

Budget 2025: Creating our Budget – Survey Results

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Presentation to Middlesex Centre Municipal Council | Oct. 2, 2024

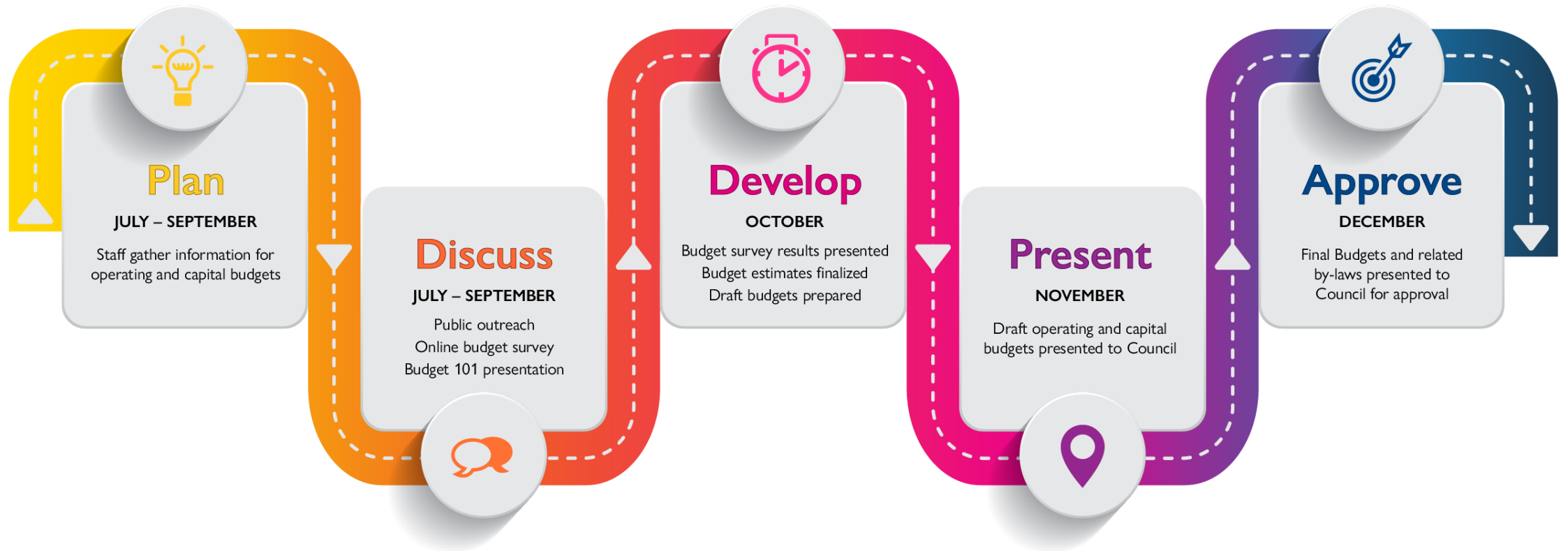


About the 2025 Budget Survey

- 395 Total Responses
- **THANK YOU to everyone that completed the survey!**
- Opened July 8 to August 25, 2024
- Advertised on tax bill insert, website, social media, e-newsletter and municipal page in Middlesex Banner and in Ilderton Villager and Kilworth-Komoka-Delaware Villager
- Results will be used to inform the 2025 Capital and Operating Budgets for Middlesex Centre, as outlined in Budget Road Map



Middlesex Centre BUDGET ROAD MAP 2025



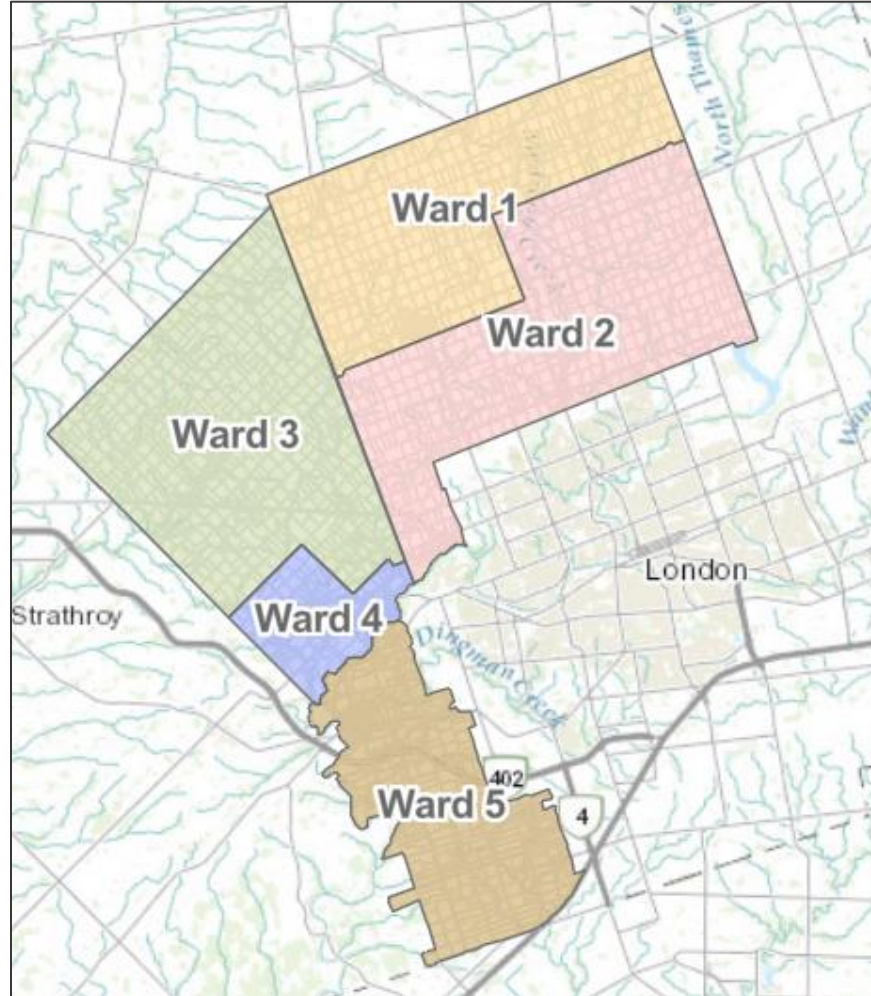


Budget Survey Structure

- Survey structure:
 - After several years of asking many questions on the importance and satisfaction with specific services that yielded similar results each year, moved to a shorter survey with less questions overall.
 - Added an additional question specific on infrastructure spending.
 - Two questions provided space for written responses:
 - One asked what the residents would spend the money on if Middlesex Centre “won the lottery” and received \$250,000 in extra funds that could be spent on any program or service.
 - One asked for any additional comments that should be considered during the 2025 budget deliberations.
- Additional section as questions about communications and customer service experiences (coming from the recent Customer Service Review). These results will be summarized for Council as part of the annual customer service update.
- Several questions provided demographic information.

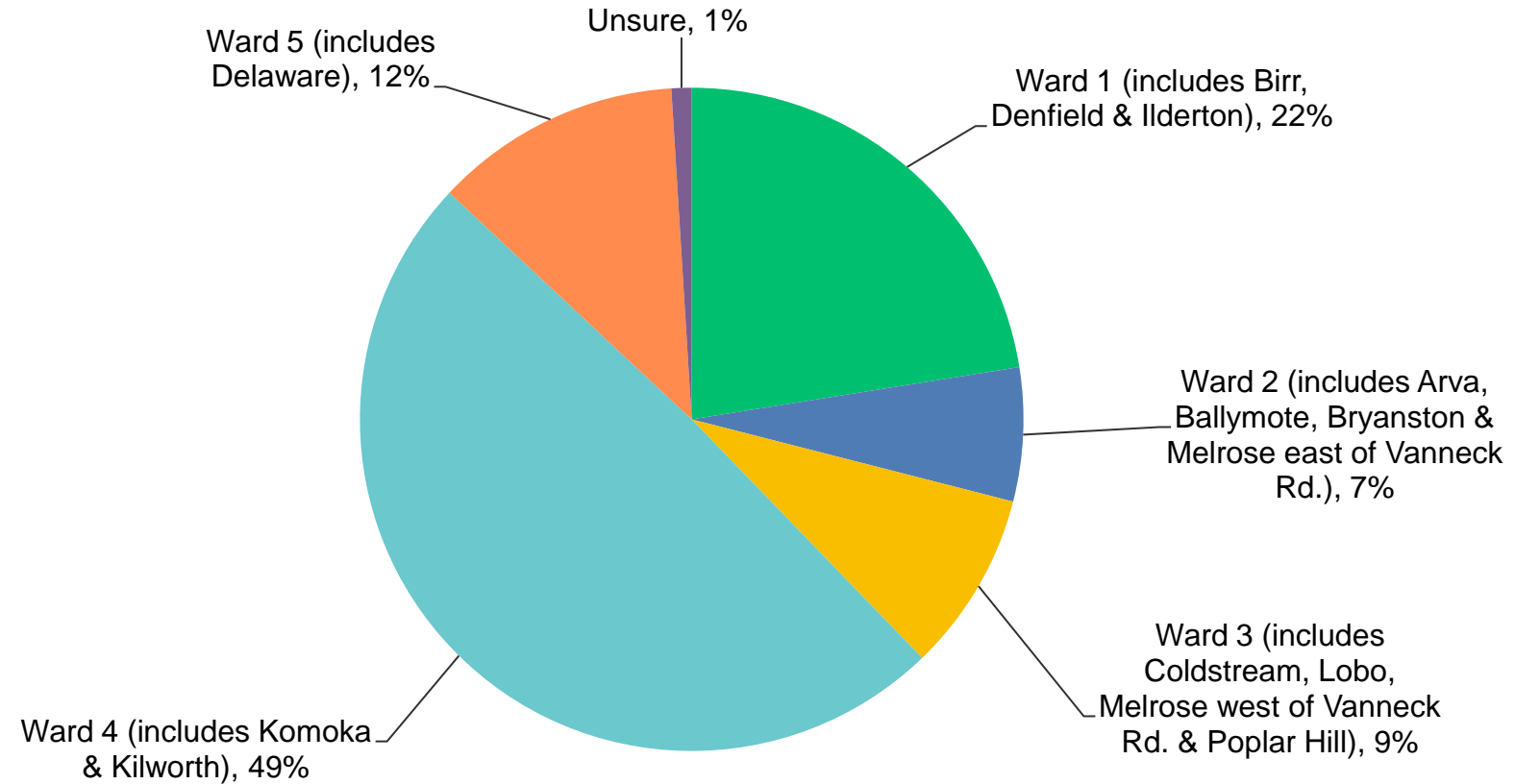


About the Responding Residents



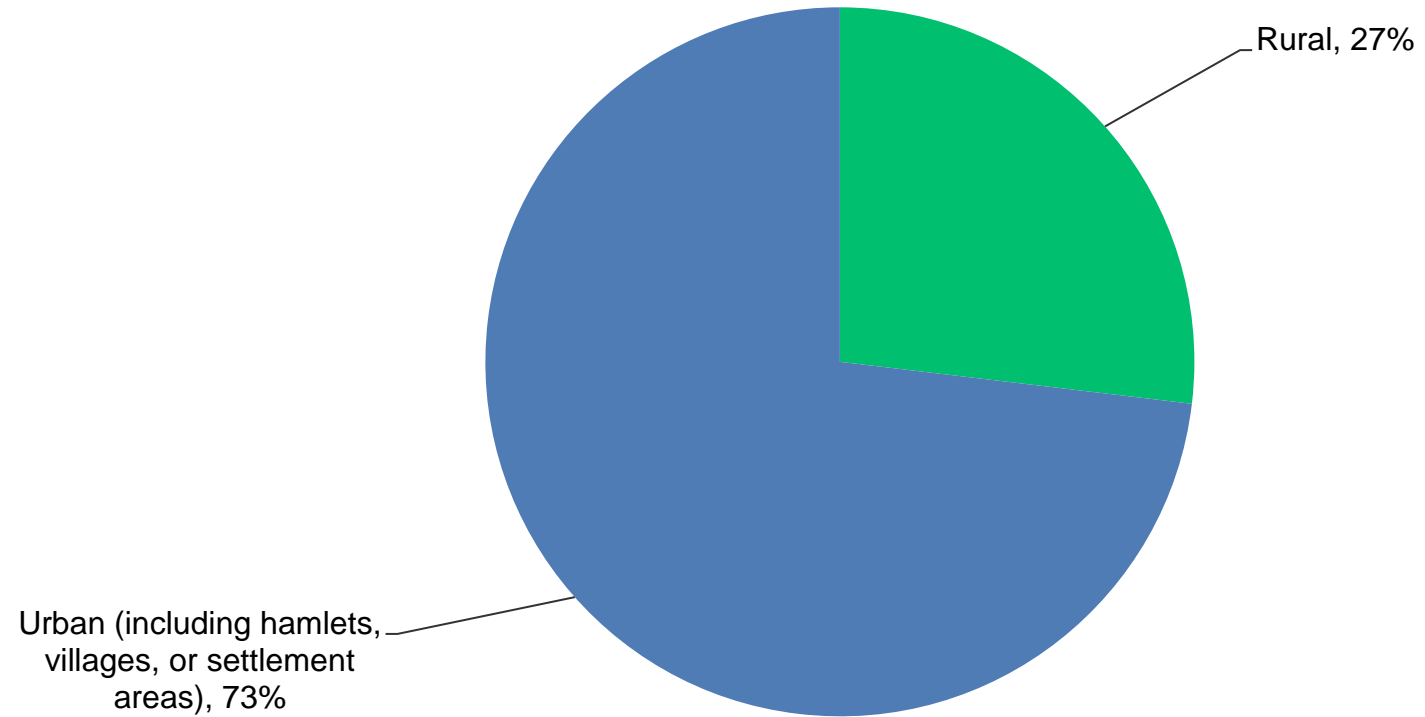
Q21: Where in Middlesex Centre do you live?

Answered: 307 Skipped: 88



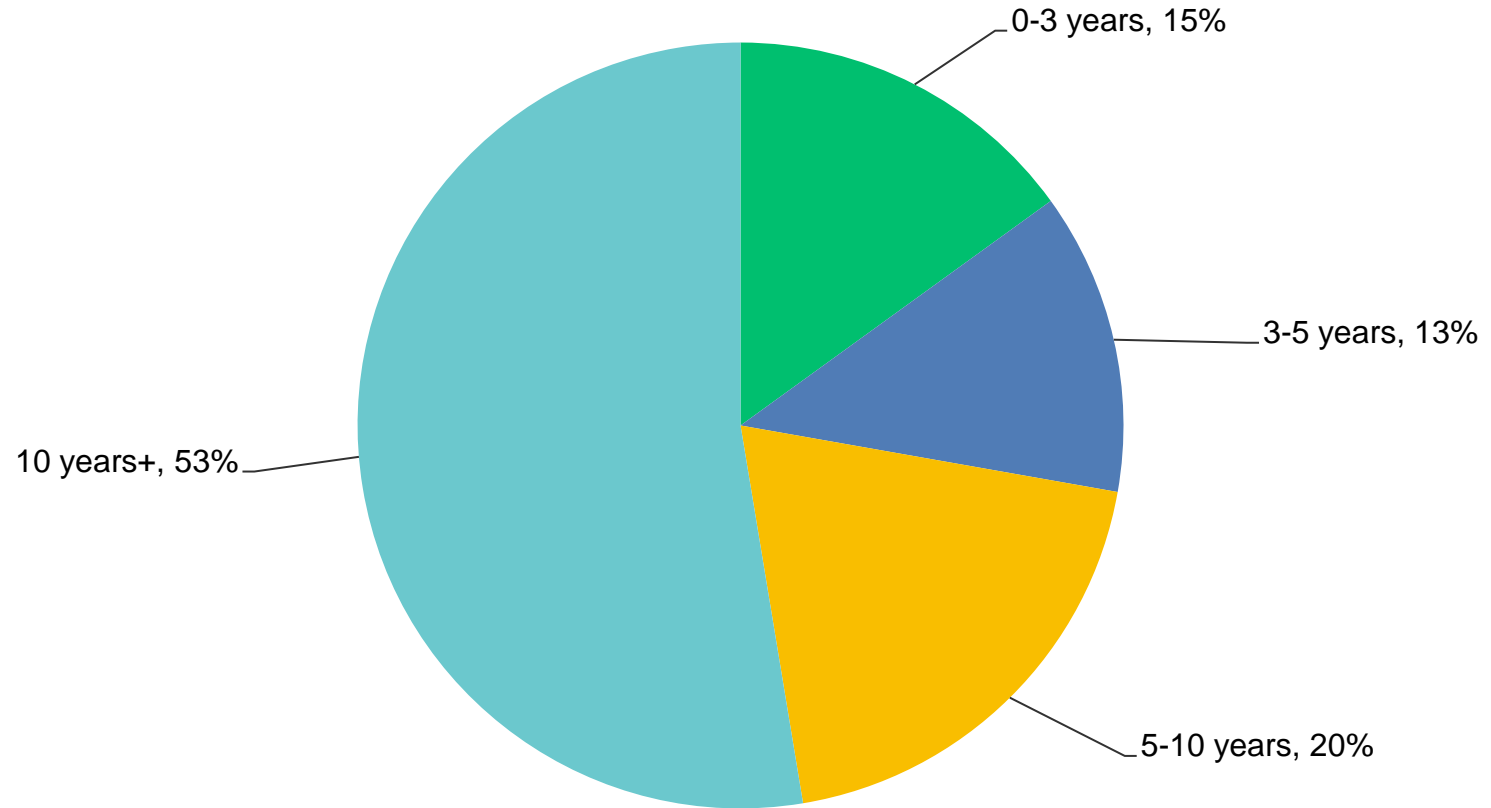
Q22: Would you describe your home as being in a rural or urban setting?

Answered: 305 Skipped: 90



Q23: How long have you lived in Middlesex Centre?

Answered: 306 Skipped: 89



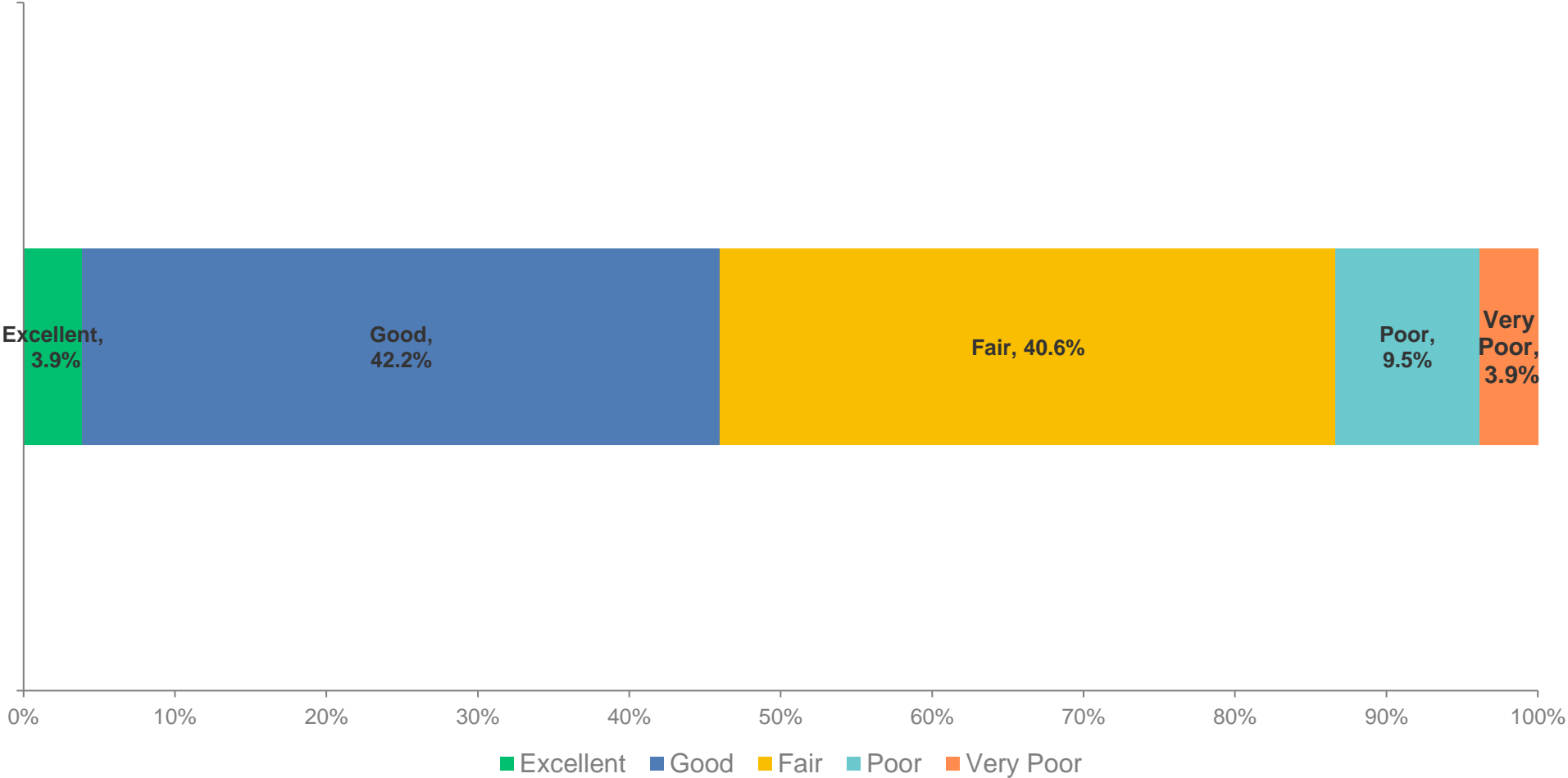


What We Heard



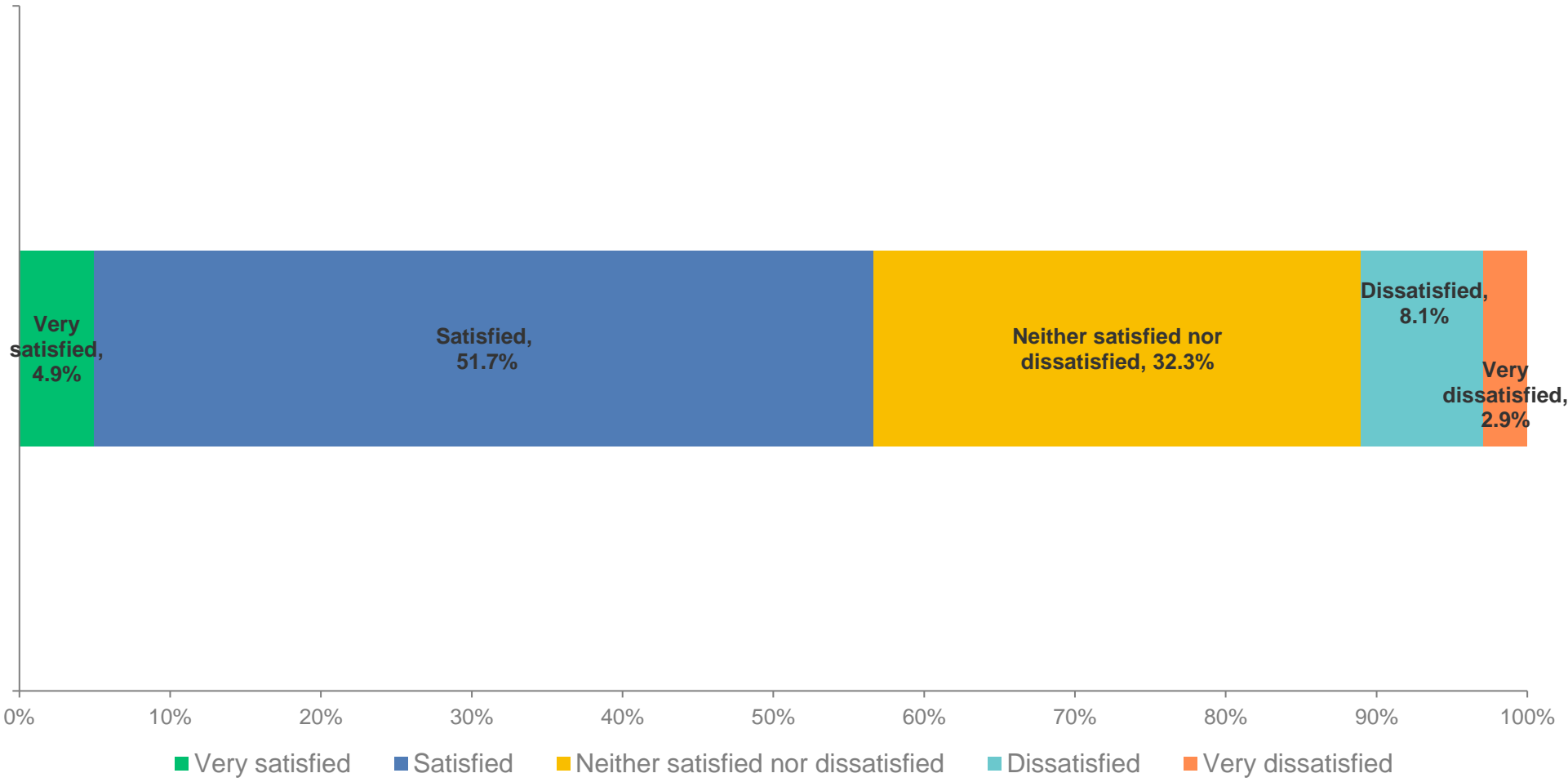
Q1: Thinking about the part of your taxes that go to Middlesex Centre, how would you rate the overall value you received for your tax dollars?

Answered: 389 Skipped: 6



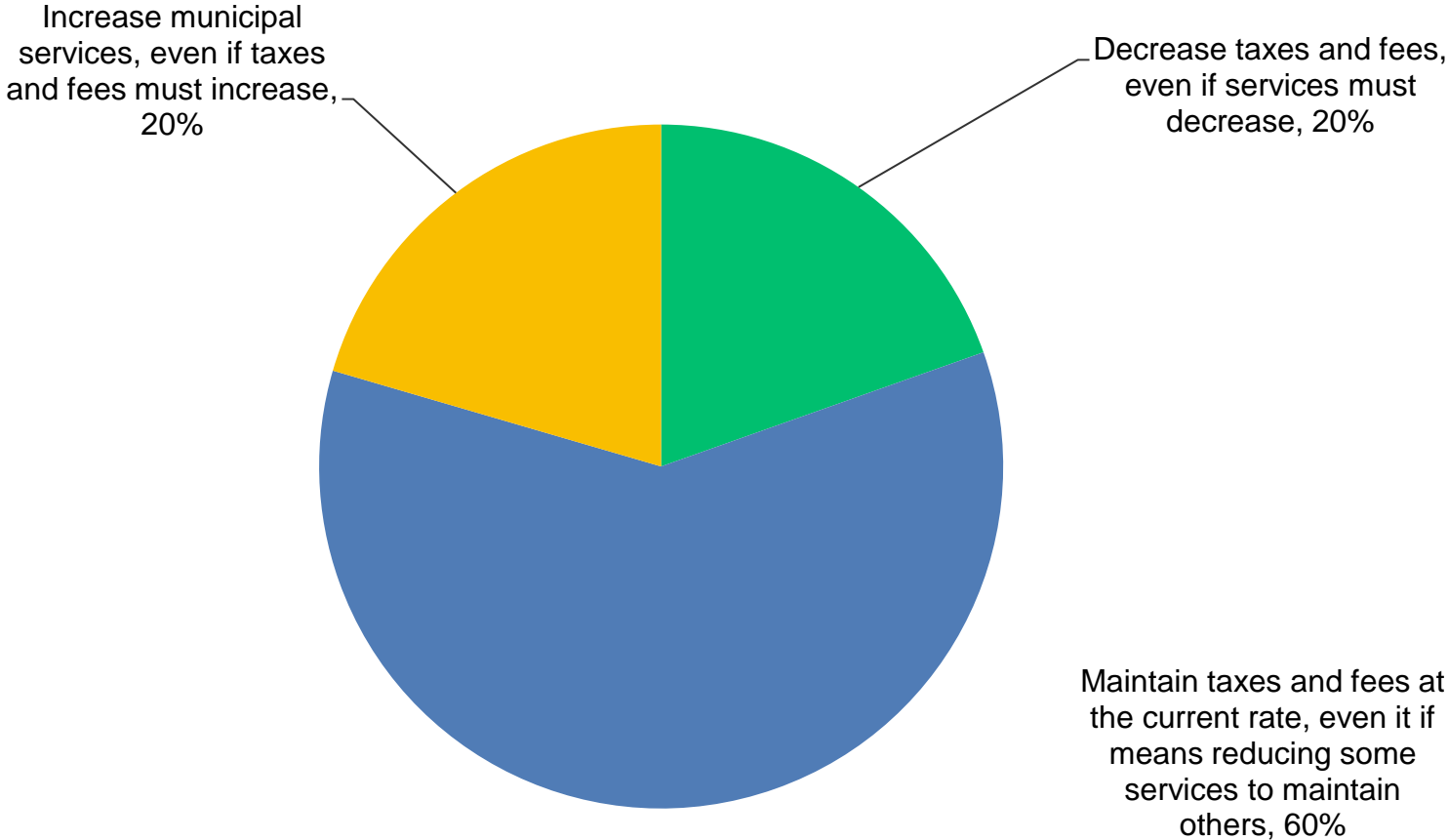
Q2: Overall, how satisfied are you with the delivery of all the services provided by Middlesex Centre?

Answered: 344 Skipped: 51



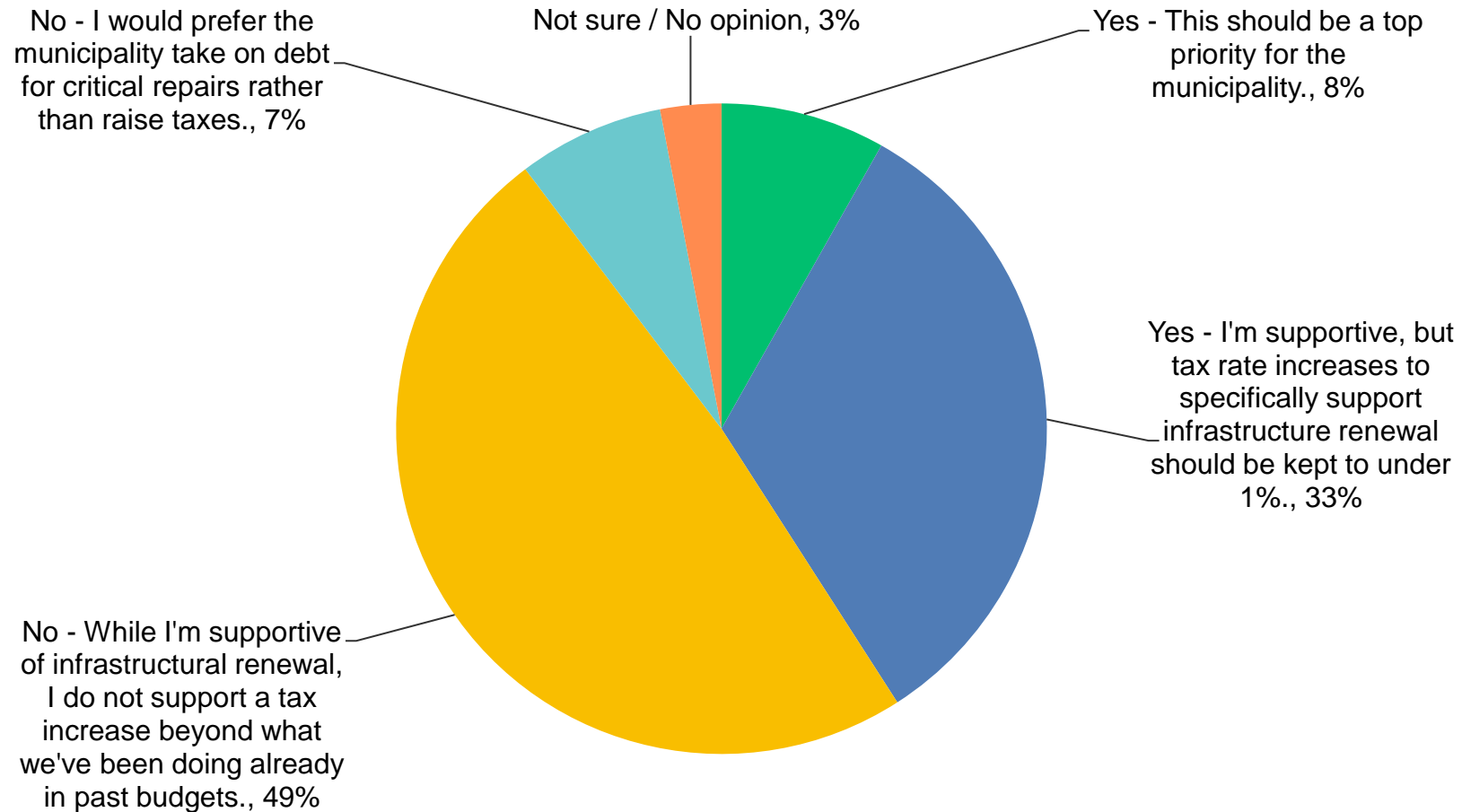
Q4: When thinking about the municipal budget and your tax dollars, which statement comes closest to your point of view?

Answered: 332 Skipped: 63



Q5: Would you support increasing property taxes specifically for infrastructure renewal?

Answered: 330 Skipped: 65





Written Comments from Survey

- Residents were asked two questions that required written responses:
 - If the municipality "won the lottery" and received \$250,000 in extra funds that could go to any municipal program or service, what would you put it towards? (296 responses)
 - Please provide any additional comments that you would like to be considered during the 2025 Budget deliberations (178 responses)
- Staff sorted and combined responses on similar issues / topics. If a resident commented on more than one issue in a response, their response was split to allow for response to each topic.
- Sharing the Comments:
 - All comments compiled and provided to Middlesex Centre's departments for consideration in the budget preparations.
 - Comments received will be posted to the Budget 2025 webpage with this presentation. Overview follows.

Q3: If the municipality "won the lottery" and received \$250,000 in extra funds that could go to any municipal program or service, what would you put it towards?

Answered: 296 Skipped: 99

- Residents indicated they would put our fictional “lottery winnings” towards:
 - **Parks & Recreation** – programs, parks and facilities (including arenas, recreation centres and a pool): 105 comments
 - **Active Transportation Routes** – trails, sidewalks and bike paths: 52 comments
 - **Roads Maintenance & Improvements** (including street lighting): 45 comments
 - **Decreasing Taxes, Water Rates & Other Government Spending**: 28 comments
 - **Fire and Emergency Services** – 17 comments
 - **Traffic & Traffic Controls** – 15 comments



Q6: Please provide any additional comments that you would like to be considered during the 2025 Budget deliberations.

Answered: 178 Skipped: 217

- Themes seen in the comments include:
 - **Keeping government spending in check and reducing taxes:** 43 comments
 - “Cost of living is skyrocketed. Any measures to support minimizing the cost would be great”*
 - “Of course we are happy to see our tax payer dollars at work.... I don’t just give free rein to just raise taxes and go crazy but doing it in moderation helps everyone. We like to take care of our community as we are proud of it. I think there is a happy medium in raising taxes so as not to financially strap citizens but to get the jobs done.”*
 - **Spending on parks and recreation programs and services:** 32 comments
 - “Keep green areas like parks and trails, make them more affordable and accessible to all”*
 - “More recreational programs.”*
 - “Add off leash dog area. It’s social action for neighbourhoods, not dogs. The dogs get the side benefit.”*
 - **Traffic concerns and general roads issues:** 28 comments
 - “would like to see traffic volume & speeding issues addressed as a priority”*
 - **Calls for active transportation routes (sidewalks, trails, etc.):** 21 comments
 - “Consider walking and biking trails. Make sure all road upgrades and resurfacing accounts for a bike lane”*
 - **Concerns about the pace of growth and related infrastructure:** 20 comments
 - “Less commercial development, and more focus on preservation of farmland and support to local farmers.”*
- There were several topical issues including concerns about flooding in Ilderton and area-specific topics like gravel road conversion.



Issues Outside of Municipal Control

- Some of the comments dealt with issues outside of municipal control:
 - Concerns about power outages
 - Calls for increased local health care / physicians
 - Calls for more schools and daycare facilities
 - Issues with unassumed municipal roads and infrastructure
 - Support for local libraries
 - Comments clearly referencing other municipalities
- Where appropriate, these issues will be shared with lead agency or government department.



Written Comments from Survey – Take Aways

- **For both questions, reducing taxes and/or controlling government spending was top-of-mind with residents.**
- If presented with “extra” funds, many would direct those funds to parks and recreation or to active transportation routes.
- Within some topic areas we see conflicting responses – for instance, some residents want more traffic calming measures, and some want the speed bumps in their neighbour removed.
- Some topics areas which received many comments in previous surveys are now greatly reduced, such as access to internet services.

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