



Public Opinion Research

Edmonton

2024 Budget Survey Results

Corporate Research
edmonton.ca/research

December 2, 2024 - City Council | FCS02529rev

Context and Methodology

The City of Edmonton conducted public opinion research to understand Edmontonians' financial situations, and their opinion on potential adjustments to City services, user fees and the annual property tax increase.

An online survey was conducted on Edmonton Insight Community between October 3 and 10, 2024. A total of 528 respondents completed the survey. Survey respondents are reflective* of age, gender, income and regional proportions of Edmontonians.

A margin of error is not reported as the study used non-probability sampling. If the study was conducted using probabilistic sampling, margin of error for a sample of 528 would be ± 4.3 per cent.

**More details on methodology can be found on the next page.*

Detailed Methodology

- Rigorous public opinion research methodologies and controls were implemented for this study to ensure the samples accurately reflect the demographics of Edmontonians in terms of gender (female, male, gender minority), age (18-34, 35-54, 55+), five geographical quadrants (NE, NW, SE, SW and Central) and income (under \$60,000, \$60,000-\$99,999, \$100,000 - \$149,999, \$150,000+).
- This survey was shared with about 2,000 members of the Edmonton Insight Community (EIC), instead of all members of the EIC. A stratified sampling approach was adopted using 2021 Census data from Statistics Canada, existing demographic information of the EIC members, and historical response rates on the EIC. Quotas were set by gender, age, and quadrant.
- After the survey was closed, data was weighted using 2021 Census data from Statistics Canada to match the Edmonton population. All weighting factors were between 0.8 and 1.6 as a result of precise sampling.

Key Insights

- Few respondents (16 per cent) are comfortable with further increase in property tax. Comfort level is higher for increased user fees (42 per cent) and service reductions (33 per cent).
- Few respondents (26 per cent) support a higher tax increase to keep the same services. Support is higher (49 per cent) for a reduction in services to keep the tax increase close to seven per cent.
- The majority of survey respondents (61 per cent) indicate that their financial situation has become more challenging, compared to the same time last year.

Detailed Results

Survey Preamble:

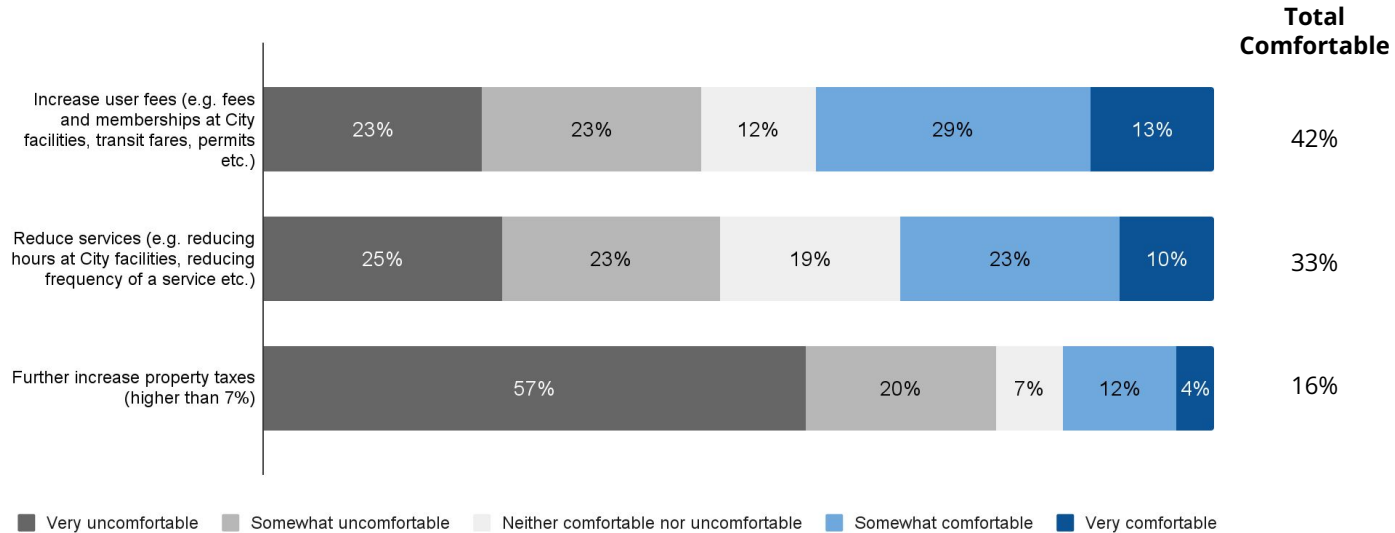
The City has 70+ services, such as fire rescue and transit. [*View a list of services.*](#) Some services are partially funded through user fees, like admissions for attractions and City facilities, transit fares and development permits. **This spring, Council approved a seven per cent property tax increase in 2025, largely to maintain existing services and user fees.**

The City is currently forecasting a deficit of \$34 million this year as inflationary pressures, a rapidly growing population and changing service needs of Edmontonians are continuing to impact City finances. These challenges mean the City is delivering services beyond what the current budget can support.

A combination of service reductions, user fee increases and a further property tax increase (above what Council already approved) is required in 2025 and over the next several years to prevent future deficits and ensure the City's continued financial stability.

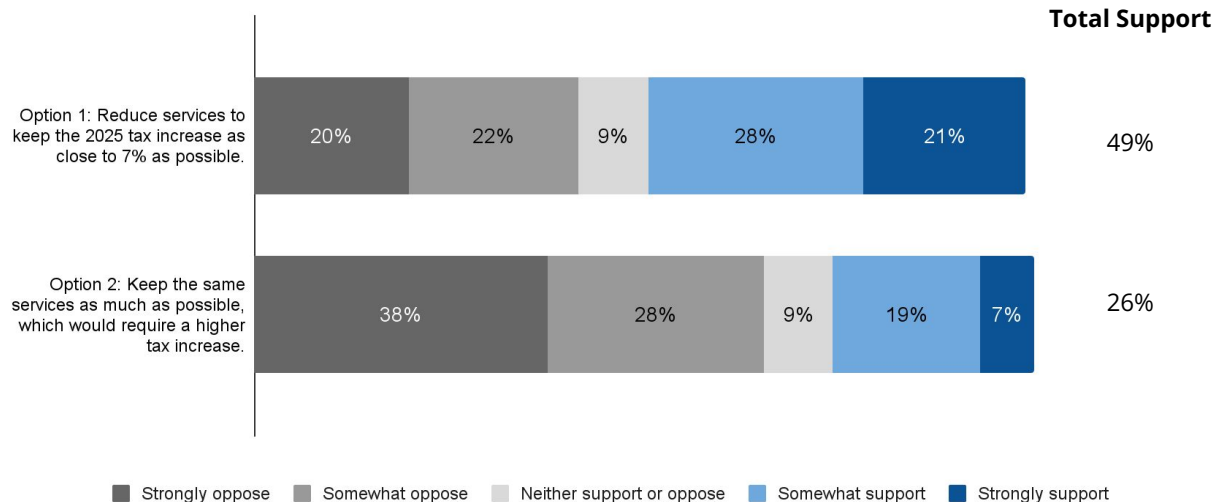
Comfort with Potential Adjustments

Survey respondents are the most comfortable (42 per cent) with increases in user fees, followed by service reductions (33 per cent). Respondents are the least comfortable (16 per cent) with a further increase in taxes above what was already approved.

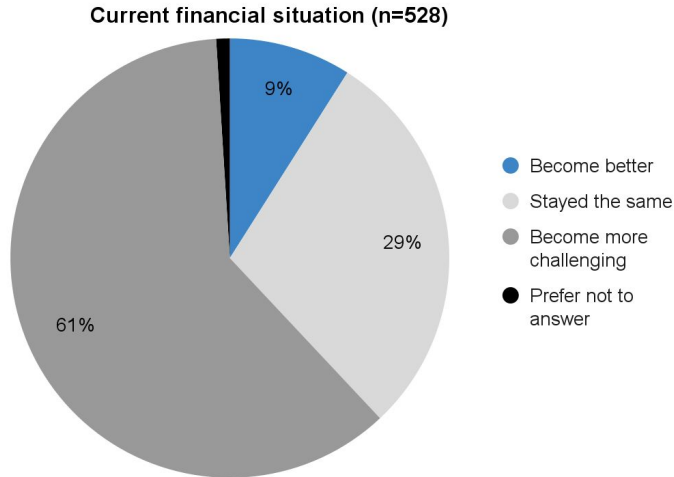


Support of Potential Adjustments

Almost half (49 per cent) of the survey respondents support a reduction in services to keep the tax increase as close to seven per cent as possible, while one quarter (26 per cent) support keeping the same services with a higher tax increase.

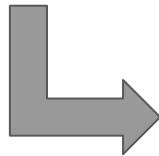


Current Household Financial Situation



The majority (61%) of survey respondents indicate that their financial situation has become more challenging, compared to the same time last year.

The top reason that contributed to a more challenging financial situation is increased cost of living or inflation.



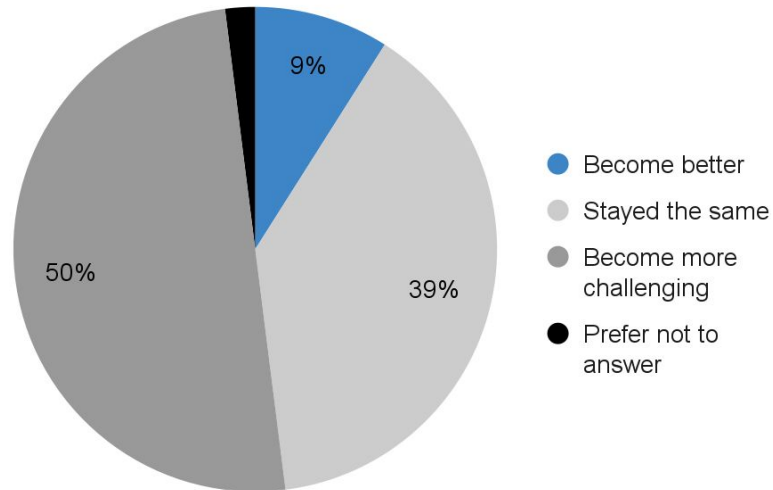
Among those who indicate their financial situation has become more challenging

Reasons for a more challenging financial situation	n=310
Increased cost of living/inflation	93%
Higher housing costs (rent or mortgage)	55%
Increased healthcare expenses	31%
Job loss or reduced work hours	23%
Reduced income from investments/savings	16%
Other	23%



Household Financial Situation Next 12 Months

Half of the respondents think their financial situation will become more challenging in the next 12 months.



Other Comments

Potential solutions	25%
<i>Focus on services with the most impact to residents</i>	6%
<i>Innovate/look for other revenue streams</i>	5%
<i>Improve efficiency of how Administration works (duplication of positions, project spending, staff reduction, etc.)</i>	5%
<i>Cut services/make tough choices</i>	4%
<i>Prioritize projects</i>	4%
<i>Increase user fees</i>	2%
The City should manage finances responsibly	25%
<i>Reduce spending</i>	13%
<i>Not satisfied with City's spending priorities</i>	12%

Do not increase taxes	16%
<i>Financial struggles</i>	7%
<i>Don't raise taxes/can't afford a tax increase</i>	7%
<i>Lower the taxes/tax is already too high</i>	2%
Find service efficiencies	8%
<i>Do not reduce services as the most vulnerable needs them</i>	5%
<i>Not happy with how certain services or their funding works</i>	2%
Other orders of government should do their part	5%
Willing to pay more taxes	2%
Reduce Council compensation	2%
Others	7%
No answer/no comment	47%

Demographics

Gender	n=528 Unweighted	n=528 Weighted Final	Census Proportions
Female	49%	51%	51%
Male	50%	48%	49%
Gender minority	1%	1%	Not available
Region	n=528 Unweighted	n=528 Weighted Final	Census Proportions
Northwest	16%	15%	17%
Northeast	17%	17%	17%
Central	12%	13%	13%
Southwest	35%	34%	33%
Southeast	20%	20%	20%

Demographics

Age	n=528 Unweighted	n=528 Weighted Final	Census Proportions
18 to 34 years old	30%	31%	32%
35 to 54 years old	36%	37%	36%
55+ years old	34%	33%	32%
Annual household income	n=528 Unweighted	n=528 Weighted Final	Census Proportions
Under \$60,000	17%	27%	30%
\$60,000 to \$99,999	24%	23%	26%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	23%	20%	22%
\$150,000 or more	27%	21%	22%
I prefer not to answer/other	9%	9%	Not applicable

Demographics

Residence	n=528
Live in Edmonton	100%
Own residential property in Edmonton	76%
Own commercial property in Edmonton	3%
Business Owner	n=528
Yes	7%
No	93%
Identify as...	n=528
Racialized/visible minority	9%
Persons with disabilities	12%
Indigenous	1%
New to Canada (less than 5 years)	1%
Born outside Canada	5%
LGBTQ2SIA+	6%
Other	4%
None of the above	61%

Employment Status	n=528
Employed full-time	53%
Employed part-time	6%
Student	5%
Unemployed/unable to work	4%
Homemaker	1%
Retired	25%
Other	4%
City Employee	n=528
Yes	10%
No	90%
Children in household	n=528
Yes	23%
No	77%

Questions?

E-mail research@edmonton.ca for more information, or visit edmonton.ca/surveys

Interested in the Edmonton Insight Community?

Go to edmontoninsightcommunity.ca to join or learn more.

Looking for data?

Visit data.edmonton.ca to find this and other City of Edmonton data on the Open Data Portal.

Corporate Research
Office of the Chief Communications Officer

