

Summary of 2018 Civic Service Satisfaction Survey

Telephone survey conducted between July 5 and 19, 2018 by Ipsos Public Affairs

October 2018



The primary objective of the survey was to obtain Vancouver residents' and businesses' feedback on municipal services and the value they perceive they are receiving from the City.

Key survey topics included:

- **Important local issues**
- **Quality of life**
- **City services (satisfaction, level of investment)**
- **Value for taxes**

Where appropriate, the City of Vancouver's results have been compared to Ipsos' municipal norms to provide a benchmark against which the City can evaluate its performance. These norms are based on research Ipsos has conducted in other Canadian municipalities within the past five years. Normative comparisons are available for residents only.

To view a more detailed report of these survey results, visit vancouver.ca/budget.

Quality of Life

Overall perceptions of Vancouver's quality of life are favourable although lower than the norm. Overall, 91% of residents and 88% of businesses rate the quality of life in Vancouver today as 'very good' or 'good'. In comparison, the normative resident score is 96% total good.

A majority of residents and businesses think that the quality of life has stayed the same or improved in the past three years. However, among those saying the quality of life has changed, both residents and businesses are much more likely to say things have worsened than improved. Specifically, 50% of residents say Vancouver's quality of life has 'stayed the same', 10% say 'improved', and 38% say 'worsened'. Among businesses, 41% say 'stayed the same', 12% say 'improved', and 46% say 'worsened'. These results are different than the norm, where residents tend to take a more balanced view towards the direction quality of life is taking (54% 'stayed the same', 22% 'improved', 21% 'worsened').

- Among those saying the quality of life has worsened, the cost of living and housing are driving perceptions of a worsened quality of life. Other factors include overcrowding and traffic.

Important Local Issues

Housing and infrastructure dominate the public issue agenda. Among residents, the two most frequently mentioned top-of-mind issues are "housing/accommodations" (49%) and "infrastructure/transportation" (44%). All other issues are a distant second in priority. The same top two issues are also voiced by businesses although the order is reversed,

with 44% mentioning "infrastructure/transportation" and 38% mentioning "housing/accommodations". "Cost of living" is a third issue of note among businesses, garnering 28% of mentions.

City Services

Most residents and businesses are satisfied with the overall level and quality of City services although satisfaction is lower than the norm. Overall, 83% of residents and 80% of businesses say they are satisfied (combined 'very/somewhat satisfied' ratings) with the overall level and quality of services provided by the City of Vancouver. In comparison, the normative resident score is 90% total satisfied.

A majority of residents and businesses think that services have stayed the same or improved in the past three years. However, among those saying services have changed, both residents and businesses are more likely to say things have worsened than improved, although the difference is less than quality of life. Specifically, 62% of residents say services have 'stayed the same', 14% say 'improved', and 22% say 'worsened'. Among businesses, 62% say 'stayed the same', 9% say 'improved', and 29% say 'worsened'.

- Respondents who think City services have worsened attribute this to a variety of factors, with no single explanation standing out from the rest.

Resident satisfaction extends to the delivery of specific services with a few notable exceptions. Enabling affordable housing is the least satisfactory of all the

tested services. Residents are highly satisfied with many of the tested services, with 14 of the 26 services receiving a satisfaction score of 80% or higher (combined ‘very/somewhat satisfied’ ratings). Moreover, another seven services receive a satisfaction score of 67% or higher. Of the remaining five services, opinion is mixed on parking (58% satisfied), social policies & projects (51%), development & building permits (50%), and homelessness services (50%). The single least satisfactory service is enabling affordable housing, with only 28% of residents saying they are satisfied with the City’s performance in this area. Seven-in-ten (69%) say they are dissatisfied, including 31% saying ‘not at all satisfied’.

A strong majority of businesses are also satisfied with many of the City’s services. One notable exception is development & building permits. More than three-quarters of businesses say they are satisfied (combined ‘very/somewhat satisfied’ ratings) with 14 of the 20 tested services. In comparison, the remaining six services receive relatively lower satisfaction scores. This includes economic development (69% satisfied), street infrastructure (67%), transportation infrastructure (66%), long-range planning (64%), and parking (59%). Development & building permits is the only service that is rated satisfactory by a minority of businesses (42% satisfied). One-half (51%) say they are dissatisfied in this regard, including 28% saying ‘not at all satisfied’.

Residents’ top three investment priorities are enabling affordable housing, social policies & projects, and homelessness services. Transportation infrastructure places fourth. Overall, 73% of residents say the City should ‘invest more’ in enabling affordable housing, 71% say the City should ‘invest more’ in social policies & projects, and 66% say the City should ‘invest more’ in homelessness services. A slight majority (53%) of residents say the City should ‘invest more’ in transportation infrastructure. While the remaining services are seen as less of an investment priority, there are no services where a majority of residents think the City should reduce investment.

Businesses’ top three priorities for investment are street infrastructure, development & building permits, and keeping our community clean. Overall, 53% of businesses say the City should ‘invest more’ in street infrastructure, 52% say the City should ‘invest more’ in development & building permits, and 50% say the City should ‘invest more’ in keeping our community clean. While the remaining services are seen as less of an investment priority, there are no services where a majority of businesses think the City should reduce investment.

Value for Taxes

The majority of residents and businesses say they receive good value for their municipal tax dollars, consistent with the norm. Overall, 79% of residents and 72% of businesses say they receive ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ good value for their municipal tax dollars. In comparison, the normative resident score is 81% total good value.

Key Takeaways

Overall perceptions of quality of life are favourable. A majority of residents and businesses think that the quality of life has stayed the same or improved in the past three years. However, among those saying the quality of life has changed, both residents and businesses are much more likely to say things have worsened than improved.

Housing and infrastructure dominate the public issue agenda.

Overall satisfaction with City services is high. A majority of residents and businesses think that services have stayed the same or improved in the past three years. However, among those saying services have changed, both residents and businesses are more likely to say things have worsened than improved, although the difference is less than quality of life.

Satisfaction extends to the delivery of specific services.

- **Highest scoring services:** library, fire rescue & medical response, parks/green spaces (residents) and library, online payment, fire rescue & medical response, police (businesses).
- **Lowest scoring services:** enabling affordable housing (residents) and development & building permits (businesses).

Respondents think the City should invest more or the same (not less) in all the tested services. Top investment priorities include:

- **Residents:** enabling affordable housing, social policies & projects, and homelessness services. Transportation infrastructure places fourth.
- **Businesses:** street infrastructure, development & building permits, and keeping our community clean.

The majority of respondents say they receive good value for their municipal tax dollars.