

VANCOUVER **2023**
BUDGET

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY



Between January 4 and 24, 2023, members of the public could provide feedback on their priorities for City spending, using the City's Shape Your City (SYC) engagement platform. 3-1-1 callers were also invited to comment on their priorities for the 2023 Budget priorities over the phone. Comments reflect the opinions of those who chose to take part.

In parallel with budget engagement, the City had Ipsos conduct a randomly selected representative survey of Vancouver residents and businesses to track satisfaction with City services and provide insight into spending priorities. This is the fourth Civic Satisfaction Survey conducted by Ipsos for the City, following previous surveys conducted in 2018, 2019 and 2021. In 2021, the City moved to a bi-annual cadence, given the cost of market research and other considerations.

Who Participated in Budget Engagement?

More than 3,200 responses were received during the three-week engagement period, via SYC and 3-1-1. There were also approximately 9,400 visits to the SYC page (as of February 10). Participation reflected a broad cross-section of Vancouver demographics:

- 15% of respondents said they lived downtown or in the West End, 24% lived in the northeast, 18% in the northwest, 17% in the southeast, 12% in the southwest, 10% worked in the City but lived elsewhere, 1% did not live or work in the City, and 4% preferred not to say.
- Half of respondents (52%) were under the age of 40, 45% were 40 and above, and 3% preferred not to say.
- Half of respondents (49%) identified as women, 36% as men, 7% as “non-binary/gender diverse” and 8% as “other” or preferred not to say.

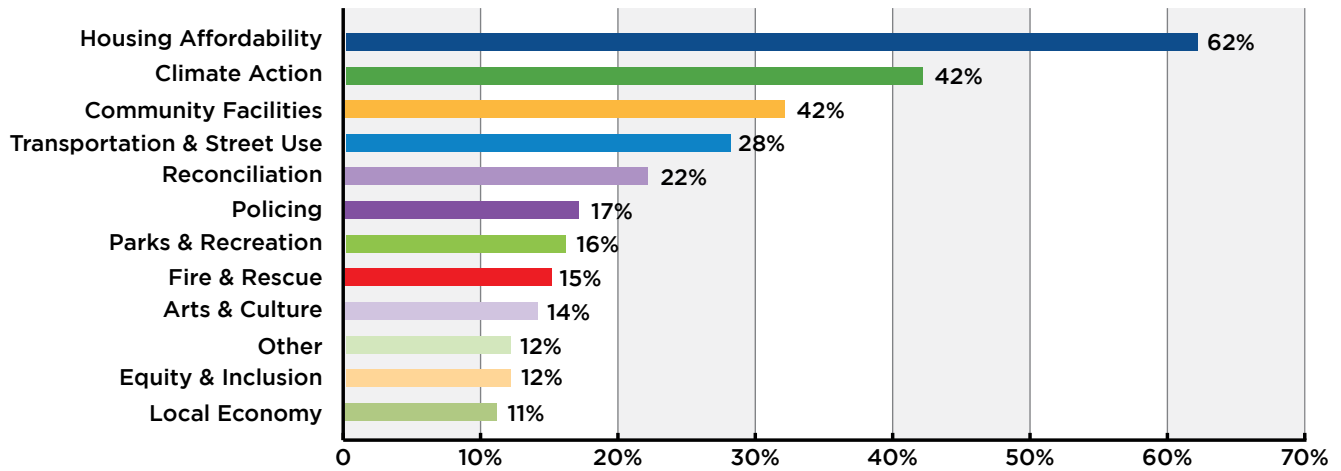
Budget Engagement Findings

A streamlined comment form asked three questions about the budget.

1. The first question was, “What are your top priorities for the City’s 2023 Budget? Select up to three.” Respondents’ top priorities included:
 - Housing affordability
 - Climate action
 - Community facilities (e.g. community centres, libraries)

The chart on the following page shows the full list of options that respondents could select.

What are your top priorities for the 2023 Budget?



2. A follow-up question asked respondents to explain why the priorities they selected were important to them. Responses were reviewed by staff and coded thematically. Top themes, which reiterated respondents' priorities, included the following:

Frequency of comments (n = 2,682)	
Housing is not affordable	28%
Address climate change (e.g. sense of urgency)	22%
Invest in more community amenities (e.g. community centres, libraries)	14%
Invest in sustainable transportation infrastructure (e.g. walking, cycling, transit)	11%
Prioritize Reconciliation	9%
Cost of living is too high	7%
Support arts and culture (e.g. programming, cultural spaces)	7%
Crime is increasing / too much crime	6%
Address homelessness	5%
Everyone should have housing (e.g. housing as a human right)	4%
Spend more on policing	4%
Support local businesses and economy	4%
More housing is needed (e.g. more density)	4%
Spend more on fire and rescue	4%
Reallocate funds from policing to other services	4%
Invest more in parks and green space	3%
Take action on food security (e.g. access to affordable food)	3%
Focus on core municipal services (e.g. streets, parks and recreation, waste collection, fire and rescue, and policing)	3%
Address overdose crisis (e.g. opioid drug toxicity, access to treatment)	3%
Personal safety is a concern	3%
Spend less on policing	2%
Vancouver is changing for the worse	2%
Address social inequities (e.g. poverty, discrimination)	2%
Address traffic / congestion	2%

Note: Results are not mutually exclusive (i.e. comments may have more than one theme/code).

3. The final question asked respondents to share their ideas for balancing the budget in 2023. While respondents provided a broad range of suggestions, the top themes included the following:

Frequency of comments (n = 1,957)	
Decrease police budget	28%
Reallocate funding from policing to other services	12%
Increase property taxes (e.g. higher-value properties, investment and empty properties)	12%
Focus on core municipal services (e.g. streets, parks and recreation, waste collection, fire and rescue and policing)	3%
Do not increase police funding	3%
Spend more cautiously (e.g. avoid unnecessary expenses)	3%
Increase parking fees (e.g. expand metered and permit parking coverage)	2%
Decrease funding for drug/addiction services (e.g. reduce grants)	2%
Decrease City staffing	2%
Focus on preventative measures to minimize future spending (e.g. resilient infrastructure)	2%
Seek more funding opportunities from senior levels of government	2%
Decrease funding for housing/homelessness	2%

Note: Results are not mutually exclusive.

Civic Satisfaction Survey

In parallel with budget engagement, the City had Ipsos conduct a randomly selected representative sample of Vancouver residents and businesses to track satisfaction with City services and provide insight into service priorities. In brief:

- Residents prioritize investment in affordable housing, homelessness, and social policies most of all. However, there is growing desire for more investment in fire rescue and medical response, keeping public spaces clean, development and building permits, and garbage and green bin collection. Businesses' top priorities for investment are fire rescue and medical response and street infrastructure.
- Residents and businesses have different ideas around how to best balance the budget. Residents prefer continuing to offer the same services but at a reduced level, while businesses opt for introducing new user fees for some City services. However, residents and businesses agree that increasing residential property taxes is the least preferred option.
- Of those who own their current place of residence, 52% of residential respondents said they would be "very willing" or "somewhat willing" to pay a \$99 tax increase (which equates to a 5% tax increase, based on a median residential unit valued at \$1.3M). This was a new question added in 2023.

See vancouver.ca/budget for the full 2023 Civic Satisfaction Survey findings.