

Report

City of Portage la Prairie

Proud of our Past...Building our Future

To: Finance, Legislative and Property Committee
From: Administration
File #: CMA-70
Date: January 30, 2012
Re: 2011 Citizen Survey – For Information Only



Attached are the results of the comparison of the 2011 Survey to the 2006, 2001, 1996 and 1991 surveys, along with the comments received.

The 2011 Citizen Survey was conducted online where approximately 500 residents throughout the City were given special login codes to complete the survey. There were approximately 30 surveys that were mailed to recipients as they did not have computers to complete the survey. These surveys were later inputted into the survey program from Administration staff.

In the previous surveys conducted, surveyors were hired to do the survey in person with the selected recipients. In 2006, the survey was mailed out to approximately 500 residents at random. The 2011 recipients were selected from the 2010 Voters List by choosing every 17th name of 8214 (8734-520 being MDC, Lions Manor & DCL residents), providing a good cross section of the City. Of those sent out, there were 155 surveys returned. Survey results are statistically accurate 95% of the time with a 7.8% margin of error.

The Koko Platz/Mellenville area had the highest return of surveys being 29%, followed by the Northwest area with a 26% return. The Northeast area was a 16% return with the Southeast and Southwest being 15% and 14% respectively.

For Council's information, the percentages were calculated on the total number of responses to that question. There are, however, some questions that were better suited to calculation on the total number of surveys returned, for example when multiple answers to a question were provided.

The Library and Chamber of Commerce will receive a copy of the statistics involving their interests.

Following are highlights of survey responses.

City Website:

Q4. And Q5: New questions regarding the City website: 53% of respondents had visited the website, 88% were able to find what they were looking for.

On streets and roads:

Q10. Those surveyed had the opinion that the condition of the streets in the City has somewhat improved with 53% of respondents stating that City streets have many bad spots compared to the 2006 response of 68% (57% in 2001, 42% in 1996, and 19% in 1991).

Q16. A total of 41% of those surveyed felt that the streets in their neighbourhood were not swept enough, as compared to 34% in 2006, 26% in 2001, 27% in 1996 and 11% in 1991.

Q17. With regard to snow clearing and removal in the neighbourhoods in 2011, 12% said they were totally dissatisfied, and another 42% believed it “could be better” (total of 54%). In comparison, in 2006, 13% were totally dissatisfied and 46% felt it could be better (total 59%), in 2001, 7% were totally dissatisfied and 34% felt it could be better (total 41%); in 1996 it was 14% and 35% respectively (total 49%); and in 1991 the figures showed 6% and 24% respectively (total 30%).

On composting, recycling and garbage collection:

Q22. New question: “Is weekly collection of yard waste necessary/preferred throughout Spring/Summer/Fall?” 65% of the respondents answered yes.

Q26. New question: “Would you participate in a year-round curbside organics/kitchen waste collection program if the cost was similar to the recycling program - \$25.00/year?” 72% of the respondents answered no.

Q27 and 28. The general public continues to be very satisfied with both garbage pick up (97% said good or excellent) and recycling (92% said good or excellent).

Q29. New question: “How would you rate the overall cleanliness of the City in general”. 7% rated the overall cleanliness of the City poor.

On drinking water:

Q30. This year the taste, odour and appearance of our drinking water is satisfactory to 65% of those surveyed, compared to 64% in 2006, 49% in 2001, 30% in 1996 and 73% in 1991.

Q36. 95% of those surveyed rated their confidence in the City’s water quality very high (25%) and satisfactory (70%)

On the topic of the Public Library

Q44. In the opinion of the majority of those surveyed in 2011, the Public Library continues to provide good service with 94% indicating excellent or good service. This compares to 89% in 2006, 82% in 2001; 79% in 1996; and 74% in 1991.

Q48. New Question: regarding the Library website: 90% had said that they have NOT accessed Library Services using its website.

On Recreation (Portage Regional Recreation Authority)

Q50. New Question: “What do you believe the PRRA are responsible for? – Choices were PCU Centre, Splash Island, Republic of Manitobah Park, Program and Services, Canada Day Activities, All the Above. 84% responded with “All of the Above”.

Q52. New – “Have you attended Canada Day Activities”: 84% responded yes.

Q53. This question was changed somewhat with the deletion of the Centennial Arena, Southport Pool and Exhibition Grounds and addition of Splash Island and the PCU Centre. There was an increase in Satisfaction in the areas of Island Park and the Republic of Manitobah Park (soccer and ball fields) compared to 2006. The percentage of the respondents who were dissatisfied with the overall operation of the PCU Centre was 9%, Splash Island 13%, Island Park 5% and Republic Park 1%.

Q56. A new question to the survey this year asked which funding plans would be supported should Council decide to make improvements to the parks and playgrounds. Allocating additional funds annually was chosen by 66% of those surveyed, followed by 25% for charging new/higher user fees, 13% for borrowing over a number of years and only 13% supported an increase in municipal taxes.

This question also included a new choice “Reduce recreation/leisure services”. 6% of those surveyed supported this point.

Q57. New question regarding accessing information on recreation programs – respondents could check all that apply. 65% accessed information in the Newspaper, 56% via radio, 40% from the PRRA Active Guide and 22% via the PRRA website.

On retail:

Q59. The questions on retail generally show the satisfaction level on par with the 2006 survey.

Q62. New Question: “Overall, how would you rate the quality of customer service you receive from the service sector in Portage la Prairie?” 79% of the respondents rated customer service either good or excellent.

Q64. 88% of the respondents said that shopping locally is important to them.

On police protection and public safety:

Q72 & 73. City residents feel safer (very safe/comfortably safe) in their neighbourhood (73% in 2011 compared to 57% in 2006) and downtown (54% in 2011 compared to 35% in 2006):

	<u>Very Safe/Cautiously Safe</u>	
	<u>N/hood</u>	<u>D/town</u>
2011	73%	54%
2006	57%	35%
2001	61%	34%
1996	61%	53%
1991	76%	54%

Question 72 also breaks down the responses by area. For your interest, the following table shows the 2011 results by area:

	2011 Breakdown by Area									
	SE		NE		SW		NW		KP/M	
Very Safe	6	27%	2	8%	4	19%	3	8%	21	49%
Comfortable (Cautiously Safe)	9	41%	10	42%	12	57%	22	56%	20	47%
Very Unsafe	7	32%	12	50%	5	24%	14	36%	2	5%
	22	100%	24	100%	21	100%	39	100%	43	100%

Q84. 38% of the people surveyed in 2011 feel that there are not enough police patrolling the City. This compares to 57% in 2006, 32% in 2001; 40% in 1996; and 36% in 1991.

Q85. 82% of those surveyed rated the service provided to their household by police over the last 12 months as excellent/good compared to 56% in 2006.

On the area of fire protection:

Q91. When asked how they ranked Fire Protection Services in the City of Portage la Prairie, 88% ranked it as Very Important compared to 75% in 2006.

Q92. 63% of the respondents rated the importance of fire safety programs very high.

Q93. 66% of the respondents rated untidy premises as an important issue compared to 52% in 2006

Q94. The importance of City wide Emergency Preparedness jumped to 69% in 2011 compared to 48% in 2006.

For Ratepayers Only and contact with the City:

Q97. This question relates to contact those surveyed would have had with City Departments. 73% were generally satisfied with the response they received compared to 57% in 2006.

Q98. When asked in 2011 how good a job they feel the City is doing meeting their needs, citizens responded with 11% somewhat or very inadequate. In 2006, those who rated the question as somewhat or very inadequate was 28%, in 1996 – 17%; and in 1991 – 15%.

Q99. It appears that in 2011 the majority of the people surveyed voted 59% in favour of increasing taxes up to inflation if the City could no longer provide its current level of services, as opposed to 40%, 22% and 26% in 2006, 2001 and 1996 respectively.

Q101. Of the choices provided to support additional taxes, it seems that road/sidewalk improvement was the winner, with increased police protection coming in a close second. The following table indicates those **willing to support additional taxes for:**

	2011	2006	2001	1996	1991
Increased police protection	42%	61%	46%	54%	40%
Increased by-law enforcement	12%	30%	21%	24%	35%
Road/sidewalk improvement	49%	63%	64%	55%	42%
Economic development	22%	27%	47%	34%	36%
City planning	7%	15%	31%		
Fire protection	23%	53%	55%		
Recreation	16%	57%	65%		
NEW Don't support Increased Taxes	41%				

For Council's information, 91% of the people who responded to this survey were over the age of 35 years. In 2006, 83% of the respondents were over the age of 25.

Q105. This question "Do you have any comments you would like to add that the survey has not covered?" was new in 2006 asking for additional comments which seemed to go over very well. In 2011 there were a total of 57 responses compared to 61 in 2006. The responses vary from good to not so good.