



2024 Operating Budget

Phase 2: Public Engagement Report

Background & Objectives

Background

A municipality's annual budget is an important policy document that dictates how the City will collect and allocate resources to best improve and maintain City services and infrastructure for the community.

The City of Belleville's budget is broken down into two components: capital and operating. While residents have always been welcome to take part in the budget process by providing their feedback to their council representatives, there has been a significant effort in recent years to encourage more thorough public engagement in the process.

In 2023, Finance engaged communications to craft educational messaging about the budget process. This involved building out a webpage and content with information around what each budget entails, and the approval process. The goal for the 2024 budget process was to focus on further education and direct engagement.

Staff have decided to take a two-phase approach for the 2024 budget process. The first phase of the process was a short, high-level Preliminary Operating Budget Survey to gauge residents operating spending priorities. Questions in the survey looked at ranking and prioritizing City services. This phase also included development of Budget 101 documents to provide a further breakdown of the process for residents.

The second phase in the engagement approach came closer to the finalization of the budget and was a more specific survey of the proposed operating budget. The 2024 Operating Budget Survey broke down some of the operating budget items and allowed residents to weigh in on the specific items identified by staff in their draft budgets.

Objectives

The goal behind this year's communications and engagement strategy was as follows:

- Provide residents with additional educational material and resources around the budget process.
- Encourage direct engagement from as many residents as possible.
- Provide council and staff with public feedback to help shape a budget and plan that best serves their residents.



Engagement Strategy

Timeline

- October 3 & 10 - Public engagement plan and timeline approved by Finance Committee and Council
- December 5 & 11 - Preliminary public feedback and recommended guidelines presented to Finance Committee and Council.
- December to January – Internal draft Operating Budget deliberations
- February 1 - Draft Operating Budget posted for public feedback.
- February 27 & 28 - Presentation of public feedback and operating budget meetings.
- March 11 - Expiry of Mayor’s veto of Council’s budget amendments (if applicable).
- March 26 - Expiry of Council’s override period of Mayor’s veto of Council’s budget amendments (if applicable).



Tactics

Like the first phase, communications used a number of channels to inform and engage the public through the second phase of engagement, including:

- Budget Webpage
- Online Survey
- Budget 101 Document
- Project Email
- Comment Card Form
- Media Release
- Email to News Subscribers
- Website Alert
- Social Media (Paid & Organic)
- Community Press Ad
- InQuinte/Quinte News Ads
- Marquee Signs

Results & Metrics

Communications around Phase 2 and the 2024 Operating Budget Survey have garnered the following results:

Webpage

Total estimated views of webpage during survey period (Feb. 1-23):

- Belleville.ca/Budget – 972 (515.19% increase compared to previous period of Jan. 9-31)
- News Release – 372

Social Media

Social media metrics during survey period (Feb. 1-23):

- Facebook (Organic) – 1 Post Total with Reach of 886 and Engagement of 18
- Facebook (Paid) – 1 Boosted Post with Reach of 12,824 and Engagement of 829
- Twitter – 2 Organic Posts Total with Average Reach of 754 and Engagement of 24

Digital

- Email to News Subscribers – Reached 316 Subscribers
- Belleville Updates Newsletter – Reached 217 Subscribers
- Marquee Sign (QSWC) –AADT of 22,000/Month

Print

- Community Press Ad – Total Reach of Approx. 18,553 Belleville Households

The results above were collected using Google Analytics, Meta Business Suite, Twitter Analytics, iCreate reporting and annual average daily traffic (as last reported in 2014).

Opportunities for Improvement

Through this process, staff have identified opportunities for improvement to future engagement initiatives relating to the City's budget:

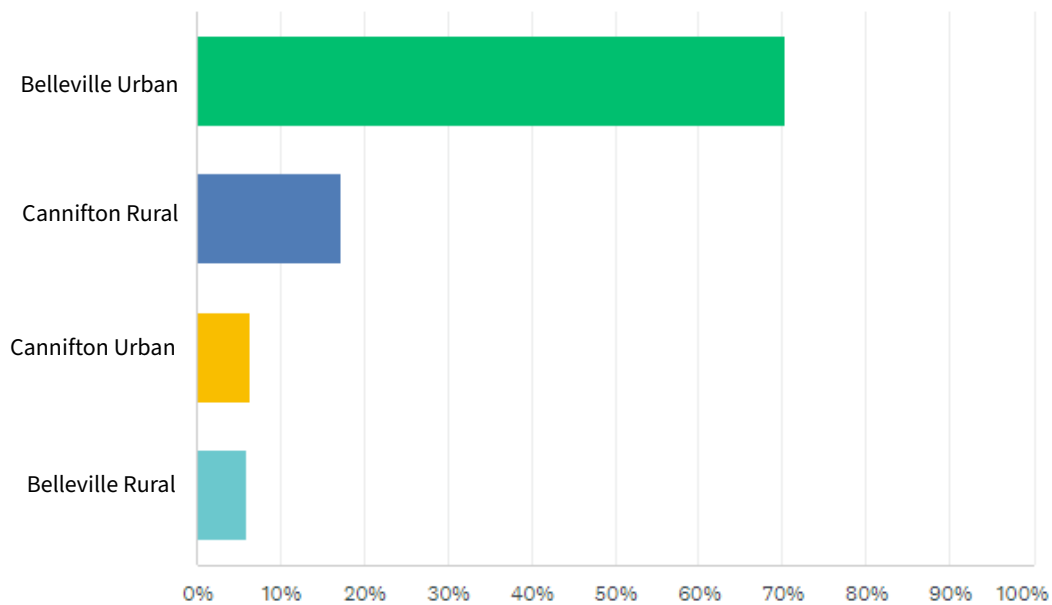
- Increase educational materials that clearly communicate what is directly provided by the City and the Province. For example, most Health & Social Services are directly provided by the Province, but the City may undertake additional services, such as Doctor Recruitment initiatives.
- Clearly report key funding strategies to balance the City's budget (e.g., use of the Casino reserve fund).
- Educate and report on departmental levels of service provided by the City.
- Continue efforts to simplify budgetary documents for public consumption.
- Explore further channels to communicate information regarding the City's budget.



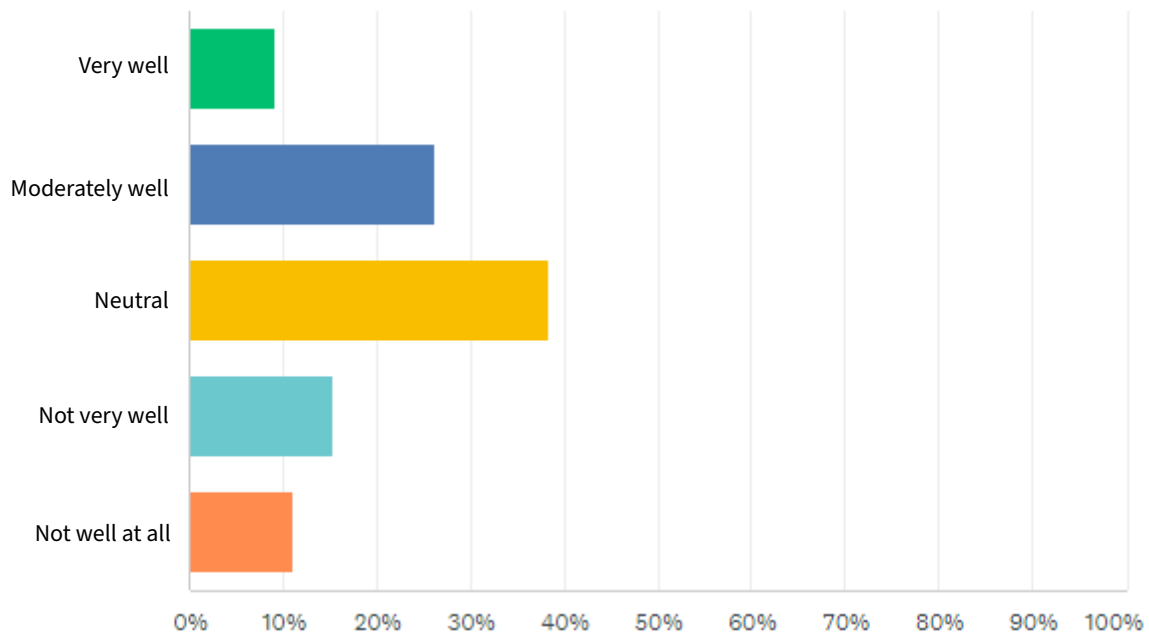
Survey Summary

The 2024 Operating Budget Survey ran from Feb. 1 to 23. Below is a summary of the 587 total responses and feedback received through the survey period. Highlights of comments under “Please Specify” for questions 3, 5, 6, 8 and 10 can be found beneath each question. See Appendix A for detailed responses.

Q1: What is your tax billing area?



Q2: In your opinion, how well does the 2024 operating budget align with the budgetary guidelines established?

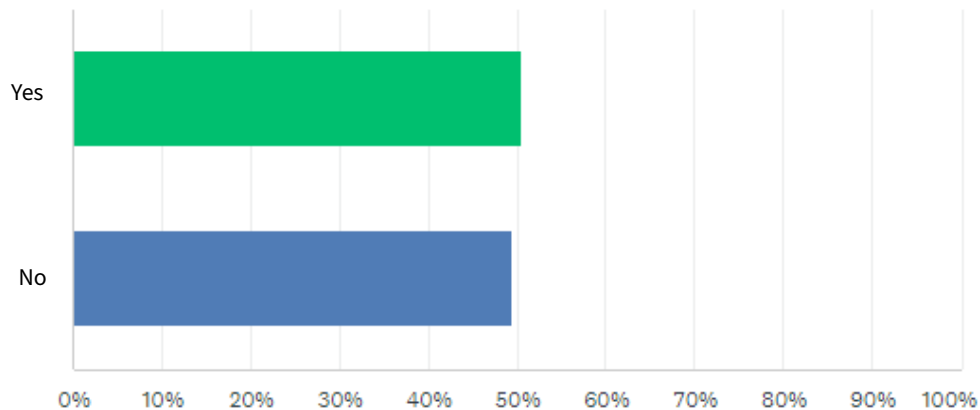


Q3: Please elaborate on your opinion to the previous question: "How well does the 2024 operating budget align with the budgetary guidelines established?"

There was an array of comments from those indicating the budget did not align with the guidelines. Below are some of the highlights. See Appendix A for detailed responses.

- Tax increases per guidelines are too high and above inflation. Ratepayers are struggling.
- There is not enough allocation to housing initiatives within Social Services portfolio.
- An improved service level within Police Services is desired without increased costs/Policing budget should be reduced.

Q4: Included in section 8.a.13 of the operating budget are proposed operating issues that reflect an incremental increase from the 2023 operating budget. Are you generally satisfied with these new initiatives?

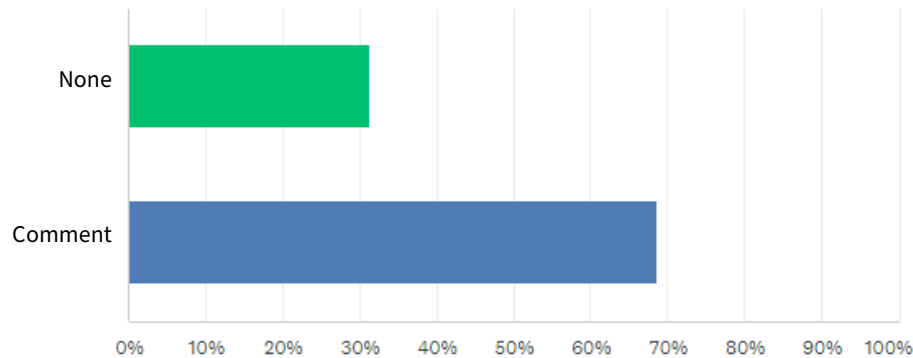


Q5: You responded, "No" the previous question. Please share your comments.

While there was an array of comments, below are some of the highlights. See Appendix A for detailed responses.

- Tax increases are too high.
- An improved service level within Police Services is desired without increased costs/Policing budget should be reduced.
- Operating issues are excessive. A complete service level review is needed.
- There are not enough new funds allocated to housing initiatives under Social Services portfolio.
- City wages/hiring should be reduced or frozen.

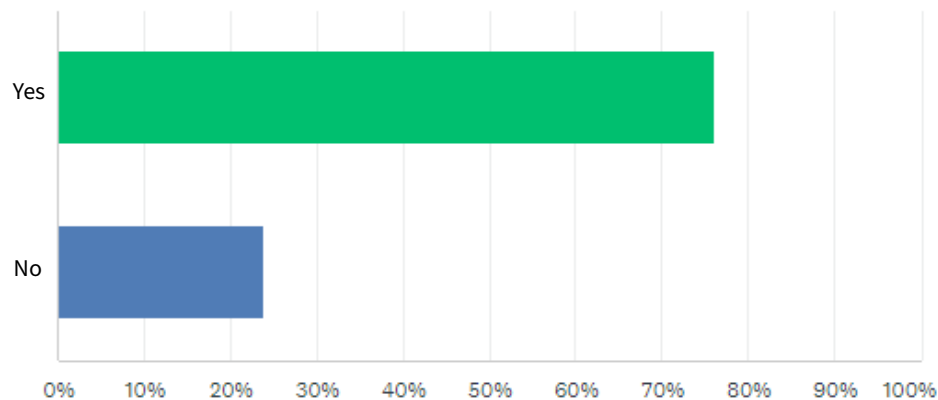
Q6: In your opinion, what changes or improvements would you suggest for the 2024 operating budget to better meet the needs of the community?



While there was an array of comments, below are some of the highlights. See Appendix A for detailed responses.

- Taxes are too high and costs should be cut.
- Increase in Doctor Recruitment and Health Services initiatives.
- Increase in affordable housing initiatives.
- Increase in road maintenance activities.
- Increase in Social Services (homelessness & housing).

Q7: In 2023, Council approved the City's first engagement strategy as it relates to the 2024 budget. This strategy included the distribution of a preliminary operating budget survey in October, the development of various education materials at belleville.ca/budget, and enhanced communication regarding the budget through the City's webpage, social media, email subscriptions, and newsletters. Based on this information, do you feel adequately informed about the development of the City's 2024 operating budget?

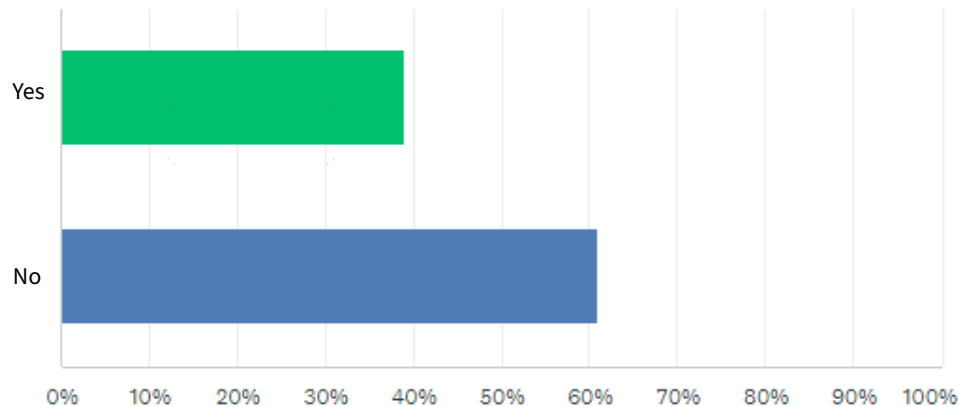


Q8: You selected, "No" to the previous question. Please explain.

While there was an array of comments, below are some of the highlights. See Appendix A for detailed responses.

- Respondents were unaware of prior survey/request for feedback.
- The City should increase its transparency in all capacities.
- There should be an increase in paper advertising of the budget (e.g. newspaper and/or bill inserts).

Q9: Are there any specific topics surrounding the City's operating budget and process that you wish you had more information and background on?



Q10: You responded, "Yes" to the previous question. Please elaborate.

While there was an array of comments, below are some of the highlights. See Appendix A for detailed responses.

- Additional information regarding Policing levels of service.
- Information regarding the City addressing homeless issue.
- Information regarding affordable housing initiatives.
- Additional detail regarding City salaries & benefits.

Appendix A

Below is a detailed look at the responses from questions 3, 5, 6, 8 and 10 of the survey.

Q3: Please elaborate on your opinion to the previous question: "How well does the 2024 operating budget align with the budgetary guidelines established?"

- I feel that you need to revisit and find more savings
- cannot afford a high increase in property tax-
- Not easy to determine.
- To much on police cost??
- Development is gaining too much for development of unaffordable housing and not enough business(employment) to keep people in the area. Also too many empty business buildings that could be used if rental/leasing costs were more sustainable for commercial purposes
- Taxes are already too high. City employees don't work enough hours and take advantage of time off. We pay too much for municipal government for what we get in return.
- There are no funds set aside to take back over the parking at the Belleville General Hospital so that the nurses and health care workers don't have to pay for parking. The paramedics, firefighters, police, public health nurses and other municipal staff don't pay for parking. Why do the hospital staff?
- As a senior,I just can't afford any increases in property tax,my life is hard enough
- No mention about increasing debt in the guideline. Council is pushing us toward \$200 million in debt despite outrageous tax increase.
- Given the current crises taking place, I would have thought that greater funding would have been allocated to emergency services (paramedics and firefighters) and Health Services. The proposed budget fails to acknowledge the simultaneous crises of chronically underfunded healthcare in a city with massive poor, elderly and chronically ill populations, let alone the addiction crisis. Increased public housing would also go a long way towards mitigating the strain on the local healthcare system. The proposed increase to protective services would likely not yield significant results, given the size of the salaries, pensions and benefits, cost of administration, overtime, etc. At the end of the day, the bulk of the proposed increases will probably not achieve any greater level of capacity for the city, nor is there any guarantee that the increases will ultimately be sufficient, or achieve the desired results. I would rather see budgetary allocation going towards longer-term goals of improving public welfare and community health.

- More focus should be put on services that affect the everyday, low-middle income resident who lives alone - not just families/seniors eg. transit, snow removal, recreation (library, outdoor trails, wellness centre,) safety downtown - security at the library/bus terminal, etc. instead of areas that only affect a small amount of people eg. dr. recruitment, social housing, enviro. services/planning, etc. As a new resident to the city, who is lucky to have a doctor in Trenton (which I found on my own through contacting TMHF,) I also had to find safe housing (in my budget) and work on my own, when I moved here last summer. The move was unexpected, but the ultimate factor for choosing Belleville was housing availability and having attended Loyalist years ago, so I was familiar with the city already. I'm really enjoying my new neighbourhood, due to the proximity to walking trails, downtown (shops/churches) and bus stops. More funding for events would also be a bonus, to help the community feel better, being in the downtown core again this summer eg. Yoga in the Streets, late-night shopping events, etc.
- Please shift the focus to community service organizations to support mental health and supportive housing.
- Adding 5% is ridiculous. The fact is cost of fuel and wages have not changed. But it appears everyone wants on the (oh it is inflation) stop [redacted] people of hard earned money. With my tax dollars I want you to eliminate this [redacted] at the church immediately. Don't tell me it is a mental health issue. (they have no clue what mental health is at this point in their life. How about the mental health of the tax paying citizen and the young ones who travel with us.
- You continue to screw homeowners that are just getting by, especially in the urban area. On the one hand you keep asking us to buy local while taxing us to the point where it is getting harder and harder to do that. We are approaching the breaking point for urban tax payers!
- It would seem guidelines focus on Doctor recruitment, housing and policing yet all areas (departments), whether internal or external agencies seem to have significant increases. Increase in Policing needs is clearly a result of the homeless issue within the city. This should be a provincial matter and not a matter to be funded by the local taxpayers. The predetermined budget increase ceiling of 5% was an arbitrary number established by Mayor Ellis, but not an amount established by the taxpayers. Once that guideline was established the budget increase was pretty much established.
- More police ? How about we utilize the current force we have , I often see two or 3 police vehicles parked together and just talking for 30 min or more
- If the guideline was a 5 percent increase why is the increase for docking at Victoria park 10 percent? There were 2 significant problems at Victoria park this past summer. The vagrant population which caused numerous boat break ins, [redacted], constant loud swearing, and fighting. A security guard went as far as helping a homeless person string a line between two trees and helped him put up a tarp on it which he slept under for a couple of days. Second problem was the lack of a working weed boat. It was late starting to cut due to a broken part late arriving and then breaking down a few weeks after getting repaired.
- 5% was what was asked for.
- 34% to police and fire but only 5% to healthcare when we are in a healthcare crisis??
- In the fall survey, a majority of Belleville residents preferred property tax rates stay the same or decrease, even if that jeopardized existing city services to some extent. The proposed budget does not achieve that.
- I question the accountability at the city. How many dept heads work to reduce cost & increase productivity of all the employees ? We need a time study & hold taxes.
- How much of my taxes are going to fund first responders who daily go to Bridge Street United Church? How much of my tax dollars are being used for the city to "donate" the banquet hall?
- No improved police service or response as same as ambulance and fire services. Higher taxes for everything benefitting the city. Monies wasted improving downtown where people don't want to go anymore. Town of fast food joints. No real industry..not enough good sustainable jobs. Lots of hospitals.. but patients shipped off to other care hospitals for procedures and treatments. Use casino monies to recruit specialized and family doctors.

- Make it affordable for residents
- Urban planning is much needed in Belleville. We are a growing city and thought is needed in our infrastructure l.
- Procurement should negotiate on the bids, not just take the lowest bids and run with it. No savings there. Hire a procurement person with automotive experience.
- Homeowners like me are already struggling with tax increases as it is. More increases to property taxes don't seem like much but are just another death by a thousand cuts. Reigning in these increases never happens. Just bump it ahead again by 2%. In 10 cycles, you have increased things by 20%.
- Even though you say you will not exceed a 5% increase, you are coming awfully close. Please drop all funding for homeless relief, as bad as this sounds they are draining resources for the tax payers/voters of Belleville.
- People cannot afford this property tax increase
- Taxes going up too much
- It doesn't because there are no real details of the budget. This info is "GENERAL" and I want to see detailed info.
- Need more readily available housing
- Did you not just raise our taxes last year by 5%. You need to look at the waste, and the over 1% wage increases!
- Property taxes too much to what we receive in any benefits.
- Quit taxing us [redacted]
- You continue to pile more and more money into the police and we have more and more crime. There are literally HUNDREDS of people living on the street, increasing crime left and right, and you continue to waste our money with NO accountability. The other priorities have no money because you pile tens of millions into the police a year. Why do they drive brand new Tahoe's? They consistently have \$100k+ vehicles that literally could not get worse fuel economy as patrol cars. You decrease speed limits and change your own community safety zone guidelines when they didn't fit your narrative. EVERYTHING when it comes to this city and that protective services category is beyond corrupt. I think it's time we have the auditor general and the like take a look, no? Seriously. Where is the money for EVERYTHING else in your so-called priorities besides police? Are you corrupt? Or just impressively incompetent? Honestly can't tell.
- The main problem in our city right now is drugs and it's become clear that our police don't intend to do anything about it. So less money to them and more into health care please.
- Doctor recruitment is important and labelled as top priority but in the pie chart it shows only 5% allocated to that. Also police and fire need less money and there needs more funds for social programming. If there was more affordable housing and community support people and the ONLY residential addiction treatment centre wasn't closed we would have less need for police. Increasing police won't solve our current dire need for mental health supports. I might not know about budget breakdowns and be able to read fancy charts but I live in this community and I work in mental health and youth justice and I can tell you community workers are burning out and drowning under the work load. There is such a high need for community based mental health supports and everyone seems to just ignore it. This is a major issue in this area and it's the reason bridge street is as dire as it is.
- More should be allocated to social services to increase safety, not policing.
- I think we can hold budget the same as last year. No need to spend money people don't have.
- We pay some of the highest taxes around. We don't need more tax increases. I pay around 265 a month for taxes and I can't afford any more increases or I will have to move out of your city.
- Top priority is Dr recruitment, yet only 5% is for health care....nurses and hospital support staff should also be a priority as well as paramedics.
- Too much to police and not enough to housing.

- The cost living is ridiculous and moving out of your parents home is not possible it's just the new normality, having your own place has become a luxury to live which shouldn't be the case. My suggestion is to cut all the costs down by 50% or increase everyone's pay by 2x or 1.5x in order to work 4 days out of 7 so we can actually live life.
- We need major tax cuts rather than tax increases , you are making life more difficult for everyone !! There is alot of FAT that needs to be cut NOW !! Wake up people before its to late !!
- To much for fire.
- Where are these guidelines? Also property tax going up another 5%? Ouch. What's another \$225/year to a senior on pension? A lot. Pickleball potentially going up 100%!!! Finally find an awesome way for seniors to be active and the city wants to do that?
- Too high for taxes.
- We are in a recession, food price going crazy etc and you are going to raise taxes.Time to start running city like a business and make cuts to lower taxes.
- More on roads
- Our taxes were not supposed to raise. What about casino money to keep our taxes down
- 34% for Police and Fire is a huge increase
- Do not agree with the 4th priority-social services housing getting 6.7 Million allocated through tax levy when the top priority of recruiting doctors to the area receives less that 600 000.
- Need doctors and more housing. Very sad too see property tax increase but none of it is going to where we need it to go.
- I've bought a house in 2017 and since then I have no family doctor and I don't see that ever changing here in Belleville. The quinte recreation centre has very limited classes that are being offered and that needs to change. It's a huge place but doesn't operate fully or with much diversity and I don't see that changing. Way more people have moved into Belleville and I still have to pay \$3 per garbage bag and I don't see that changing. Amenities should improve greatly before u ask for more money from us - the hard working people who have already paid and continue to pay for the city of Belleville and haven't seen much chnage for that. And you overspend spend on things that don't make a difference or were unnecessary.
- Gtf
- The Welcoming Streets process is being funded by a loophole an dan earlier report indicated that city councillors wanted to double that budget bringing it to \$280, 000. This is not acceptable. I reside in Hillcrest, since the new park has been ceremony at end of October 2023 we have observed a migration of homeless individuals to the wooded areas of Hillcrest. The Welcoming Streets process is merely a security detail to protect downtown businesses. The downtown business nad pproperty owners need to fund their own security. Identical to the Quinte Mall. [redacted] The Welcoming Streets process are merely an extension of the Police service. This farce needs to stop immediately. [redacted] Yes we were all told that the current funding for the Welcoming Streets was provided thru another source of funds - simply another farce.
- Categories of guidelines provided don't align with budget categories so difficult to see if align.
- Why does rural urban pay so much when we have no sewer or water no sidewalks or snow removal. We get garbage pick up that is paid for like the city. We have no parks, water parks or other amenities like the city. What justifies the amount of tax
- Protective Services Budget at 34% indicates a need by Council to review \$ what the priorities are for Fire and Police and where the expenses are coming from and in some cases where costs can be reduced and or eliminated.
- No
- Increase is to high, income increase does not support this
- Proposing new housing to accomodate the indigent criminal element in town should not be a priority when the existing infrastructure (roads in particular) are a shambles.
- Too much increase.

- This survey is a joke.
- How come the urban got the biggest rise but use the service the least
- Money for affordable housing needs to be increased and the police budget decreased.
- It seems the mayor of council are not addressing affordable housing building houses is not the answer regular working people cant afford to buy them or afford sky high rents its time this city council start taking care of it working tax paying citizens
- We have no sewers or water
- Start looking at cost reductions instead of continual increases. The value proposition of Belleville is not good so I looking to move.
- Why is more money needed to meet the guidelines? How about operating more efficiently?
- I think a whole bunch of different areas are getting too much money
- Need more police and better fire coverage to Belleville urban/rural
- The proposed increase is above 2023 CPI of 3.9% for Canada
- What measures are being taken to reduce expenses or non essential staffing? Private sector seems to be cutting workforce yet public sector maintains staffing levels and spending habits.

Q5: You responded, "No" the previous question: "Included in section 8.a.13 of the operating budget are proposed operating issues that reflect an incremental increase from the 2023 operating budget. Are you generally satisfied with these new initiatives?" Please share your comments.

- No You need to put on hold some issues so we can have some breathing room
- Cannot afford a high increase
- No
- not clear how tax payers benefit from spending more money
- New initiatives means more taxes
- There shouldn't be any increases since our taxes are already high enough. To have all property taxes increase in a growing community that already has such high taxes, doesn't make sense. It is not fair that our citizens need to pay for the poor fiscal responsibility of our city employees.
- Far too much taxes levied to Recreation.
- Parking for nurses!!!!!!
- An increase of 4 million for protective services seems excessive
- Any increase in taxes is very hard for my family
- A 13.3% increase to the Quinte Arts Council is not worthy when compared to other more important services requiring funding
- ypu need to redistribute 2 million dollars to cover TheBridge which will not be viable until 2026 in my opinion
- Cut the increase back to 3% overall. A 5% increase is a reckless and unjustifiable increase.
- I am concerned with the long-term sustainability of the increases as many of them seem to be disproportionately vulnerable to inflationary forces
- See comment above.
- User fees for harbors increase is out of line with 5 percent target
- With the casino money property taxes should not be raised that high.
- Understanding that costs increase, however I think it's time to look at ways to maintain or reduce taxes by cutting services if necessary.

- What about cutbacks in the mayor's and Council's salaries?
- see previous comments. Also, there does not seem to be an initiative to review unnecessary services in order to lower budget increases. Council needs city staff to report on service/benefits provided and determine if all services are providing adequate and necessary benefits to the city as a whole. Council needs to be prepared to make tough decisions. User fees are increasing, most notably for the recreation facilities. These are in effect tax increases to those who use the facilities. A quick calculation for 2 uses per week of the QSWC pool adds an additional \$600/year for 2 person household. In effect, increasing taxes by an additional 10-12%. This doesn't seem to fit with an objective of providing affordable recreation for city residents. User fee increases should be kept to the same % as overall budget increases. An additional \$200K earned as result of the increase is not a significant overall budget amount. Also, doesn't appear that all areas of user fees increased by the same proportions, ie Library user fees, user fees for Policing services, etc...
- Stop wasting our money and be smarter about how we spend our tax dollars , council needs to treat our tax dollars the same way they treat there own dollars
- An increase in any tax in this economy is not sustainable
- See previous comments. Instead of a 10 percent increase there should be a decrease because of the two major problems at Victoria park.
- Pickleball, mostly played by seniors on pensions, shouldn't go up 100% at the QWSC...from \$3.00 to \$6.00. A 100% increase is totally ridiculous.
- I am not interested in new initiatives or service enhancements. I would prefer property taxes go down.
- Lower taxes
- No comment. The city will do what they want 3% last year,5% this year, maybe 8% next year. The waste at city hall should be cut.
- What is the cost of EMS going to Bridge Street United? How much of my tax dollars were used for the city of Belleville to "donate" the Banquet Hall?
- A
- Really look at how operating cost are spent. Double jobs to get a job done. Etc.
- Stop giving yourselves big pay raises when seniors are barely surviving try living on their incomes. People like living way beyond their means. Unions have to be met with pushback. Out of control
- With one in five residents not having a primary care health practitioner, far more must be done.
- 4.92% to high, sharpen your pencils and trim it to between 4.25% and 4.5%
- Have never paid more property taxes as I am now in Belleville
- Comments don't matter you will take our money and spend as you wish
- N
- I feel that our tax money should be spent on more nurses and healthcare in our area
- Procurement should negotiate on the bids, not just take the lowest bids and run with it. No savings there. Hire a procurement person with automotive experience.
- Police services cost increased
- A bunch of the downtown recreation projects didn't work out (in my estimation) as opposed to events like Canada Day. I'd scrap the former so as to bring the budget increase closer to the inflation rate.
- Are you positive they are necessary?
- Despite having no affordable housing the City is still growing and needs a much better transit system.
- I am more concerned with reducing the operational budget than anything else. We are a growing city, the new taxes should offset operational expenditures. Please reduce the budget to non tax payers (i.e. the homeless) as well as bonuses to municipal employees.
- Police budget increasing to deal with crime. This won't address systematic issues.
- I think there should be more library programs especially for teens and kids.
- what is happening to the "Casino Money" the city receives. nothing is mentioned about it's use?
- Nothing specific
- Health and Housing investments need to be increased. Police budget needs to be decreased.

- Even if there are new initiatives, it has not been specifically told to me and my recommendations were not sought/ heeded.
- Not satisfied
- Need more effort to identify cost saving initiatives without impacts services
- No I am not.
- Need to have more traffic control using the fines to set the increased cost of police
- I think the increase for protective services is too high
- As stated, the budget does NOT reflect the operating issues. You neglected them all and have done what you always do and has produced the environment we are in now.
- Less money to police unless they start making more arrests for open drug use.
- I'm all for increased taxes actually. As long as my taxes are going somewhere that matters and your budget breakdown is terrible. Again, I don't want to increase my taxes so the city can pay for better police and fire. I'm not looking to defund these agencies but we have bigger problems. If things continue how they are there will be zero mental health workers available because they burned out so bad and then this city will really crumble. Right now with a proper infrastructure the homelessness problem could likely be significantly decreased in the next 2 years
- Less money should be allocated to policing and distributed to social services to improve the safety of all residents, including the unhoused population.
- Stop spending
- We already have high taxes in this city that should be covering all of this
- Doesn't fix any major issues that people are having on a daily basis nor does it help people who live on welfare, disability or other income.
- We need doctors and roads maintained / replaced. We don't need more police. They aren't allowed to do much about the biggest problem Belleville has anyway. The Homeless. We didn't have any homeless until the shelter was opened...
- Show some LEADERSHIP ?? Any increases are not acceptable !!
- Typically incremental increase does NOT mean 100%!!!
- Not happy with them
- Healthcare is still not taken into a priority consideration...we need more family doctors, walk in clinics that are open in the evening when people are able to go after work. Currently all Healthcare services including imaging have terrible hours for working class and very long wait times.
- Generally but I don't believe so much needs to be spent on these initiatives. The doctor issue seems to be ongoing. Perhaps there may be another solution rather than the current expensive recruitment strategy.
- Please make cuts for a 0 percent tax increase
- I am concerned with the growth in the police budget. We continually hear that crime is down, but you are adding police officers and costs. I am also concerned with the lack of detail in the survey on what is being proposed to supporting the priority of housing. You need to provide details.
- No can barely keep food on table and with tax increases on my home wonder how long before something has to give
- Can barely keep food on table and worried about increased taxes how I'm going to survive holding onto my home
- Overall not satisfied
- Belleville Rural taxes are too high already-there should not be an additional 4.9% increase at this time.
- Money spent on street repair would have been a much better investment than dog parks. Bell Blvd. Is a disgrace.
- See my previous comments

- Regarding the Belleville parks and ongoing expenses. How can taxes be raised and the number of flower baskets will possibly increase. This cost is ridiculous. Folks are struggling yest the city hangs flower baskets. Do you think anyone really gives a hoot about flower baskets. The process also requires watering. That results in city employees driving around with watering trucks to water the sill baskets. Let us all give our heads a good shake. What is actually important. Residing in Hillcrest, i would appreciate a suspension of expenditures at the new park with the exception of the playground. The safety village cannot be relocated to Hillcrest park. We all know from [redacted] appearance ion CJBQ that the current safety village is a haven for [redacted], homeless folks and [redacted]. Why would anyone want to relocate that problematic site to a family neighborhood. Presnetly that site is not located in a residential neighborhood.
- No why do we spend so much money running and operating shelters, perhaps instead of catering to those who do not want to help themselves start preventing crime and spend money on locking people up and preventing repeat offenders
- Individual costs for Police and Fire regarding salaries - equipment and maitenance costs needs to have a in-depth review to see where the dollars are going and if needed in the above areas.
- Recreation and social too high
- Existing services in Belleville are poorly executed for the existing tax levy charged. Police presence is minimal in town despite the increase in crime resulting from increased presence of large numbers of homeless in town. However, the police in this small Ontario town require a fleet of expensive SUVs with custom paint jobs. Road maintenance is shambolic and the town storm water run off system clearly does not function as evidenced clearly along Hwy 62 during periods of heavy rain. So will an increase in home owner taxes translate into a mediocre level of town services?
- Instead of raising taxes. Maybe it is time to look at cut backs.
- Would be willing to pay higher taxes for Quinte health care
- Too much increase
- Reviewing the .pdf some of the approved increases are much higher than the average homeowner's wage is increasing. We have donor fatigue in the area trying to assist so many programs, but hitting homeowners with such an increase is not reasonable. Sales of houses are going to be more difficult also, with taxes easily being between 10 and 40% of pensioner income (either government or private). This also excludes more and more young folks. The average family income in Bellevl is approximately 10K less than, let's say, Kingston. These are hard decisions but home taxes are becoming burdensome with no 'tax break' at income tax time. Some of the departments were double digit increases and how is the average homeowner going to pay for that.
- With all the new homes to generate tax income, why do the taxes keep increasing
- incremental increase to some and substantial to far too many.
- The increase in taxes is more than my increase in pay for the month thus I'm living on less money now than a year ago as well the prices of food will increase.
- Please house our homeless and stop trying to say it is provincial or federal issue!!
- 156
- Not satisfied.
- Zero efforts made to lower cost and get rid of inefficiencies, including personnel
- There should be no increases except for police and fire department. You can always reduce expenses by finding ways to increase productivity
- Protective services growing too fast. Shifting p/t and seasonal to f/t comes with ongoing costs for pension and benefits. Need to look for productivity savings in all departments. Budget never goes down, only up.
- User fees for recreational programs should be kept as they are.

- I have no idea what they are so can not answer this. Here is what I know, you have increased my taxes by almost 5% yet I am surrounded by mentally ill and addicted people walking my streets, trying to break into my home, and with no police presence whatsoever in our area. East hill is paying very high taxes yet has no protection.
- We shouldn't be funding a 13% increase to the Quinte Arts Council and 25,000 for a Lighting Display Drone Show and 500,000 for the Cannifton Development Strategy given the struggle for residents financially.
- Im becoming tax poor and living on a street that has next to no lighting the street is at best a roller coaster no sidewalks and no drainage
- Taxes keep going up but that's hard on people on a fixed income
- Spend the monies for police who need it. Take from fire who don't. Any job in which you work 24 hours you are not working very much
- Increasing full time fire staff although looks good, is not justified. We have too many full time firefighters for size of area. Target area should be policing. Lack of attention to promotion of areas for kids and youths. minimal parks, youth centers or areas of use for kids and youths
- Would liked to have seen far more money to address mental health issyes which in turn impact our serious homeless problem.
- Not support doctor recruitment.
- Start looking at cost reductions!!!!
- I'm not happy with this proposal. Belleville needs to reduce staff and freeze wages.
- I believe the increase should be even smaller based on how people are struggling today
- No tax increases above CPI
- Decrease taxes. Reduce the spending.
- Police needs to be trimmed
- Decrease the budget and stop spending where it's not needed.

Q6: In your opinion, what changes or improvements would you suggest for the 2024 operating budget to better meet the needs of the community?

- Fund raise for the Bridge Project rather than increase taxes
- No increased taxes for The Bridge/The Hub until partners are identified, objectives are determined, roles of each partner are specified and all costs are presented.
- reduce funding for police and fire
- The recent proposed increase in the property taxes to pay for renovations for the Alhambra banquet hall retrofit to become an integrated care hub was never put forward for discussion in the previous budget surveys. This and any continuing costs to enable addicts to stay addicted at taxpayers expense need to be specifically put to taxpayers for discussion.
- Not everyone is o line or has internet. Many older adults cannot access materials on line.
- More allocation to social and family services and medical services
- Cutting outrageous salaries of city executives. Also, making them accountable for their jobs and having them actually put in a real week's worth of time, with less away/sick days.
- Reduce allocation to Recreation - currently 16%.
- Free parking at the hospital, more parking at the hospital.
- More funding for EMS, local housing strategy

- Funding for Doctor incentives (recruitment) should be replaced with Registered Nurses. No mention if the current Overdose Crisis ongoing at time of budget delivery.
- Instead of 4 million increase to protective services, take half towards affordable housing.
- "The homeless and drug issues in downtown Belleville NEED to be addressed ASAP. After spending over \$30M to revitalize a downtown that no one feels safe visiting, and millions more for increased police presence and downtown marketing, both of which were undermined over the period of one weekend due to negative press coverage, the city continues to plod along without any firm commitments to really solving the issues. Your residents are sick and tired of it. Why can't the downtown core be declared a shopping zone, with full enforcement to back it up? The Quinte Mall has no issues with keeping their tenants and shoppers safe, why can't the downtown be treated the same way? But instead more social services keep being added to downtown, the exact OPPOSITE of what you should be doing to encourage vibrant growth and commercial enterprise. Meanwhile those without fixed addresses continue to destroy our downtown one building at a time, without any regard for the safety of others or themselves. Invest the time and effort to revitalize the banquet hall. We all know that it'll simply shift the destruction, crime and danger to a different area of town, and that there will be a price to pay, but at least the downtown can start to rejuvenate in a healthy direction.
- Roads, streets are in fatal condition, no doctors
- Less on police services. More on healthcare.
- More speed control in rural areas
- I am very concerned with the draft user fees increases to the Wellness Centre for recreational swimming. A \$2 increase is a 67% increase which is significant since I swim almost daily and it would cost me an additional \$60 a month. How come reduced rates are not offered through monthly memberships or three month passes? There should also be a seniors rate since most are on fixed incomes. There should also be a different fee for non tax payers so that they are paying more money for the user fees including swimming. To lessen the hardship for the community, can we please look at gradually increasing the recreational swimming fees so it is \$1 increase starting this April 2024 and the following year \$1 increase in April 2025 to avoid such a significant increase at once? We want to encourage people to keep fit and healthy and recreational swimming also helps with mental health but some people will not be able to afford this drastic increase and it will negatively impact their wellbeing.
- see prior comment
- Affordable Housing is a big issue anymore.
- Geared to income housing NEEDS to be a priority. It's reflected nowhere in the new budget. Why?
- Tax and debt increases with less being done to increase housing, road improvements and development of the waterfront.
- See comment above - More funding: recreation (wellness centre, arts, library programming for adults/ more books, events downtown, transit - more service hours on weekends/bus stops, snow removal, police/security downtown and when Bridge St. moves to the Bridge.) Less funding: dr. recruitment, affordable housing, enviro. services/planning, etc.
- Social services and the need to help the homeless
- Reduce the budget by cutting services so that the tax burden doesn't keep going up for residents.
- Does the operating budget include educating municipal services staff in how to service and work with diverse populations moving here?
- More Dr, more mental health services, detoxification centre, police and ambulance co- op housing along with Ontario housing geared towards income
- Get the street cleaned up
- Look at previous answer.

- 1) Salary/benefit increases appear to be excessive with most departments budgeting a minimum of 8% increase - not sure what contracts were negotiated with such significant increases. 2) Addition of 14 staff members seems excessive - with everyone looking to save money to pay bills, a hiring freeze in the local public service sector should be implemented. Also, the budget increase as a result of these increased positions is significantly understated on an annual basis as they are all prorated based on various start dates throughout the year. The effect on subsequent years tax bills will be significantly higher. The total annualized budget effect should be reflected in the 2024 budget, not the prorated effect. 3) There is no indication of non-city taxpayers residents using the sports facilities being charged a premium to pay for the facilities being double funded by city taxpayer users.
- The city needs money to attract more health care providers and hopefully a walk in clinic.
- Would like the OPP to police Belleville, our current police force is a joke , also 0 percent property tax increases for rural areas , residents get nothing in return for these observed increases
- Maybe more should be spent on health services as so many people do not have a doctor. Why does Napanee have a better wait time than Belleville? Are we preparing and planning enough dollars to do more for the situation our city is in and has been in for the past few years?
- More funding for parks, recreation and social services
- Tax the wealthy not the poor
- Improvements to homeless...move away from church...control drug use/overdose numbers
- A focus on mobility transit. Funding to make it actually effective.
- Rental for apartments is too high not enough apartments for seniors only.
- The budget needs to be cut, and cut dramatically, in order to lower property taxes.
- Easier severances smaller rural frontages for severance to 100'
- Start getting 8 hrs work for 8 hrs pay.
- Stop giving my tax dollars away for services that are not my responsibility.
- Take a closer look at where money is spent. Really Really Focus
- People need more say when it comes to large projects the city wants to spend tax dollars on.
- I would be prepared to pay a one time surtax to provide more housing and healthcare.
- Policing budget to high
- Better control over project initiatives. Ex.Settlers Ridge Park modifications where the total budget went to the parking lot and the walkway design and completion was stopped.
- Cut all salaries for council and other unnecessary waste in municipal government until the community as a whole is better.
- LESS IMMIGRATION - TOO MANY LIVING IN RENTAL UNITS - 2 BDRM APTS WILL HAVE 8 PEOPLE LIVING THERE - NOT RIGHT - NEED TO REVISE CITY BYLAWS TO RESTRICT AMOUNT OF PEOPLE LIVING IN ONE UNIT
- Increase doctor recruiting
- More health care money spent on nurses and healthcare
- Continue increase in user fees.
- Free garbage pick up
- Homelessness is creating significant pressures on the City and its citizens. Other than The Bridge \$1 million of new funds to renovate "The Bridge" Social Service hub, after reading the detailed budget, I don't see any additional funds allocated to a plan to address mental health, housing, addictions.
- I'm concerned that additional policing of the downtown core is more band-aid than solution. To what extent can the city's operating budget leverage the work of others who can provide the kind of solutions that help people access housing and the healthcare they need in order to manage addiction and mental illness?

- It's not clear to me that now is the time for above-inflation tax increases in a heavily taxed municipality. As painful as cutting back on recreational spending is, people are dying on the streets. There's no world in which fun & games take priority over the housing/cost-of-living/migration crisis. Blame the feds or the Province if you like, but so long as the homeless line Bridge Street and opioid deaths are epidemic everything else in the budget needs to justify itself relative to addressing that.
- Unless a spending increase is actually needed, it should not occur.
- A much more focused affordable housing plan and a much improved transit system.
- Less funding for social assistance. Things are expensive enough as is. We are struggling to pay our taxes and we may move out of this municipality as a result.
- Increased spending on Healthcare services so more doctors are available.
- Money is tighter than ever for people. This huge increase is unreasonable ... the strong mayor was not democratically elected
- I think there is a disconnect with certain city requirements eg. I buy dog tags annually, yet many don't.
- We simply need to pay better attention to road maintenance.
- Less to social housing initiatives and more to medical.
- We don't understand for the need for two ploughs in this budget. Perhaps it could be spread over a couple of years. Especially since there has been such a light demand for existing ploughs this winter.
- Not sure
- Health , Housing and Social Services budgets increased. Police budget decreased.
- There should be a very drastic change in administrative concept. It has to reflect the best social requirement in the difficult financial climate. Health care, social togetherness, societal education, massive drug overdose related counseling should be the top priorities than repeatedly defending the anti social activities and health care crisis without a concrete plan to decrease it.
- More housing to get people off the streets. The homeless is making belleville look like a slum and scary after dark and they burn buildings and destroy them
- Increase in police and emergency services, doctors,EMT/ambulance;
- 100 % increase in sports drop in fees is extreme , will deter many seniors who rely on services for healthy lifestyle.
- At some point someone needs to stop and realize that the tax payers can not afford these increases anymore.
- Opening the Recreation centres for more public use, Moving the Homeless away from the church on Bridge St, combating crime by enforcing the law for everyone!
- Reduce the time delay in deciding issues
- Reduce protective services
- hire more people at qswc so my classes stop getting cancelled
- Low cost housing and rental should be moved up on priority list
- Not sure. I don't think I have been paying attention to specifics. So not sure I totally understand the bigger picture. I have not taken the time to fully understand and be informed.
- Reduction of police services and increase in social initiatives, affordable houses, social workers, ethically dealing with homelessness, rehabilitation of drug addicts, etc. - not just more police officers as clearly that isn't the solution with current/worsening social issues.
- Lower taxes
- Decrease to police budget, increase housing and other social initiatives
- Honestly making this be able to be reviewed its 400 pages...
- Police have done little to nothing about the open drug use and theft in this town. Adding more officers who also won't do anything would solve nothing. Put more money into health care and get us more doctors. The wait for a doctor has become ridiculous.
- Everything I said before. More money to community supports and the so called "hub" that is being planned, more money to childrens mental health or just addictions supports.
- Dr Recruitment. People have been waiting several years for a family doctor. This is crucial!

- At a quick glance, I do not see any money being allocated to support the most vulnerable members of our community.
- Hold spending
- Reduce the police budget, increase the housing budget and put into the budget the need for a harm reduction program.
- Fee increases at Belleville Wellness Centre too drastic. Swim drop in increase is a 67% increase and unacceptable. Also unclear on why residents and nonresidents pay the same fees when they are not Belleville taxpayers. My ability to continue to use the center will be significantly impacted.
- Road repair. Highland Ave would be nice.
- Get rid of those speed cameras once and for all or if not make steep cuts to the police budget !!
- Reduce the number of FT Fire and move toward PT Fire
- Incremental increase would be fine however 100% for pickleball is not. Wellness Centre should be for just that...Wellness!! 5% increase to property taxes is substantial as well. My pension does NOT go up!!
- Not as much money for plants. Use perennials.
- Increase staff at walkin clinics, Imaging clinics and increase the hours of availability. Include garbage in the higher property tax rates.
- Less on transportation and recreation. They are not core services. Parks should be "pay to play" Bus service fees should support 100% of the cost of running the service.
- Please make cuts
- Roads
- Increase funding and initiate access to mental health services. The waitlist for children is 2 million. There are far too few services for adults.
- Funding for more subsidized housing the wait list is way to long. Road repairs (Bridge Street, McDonalds Ave especially with the new school being built)
- Proposed use for service for pickball courts as a cost recovery for the city. Reduced support to out of city expenditures i.e. university Kingston hospitals foundation.
- Belleville is/has seen strong assessment growth from construction. I don't see that revenue offsetting expenses. It would be helpful to see this.
- Roads improvements, a traffic light at college and airport pkwy
- You have to help us keep our homes we worked hard to maintain them but our being forced to sell because of taxes
- Health care incentives back to community
- Would not further increase taxes by 4.9% when taxes are already high. Would not allocate minimal amount to top community priority while allocating almost 7 million to one that is not in the top 3.
- More input from residents
- See my previous comments
- No flower baskets, Do not relocate the safety village, suspend further expansions to current parks. Defund the Welcoming streets farce. Considering all the homeless residing in Hillcrest why do they remain dedicated to the downtown core, simple they are a police service security detail.
- I think 5% raise to property taxes is too much. We are just holding it together now.
- More funding should have been put into doctor recruitment rather than the millions put into social housing
- More budget towards Dr. recruitment, less towards social housing.
- Let's make the city a cleaner safer place to be. It's embarrassing to bring friends and family downtown. You have methadone clinics on every corner and people asking for money at every intersection.

- More police budget. They are running around going call to call trying to put out band-aids on social issues. We as a city have drawn vagrants to the community, with that comes significant drug increase and petty crime. It is just a matter of time until those petty crimes then more violent and increase. We need to increase police to support them in what they do and try to get ahead of the curve of crime and violence. Why does rural get have to pay what we do with the increase when we have minimal when compare to the city such as no parks, no water parks, no sewer, no sidewalks, no public transit ... doesn't make sense
- Find the areas in the Police and Fire Operational budgets that need review and take a look at where the \$ are being used unnecessarily and reduce the budget for these services to better reflect the actual costs and services needed.
- Cut recreation and social services to meet private sector wage increases
- -Increased police presence be allocated for particularly foot patrols in the down town to prevent undesireables from intimidating shoppers from patronizing local business. - Vigorous road resurfacing particularly in the old section of town and synchronized with modernization of storm water run off infrastructure.
- An additional increase for the police service to have an additional two officers to patrol the BIA . This would cover the night hours giving the BIA area 24 hour coverage and help the protect the city core from the current homeless situation downtown
- Cut backs
- Larger piece fir Quinte health care
- Mental health crisis services
- Cutback on city staff.
- I think the police services need more funding to manage the increase in problematic people in the downtown core.
- NO MONEY FOR HOMELESS/ADDICTS
- Any change to what businesses will pay (without a negative effect?). How robust and healthy are the reserves. What is the domino effect if one portfolio achieves a high percentage of assistance - is another compromised.
- The department that services parks and city trees should be given enough money to replace the hundreds of trees that were cut down over the last few years in the city. We need to refurbish our tree canopy.
- our streets need improving. Parkdale drive really needs fixing. !!!
- Further increases in Transit investment (more routes, higher frequency of trips) and development of bike lanes to take more vehicles off the roads. The aim is to reduce emissions while also benefiting the public economically through lower transportation costs.
- Live within the means of the taxes collected and only increase taxes based on inflation would be a great start. But not to exceed a certain percentage because when inflation is high most people don't get that increase in pay thus you would be eating up whatever disposable income they might have.
- Again please house our homeless.
- Focus on affordable housing not growth. Focus on Dr recruiting and police services not recreation. We pay for our garbage services which are minimal and should include free regular yard waste pickup- 1x per month
- No more increases we are in a recession your breaking the backs of the people. Stop wasteful spending. We don't need multi colour crosswalks we need to be able to afford to put food on the table
- Less in protective services. How many other similar sized forces have 2 canine units? Why is tax base paying for kids camps which run at deficit?
- More money to fix roads
- If taxes are increasing there should be no increase in user fees.
- I would like to see more emphasis put on Economic Development to attract more Industries to Belleville's Industrial Park.

- Continue to invest in capital projects, road and sewer improvements.
- Higher increases incentive and budget for doctors - area does not have enough to support demand
- It doesn't make sense that this budget includes draft use fees increases which haven't been approved and also are significantly increased for those who are struggling financially or seniors with fixed income. For example, the draft user fees for swimming will increase to 67% which is not fair and for those that swim frequently this will result in significant more money a month.
- Stop wasting money on the downtown no one goes there because it is safe deal with homeless situation find ways to provide affordable housing and rents
- look at other ways than a survey to engage community members.
- Cut back building new parks we have enough to much money being spent maintaining them
- Yes . Police officers doctors and paramedics. Should be the priority.
- Spend money within reason that you do not need to increase taxes. We are grossly over taxed for services available within the area. Lack doctors, hospitals , adequate policing, schooling, and infanstructure to be paying higher taxes then a place like Oakville. \$7k per year and still paying for garbage tags is a gross misuse of people's taxes
- More money allocated to dealing with the ever increasing problems that homeless population have on our community. Increasing police funding is a band aid approach and far more money needs to go to menral health organizations.
- Recreation Planning
- more on health and doctor recruitment. more housing starts, focussing on reASONABLY PRICED RENTAL UNITS FOR SENIORS
- Does it really matter as this city council does what it wants irregardless of what the citizens want.
- Doctor's, more police on the streets, traffic camera's, change lanes on Sidney street north from Cascade, there are traffic jams with only one lane going north and short turning lane being shared. Housing, streets needing to repaved.
- Freeze wages and reduce staff. Paying people more hasn't yielded better services. [redacted]
- Reduce budget to equal or less than 2023 CPI of 3.9%
- Tax increases should be the same in rural and urban areas, urban residents subsidizes rural areas with services, responsibilities, ie we can end up with high density social housings and they get estate lots
- We really need a safe overpass so people can walk to town. We need adequate health services.
- Reduce taxes and spending
- more money for doctor recruitment, policing and roads.

Q8: You selected, "No" to the previous question:"Do you feel adequately informed about the development of the City's 2024 operating budget?" Please explain.

- xxxxxxxx
- It is not presented in simple terms that the average person can understand.
- Again, the recent issue of an integrated care hub was never mentioned and the 20 million annually plus the millions more to make the hub up and running needs to be put to the taxpayers that are being forced to pay for it.
- Other efforts could be made outside of city website.
- Never heard anything about it and didn't see any social media post until today with the planned budget

- There are not enough details surrounding the rationale on why tax rates are going up. It is simple accounting and the increased revenue is obvious, but the expenses seem out of whack, especially when you don't see services being offered at the level they should be. We should find more ways to keep costs down, not just pay for inadequate work/services.
- Yes
- There should be detailed information about why our debt increases ever year to almost \$200M.
- It involves having good access to the internet. Not everyone does.
- Haven't seen previous info
- Didn't know about earlier inputs
- Is there some rebate on property taxes for seniors on fixed income? Where do I find out?
- No snow this year How much did you save, should be a least 50%.
- No. The city has paid for and donated a property without transparency of the cost and a tax increased that directly involves EMS going to Bridge Street United Church.
- No
- N
- Didn't receive anything about this budget in the mail as a tax payer shud have received something
- It takes a lot of time to wade through the budget documents and correlated the different parts. To better engage the general public, we need more charts, graphs and infographics.
- I found this survey completely by accident..so no.
- Please be more open to taxpayers as to
- Let people know in the local paper, with their bill
- I just happened upon this email in my junk folder
- Most of the information lies on specific details, explaining the need/purpose and what definite outcomes can be achieved and the help that other government authorities can possibly help with... example housing crisis has been looked after by both provincial and feds
- I know nothing
- There is not enough transparency from city council . No
- Not enough access from the public, nor notifications, quite frankly , you all don't really care about any of the residents
- Its a monstrously large document, which guarantees no one is going to completely review it. So I really have no way to say I understand
- No spending
- You need to make this questionnaire more simple
- Council dose what in there best interest
- Have to hear from the press about increasing taxes
- Maybe people not only need to be informed about how our tax money is being spent but also have some input
- I did not get the information that went out back in October and I think this can be greatly improved.
- Some information is very vague
- No send out written pamphlets
- I don't understand why the city spends money on pamphlets and advertisements sent out through the city tax bills. When the majority of people will throw them out. They seem a bit wasteful and unnecessary. If people want the information. They will look for it. I think money could be spend elsewhere other than printing fees
- I don't have time to read and understand what is being said.
- i guess
- I believe the city should be putting out information to all citizens about the upcoming meeting by sending everyone emails or phone calls or someway to reach more people. I'm taking the time to fill it out only because I received the email.
- No I do not.

- Pamphlet distribution in layman's terms would be a good idea
- 654
- Did not see survey.
- This is the first I have seen anything about it
- For a population size of 56,000 the survey that was completed in the Fall resulted in a very low sample. Is this truly reflective of the community's wants and desires.
- I never knew or would agree to increased firefighter staffing. 24 hour shifts . Come on people. What a shame
- Little communication regarding survey and infrequent updates.
- It's not just the budget, it's communication in general is very poor.
- The Belleville magazine doesn't show up anymore.
- There is a lot to unpack

Q10: You selected, "No" to the previous question: "Do you feel adequately informed about the development of the City's 2024 operating budget?" Please explain.

- Family Services
- Health costs - medical, public health, and social services. Community Events
- exactly what capital projects are proceeding and where the increases in police and fire are going; what cost reduction initiatives are planned by city departments and what savings have already been realized.
- The specifics involved in subsidized housing and social projects for addicts that require property tax increases to enable their lifestyle choices.
- Medical. Social and family services as well as protection services
- Operating budget surrounding the Quinte Sports and Wellness Centre. It seems that a lot of money is going into it, with many user groups paying ridiculously high fees. The level on which this facility operates is far behind what it once was pre-pandemic. Why are we paying higher fees for lower service?
- Recreation; Transit;
- Parking at the hospital.
- Funding directed to the overdose/homeless crisis and cleaning up downtown is where?
- Why there is 1% difference between Cannifton Urban and rural?
- Police budget
- Policing and transportation
- Debt
- New (bus) transit plan - Where will the new stops be? When will the new routes start? What will the new hours be? What will the cost of a monthly bus pass be? Where will you be able to get a monthly bus pass? Where are the new bus maps/schedules for routes?
- User fees
- What is in the city's budget to support youth 19-26 who are not in school, and unable to find rental housing?
- Operating substance abuse clinics and be more transparent of the housing crisis
- Salaries and benefits information is vague. Its likely the single largest operating expense item but little is provided as to how much is a result of contractual obligations with % increases for wages, new benefits provided, and how much of the increase is a result of restructuring departments and job classifications. I can only find information on new positions proposed, which as mentioned is understated.

- I would like more information on our police department, we do not get what we pay for , it's again time to look at the OPP policing our city
- Recreation and Culteral are going up over 2,044,500 and I believe we have more urgent problems in our city that this??
- Children's Parks and public activities. Business expansion plans
- Increase of 10% for harbours, compared to 6-8% for ball diamonds, ice time for adults.
- Education for children
- Police, fire dept. and health unit needs
- How they arrived at a 10 percent increase for Victoria park docking
- What the 5 bylaw officers did last year. Noise by law not enforced . 10-12 people living in hundreds of homes. Where I live Belleville is a nightmare.
- How did the city buy and then donate the Banquet Centre? How much did that cost? How much of an increase has EMS costing been since Bridge Street United Church became operational?
- No
- It won't matter anyway. Council members can't agree on matters..do you think it will with taxpayers
- being more informed
- Free garbage pick up, free quarterly yard waste pick up
- I am interested in how City staff and Council made decisions on funding of City Boards like the Library and Special purposed boards and municipal grant program budgets. The reasoning behind the percentage increases are not transparent. I was pleased to see that the 2024 draft budget had explanations about technology needs and investments that each department was implementing.
- More information about how spending plans are made buy departments.
- Give me links to more detailed breakdowns of the spending. The pie chart tells me next to nothing about how much municipal services cost and why.
- Affordable housing and transit.
- The homeless population. I feel I haven't seen much regarding what we are paying for the homeless/ drugged population. If it is zero, I agree with your policies. Life is too expensive as is, a small town like Belleville shouldn't be responsible for paying for these issues and the more we 'donate' to this cause, the more homeless we will receive. We can afford the Pam's of Belleville, but not the Tom, Dick, and Harry's of Toronto.
- Doctor recruitment. Affordable housing
- A breakdown of the top three expense sections into sub categories.
- Yes, mentioned in my comment above
- Why is the police budget so bloated while budgets that actually help citizens such as Health, Housing and Social Services are underfunded?
- I need all details of the top 5 expenditure heads
- Why 100% fee increase in drop in sports fees when overall increase to recreation / cultural is over 11%? Most other fee increases are 10% , 100% is extreme.
- Equipment costs. Counsels wages. Expense accounts. Tendering qualifications.
- Question is to broad based to be a yes or no answer, convenient for your numbers, forces answers
- I have wondered about what seems to be a rather slow development of the new .exhibition grounds.
- why do you compare the 2024 Budget (as suggested) only to what was Budgeted for 2023..... when you (should) have Actuals for the most of 2023 that you could use to project what the Final 2023 costs will come in at, and use that as the comparator..?? OR... show both as comparators....
- The justification and due diligence investigation for why police funding appears to be the highest budget item by a significant amount yet funding to address the root socioeconomic issues is comparatively insulting and well below satisfactory efforts.
- The overall cost
- I want to know exact breakdowns on where the money goes because I'm not seeing any improvements for people struggling with mental health

- Why do we pay for garbage bag tags. Where does the money from casino go. Why do we need to spend so much money on flowers
- We recently had two greedy landowners purposely destroy one designated heritage building due to owner neglect and a second perfectly sound building that was the gateway into our city torn down for owner shortsightedness and greed. Monies need to be allocated to Heritage Belleville so that they have the money and resources to protect our beautiful city.
- Costs associated with the addicts and others hanging out beside the church.
- How much is the Belleville senators cost to the taxpayers ?? Horrible attendance !!
- We see police monitoring road construction sites and we understand they are typically being paid overtime rates. Couldnt they be better utilized elsewhere and maybe have security do this light activity. I am sure there are more examples of this kind of waste.
- How the homeless situation will be managed, I do not go downtown anymore because I fell unsafe
- Not sure.
- No! I Would think that the Management teams and council should have a good handle on what we can and cannot afford spend! I believe that the proposed increase seems very reasonable at 5% !
- People should be made aware where and on what the money is being spent on. The city gets an enormous amount of money from the casino every year but no one ever knows what the money is spent on.
- What is the number of police service uniformed staff that are retiring. Is the increase in staff truly an increase or is the BPS filling vacancies created thru attrition. How many BPS uniformed staffers have received promotions thereby reducing the number of BPS staffers who are "boots on the ground". How many further promotions will occur at BPS in 2024 - 2025 that will impact the number of "boots on the ground".
- What is all the millions being spent of social housing
- Recreation & cultural
- Homeless
- Community services and homeless issues
- Public safety. I think the city needs to be made more aware of what is happening in the community. We should know more about the kinds of calls the police go to and the geographical locations of those calls. If we know more about that it can justify the money spent on policing.
- Deeper information to costs for salaries - equipment - overtime - maitenance etc.
- Policing and police expenses, road and drainage maintenance priorities.
- all
- How much of our tax dollars going to support the burgeoning homeless/transient population
- reserves and is there strategic planning for a more unified budget or approach to deal with the gaps and issues (a difficult task before the city)
- Please get more Doctors and NP here. Bring them from other countries.!!!
- I would like more context given to the category of "general improvement", as well as more details on strategies to improve housing availability.
- How are all our governments going to work together to tackle the issue of homelessness
- 465
- Management structure with job titles and duties
- User fee increases.
- More details and transparency on Public Transit costs and Library costs.
- User fees should have been published before now so that the community and users could provide their feedback instead of thee being included as a draft in the budget. More info should be provided on the increase to the Quinte Arts Council and the Cannifton Development Strategy.
- Service levels should be explained and included in the budget information. What cuts were there, what things were deferred, service level reductions and increases?
- To many parks

- Why do we need more firefighters. 100 k a piece working 7 days a month. Cash for life lottery. They do more medical calls then should get more ambulances. Many false alarms and the rare fire. [redacted] if they work it makes the news. Belleville Fire puts out a rubbish fire. Like no one works "
- Projects bids and awards process.
- Mayor Ellis heavily campaigned by telling people he wouldn't raise taxes and he would address the homeless issue. Needless to say that he has broken both of his campaign promises. Homelessness and drug addiction beed priority.
- Housing and rental unit planning.
- Cost and expense cutting measures

Appendix B

The comments below were received through emails and posts relating to the operating budget on the City's social media channels (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) throughout the consultation period:

- 1- For the 2025 budget, we need to establish a think tank to review the city-provided services. The team should include process improvement and accounting/finance members. They will spend as many months as needed; focused on reviewing and recommending ways to reduce, change, and streamline city-provided services. The short review process used by the councilors today is not enough. The nice-to-have and under-used elements of the services provided by the city need to be eliminated or converted to self-funding. 2- Establish a city employee cost improvement suggestion program. The program would be led by an independent person who would analyze it with the appropriate people and the employees would be paid a modest award for the accepted recommendations.
- I believe it's time for council to deal with the elephant in the room. Police and Fire. I know councillors are reluctant to deal with these items because they are afraid to offend voters who are family and friends of persons who are employed by both police and fire. Why are we paying an outside agency to dispatch fire when we have a state of the art police dispatch. Quinte West dispatches fire why can't Belleville police dispatch fire. Why are we not getting a costing from the OPP to police Belleville. Surely there are savings to be had there. Quinte West hasn't looked back since they made the switch. Council cannot continue to just keep asking the tax payer to pay more and more without looking at possible alternatives.
- I completed the survey prior to the announcement that the mayor is activating his strong powers to force the taxpayers to fund the "Bridge" project. The cost so far is actually confusing as per the Mayor's interview on the morning show provided by CJBQ. It appears that near \$ 2 million has been spent thus far. That cost equals the purchase of the old Banquet Centre and other matters. During the broadcast the question was raised on how will funding be sustained. The mayor also mentioned that if not enough funding is acquired than the project will simply be a warming centre with food possibly. My question and concern is who are the personnel or organizations that will operate this project for the long term. What will the salary obligation be and who will pay the salaries. How many employees will be required to operate such a facility 24 hours per day seven days per week. Those costs have yet to be explained in detail. Where will the supplies come from such as food, linen and housekeeping supplies. What is the cost to clean the facility, it can not become a transfer facility for ailments such as Covid. Who will prepare food for the 24 hour operation. How will security be provided and who funds that cost. Finally, who will take attendance and register the actual homeless users of the facility. How will verification be administered to ensure that the "Bridge" does not become a "Hub" for other Belleville residents and out of town individuals looking for a flop house. For all these processes to be streamlined on a daily basis requires professional personnel (Salaries of \$ 50, 000 or more per employee), IT systems and accurate identification by Health cards, birth certificates or drivers licenses. Every week we see news reports of individuals that have an interaction with police where the "no fixed address" is reported. These are the questions that must be answered to protect the taxpayers of Belleville. Of course something needs to occur but the "Bridge" solution is only relocating the concern.
- Downtown is safe for me, as is walking and parking along Bridge St. There are so many wonderful and varied businesses, a terrific food and art scene, people committed to ongoing growth and development, problem resolution, and welcoming new residents... I have been in and out of the lower BSUC door so often over time- circumstances evolve and change but what is unchanging, for me, is the constancy of kindness, care and compassion that I am greeted with by a vast majority of people.
- Does this include housing support for Non-commuter locals?
- We live in "urban" Belleville and are still waiting for city water. Maybe it comes with the new 5% tax increase? But I doubt it..

- Well at least someone responsibly put in this line, "That the 2024 Operating Budget be presented with an overall residential property tax rates increase not to exceed 5%; Quinte West taxes went up 6.67% on top of a 5.3% last year.
- Really love the almost 100% increase in the rec centre fees. Maybe spread it out over a few years
- Not sure why we did the survey and the council did the complete opposite. Good luck combating the homelessness and mental health in this city. Throughout money at the police isn't helping this city. My experience you report a break in my house, my car and they go oh well too bad. What a joke it has been for the past 20 yrs this city just keeps going back wards. The drugs have always been here just before they were behind closed doors. How about open your eyes.
- Just tell us how much our taxes are going up. Seniors get a raise in Jan then it goes in raised taxes
- Not as big an issue. But how about upgrading transit
- Clean up Church st/ and Bridge st
- Increasing taxes? Should not have invested in the speeding camera for 2 Mils. Now with the situation in downtown, Belleville is asking Province to help with funding. Casino money is not being put to good use?
- How much of the budget has been put aside to resolve the homeless crisis?
- Approximately 60% increase for some user pay fees at the Wellness Centre. Think they are going to lose a lot of members.
- What money is going to finally upgrade the disgusting sewer sanitation at the trail. Keep hearing promises that they will cap tanks but zero has happened! The stench is a blight on our community and an embarrassment to our city. Ellis campaigned on zero tax hike! That sure didn't happen!
- Belleville spent so much effort on beautifying Front St. and downtown now it's not safe.
- Another problem with downtown is the outrageous taxes , I worked downtown in the 90s and all 3 places had to close because the taxes were crazy
- What is all that Casino money being used for?
- I don't know why they ask for our opinions they do what they want any way look at Moira Secondary now known as EASTSIDE if they want our opinions then follow our opinions or hire somebody who will
- How much did it cost to buy the Banquet Centre and then "donate" it? What is the correlation/causation between an increase in EMS spending and Bridge Street United Church?
- The blind leading the blind. At least the Mayoral Powers are being used. Check out the amount being paid to staff on Sunshine list compared to other municipalities = bad management of the city coffers.
- How about helping out The Gleaners Food Bank
- belleville is beginning to look like a slum town, there is nothing downtown i would shop for, empty storefronts and just a bunch of non working people down there
- If people want to know what is going on in Belleville, almost all the various meetings are available to read on the City of Belleville website or to watch on Youtube, if you pay city taxes you should understand how your taxes are spent, then maybe have a better understanding of the difference between an operating budget and a capital budget.
- Why do you bother inviting our participation? It's not like you're gonna listen to us