, and the allocation of taxes (14%). The next most popular option is just a reiteration of "poor value for my tax dollars": taxes are too high or simply restating that they receive poor value (13%). The most popular reasons cited for

** T-test results indicate this relationship is accurate at the 99%+ threshold.

good value range from broad comments saying residents have no complaints and that Cambridge is a good place to live (13%) to comments about the good level of programs and services (13%).



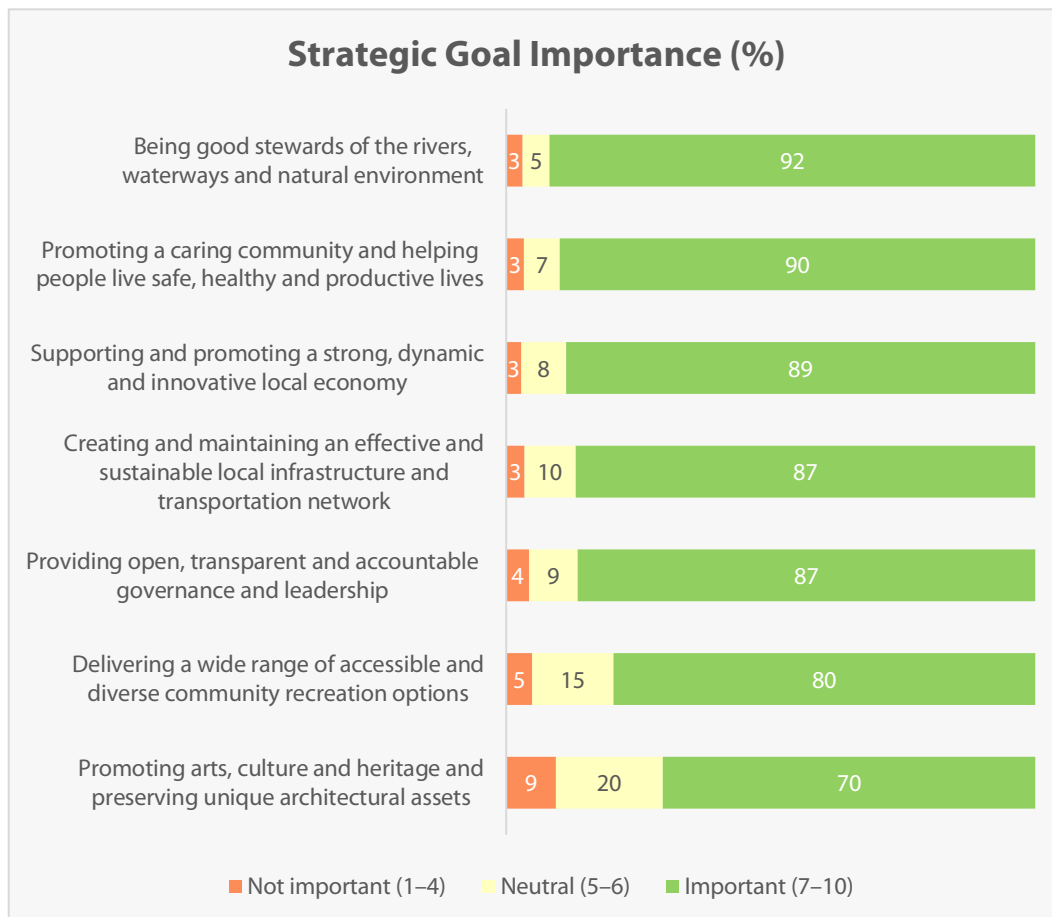
Question: You indicated that the value you receive from your tax dollars is [previous answer], why do you feel this way? (multi-mention)

Sample size: 365

Framework: All respondents, excluding "don't know" and "prefer not to say"

Strategic Goals

When it comes to the City's strategic goals, residents feel that all of the goals are important to them personally. Almost every goal has around nine in 10 residents saying they think it is important. The goal that ranks the highest in importance among respondents is "being good stewards of the rivers, waterways and natural environment" (92%), which indicates that residents see environmental protection and conservation as a top priority. Two goals are viewed as slightly less important: recreation and the arts. Like in other parts of this report, these should not be viewed as unimportant as the vast majority of residents still value them. It should just be noted that they are lower on some residents' priority list.



Question: Now, we'd like to know how *important* each of these goals is to you using a similar scale, as previously, where 1 is not important at all, and 10 is extremely important.

Sample size: Varies

Framework: All respondents, excluding "don't know"

When asked to rate how well the City is doing on these various goals, performance on most goals is seen as positive by a majority of residents. Residents feel most positively about the City's environmental stewardship, with two-thirds (67%) of residents feeling that the City is doing well in that area. This is followed by "promoting a caring community" (65%) and supporting the local economy (54%).



Question: We'd like to ask about the City's strategic goals. First, we'd like to know how *well* you feel the City is doing at working towards these goals. When answering, please use a number from 1 to 10, where 1 means not well at all, and 10 means extremely well. You may also say you don't know. So, how well is the City doing at...

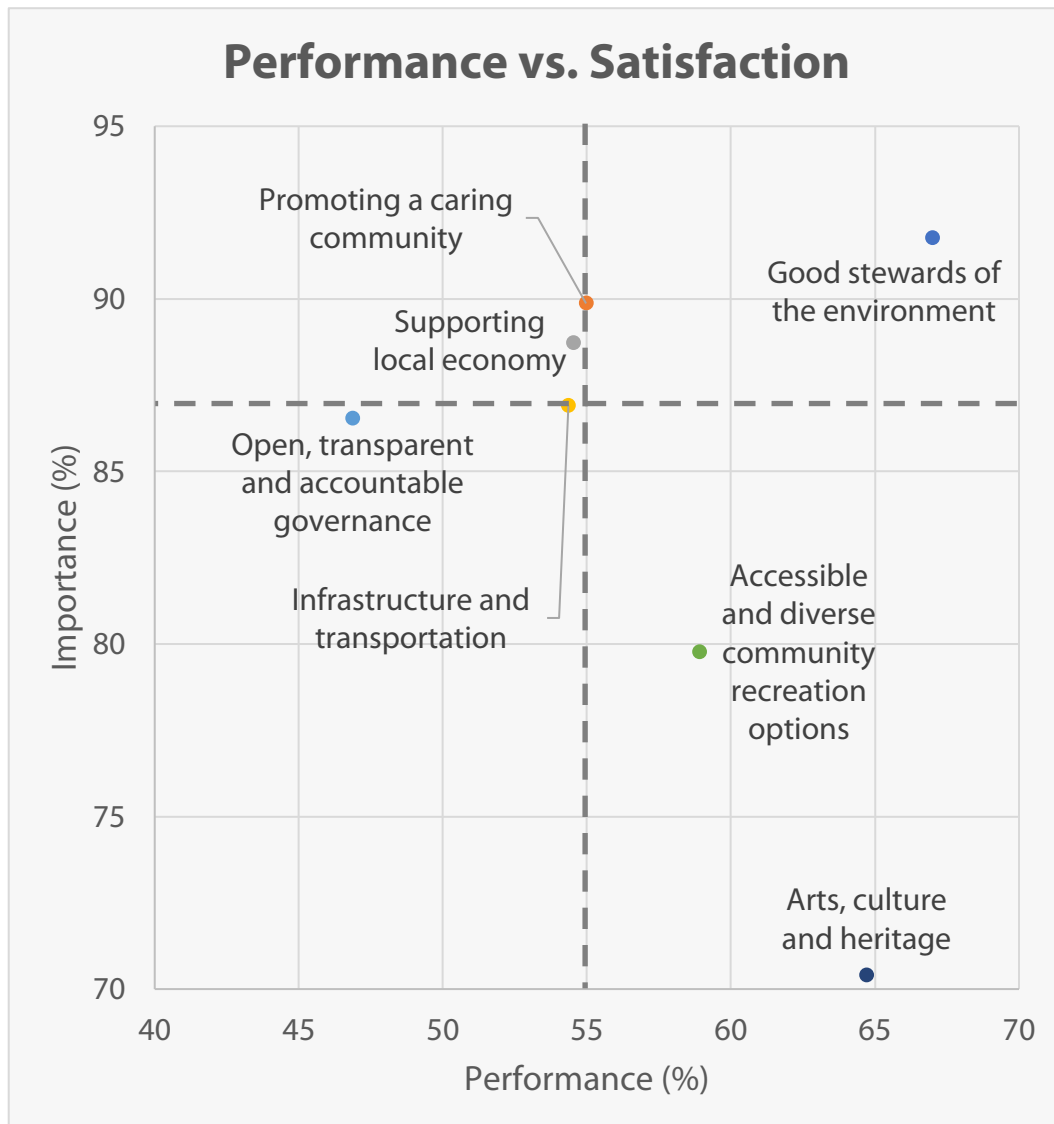
Sample size: Varies

Framework: All respondents, excluding "don't know"

Plotting these results on a grid, like the one created to analyze services (see page 18), yields the following result. As before, responses can be assessed to show "successes," "secondary areas" and "targets" for improvement. Thresholds are established by finding the median values (average) for each of the importance and satisfaction scores. These median values determine the grid quadrants:

- The median satisfaction for services is 55.0.
- The median importance for services is 86.9.

Supporting the local economy is an area which is highly valued by residents but where some improvements may be desired. As alluded to previously, environmental stewardship is clearly a successful goal as residents both value it and feel that the City is performing well in this regard.



When asked to describe Cambridge in one word, most residents choose positive words to describe the City. The top words are “good” (21 mentions), “home” (20 mentions), “comfortable” (14 mentions), “great” (13 mentions), “beautiful” (11 mentions), and “growing” (9 mentions).



Framework: All respondents; refusals like “no comment” are excluded from the visualization

RECOMMENDATIONS

The two main issue areas raised by residents are homelessness and drug addiction. Not only are these issues top-of-mind issues for residents, they are also what residents point to when asked why life has worsened in the City. Notwithstanding the fact that these are multi-sector issues affecting many municipalities and the City cannot solve these issues on its own, focusing on these areas may potentially improve the City's quality of life ratings.

Forum's analysis of the City's services yielded a handful of service areas that the City should focus on. Our importance vs. satisfaction grid analysis found roads/transportation planning and economic development to be areas that the City should devote resources to improving. Residents think these service areas are important but are relatively dissatisfied with their performance. When looking at drivers of satisfaction, Forum identified development services, roads/transportation planning, and economic development as the three areas which played the biggest role in driving residents' overall satisfaction with the City. Focusing on the aforementioned areas will potentially bolster satisfaction with the City.

Finally, the survey results point to governmental transparency as a concern shared by many residents. Outreach efforts by the City to engage residents in decision-making processes could alleviate this concern and show residents that their municipal government is accountable and responsive to citizens' needs.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The following respondent profiles are weighted by age and gender to represent the age and gender makeups of Cambridge reported in the 2016 Census.

