



Budget Simulator Public Consultation Results

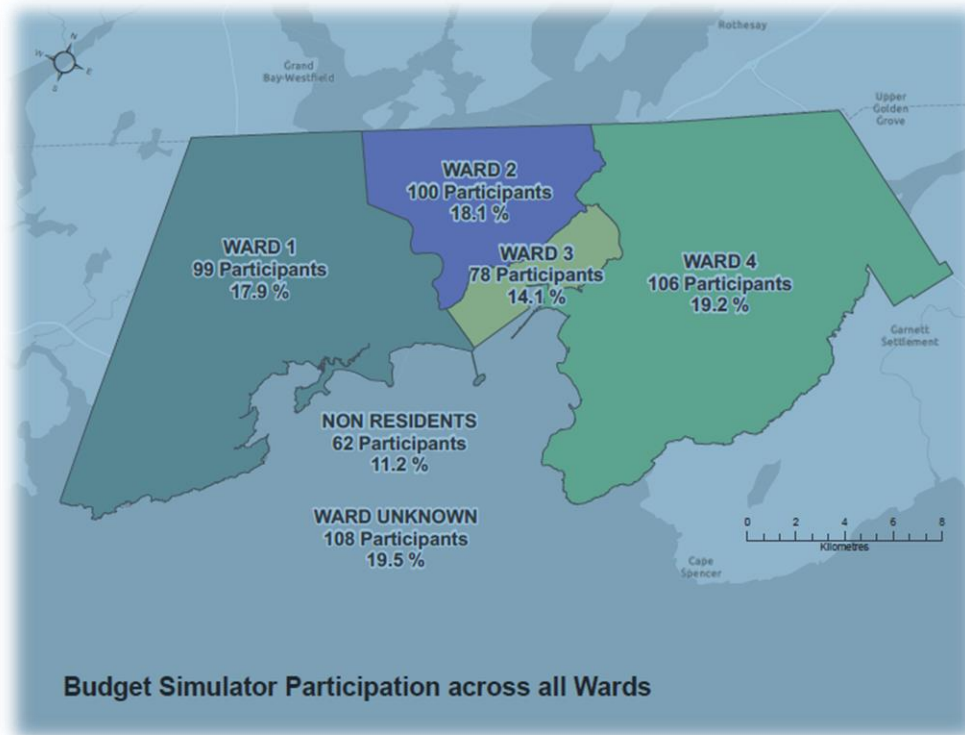
Update to Finance Committee July 18, 2019



Public Consultation- Demographics

Demographic Information

- There was almost equal participation across all wards.



Public Consultation- Verification

Verification of Results

- The privacy of individuals was maintained and respected while performing verification procedures.
- Data was reviewed for any duplication of responses or trending that may have occurred due to inappropriate activity.
- Five tests were performed.
- Through this process all results appeared to be valid.

Public Consultation- Summary

Summary of Results

- 553 responses received
- Amount of responses received was acceptable and was considered to be a positive uptake in level of participation.
- 195 participants (35%) balanced their budgets.
- 358 participants were not able to balance the budget, leaving a deficit.
- Based on average results from participants, the average participant was only able to identify 43% of the shortfall.
 - Simulator challenge was to identify \$9 million in value and the average changes made reduced the shortfall by \$3.9 million (more than \$5 million of deficit remaining).

Public Consultation- Summary of Themes

Tax Rate Results

- Participants response on tax rate increase was mixed:
- Summarized responses excluding non-residents and renters were as follows:
 - 50% of participants either chose to maintain the tax rate or decrease the tax rate
 - 32% of participants did not change the tax rate
 - 18% of participants chose to reduce the tax rate
 - 50% of participants chose to increase the tax rate
 - Average increase of property tax rates was close to a one-cent increase.

Change in Taxes	# Respondents	% Respondents	% Respondents (Renters and Non-Residents Removed)
+ 3 Cents	174	32%	28%
+ 2 Cents	60	11%	11%
+ 1 Cent	62	11%	10%
No Change	161	29%	32%
- 1 Cent	41	7%	8%
- 2 Cents	18	3%	4%
- 3 Cents	37	7%	7%



Public Consultation- Summary of Themes (continued)

Service Area Results

- Average Participants would tolerate a reduction in service levels, budget reductions varied from 1.5% to 19% depending on the service:
 - Budget cuts were across all service areas (no service area received an increase in budget).
- Based on Percentage of Budget:
 - Average percentage budget reductions were **higher** for Economic Development, Transit Services, Recreation Programming, Sports Facilities and One Stop Development Shop /Property Compliance Programs; and
 - Average percentage budget reductions were **lower** for Road Maintenance and Snow Control Streets and Sidewalks.
- Based on dollar allocations, the **highest average budget reductions** were in Police Services, Fire Rescue and Suppression Services and EMO, Economic Development, and Transit Services.

Public Consultation- Summary of Themes (continued)

Dollar Allocation Results

- Average total budget reduction is approximately \$4.0 million; 4 areas comprise almost 78% (\$3.1 million) of those reductions:
 - Police Services- \$1.2 million
 - Fire Rescue and Suppression Services and EMO- \$884,000
 - Economic Development- \$558,000
 - Transit Services- \$470,000



Public Consultation- Summary of Themes (continued)

Revenue Generation Results

- 189 comments received in relation to Revenue Generation
- Common Themes referenced in comments included:
 - Non Resident User fees and taxes
 - Tolls on City Roads
 - Charges to neighboring communities for services
 - Taxation of Heavy Industry.

Public Consultation- Summary of Themes (continued)

Community Facilities Results

- 106 respondents commented on community facilities.
- Respondents generally acknowledged the importance of these facilities to life in the City.
- Many respondents indicated that there should be alternative funding models and some indicated the closure of facilities.
- The most frequent comments were related to higher contributions from users outside the City, either in the form of higher contributions from communities, a change in the funding formula, user fees, or contributions to capital.

Public Consultation- Summary of Themes (continued)

The City's positive attributes

- Building awareness about the City's positive attributes was a theme found in the General Comments section.

Comments from participant:

“As a new resident, I see opportunity where many long term residents see negativity. And people here don't seem to travel as much so they don't realize how fortunate they are compared to many other cities.”

“We need to brag up our amazing parks, beaches, trails, etc more. There is so much to do here. Such a healthy and fun lifestyle to be had here. The people are amazing and so is the landscape.”



Public Consultation- Communication Results

Additional Information

- Communication efforts for the simulator exercise were well received. Social media engagement included 4,339 shares, clicks, likes or comments (as of April 2).
- Total YouTube video views of service area profiles (as of April 12) were 2,812.
- Additional comments provided throughout the budget simulator indicated a high level of engagement and interaction.
- Response rate provided the ability to gather themes for the Long Term Financial Plan.



Public Consultation- Results

Questions?

