

**CITIZEN BUDGET RESULTS**  
**St. Thomas, Ontario**  
**September 26th, 2017**



# Online Budget Consultation Report

For the period August 21 to September 22, 2017

*Prepared by Open North for: City of St. Thomas*

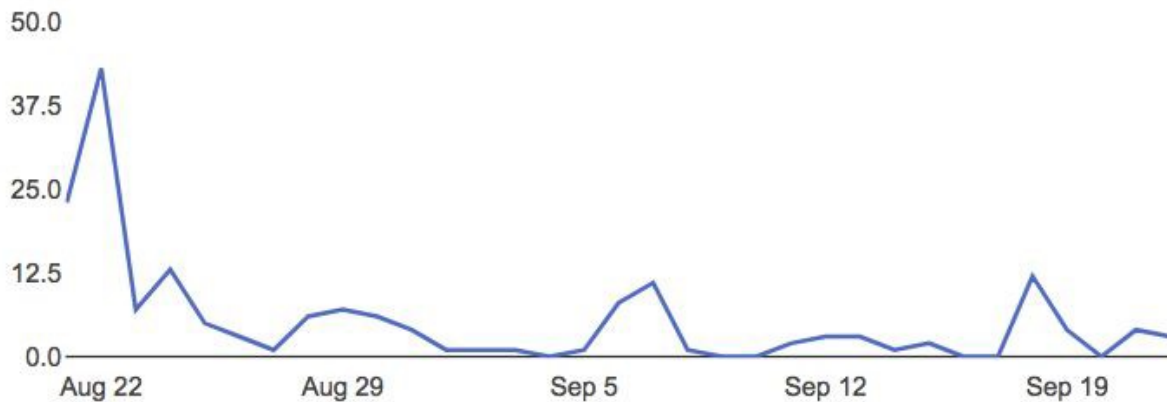
**176**

**Responses**

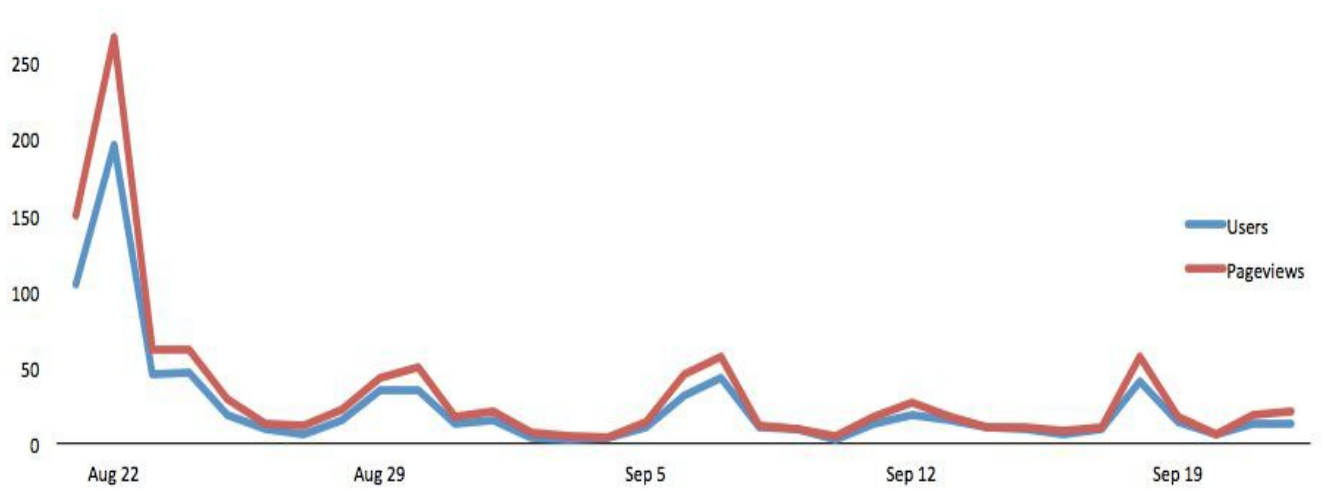
**9 minutes**

**Median time to complete**

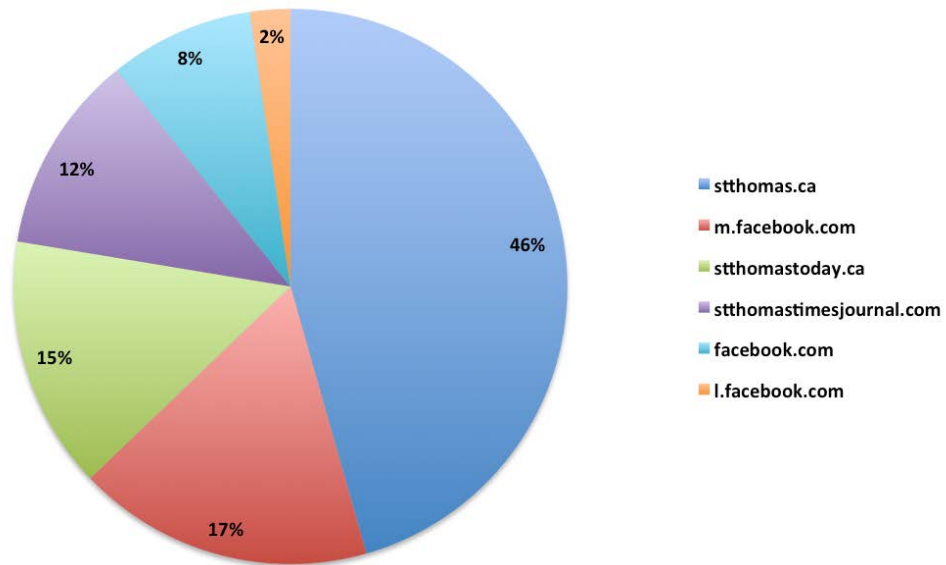
## Responses per Day



## Number of Visitors

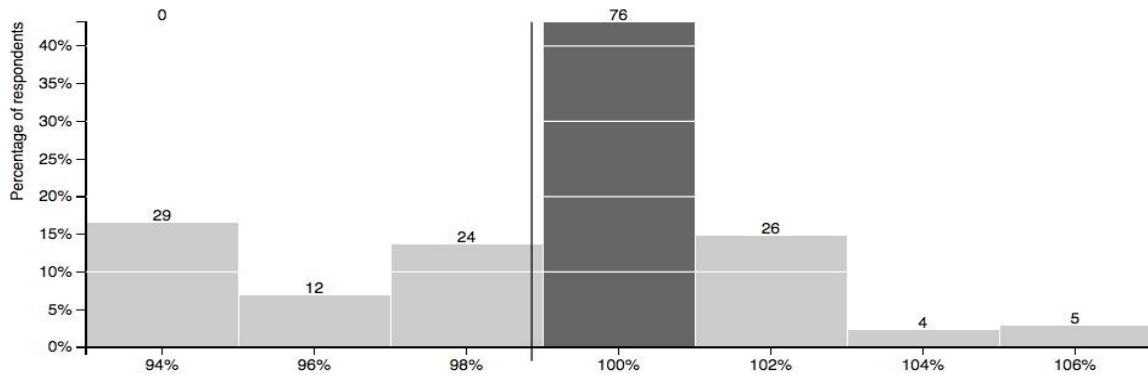


## Web Traffic Sources



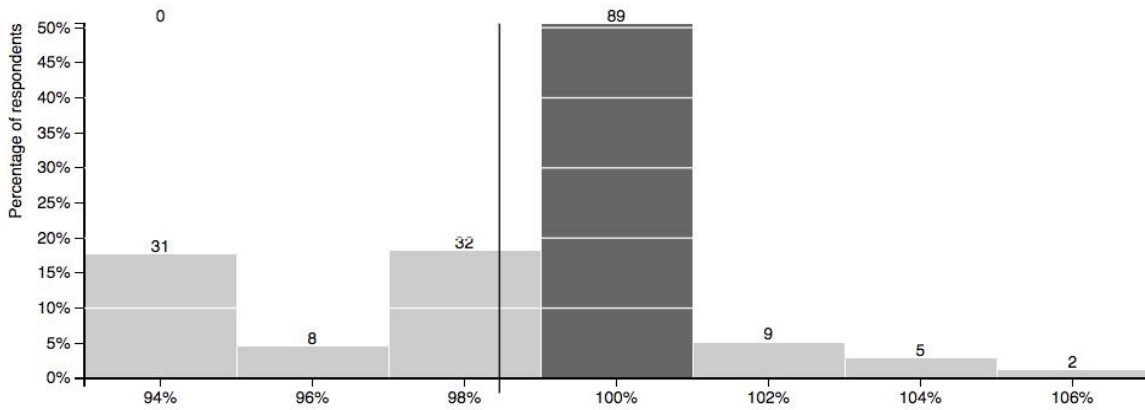
### Police Services

*How would you adjust property tax funding for police services in the city?*



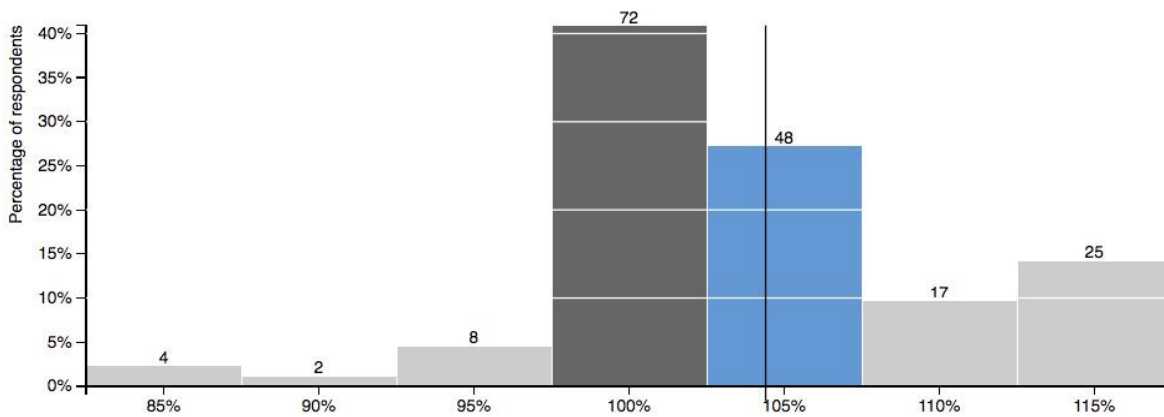
### Fire Services

*How would you adjust property tax funding for fire services in the city?*



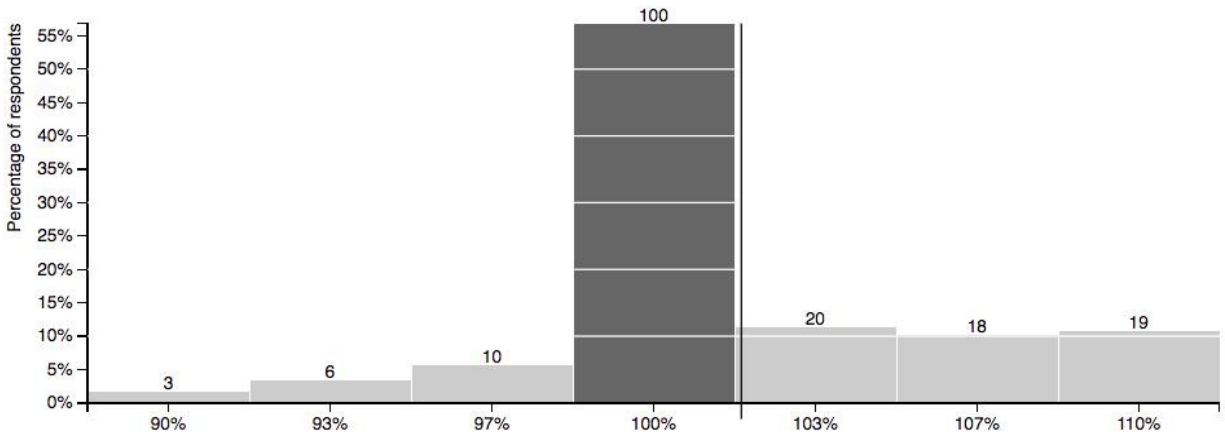
### Roads and Bridges

*How would you adjust property tax funding for roads and bridges in the city?*



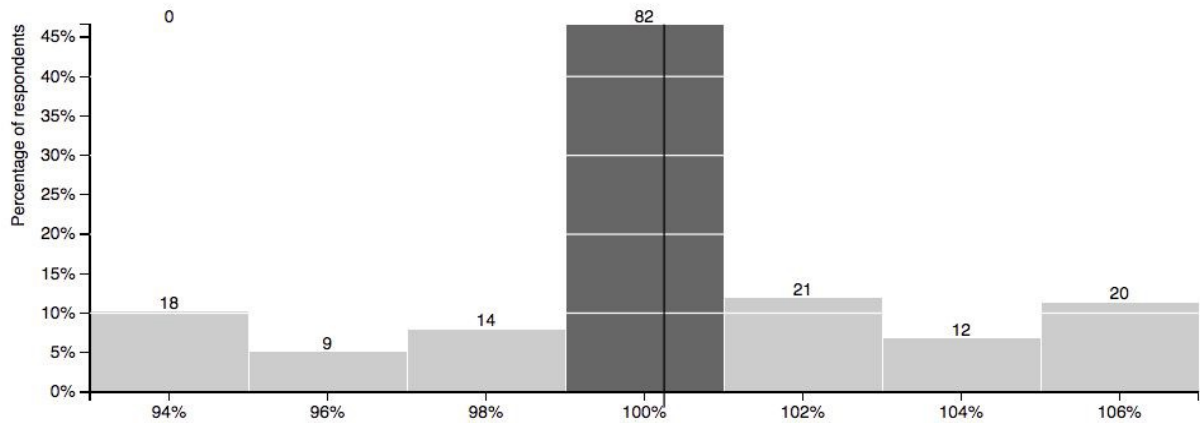
## Winter Maintenance

*How would you adjust property tax funding for winter maintenance in the city?*

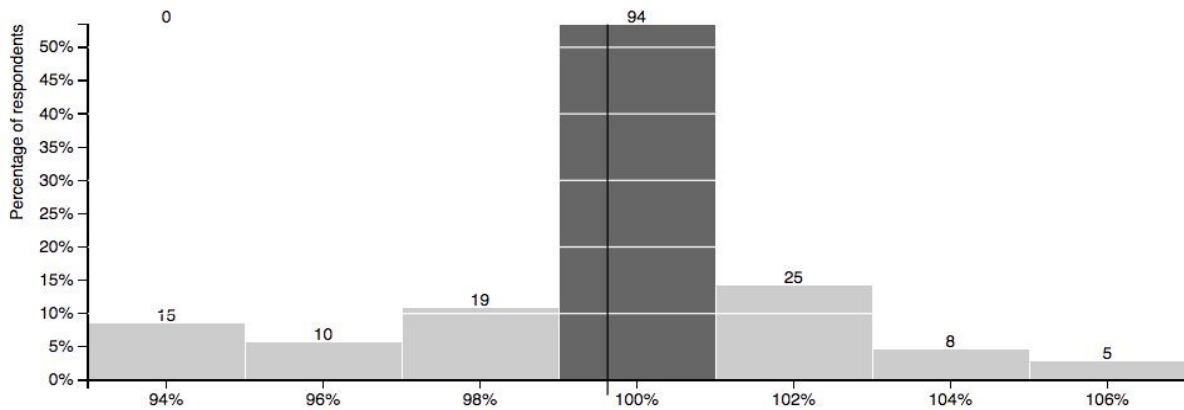


## Recreational Facilities and Parks

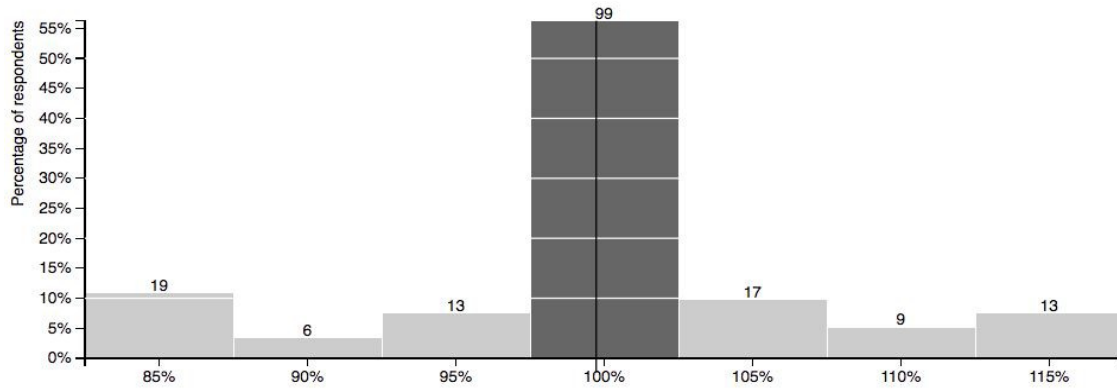
*How would you adjust property tax funding for recreational facilities in the city?*



*How would you adjust property tax funding for parks in the city?*

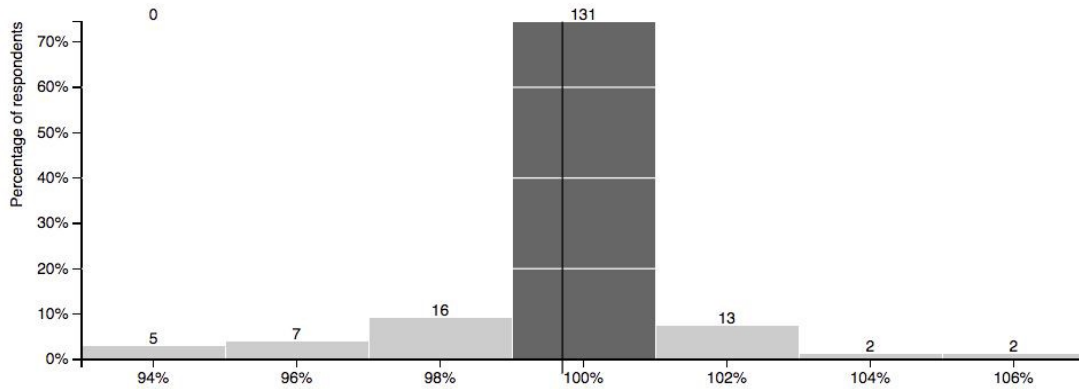


*How would you adjust property tax funding for trees in the city?*



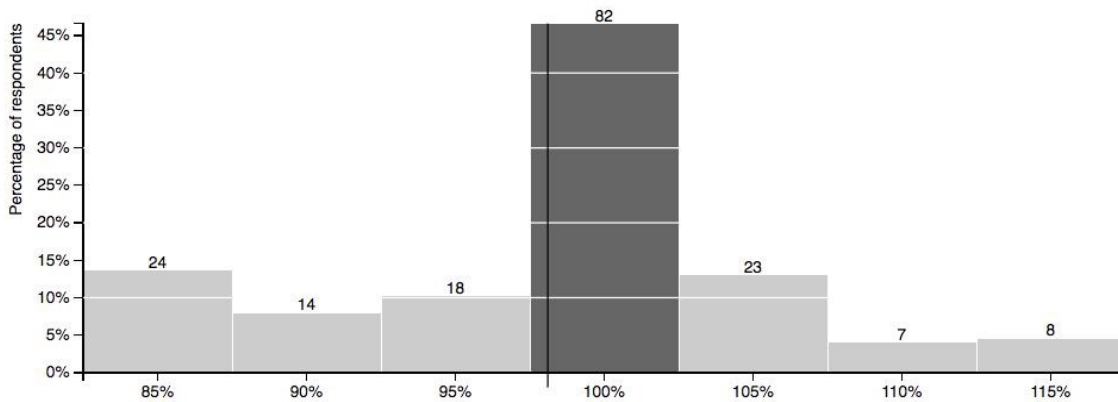
**Waste Management**

*How would you adjust property tax funding for waste management in the city?*



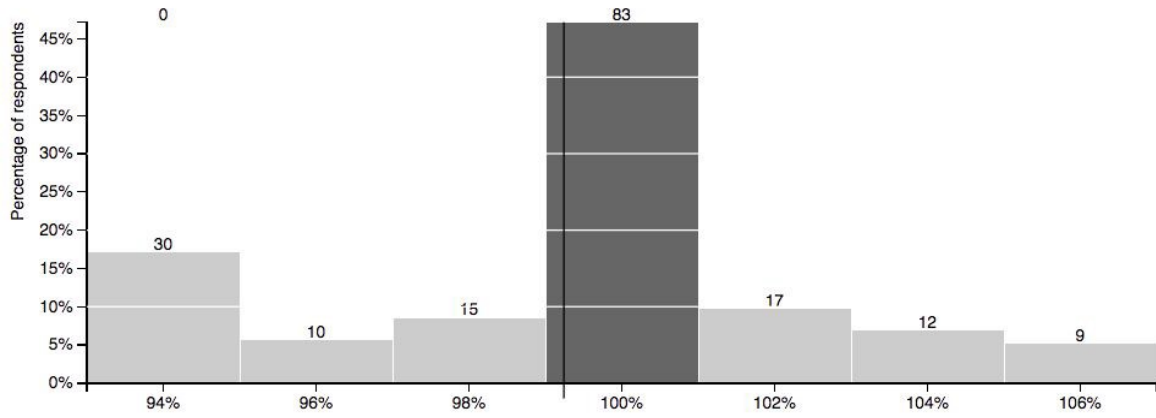
**Transit System**

*How would you adjust property tax funding for transit in the city?*



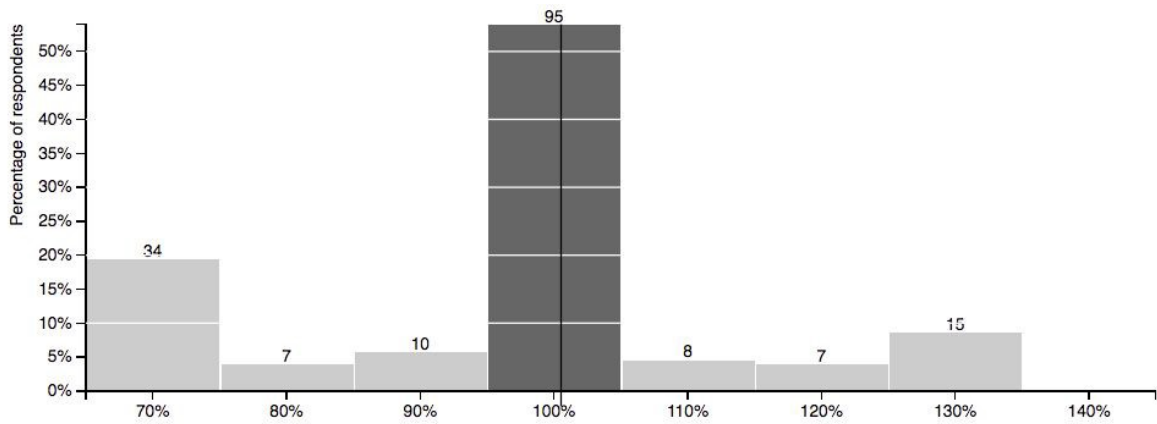
## Libraries

*How would you adjust property tax funding for libraries in the city?*



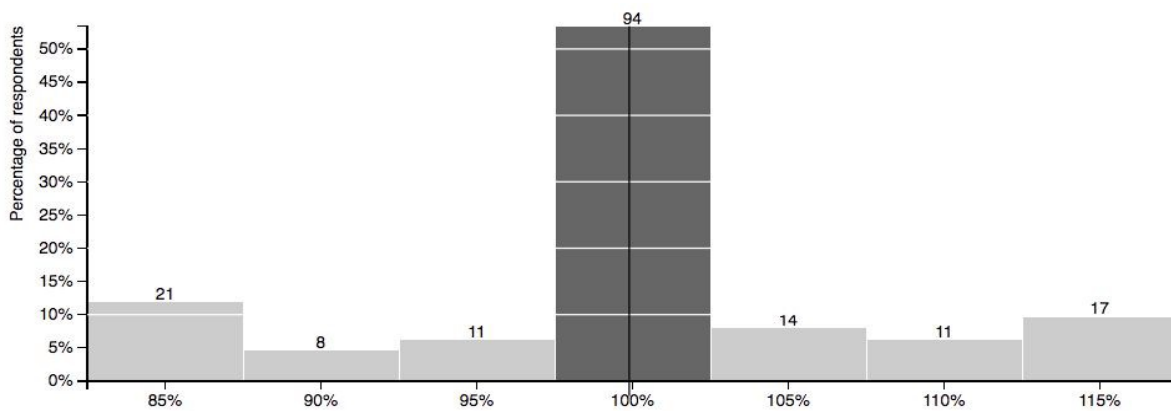
## Airport

*How would you adjust property tax funding for continued investment in our airport?*



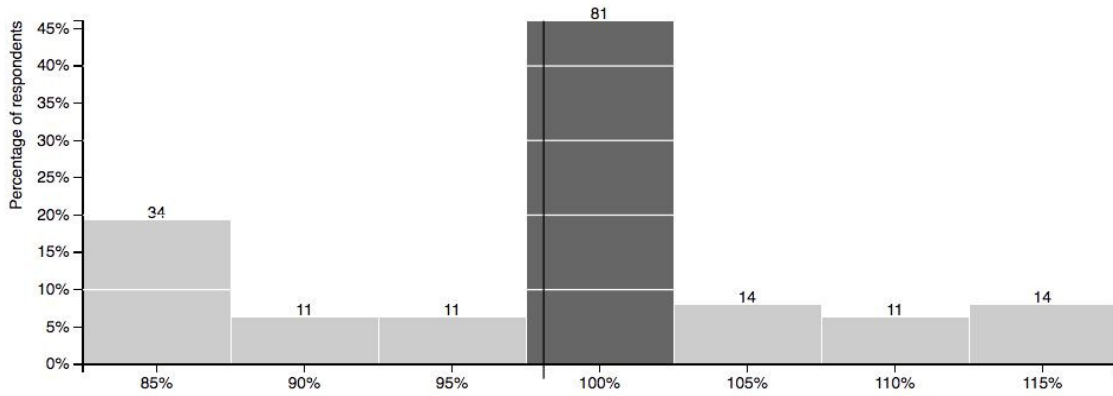
## Animal Services

*How would you adjust property tax funding for animal services within the city?*



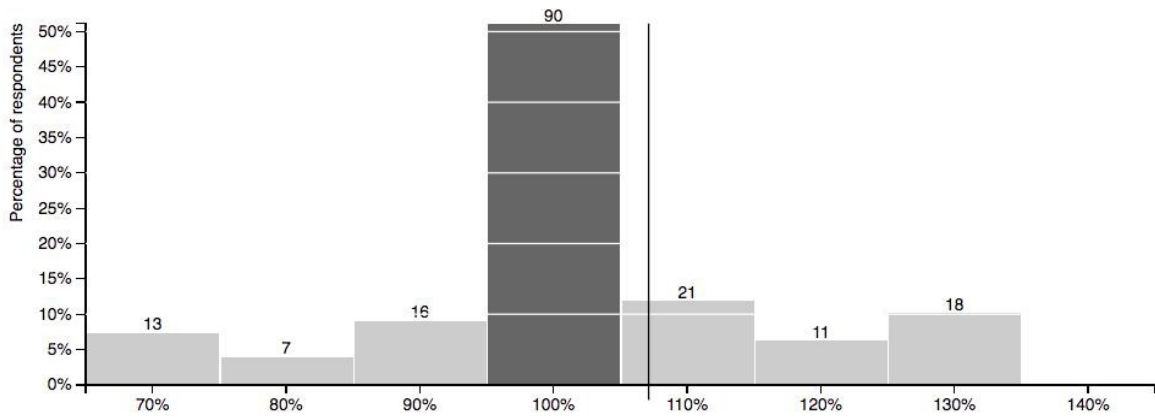
## Council Grants

*How would you adjust property tax funding for council grants?*



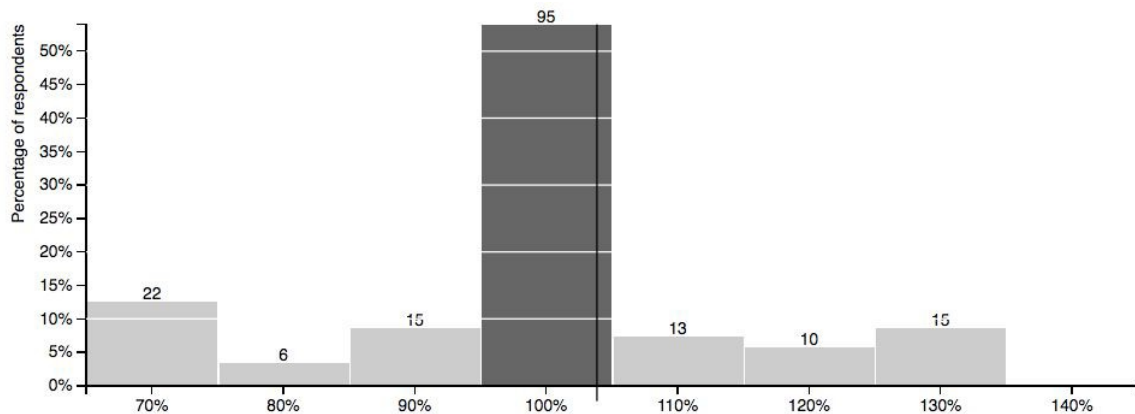
## Economic Development

*How would you adjust property tax funding for the Economic Development Corporation?*



## Tourism

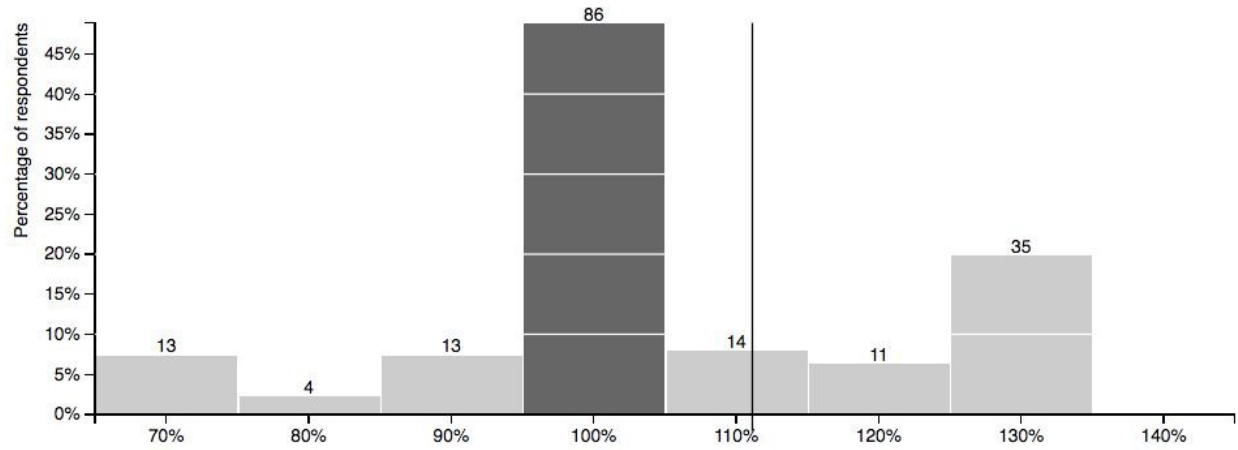
*How would you adjust property tax funding for tourism within the city?*





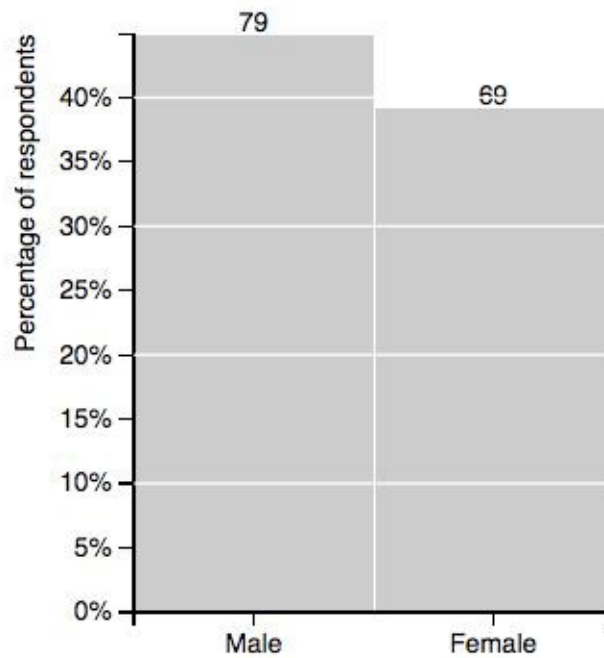
## Downtown Community Improvement

*How would you adjust property tax funding to affect maintenance within the downtown area?*

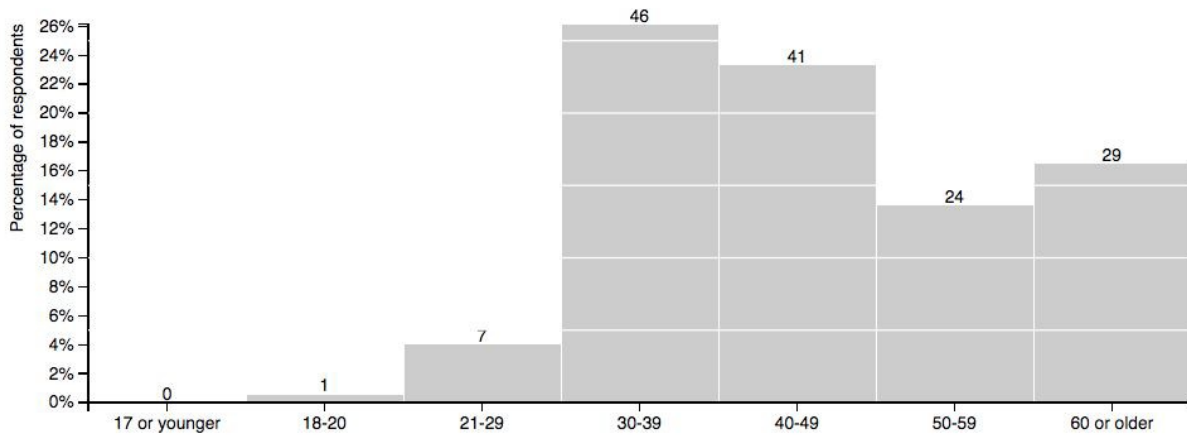


## Demographic and Outreach

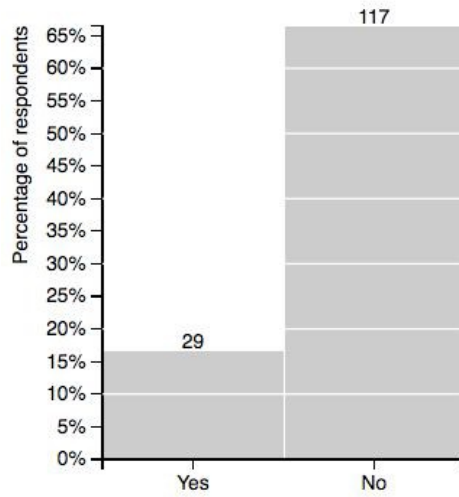
*Are you male or female?*



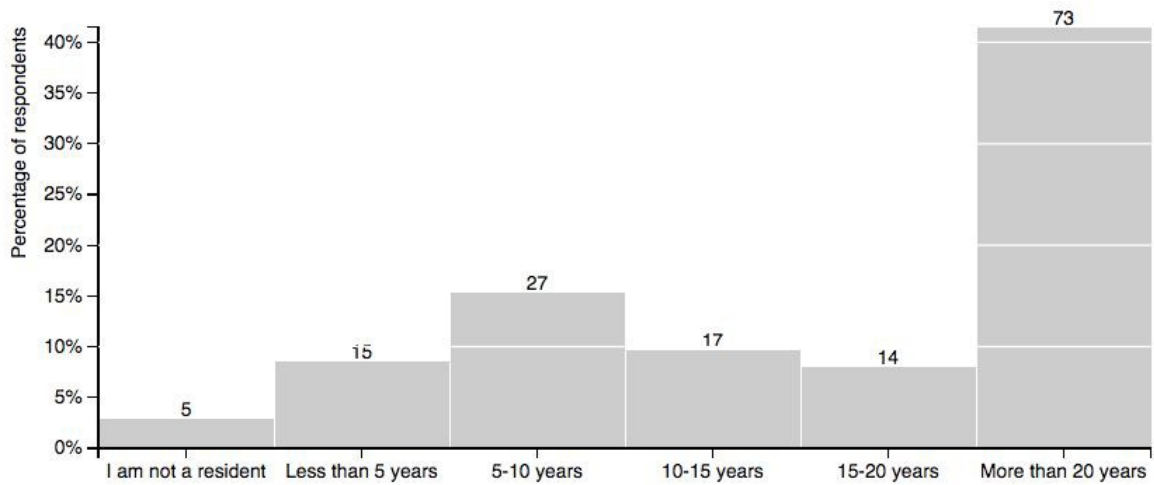
### What age group do you fall into?



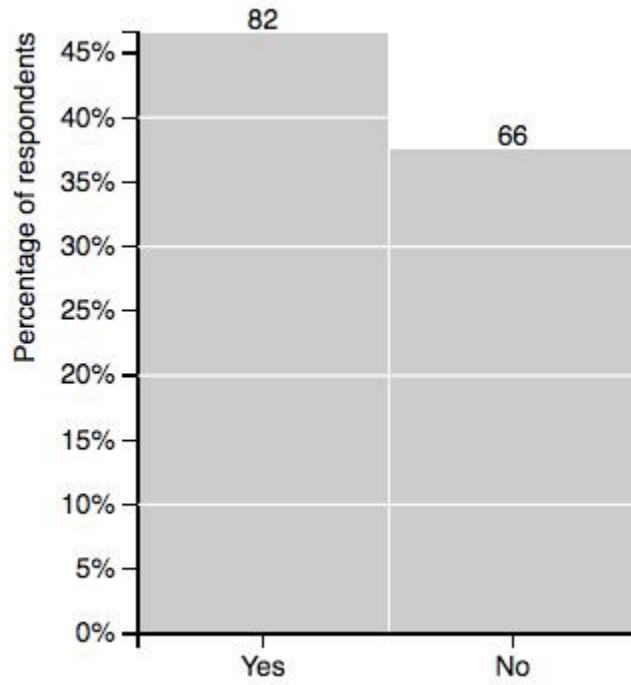
### Are you retired?



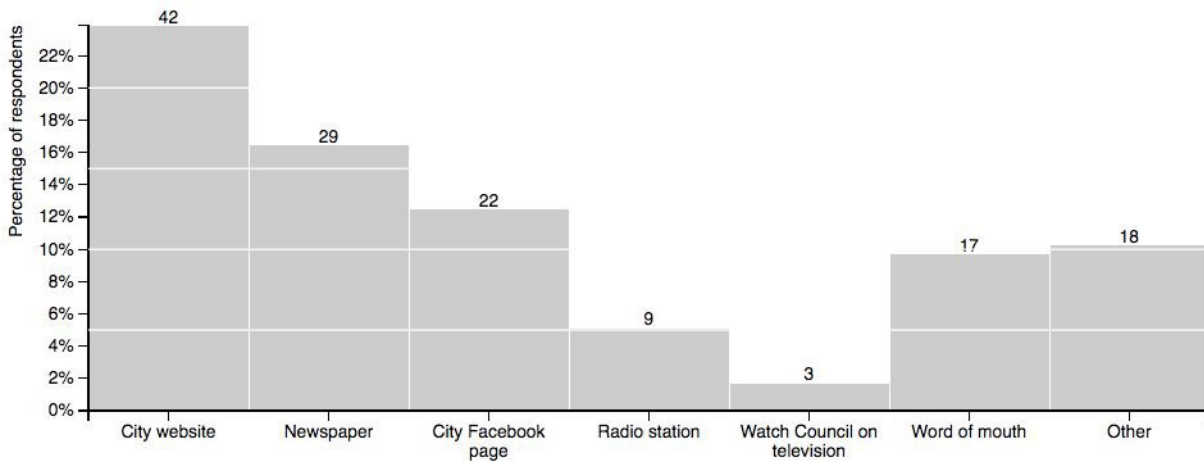
### How long have you been a resident of the City?



*Do you currently work in St. Thomas?*



*Where and how do you receive information regarding City business?*



## Comments

### How would you adjust your property tax funding for police services in the city?

As a family, we are concerned with the increase of incidents involving drugs at the library after the police moved locations. While I'm not sure what the long-term answer is, the police service have done a wonderful job with regular patrols through the library daily, and especially seeing how the officers engage with the kids in the children's department has been very positive!
Continue to become advanced with technology
find savings for any increase in union salaries
first encounter with OPP was, a bullying officer came to our house and accused us to make pictures standing on our deck, we had been able to proof that we had that day we did stand on our deck but without a camera. The service is not much of a service!
Freeze pay to allow for same services. Enough is enough.
Great police services.
I believe we have more officers and Management than a city the size of St.Thomas requires; and so a reduction is in order.
I feel our city is exceptionally safe, not to diminish efforts of local police, but having lived elsewhere where it was more dangerous where police budgets were even greater shows that our community has an intrinsic well being that contributes to its safety, and therefore this budget should be reduced
I understand that the police receive retention pay and their salaries are often raised to be comparable to other municipalities, however I think that police services in municipalities with higher crimes rates should be paid more. We need to control spending here too, if other municipal staff members are taking small increases in wages or none. the Police services should do so also.
I would like to know what the costs are in other cities similar to St Thomas are. This would help me gauge how our city is doing.
I would like to see both our Police and Fire services carry Naloxone
I would like to see more police officers, but perhaps different modes of transportation (all the police vehicles are so new and expensive - would rather have more bodies!!) Need to get the drug situation under control in this city.....
Increase drug enforcement and clean up talbot street
Increasing mental health programs or officers dealing with mental health issues in our community. They are at crisis point and need an increase in staff to deal with this issue.
It's extremely important to prosecute cybercrime. These days cybercrime is potentially worse than breaking and entering a home. A lot more resources needs to be invested in holding cybercriminals responsible for their crimes.
Just an increase in police presence.
Kind of people in this city we need more police presence
lots of cops
Love having a city police service. I have lived many places with RCMP and OPP and I am extremely grateful for a quality local service!
Modest change to allow improvements in other areas.
More community presence in problem areas such as west Talbot Street.
more enforcement on highway traffic act regarding cyclists. Cyclists abuse their maneuverability capability, road signs, etc.. They need to prove the need for respect from the motorist. Sharing the road is a mutual interest and is the law.

More time and resources spent on drug enforcement.
More traffic- speed enforcement.
Need our police!
no change please
none
Our police services are excellent, give more to fire to help them with more coverage.
Outrageous amount . Reduce those salaries. This needs to be stopped as its completely out of line with rest of society.
overpaid
Overstaffed Overpaid ticket writers but poor crime solvers and thief catchers
Perhaps they could stop wasting g the money they have on million dollar buildings that they did t need
Police and fire protection too expensive and the wage structure is NOT Sustainable in the future. Provincial mediation is a joke . We don't have the Ford, Lear, Sterling type wages to sustain these wages
Police are often seen just sitting around in parking lots doing nothing. In my experience the police are very corrupt and only do what they feel like doing anyhow.
Police costs have skyrocketed in the past 17 years with overall crime rates declining. The persistent budgetary increases, largely as a result of ballooning salary costs, are not sustainable. Core dollars must be focused on front-line policing and specialized investigative services. Community relations and fixed capital costs all require re-evaluation.
Police officers today are dealing with more than just the traditional core service of apprehending criminals and preventing crime. The reality for police today is that any problem – criminal, social, financial, political and even some health issues – left unresolved by agencies created and funded to address them, will be dumped in the police's lap and they deal with it. If people have a problem and need assistance, the police are the first to be called. Yet, crime analysts will question the number of police officers in Canada because overall crime is falling. if you slap a band-aid on the symptom of a larger problem not of their creation (police can always get a person to a shelter but they can't cure homelessness) – there is scant praise or recognition for a job well done and due to a lack of funding for social services, it is a revolving door for those in need who eventually end up dealing with the police again. Mental health, as an example, is a serious problem in St. Thomas and police are being expected to be street corner psychiatrists with minimal training given our ongoing staffing challenges and Service size. St. Thomas is growing along with mental health issues, drug issues and traffic related problems. The Service also needs to grow to meet the growing expectations of the public and ensure the City remains an attraction for others to move here and take up residence. As noted by Maclean's Magazine recently, people are moving to St. Thomas for a variety of positive reasons and a low crime rate was one of the reasons.
Police services consumer nearly 25% of the operating budget. I do not agree with retention bonuses (seriously, who leaves a \$105,000/year job??
Police should be focused on drug crime, and getting officers out of their cars and patrolling Talbot street and Pinafore Park. Crime prevention through visible policing.
Police should start policing the roads, tired of seeing way to many people not follow the rules of the road....maybe stop hiding in parking lots ?? I see the cruisers parked in obscure parking lots quite a bit but when I phone for non emergency service it takes over 1 hr to come ? I also sat in the police station waiting to talk to an officer for 45 mins and left, seems to be over paid and underworked.
salaries are way to high. Insulting to tax payers
St. Thomas is not a big city and does not need all the police we have now. Their pay and benefits are unsustainable and the need to cut them back needs to begin now! There are very,

very few dangers here to justify the number of police employed in such a small community. This is just excessive, unnecessary spending.
The fact that fire and police services accounts for nearly half of the city's budget is irresponsible and financially unsustainable.
The police presence is great in St Thomas. My only suggestion would be to train them better on communicating with the public.
There are too many police for such a small town. Multiple responders for minor calls is a waste of resources. Avoid tiered response when possible.
They don't get the credit they deserve for all they are expected to do and know in seconds on scene.
They dont deserve an incentive to work in St Thomas its not like they are policing Toronto.
Though the police due an admirable job, I do see a lot parked and idling in areas not publicly accessible (sometimes in pairs), as opposed to patrolling or interacting with the public.
We dont constantly need new cruisers or new designs on the vehicles, its a waste of money. The new police station was a bit of a stretch considering they just renovated the old one not long before moving to the new one
With the new station now in place the new technology should be saving the Comunity money & I believe that money could be allocated for other projects in the city
would go lower if i could. Overpaid
You see to many cruisers sitting around parking lots and chat

### How would you adjust your property tax funding for fire services in the city?

A study could be conducted on the use of overtime and callbacks by fire services personnel. An investigation on what constitutes a call for service and logged entries for calls such as getting fuel as a call for service or routine vehicle maintenance. Fire services are a critical service but I believe we are not paying close enough attention to where the money is going to run the fire dept.
Avoid tiered response when possible and use existing halls for longer.
City could be run with volunteers (part timers). \$500,000 for a tanker for 130 houses? It is cheaper to use the mutual aid agreement with central elgin. Decrease in fire/mvc's warrants a decrease in service. Stop going to medical calls. They need to stop doing a mandatory call back everytime there is a fire. This is a waste of OT (taxpayers money)
Don't see them much in the community and from the few i know they have so much thine off they have second jobs or businesses
emergency medical services should be reduced
Excessive Fire Services are the same as the police. St. Thomas is not a big city and does not need all the fireman we have now. Their pay and benefits are unsustainable and the need to cut them back needs to begin now! There are very, very few fire calls and they could be covered by part-time or volunteer firemen. To be reasonable, to justify the number of firemen employed in such a small community, this is just excessive, unnecessary spending.
exclusive club members rushing on all vehicles and sirens to the same place to stand around as long as possible and not be needed
find savings for any increase in union salaries
Fire rescue is very important but do they really need to go to every call that in some cases is a false alarm people should have to pay for the service if they are brought to a residence for a false alarm
Fire services consumer nearly 20% of the operating budget. I do not agree with retention

bonuses (seriously, who leave a \$125,000/year job?? Why do they have to use expensive equipment to go get coffee. In the Canadian Army, it is an offense to use tax payer funded equipment to get lunch or a coffee. There is a high level of entitlement with the fire service, at the expense of sidewalks and capital projects. We're a city of 36,000 yet we spend \$8,400,000.00 on fire services. This is a self-licking ice cream cone.
Fire services could also do with a reduction.
Fire should respond to all medical emergencies if they can get there first. Increase fire prevention enforcement is needed for all the old multiresidential properties.
Firemen earn way too much money. Especially considering that other communities have volunteer firemen.
Freeze pay to allow for no reduction in services
Has the City considered a composite Fire Service? A joint dispatch center for Fire, EMS, Police, Volunteer Fire, etc...Fire protection in St. Thomas is required, as mentioned above, to ensure the City is a viable attraction (community safety) for newcomers and to keep current residents, especially our younger population, from moving away. Are there options to finding efficiencies with our current Fire Service?
I feel that the fire department is not busy enough to justify the dollars spent, could be in charge of EMS calls as well to justify spending.
I need to know what other municipalities are costs are as compared to St Thomas. However, I want St Thomas to have one of the lowest cost Fire Services available.
I would go lower if i could. Overpaid.
I would like to see both our Police and Fire services carry Naloxone
i would like to see the department go to half full time and the other half part time
I'd like the response times kept and budget.lowered. Salaries again are way too high. Tender out the jobs and you'd still have massive interest at 60% of those salaries.
Is the city FD responsible for airport coverage, if so is proper training/equipment adequate, should come from airport budget. Has chemical spills/gasses being addressed?
Modest change to allow other improvements in other areas.
Most important for response time and efficient equipment and staff
Need our fire dept!
No change. Level of service is appropriate
none
overpaid
salaries are way to high. Insulting to tax payers
See my comments above on police and fire protection .
Similar to police services..., core dollars must be concentrated in front-line services and not ballooning salaries. Notwithstanding St. Thomas prevailing in arbitration on the basis of the municipality's ability to pay, the local union continues to maintain a negotiating position of budget parity with police.
The fact that fire and police services accounts for nearly half of the city's budget is irresponsible and financially unsustainable. Fire fighters wages are far too high and must be controlled before they become detrimental to the function of the City. We live in an age where fire codes and preventing more and more fires. We should be focused on reducing our reliance on this service, not spending more and more. Half of the time fire fighters are not even working, perhaps utilize some of their down time to help parks and recreation staff.
The fire department was quick to respond to our calls. This is a well run organization.
They sleep and wait for calls. We are paying a fortune here for a reactive service that is almost obsolete for fire. We need to increase the ems unit instead.
Two stations and this many people waiting around for calls is absurd

volunteer fire depts. surrounding st Thomas mutual aid already it is time for composite fire services using both in the city with no new hires
Wages too high for our affordable small community.
We need to look at a blended volunteer / part time full time department. Barrie has done this effectively. It's 2017, things are designed not to burn with fire code etc.
Why do we respond to a call with Ambulance and Firetruck
Why is this not dispatched from the same place as the police? The city is paying 4 extra dispatchers to answer a tiny amount of calls a year that could easily be managed by police/ fire combo. This is silly to me

## How would you adjust your property tax funding for roads and bridges in the city?

As a taxpayer I am wondering when Steele Street will be getting sidewalks and curbs. Nice new sidewalks to the Health Unit but none here in Yarmouth Heights that was annexed how long ago?
Assuming rebuilding projects are considered capital expense, I suggest spending more on general maintenance such as road resurfacing.
Chestnut St. is highly used by construction vehicles (backhoes, dump trucks etc.), buses, and transport trucks from the grocery stores. It will require maintenance in the years to come.
Council needs to re evaluate their priorities stop spending money on roundabouts and play places such as the proposed new recreation area in the North east of the city and start repairing the roads, infrastructure and bridges such as the old Bailey bridge on Dale wood rd.
delayed bridge..not sure why we do not have any money to fix it as it has been a temporary bridge for how many years. not sure whammy tax dollars are being used for. i know the south side. :(
Disappointed in this years spending, see it as wasteful and redundant.
Essential. Saves wear and tear on vehicles.
Funding should remain; utilizing provincial and federal grants under the Gas Tax Fund should be funding these items NOT recycling centres and non-related infrastructure. The Dalewood bridge replacement ought to be a higher priority than it has been given especially when compared to unnecessary roundabouts and the superficial redux of Talbot Street West
Great job this year fixing things up but a fair way to go
I am very impressed with the amount of capital works being completed in the city this year. Keep it up.
I feel like there are roads that are being paved that are in good condition while roads that are more pothole than asphalt are ignored. Ex. Stanley St. South of Wellington has been torn up, Stanley St. North of Wellington, one of the worst streets in the city, untouched.
I feel roads need more work.
i like the amount of road and sidewalks being done my only concern is that some streets being done are not in desperate need as some other streets i just shake my head sometimes
I live on a quiet, bumpy, uneven, very hard to cycle on street.
I understand it's a slow, steady process, but I am glad to see progress being made on some of the busier areas of the city.
I wish all pedestrian signals just changed along with the traffic lights. I've seen people waiting for a walk signal on Talbot St. by Spicer's bakery through a whole green light because they didn't push the button. Why can't they just change without a person pushing the button, and have a button for lights that stay red until a car stops. Beg buttons aren't fair for pedestrians.



I would like for City Hall to think about putting a brand new sidewalk in on the front of the Grace Cafe on Queen Street. These wonderful volunteers work their butts off day in and out to provide for the less fortunate, have you seen the front of their building? The sidewalk there desperately could use a new one replaced !
I'm looking forward to seeing the new Dalewood bridge!
Increased repair and repaving.
Infrastructure improvements has to continue . I live in the " flood zone" and took advantage of the city subsidy for back water valve
maintain good infrastructure
Many roads and bridges in the city still need repair.
More curb and sidewalk repairs, as well as timely repair of excavations would justify an increase.
More than enough Bridges and road work was done this year in my opinion A lot of it was waste most are paved again so no need for repaving and don't need anymore roundabouts
no change if this year can be duplicated
Please do not build any trails through the ravine. Many residents are concerned about preserving the ravines throughout St. Thomas for the animals and birds, biodiversity of trees and plants, etc. There are enough sidewalks and trails already. Residents do not need any trails through the ravines.
Road infrastructure needs to be opened up to allow for residential development and/or improved in places where development has/is occurring, i.e. Fairview South and Southdale from Sunset to Centennial. Build access to allow for development in old downtown across old rail bridge at Barwick Street.
Roads are terrible and not taken care of
Roadway surfaces need updating in many locals. Initial upgrade, (due to neglect by previous administrations budget hindsight), would be high but diminish as a maint program is followed. Extract \$ from waste management and library.
seems a good thing to do
St. Thomas needs something to set it apart. Having the best roads in SW Ontario could be an asset that pays back quickly. PS> This year, a welcome and noticeable improvement to many high-use roadways.
The city does a poor job in repairing roads.
The city is doing well this year with new sidewalks and trails. This should continue to promote a healthy life style.
The City of St Thomas Roads are terrible. We need to spend more and do it faster. However, I need to know what other cities are costing in this area as an average for Ontario cities.
The City of St. Thomas is crumbling. Our new City engineer has done a wonderful job with this years project prioritization. That said, there are still an abundance of infrastructure needs in this City. They should be addressed immediately. Roads are crumbling, our downtown facade is disgraceful and the overall image our city presents is that no one wants to be here let alone live here. It is time to invest in infrastructure.
The roads all across the city need to be repaired and in winter they need to be plowed and salted or sand for people to get around better and the emergency people can get to those that need them much faster and safer.
The roads desperately need attention, even visitors to St. Thomas comment on the state of many of our roads compared to other communities. The department seems to have adopted a "good enough" ethos.
There are a number of roads in St. Thomas that need to be repaired. However, the City has been doing a great job during the past couple of years addressing this issue.
There are so many roads like centre street that have needed to be re paved for years!

There are still a number of roads that are embarrassment to be municipally maintained. I would like to see the same dedication to main routes be used on some older residential streets that are in sore need of it. Traffic management is it a must. My street in particular is treated as a main route by residents however the municipal does not see it the same. Speed reduction and maintenance needs to be reviewed.
This adds so much to a community.
this needs significant ongoing investment
Widen Elm Street, add sidewalks to north side of Chestnut Street and other residential areas.

## How would you adjust your property tax funding for winter maintenance in the city?

A decent job is done on main streets.
cleaning of the roads is important... the sidewalks can be done during regular hours
Considering that public transit is not the best, Money should be put towards this.
Default
Do a better job at clearing sidewalks in a timely manner
i do not think this is an area where we need to penny pinch roads need to be made safe at all cost period
I don't believe that should be reduced only used more efficiently such as plowing sidewalks when they are bare!!!!
I have witnessed on many occasions salt and sanding being applied before plowing. Seems backwards after asking other physical services departments in Elgin County. Talbot Street I understand is a priority but so are sidewalks in radius of schools. Too often my children are trudging through sidewalks to school days after a snow fall but I see Talbot in pristine condition.
I think a better job could be done with clearing of the roads in winter. Too much time is spent cleaning residential sidewalks. Those are the responsibilities of the home owners. Issue tickets, further revenue for the City, if residents are non-compliant.
I would like to see more priority placed on the sidewalks, especially downtown and by the Elgin Mall. Funny, if it snows on a Wednesday, the sidewalk normally doesn't get done, but if it's a Sunday then Overtime kicks in and the sidewalks are awesome. Am I dreaming this???
I would like to see the bylaw requiring residents to clear their own sidewalks enforced. This would lighten the load/budget required for winter maintenance, and basically see that the residents who don't contribute their share by clearing their sidewalk contribute more financially by the way of fines. There could be an exemption program for those with disabilities or conditions preventing them from shoveling snow.
I would support a tax increase that directly resulted in the more timely clearing of sidewalks and walkways.
it's good
It's very important to make sure sidewalks are plowed and salted for the increased number of walkers and runners.
maintain existing standard, find savings to keep same budget
make citizens aware of mms and stick to these not exceeding shift work to avoid o.t. in winter storm events
Make sure the sidewalks are cleared properly. People who need to walk/use wheelchair or use strollers should not be inconvenienced.
No planned changes needed By necessity, this number will fluctuate according to weather incidents. Plan based on benchmarks and desired outcomes, not hard and fast budget

numbers.
Other nearby municipalities have more frequent snow and ice removal
Residents should be responsible for shovelling there own sidewalks in the residential areas and the people that do the removal usually damage lawns during there removal
seem to only work when overtime is available
Sidewalks are deadly to walk on as they never get cleared. Walking on the road puts your life at risk.
Sidewalks must be cleared sooner, I walk to work and often have to resort to walking on the road which is dangerous when covered in snow and ice.
Snow Plowing is Mediocre at best . This is Canada and the snow budget should reflect that .
Stop using so much salt and plow the roads instead, it's such a detriment to our environment to over use chemicals.
They do a great job
They do a horrible job extremely slow to clear after a winter storm and then when there is no snow theyre out clearing sidewalks and salting them.
This has improved considerably over past years. Keep up the great work!!
This one is sticky, some years are more deserving of the funding than others. What happens to the surplus in years of little snow?
Very pleased with present winter maintance. Noticed huge improvement over 2015/16 season :) we could do with less snow clearing as an emergency.
We would prefer more frequent snow removal in our area along with salt as opposed to sand dumped. We would also like our sidewalks to be maintained after snow storms. We live in an affluent area and it seems we are days behind with snow removal.
Where to start on this issue !! How do you have trucks out salting with no blades on the front, why is Highbury such a nightmare, why do the trucks and sidewalk plows all head back to the shop for their breaks ( no wonder things don't get plowed alot of time wasted) I live over the Barwick st bridge and we used to be one of the first areas plowed but not anymore. THE CITY DOES A TERRIBLE JOB and the manager handling this dept needs to be fired. I know many people contact city hall complaining about snow removal and over the years it's only gotten worse. Good job listening to your residents.
Why not contract it out for cheaper, better results
Winter maintenance in St Thomas is below par in my estimation. We need to do it better and faster.
Winter maintenance in St. Thomas is currently good. No changes are needed.

**How would you adjust your property tax funding for recreational facilities and parks and trees in the city?**

Again, these are all areas that make St. Thomas an attractive City. Our recreational facilities are top notch and developing a new soccer complex is a smart move considering that soccer participation is rising exponentially. The facility will doubt draw people to the City for games and tournaments causing a spin off for local business. Well done!
Allow sufficient operating dollars to maintain existing as well as new facilities such as the new athletic fields at Burwell to Highbury. Increase tree planting programs. Institute a bylaw controlling the removal of trees on private property.
as i live on the north side we seldom see any of the tax dollars spent here. the south side is top dollar north side is geto.
Do we have too many parks in this city? What do other cities pay for parks and recreation

services?
Don't waste money on fancy washrooms like the ones in Pinafore Park! Basic amenities are fine. Too much emphasis on arenas.
Expand tree planting but dont let it limit high density development.
Facilities need to be promoted and used more, thereby generating income. Measure occupancy rates then work to fill the gaps. Our parks are beautiful. Wouldn't want to see anything less.
Fantastic job with the maintenance of the parks and activities available for kids at Timken and Memorial arenas.
I do believe the parks can manage with less for increases elsewhere, as there seems to have been several large capital expenditures in the park in the last 2-3 years. The pace of these improvements can be slowed. I can think of over \$2M spent at Pinafore in the last 3 years.
I live on Wellington, by the firestation and feel that many trees are overgrown and hanging low onto sidewalks resulting in either having to duck or walk around the trees. Also have noticed a lot of trees growing into power lines (although that doesn't affect walking or sidewalks)
i think the parks are doing a great job in managing the department
I think there are enough recreational out lets for a city this size. Although there is fund raising in some cases to build these facilities once completed it now becomes the responsibility of the taxpayers to maintain them.And so there needs to be more thought go into decisions to build them in the first place.
I'd like to see more done with Water Works Park, the pond area could use some upgrades.
If you're going to do increase it then that means you should cut down my tree in less than a year-and-a-half request and it still standing may I add
It seems like all the budget goes into 3-4 months of enjoyment when there are so many streets in need of new pavement that is needed especially in the winter months
let the public get involved whenever possible
maintain existing standard, find savings to keep same budget
Outdoor water complex (like strathroy, tillsonburg, Woodstock)
Parks are nicely kept but this new recreation complex is a waste of money. Not to mention the \$750 000 bathroom out at Pinafore whoever approved that should be fired on site what a bunch of dummies.
Parks in this city are beautiful,however summer employees need more supervision from full time employees. Too many kids standing around with little supervision. Full time parks and roads need to pull,their weight more and this reflects on how hard summer students work
Plant more trees, keep the l city beautiful
Says les frequent lawn cutting, keep lawns longer, thus deceases weed control. Says decreased snow removal, snow removal has its own budget. a lot of city trees need manicuring. Some facilities should be pay as you go by users, pools, parks, tennis, etc.
spending in the park outrageous new pinafore washroom to expensive pavilion repairs to much new soccer fields to expensive should have been done in stages tree inventory poor old trees not being properly maintained or replaced parks and recreation supervisor should be fired
St. Thomas is known for the quality of our parks and recreation facilities which is good. That said, it should not come at a cost of essential needs like infrastructure. What is the point of having a beautiful park if you can't get to it. The City needs to preserve old trees and focus on reforestation. No additional money should be given to parks and recreation.
The recreational facilities are mainly used by people who could afford to pay user fees.
There are enough private clubs and organizations in the city that should be paying non-subsidized rates to use recreational facilities and grounds. Tree management is burdensome and over-regulated.

There are so many over grown trees on small streets. They need trimming and more attention
Too many parks already.
We have a beautiful city thank you
We have lovely parks and I hope they will continue to be as lovely!
We have never had a response to help with trees on or near our property.
we need an indoor soccer/baseball facility, its a shame the city's sports programs have to drive to London to use their facilities
We need another pool in st. Thomas. YMCA is so crowded and there is hardly any open time for people just wanting to swim with their family.
We need more pathways for walking running and cycling to connect our city so you can do these activities on safe pathways to go from one end of the city to the other. Cycle pathways through parks will keep bicycles off the roads onto safer riding places
We need more trees in general. Please plant fruit trees. The Gleaners can harvest from them and share with residents through the various programs in the city.
We would like to see greater expansion of recreational programs (especially arts and swimming) offered through the city, and for more age ranges (toddler/preschool). Other cities have a much larger range of programs for same size cities (ie: Newmarket). St Thomas has fantastic parks, and we would like to see some more tree planting, especially along boulevards, to increase shade for summertime.
Would definitely like to see more bike paths and trees in our city.

### **How would you adjust your property tax funding for waste management in the city?**

Composting for household waste could be reduced to monthly. Since composting, recycling programs are in place household collection can be reduced to bi-weekly
Current level of service is adequate.
Funding is good. Very happy with new recycling plant. Congrats on the award! Not entirely sure if it is this department but would love to see more garbage bins around the city. Maybe at each bus stop? Going for walks with my dogs and carry their waste, seeing children walking to/from school with their lunch garbage, even parks are lacking.
I've read that people will only walk 25-30 steps for a garbage can, while I think a garbage in front of every house is unrealistic, I would like to see more throughout the city especially main roads (Wellington, Elm, Fairview, First) and more frequently on Talbot St. and in parks - especially the smaller ones.
good service now
Hazardous waste disposal should not be limited to Saturdays.
I suggest that you pick up the green box weekly in the summer and only once a month during the winter.
i think that the site could have been used for the water sewer department as my understanding that there was a study done that the works site is to small for them and roads and the recycling centre has alot of unused space but the water sewer department could have used the hole space up
I wish there was once or twice that you could put large items, having this available would hopefully cut down on the amount of abandoned furniture in the downtown alleys
I would like to see more home composting encouraged, which would reduce waste

management costs. I would also like to see the 2 bag limit imposed; not many on our street seem to stick to it, and I've never seen a garbage tag.
I would like to see the curbside recycling program enhanced to move to the larger wheeled bins for recyclable collections to encourage greater recycling of goods.
I would support the use of tax dollars to maintain the current services. As I have used the community recycling center a number of times and feel it was money well spent.
Improve signage at the CRC - I waited in line (as per the sign) only to be told I could drop my recycling directly at the building.
In Europe we have to do more, for example bring recycling materials to the recycling place, what we have in St. Thomas is luxury
It seems like we have a great triple pickup now so leave as is. Schedules are just right for me.
leave it the same no automatic increase in costs
maintain existing standard, find savings to keep same budget
Make it easier to dispose of household hazardous waste, can be difficult to get to centre on Saturday. Annual curbside large item disposal.
New Centre is good.
new crc is awesome. No need for more frequent garbage collection.
No comments , not enough knowledge of this dept
No issue with this Service. The Community Recycling Centre is impressive, well maintained and required.
ok to decrease... change to 1 bag
St. Thomas' approach to waste management is counterintuitive. Green bin/compost and recycling should be collected weekly with a 1 garbage bag limit one week, with a 2 bag limit the following. This would compel local residents to compost and recycle more and reduce the city's overall tonnage on non-divertable waste.
Start composting, zero green waste should go in the garbage.
The City needs to start a service of picking up larger objects for the citizens of St Thomas. Furniture, sofa, mattresses etc. needs to be a responsibly of the municipality even if it costs a few more dollars a year. You just can't leave waste on the road and hope someone comes and picks it up. Not very professional and makes the city look rundown and poor.
The guys do a terrific job every week.
The new community recycling center is nice but the pricing is not very honest as they don't tell you about minimum dumping fees. It's a great facility. I love my green bin.
The new recycling centre is a great success but we need to have a day like alot of neighbouring towns of large item removals. For example Annually Burlington has a city wide put your large items to the curb. Items are placed curb side a day or two before collection and the city has a citywide free yard sale. People travel from all over to drive around town to pickup items they can recycle which cuts down on the amount of collection at the end.
Very pleased with recycling and compost systems. Appreciate new garbage company
Very proud of St.Thomas composting program.
Very proud to have a green bin program in St Thomas (where London falls behind). Greater education on what goes into landfills (for example all the packaging waste) and realistically we should push for a single bag per household limit, which is reasonable with weekly pick-up.
Waste management is currently good and well funded. It does not need more but it does not need less.
We have a good system
We wasted a lot of money with the waste deposal on Burwell just because the Mayor doesnt like Bob McGaig when it could have been leased a lot cheaper.
well done new recycling centre works well
Would love to see:

1. Big pick up day
2. Spring/Fall cleaning days No limit to bags

### How would you adjust your property tax funding for transit in the city?

As I personally don't use the transit system I feel it would be unfair of me to make any recommendations
As it stands public transit in St Thomas. More routes need to be added, the service needs to start earlier and run later. To offset costs perhaps run on a 45 minute cycle.
Better operating hours. Currently the bus does not run when I have to go to work which means I have to have a car.
Dont increase subsidy any further.
Dont use it so no that interested in paying for it.
get rid of public transit. Subsidize cab companies. Flat fee for anywhere in st thomas
Help to allow different taxi services in the city with flat rates since the transit system sucks. Also out I. Service the trains to port Stanley!!! You'll make way more money especially in the summer
How much does each rider pay to the overall cost of the ride? In my opinion a rider should pay approx. 75% or more towards the cost of a ride. The city provides rides for approx. 675 people per day. Would taxi's, Uber etc. be more cost effective?
I do not use public transit in this city, however would love to see a commuter train from St. Thomas to Toronto. So if extra funding could be allocated to this I would be willing to put more tax funding into the transit system for this purpose
I have never used our Transit System but I do support the requirement with an aging population. Public transportation provides personal mobility and freedom for people from every walk of life. Access to public transportation gives people transportation options to get to work, go to school, visit friends, or go to a doctor's office.
i like the small buses. Seems about right size.
If the bus system could run a little later during the Christmas season when it's too cold to walk it might benefit the downtown merchants
Increase the rates of people on use the bus don't make everybody else pay for it
It's really sad when someone who doesn't drive, and can't afford a taxi can't go to an evening movie after work because the busses stop before the movie ends. Our transit system needs to lengthen the hours of operation.
later times and more routes
leave it the same
maintain existing standard, find savings to keep same budget
Make the buses more user friendly. It is near impossible to travel on the bus with more than one small child, trying to get on the bus with no help etc. Allow caregivers with strollers to use the wheelchair access if there is no disabled person using it. A stroller is needed because the child is unable to stand or walk for the distance required, the same as a wheelchair...
more buses are needed and better times for them as well
More frequent buses and later hours would be nice.
More or bigger buses are needed on school routes to reduce congestion.
My daughter lives in St Thomas, and she has a very hard time getting around due to the crappy bus service. Also in order for me to visit I have to rent a car, which is quite expensive. Why is there no bus / train service to St Thomas? Do you not want people to visit? How can we if there is no transportation to get there? I've never in my life seen a city that had absolutely no bus service to get there, kind of ridiculous don't you think, especially when St Thomas is the Railway Capital of Canada!!! PLEASE GET BUS SERVICE SO I CAN VISIT MORE!! Thank You!!

need longer hours more frequent buses
of little use to me
Offer increased hours during the week and extend to weekends. We have an increasing population of people without cars or the ability to drive them properly. Current level of service is too restrictive.
Our Public Transportation is shamefully underfunded and this causes serious problems for those of us who rely on it in order to find or maintain employment, get ourselves and / or our children to appointments, daycare, extra-curricular programs, etc, and participate in the social and economic functioning of our city. Please, please take these needs more seriously.
Our transit is not the best. The busses are painful to ride on bumpy streets; not sure if that's shocks/upkeep or the road repair department.
Paratransit and special needs transit should be addressed by an applications and needs-assessed programme. St. Thomas as a city does not require a transit system on the scale it presently has. The ratio of users to ratepayers is disproportionate with road and bridge work languishing to fund expensive transit operations that benefit too small a group that otherwise doesn't require paratransit or special needs-based transport assistance
reduce the operating hours... most of the regular buses are empty during the evenings
Routes are poor and do not go to residential areas or Formet for shifts.
Seems like a lot of money. sounds like the city is paying about \$4 per rider.
Seems to be improving every year
Study options for improved transit. Could vehicles simply be dispatched to pick up riders and take them to their destination on a cost effective basis?
The Tax Payers pay for each ride 4\$, we are not using it
The transit system is not well utilized and is not needed in a City of this size. St. Thomas transit should be shut down completely.
This was the first thing I noticed about our community. Lack of public transportation. Bad hours. Discouraged by the current system.
Transit desperately needs to be improved. More frequency, later into the evening, better routes.
Transit hours are inadequate. 7 day service and service to 11 p.m. would make this service much more user-friendly.
Transit service does not meet the needs of the community of largely elderly people. Service ends too early, rules of use are punitive and do not accommodate elderly shoppers. If more funds are to be allocated to this service major improvements should be enacted.
Transit service increased by an hour in the evening and also start Saturday service at 7.45
Very low ridership must be addressed
Would like express style routes run art 10pm and at 113ppm so people can get to work on midnights and get home on afternoons. I see many people walking in terrible weather

### How would you adjust your property tax funding for libraries in the city?

Big estate donation makes up for some loss in funding
council in this city loves to blow money on high profile sports facilities that are all used some of the time some of the year . but as soon as things get a little tight fiscally the first place they pick on is our library that is used by all walks of life all year around and more consistently than sports venues
Current level of service is adequate. Avoid duplication of programs such as the maker space which duplicates and competes with the STEAM Centre.



Don't use the library much but did go when off on Maternity leave last year. Very happy with the services provided. Would love to see additional funding for children.
Expand the library and create a green space where the old police station was
Feel the the library is very adequate
great library
Great library and programs but this would be an area I would be willing to see a cut to programming. Temporarily. The library has benefits from many changes in recent years, attention needs to be given to other areas of the City.
Happy with present library services.
i think libraries are not being used as much as in the past i would like to see it downsized and possibly be used for other city purposes before additions or building new facilities
I think that the St. Thomas Library is great, even better than London, the bigger system!
I think the library is running fantastic as is. Perhaps in future years when the estate funding runs out we will see the need for more funding to maintain the building but I would hate to see any be taken away as it is such a hub and an asset to our community
If the library did more fundraising like the art centre they wouldn't need as much funding.
leave it the same as it is being used for social and not study
Libraries are important cornerstones of a healthy community. Libraries give people the opportunity to find jobs, explore medical research, experience new ideas, get lost in wonderful stories, while at the same time providing a sense of place for gathering. Education is key to the success of our youth and community. A library plays a very important role in promoting the progress of knowledge. There are many people who love reading. But they can't afford to buy books because the prices of books are very high.
Libraries are there for everyone.
Libraries.. waste would reduce more.
Library services should be confined to collections and literacy programs only. Remainder should be eliminated. Collaboration of acquisitions and collections with Elgin County should be considered to reduce costs.
Like this but doesn't need more funds.
maintain existing standard, find savings to keep same budget
nobody reads anymore
Our library is phenomenal. It should be a model for others in comparable cities, and I am always impressed by the programmes and services offered.
Our library is the BEST!!!!
Our library services are excellent. No changes plus or minus are needed. They do a great job.
School facilities and on line accessibility duplicate a lot of library services
The libraries renovating just about every week replacing railings only a couple years after the big redo and putting roofs on when that should have been done before the re model.
The library is an important public good, deserving of significant investment of public dollars.
There are other cultural venues in the city that offer workshops as well that don't enjoy the guaranteed funding the library does. While I love the library, I'm not sure it should be the only hub for workshops and programs.
There really needs to be another branch on the southwest end of the city. The main branch is fantastic. We utilize these programs regularly. It is very far to go just to return materials or to access some of the fantastic programs. Maybe the STEAM centre had room. Or one of the museums. Something that has programs for tweens. Not many centres have programs directed at tweens in this area.
This is a wonderful facility with excellent programming.
This is the best part of St. Thomas!! But they have lots going on already.
Too much money has been spent on the Library and the difference is not really noticeable.

Since generous donations have been made, taxpayers should not have to spend any more money on renovating the Library.
Valuable city asset, always uses it money to benefit community
We use the library but we are wondering if it is not extravagance
With the advent of the Internet and many other provincial programs, I believe the library is a thing of the past. That and whenever I am there, it is under constant renovation for what appears to be for the sake of (how many times can you update the side basement entrance?).
would like to see library hours extended to Sunday's to meet the needs of school aged children and adults who work during the week.

### How would you adjust your property tax funding for continued investment in our airport?

Airport continues to get busier every year. Would like to see a corporate jet hub established if possible and I believe it is do-able
an airport is a benficial to area.
As far as I'm aware, the airport provides no public municipal services, so why should we pay for them? If someone can afford a plane, then they can pay for it themselves.
Huge growth opportunity here.
Huge growth opportunity here.
I am ignorant on the subject unfortunately.....I don't understand why we need an airport? Are there commercial flights out of St. Thomas?
I didn't know the city funded the air port that isn't really within city limits, and the money that is raised during the air show would contribute I am sure there maintenance
I feel that the airport is a under appreciated possible economic generator for this community
I think this is a huge asset that needs to have more investment made to increase opportunities for travel here.
I think this is a huge asset that needs to have more investment made to increase opportunities for travel here.
I would like to see more destinations available from the London airport
its not attracting any new business therefore get the small local business more involved
London is in close proximity. Feel the airport is a hobbyist facility and the maintenance of runways, grounds, buildings, FAA, fire Dept support, etc shouldn't be supporte by the taxpayer.
maintain existing standard, find savings to keep same budget
Make those with planes pay for it
No comment.
No increases required.
Runway 33 upgrade. Now can only be used as a taxiway.
Small amount for something we are very fortunate to have in St. Thomas.
the airport did bring business to the area
The airport is a nuisance to the residents of St. Thomas. All funding should be immediately cut to this. Prop planes continuously buzz the city at low heights. They are noisy and not needed. The hercules training plane comes to St. Thomas FAR too often and is a loud headache. St. Thomas does not need an airport and is not worth my hard earned money.
The airport seems to be more for private use, it doesn't seem right for the public to pay for something they don't have use of. That being said I don't actually know much about it, and my statement is based solely on my assumption.
The City of St Thomas does not need a public airport. Sell it to private industry or to the County

<p>of Elgin. The County reaps the benefits of business taxes etc. not the City of St Thomas. Also with London airport so near any business jets can land there without much delay in driving over to the City of St Thomas.</p> <p>Also, the city's history of running a business in poor considering Accent. I would hate to see the same financial fiasco occur about the airport. Do not spend a dime on any improvements! As I understand it, there are over 500 airports in Ontario. Do we really need one in St Thomas and does it really pay for it self?</p>
<p>Unless a definitive cost benefit analysis can present economic benefit well above the \$95,000 in direct funding, this should be a private airport especially with London International Airport a mere 25 minutes from St. Thomas.</p>
<p>what is the return on investment how much is spent compared to costs airport plans for future solar farm to raise funds, outdated, light industry buying land, they don't buy in the city seems all fabricated to get funds for runway council should have looked into this deeper seems to be a waste of money should be sold London, tillsonburg close enough</p>
<p>Why do we need a publicly funded airport?</p>
<p>Why does the city need an municipal airport? Does it help the increase the economic livelihood of St. Thomas?</p>
<p>Why not sell the bush along Elm for homes?</p>
<p>worth maintaining</p>
<p>worth maintaining</p>

**How would you adjust your property tax funding for animal services within the city?**

<p>A requirement and Animal Control Services do a great job.</p>
<p>Animal services are important in this City. Currently they receive little help from tax payers. Dogs and cats deserve to be helped when they need it. A slight increase in funding is warranted.</p>
<p>Animals need our help.. they can't speak for themselves :)</p>
<p>Control services need to be available. Shelter services, adoption and welfare should be in the hands of other providers.</p>
<p>enforcement of city bylaws would support this service.</p>
<p>Expand to being open later, more staff to provide more care.</p>
<p>Get the skunks out of town</p>
<p>Hire people who actually care about animal welfare. Some people working at the City Animal Services have a rather negative attitude. Or give more money to the rescue groups.</p>
<p>i have seen the plans to renovate the animal shelter and all i have to say is really council this is using tax dollors wisely give your head a shake</p>
<p>I love doggies</p>
<p>I think a better job could be done to deal with the residential feral cats that seem to dominate serveral neighborhoods</p>
<p>I would like to see a proper animal shelter build with a full adoption service, where various agencies from the city could work within the City owned property to encourage adoption events within St. Thomas, and having the City take a more active role in finding homes for the animals.</p>
<p>If spading were included in adoptions, there would be more adoptions and the animals would not continue to reproduce and thereby continue to come back into the system. The SPCA in Britain offers clinics for spading and other health issues to low income citizens and I would support tax dollors towards this.</p>

<p>Increase animal service funding so you can provide the following... (1) Provide an animal shelter in our community we can be proud of. Right now, not so much. (2) Use budget money to provide education for city employees, managers, clerks etc on how to operate an animal shelter. Spent part of the budget by sending your city managers, clerks, councilors and city decision makers to other communities that operate pounds. You do not have to invent a new wheel. Lots of great running pounds to model from. (3) make it mandatory all city council members and city managers visit the St Thomas pound at least once a year. You can't fix a problem if you don't understand or admit you have one.</p> <p>(4) Please stop depending on Animal Rescue groups (volunteers) that spend thousands upon thousands of fundraising dollars and thousands of volunteer hours trying to solve animal welfare issues for the City of St Thomas. They will not always be around.</p>
<p>interesting. If we decrease fire and police just a tiny bit we can increase all these other things like trees, parks, animal centre, tourism and still keep taxes down!!!!</p>
<p>It's very cruel to hold an animal in a cage. Many don't realize that being trapped in a cage causes PTSD and other mental illnesses in these animals which in many ways are like little children who are unable to communicate with humans. They are still conscious of suffering. Therefore the City of St. Thomas should build a cage-free shelter like many other cities have done to reduce the amount of suffering dogs and cats go through. It would be very EVIL to put orphaned children in cages. It's just as EVIL to put dogs and cats in cages as if they were criminals that need to be punished. Observe the difference between the cats at Pets are Friends for Life who live peacefully together in cageless rooms with the cats at Animal Aide and cats trapped in cages at the City of St. Thomas Animal services building. Many cats from Animal Aide or the City of St. Thomas are extremely anxious don't get along with other cats because they are disturbed from being trapped in a very small cage where they can hardly move. This is extremely cruel. How would you like to be trapped in a cage for hours, days and weeks - unable to move. Cats and dogs are really no different than humans except they cannot communicate how much they are suffering.</p>
<p>leave it the same- it does not seem to be working</p>
<p>maintain existing standard, find savings to keep same budget</p>
<p>More Animal bylaw enforcement, and rescue of sick animals, improved equipment, pass an animal care bylaw for officers to enforce, provide increased medical care for all animals.</p>
<p>Needs to be limits on spending. Dont build new shelter - just fix up old one. Agree with Clr Clarke - need to take care of people first!</p>
<p>No comments</p>
<p>No increase required.</p>
<p>Pay for foster programs</p>
<p>Please keep up with the times and allow us to have chickens and bees! The majority of cities allow this now. You could even charge a licence fee for them to generate some revenue. It is heartbreaking to see the bees in such decline, and to know the devastating effect that their extinction will have on our food supply, yet we aren't allowed to try and increase the population...</p> <p>Chickens are relatively easy to keep. Most of the objection seems to revolve around noise and smell, but if you had my neighbours, you'd know that dogs are much louder and smellier, it's down to responsible ownership. Maybe run a pilot project if you're too worried to change the bylaw straight off, or talk to London and Sarnia and see how they've managed it? I'd be in for that --. In times when so many are worried about food security, it seems madness not to let us take control of more of that for ourselves.</p>

It's also worrying that cats are supposed to be kept indoors. Our cats are rescue, we domesticated them from a local colony, which is now under control, thanks to charity Cat. These cats are miserable inside and destructive. They came from outside, and that's where they are happy. Several people on our street have taken on colony cats, and they have found the same. In all honestly, we have done the City a favour by taking these cats, vetting them and spaying/neutering them. We do our best, but can't change them.
Save the kitties! (and other animals)
should be made self sufficient supervisory staff should ensure it pays for itself through contracting out of our services
The shelter needs to be razed and re-designed into a larger facility. A proper computer system with a shelter management program is needed, instead of everything being on paper. Licencing needs to be actually enforced-this is a lot of lost revenue. There is no incentive for someone to buy a licence until halfway through the year when the price goes down and no one cares if you don't even buy one several years in a row; no one is held accountable. By-law officers need to do enforcement which includes education/ticketing. Also, there is no computer program to track licences/owners. Spay/neuter program is a good step, but a separate Facebook page for the shelter is needed in order to seriously increase adoptions.
There are so many disgarded animals that need care
They have been having some issues lately and could use some more help
This centre is often empty and unused.

### How would you adjust your property tax funding for council grants?

council should be ashamed of the way they have treated the st Thomas cemetery company
Eliminate grants
Excellent use of funds.
get rid of grants
Get rid of grants.
Give grants to those community groups that enhance the city.
Give grants to those community groups that enhance the city.
grants should only be for one time , not ongoing admin and operations
I am very concerned with the amount of money given to various organizations to cover what I can only assume are operating costs. Private companies that receive funds from other sources, such as the Teen Centre, St. Thomas Cemetery and Art Centre should be applying for program specific grants that have measurable community impacts, as opposed to just a general funding amount - especially given the large amount of money being directed to just those few groups. I also think that the money being given to the hospital should be made more publicly aware through the community grant program, as that is something that should be reflected here within our taxes.
I am very concerned with the amount of money given to various organizations to cover what I can only assume are operating costs. Private companies that receive funds from other sources, such as the Teen Centre, St. Thomas Cemetery and Art Centre should be applying for program specific grants that have measurable community impacts, as opposed to just a general funding amount - especially given the large amount of money being directed to just those few groups. I also think that the money being given to the hospital should be made more publicly aware through the community grant program, as that is something that should be reflected here within our taxes.
I don't want the City of St Thomas donating money to different charities etc. I would rather do it

myself based on my beliefs.
I think the cemetery is a waste. let those paying for it cover the costs. why do the residents pay?
I think the City does a great job with the distribution of grant money to those Organizations that benefit the City/Citizens.
I would not increase basic overheads but I would increase funding to council grants. The council grants should not be labelled administration; they are designed to invest in community based services. By mis-categorizing them they misleadingly inflate the percentage that appears to go to administrative overheads.
i would tend to want these programs to fund themselves. This couldnt be done immediately so we should look forward to less money but over time
If these organizations require grants to exist, then there is no need for them. I feel if the public wanted these they would fund it by other means, not via tax dollars. I may change my mind if I had any say in how these grants were distributed.
Increased funding for community mental health initiatives. Would be great if there was an increase allotted to keeping Psychiatric Survivors Network open.
Keep the same
leave the same but do not increase
Like the new system for approval of grants. Art Gallery needs to be more self- sustainable.
more funds could create more opportunities for families with low income
No grants to entities that compete with for profit business such as Cemetery.
Reduce dependency.
St Thomas cemetery is very deserving of any \$ help. They maintain a lovely old cemetery.
St. Thomas-Elgin Art Centre should be privately funded, Talbot Teen Centre is unnecessary, and the St. Thomas Cemetery should be an NPO. Too much waste and duplication of services in the recipients list.
The City is not in the business of hand outs. Cut grants to third party organizations.
There should be much more of a focus on art in this community. There is not enough focus on art for teens or youth. There are many fabulous artists in this community that gather annually for the appreciation of the arts. This could be advertised in the highschoools. To draw out the upcoming artists and their families. This could also include a small monetary donation to help fund the future advertising. Or a larger location rental.
These companies are worth while investments in our community
These groups have a major part to play in the community. I would like to see guaranteed funding for STEPAC, for example.
These organizations need to take the initiative to fundraise. The Art Centre is especially a waste because most of the artwork, in my opinion, is very ugly and pathetic. Elephants from African Lion Safari can paint better pictures. Some works of art are amazing (ie. Peter Robinson), but skillful artists are very rare.
These projects are repeated each year and other new services or existing services are limited or receive none
We call ourselves "The Railway City". All four parts of the Railway Coalition are severely underfunded. A tax break is also needed.
We do think a grant system may be misused
Would like to see Children's mental health receive some city funding to support Elgin County better

## How would you adjust your property tax funding for the Economic Development Corporation?

Again this department has misaligned its use of funds. Its focus has been on development rather than growth.
Attracting More industry and business will only improve our city.
Attracting More industry and business will only improve our city.
Council throws money away on their personal interests and there needs to be more community opinion
Does the Economic Development Corporation do enough for the "\$ 415'000?
Doesn't seem to be working.
Economic development/support for a community is vital for too many reasons to list.....
Eliminate this department completely. The state of our local economy confirms this corporation is entirely ineffective at attracting solid, sustainable, and meaningful jobs and investment in this community.
Feel that this dept is working very hard
Great job this year
How much new business did the EDC bring in during the last 5 years? Does it EDC pay for itself or would it be better to outsource this service?
I believe the municipality needs to work with others in the region as opposed to alone. I would like to see the creation of information technology investment (such as an incubator) to encourage young people to pursue these avenues as opposed to manufacturing. Manufacturing will never return en-mass.
I tend to see a lot of inter-sponsorships occurring between the EDC, Downtown Development Board, Tourism and the Small Business Centre. I feel that there could be a better use of the finances to show what the return on investment is for each group.
I tend to see a lot of inter-sponsorships occurring between the EDC, Downtown Development Board, Tourism and the Small Business Centre. I feel that there could be a better use of the finances to show what the return on investment is for each group.
If we pay this much ...work harder
Keep the same
lots of wages little value
maintain existing standard, find savings to keep same budget
necessary
necessary
no need what do they do..big expense accounts.
Our economy needs more of the opportunities created by this department
Review cost vs. benefit annually for continued funding.
Small Business Enterprise Center is a great organization. They offer support, encouragement and opportunities that will enable St. Thomas to flourish.
The City needs new, quality jobs. Money is needed to attract new businesses and rebrand this City. We are the railway city, but the rail doesn't stop here anymore. It is time to adapt to change and seek reinvestment from the private sector to give this City a boost.
The level of investment is adequate or possibly high, given the low level of results that have come from that department. Better to invest in community development initiatives that will make the city attractive to youth and new residents.
The level of investment is adequate or possibly high, given the low level of results that have come from that department. Better to invest in community development initiatives that will make

the city attractive to youth and new residents.
Think EDC could be more aggressive attracting new business
this is not working reduce if at all possible
This is very underfunded. Our community needs to put more focus on economic development.
Unfortunately, since there is a preference and priority to hire new immigrants, any residents of St. Thomas who are struggling to find a job will still struggle with unemployment. Certainly, everyone has a right to be equally considered for a job. But in Ontario, many Canadian-born citizens who are fully qualified for a particular job are actually denied job opportunities because of the preference to hire immigrants. If an immigrant is better qualified, then certainly the immigrant has a better right to a job. Equality is important. But there is no Equality in Ontario because Candian-born citizens are often denied job opportunities and therefore many end up in need of Social Assistance to make ends meet while foreigners buy up expensive real estate and drive up the real estate prices making everything unaffordable for Canadian-born citizens (this happened in Toronto).
What does this division actually do besides trips and high spending? basically a bunch of people spending tax payers money for what?? Get over Railway city... no trains anymore.. move on.
Why is the EDC spending money on a Big Top Tent???

### How would you adjust your property tax funding for tourism within the city?

Better administered by the Chamber of Commerce or a different public-private partnership \$165,000.00 is far too great a cost.
Bringing people here and getting them to stay here while they play is important for the growth of our city.
Could move Jumbo to Tiger store location and restore to original park setting
Do better than a stupid tent. Get that track running to and from port Stanley and London
Fine as is
How many tourist are visiting St. Thomas because of St. Thomas!
I am unsure of how much tourism impacts St. Thomas....what are tourists coming to St. Thomas for?
I believe our railway history should be our future attraction as a destination.
I don't think it's fair to not participate in doors open Ontario because of the big top tent. Lower income families who went to doors open would not even be able to afford to go to anything in the big top. That's a sad excuse!
I think the business that benefit from tourism should pay for this cost.
I was disappointed with the decision to bring the "big top" to town, as it is highly inaccessible to the citizens of St. Thomas without a significant cash outlay to attend events. We have space at both Memorial Arena and Timken Arena that could be better used and more accessible for concerts, as are our parks which also could be better utilized for more "bring people to town" events. We also have events like Iron Horse and Ribfest that are trying to bring people into town and continue to use the Elgin County Rail area, which is not ideal - if the City wants to encourage people to hold events, they should be providing more investments to make those areas places where people want to go, instead of leaving it to the organizers to create that space with little to no funding.
I'm not sure attracting people to St. Thomas as a tourism destination is the best expenditure of funds. We don't have the hospitality infrastructure to be a tourist draw.
It's cheap and at least brings people in to spend at local restaurants.



Keep up the good work.
leave the same handing out free stuff gets most mileage
maintain existing standard, find savings to keep same budget
More advertising and greater variety of programming needs to be put into town festivals. Comic Con during the Iron Horse festival was a good start.... But it wasn't enough
More tourism in the city is always a good thing.
necessary
Same as EDC, it has focused resources on development rather than growth. Costing existing assets while benefiting a few new ones.
St. Thomas proud continues to be an incredible slogan. I believe St. Thomas needs offer a decent hotel to keep additional revenue from the many hockey, and baseball tournaments, skating competitions and not even considering out of town wedding guests. Currently we those tourism dollars to London. Let build one on the old Timken lot. With the new park going in on Burwell great opportunities lay ahead.
Talbot St. Has a long way to go ! Would like to see bump outs for Cafe, etc. More beautification
That build on \Talbot that was built is a complete waste of money its never open and no knows its there when people hear St Thomas it should be about Jumbo and the railway and we waste money on things like this
There is much more that can be done to make St Thomas a more attractive community. Such as planting more flowers. There is not enough gardening done by the city. Pinafore park is so delightful. It is a shame that the others parks are not even half as attractive. We are very hopeful the new elavated park will have an equally attractive entrance. Aided by our city. Projects like this make St Thomas a much more attractive destination. Hopefully our city will continue to support and add to this project.
This department has been pivotal in creating a sense of civic pride and renewed interest in our community. It is understaffed relative to the results it has generated over the past couple of years.
This is a ruze and a waste of money. Change the trains into commuter trains like promised so we can get people to work. You want tourism??? Help People get here!
Tourism is great for our economy and great for our community they provide so many fun activities downtown as well as on the city as a whole
Tourism provides a number of social and economic benefits that we should always be capitalizing on.
We have nothing to offer for tourism. It's a door mat for port Stanley
What a waste taking all the tracks out to then put them back in again !!
Who wants to come here with the current state of our City. It is embarrassing that we encourage people to come given the shape of our infrastructure deficit. Invest in our City first, then bring people here when we can be proud to show off the City.

**How would you adjust your property tax funding to affect maintenance within the Downtown area?**

Continue expanding branding, presumably the rail theme introduced to the west end.
Council has wasted so much on this statues and miss spelled signs
Current Council is doing a tremendous job trying to make Talbot Street, especially thew West end and entrance more attractive and welcoming. Keep up the great work!
Default
Downtown businesses pay high taxes that should fund snow removal and sidewalk

maintenance. Flower baskets and banners should be funded by interested groups.
Ensuring that downtown businesses are wheelchair friendly
Fine as is
hold the line on this there seems to be no payback
I think everything looks nice and is really coming along, but I also think things could be more practical. The lovely landscaping can actually make it hard to see oncoming traffic while driving. Just saying....
I would like to see a vacancy tax put in place, as opposed to the current rebate program, whereby if space remains empty for greater than 6 months, a charge is levied, in the hopes that it will encourage those holding properties to get them fixed up and filled. There is no incentive to fill that empty space at this time and as a result the gapped tooth "Store" "Empty" pattern continues.
I would love to see more investment in existing structures in this town. I'd like to see buildings valued and repurposed. While new builds are always appealing, there's something to be said for the stewardship of revitalizing existing infrastructure.
I'm impressed with the updates & changes.
Important to have attractive downtown. First impressions are important
In terms of weed control it may not be a bad idea for the mayor and city council to take a walk about and see just how the money is being spent; as clearly the weed control isn't working.
It is embarrassing how dirty our downtown still is more clean up please.
It is starting to look quite inviting downtown
it's a waste
Love the new look of west end of Talbot St- very happy the city chose to make a design investment and to continue it through the rest of downtown Talbot St.
Loving the cleanup of downtown. Really improving the appearance of our city.
Our current DDB has done amazing things with the budget provided, I really hope the city continues with the downtown revitalization and that isn't Taken from their budget
Our Downtown core is run down and dilapidated. It is outdated and desperately needs attention. Increase funding to help bring back to the downtown!
Pedestrianize Talbot Street from Queen to Princess. This has done wonders in the UK because now people have to walk past stores, and are tempted by window shopping, rather than going straight to one store and leaving. Require that store fronts be used as store fronts or displays (if no store is there), increase taxes on owners using them purely for ugly storage. Make it a destination. Somewhere that people will want to visit.
Reallocation of budget distribution would result in a better tax spread and a reduction in taxes. Our taxes were to go up by the published amount and actually have surpassed that increase figure. How can you make an increase without finalizing the budget?
Same as above
Seems like the downtown gets more funding than other parts of the town, all parts of our town are important.
Seems really clean. I like the funds for owners to fix it up. Some awesome old buildings to return to good condition
should be a levy by the BIA
The aesthetic would improve for the City by actually enforcing the property standards by-law and it would encourage people from other areas to buy or live in the City. It doesn't cost a lot of money to pick up your garbage and dispose of it properly. Eliminating the dog feces all over the sidewalk. Maybe you need to have proper animal disposal units to encourage people to pick up their animal's wastes.
The City should more aggressively pursue destruction and redevelopment of dilapidated properties in the downtown and other areas of the city.

There is a clear deficit of investments in our core infrastructure. Things have improved considerably but the pace of investment needs to increase in order to catch up.

Wherever the money goes, it would be nice to have 1 term of council with NO budget increase.

Why just the downtown area? The whole city needs attention. I think you are showing discrimination against the average neighbourhood in all of St Thomas when you just say "downtown area".

If the downtown area needs or wants more maintenance they should pay for it. They are all profit making organizations.

You need to get rid of the scummy people downtown before people will go down there no matter how nice I make it.