

CITIZEN BUDGET RESULTS
City of Yellowknife, Northwest Territories
October 27th, 2017



OpenNorth

Online Budget Consultation Report

For the period October 10 to October 26, 2017

Prepared by Open North for: City of Yellowknife

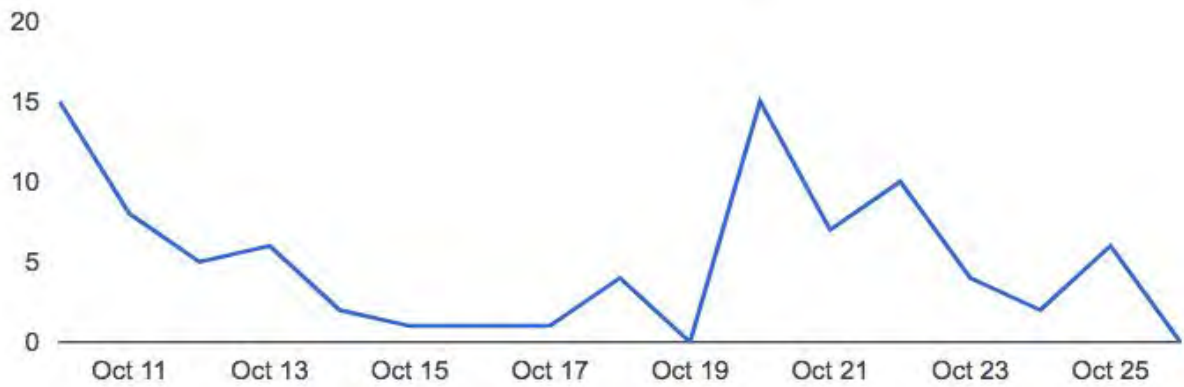
87

Responses

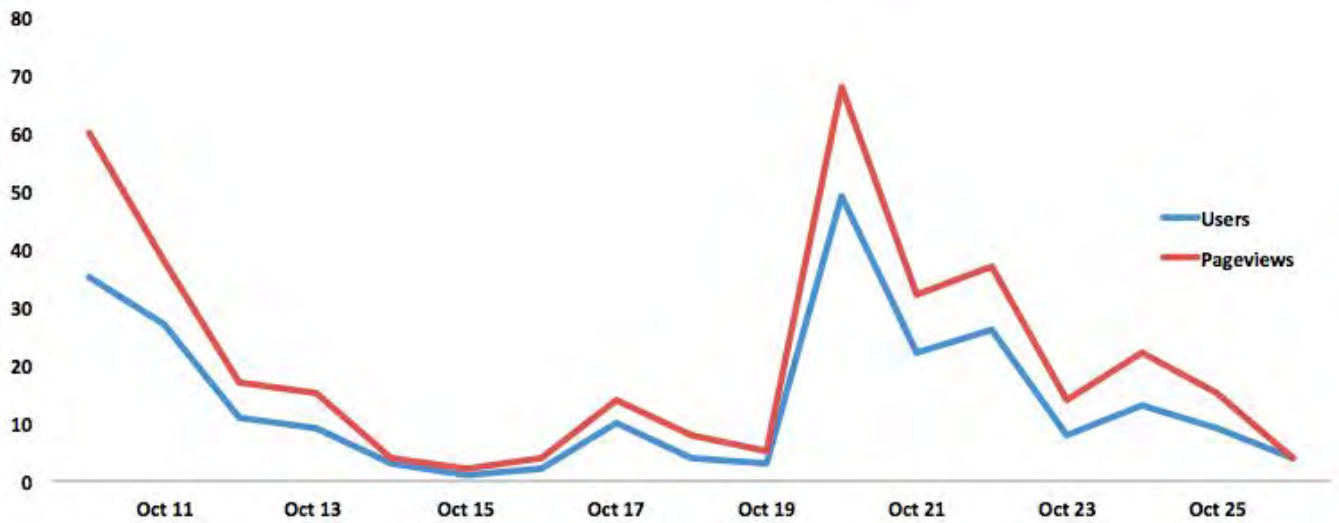
6 minutes

Median time to complete

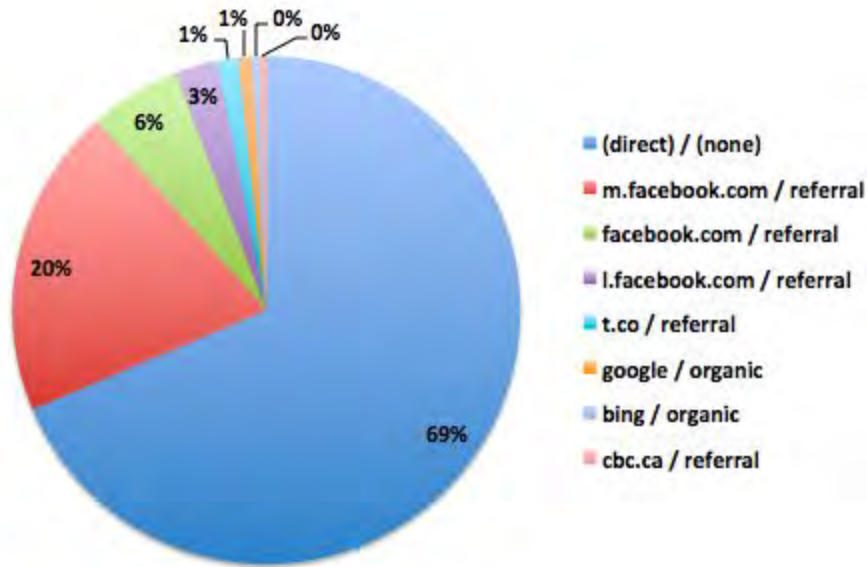
Responses per Day



Total Number Visitors: 220



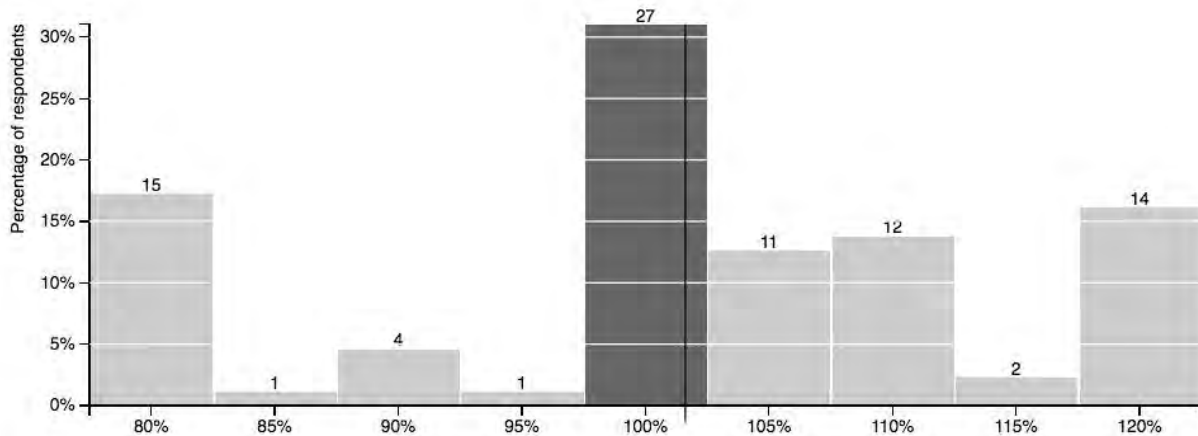
Web Traffic Sources



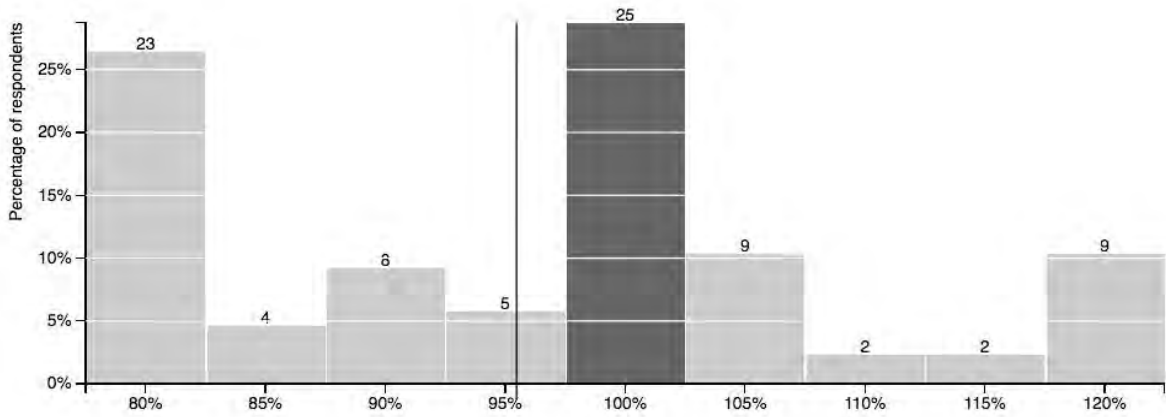
Questions

Community Grants, Recreation, Parks and Trails

How would you adjust your property tax funding for Recreation, Parks and Trails in Yellowknife?

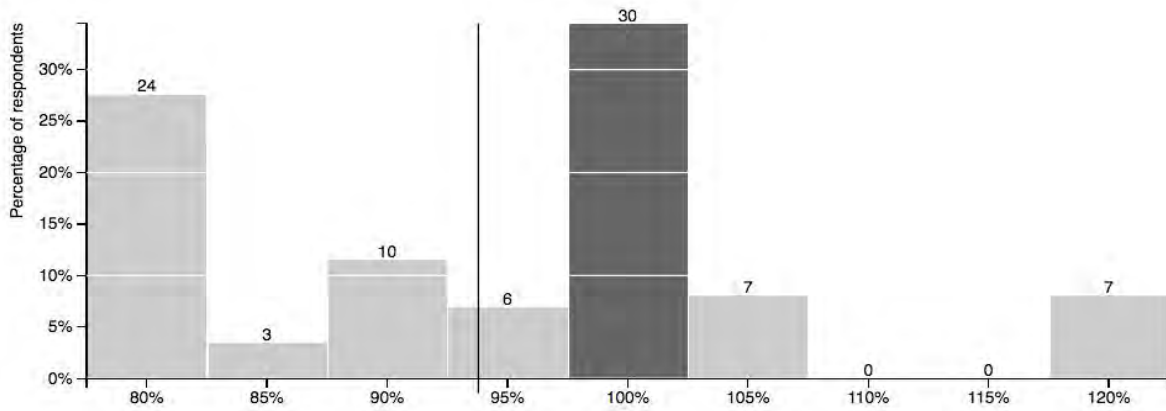


How would you adjust your property tax funding for Community Grants?



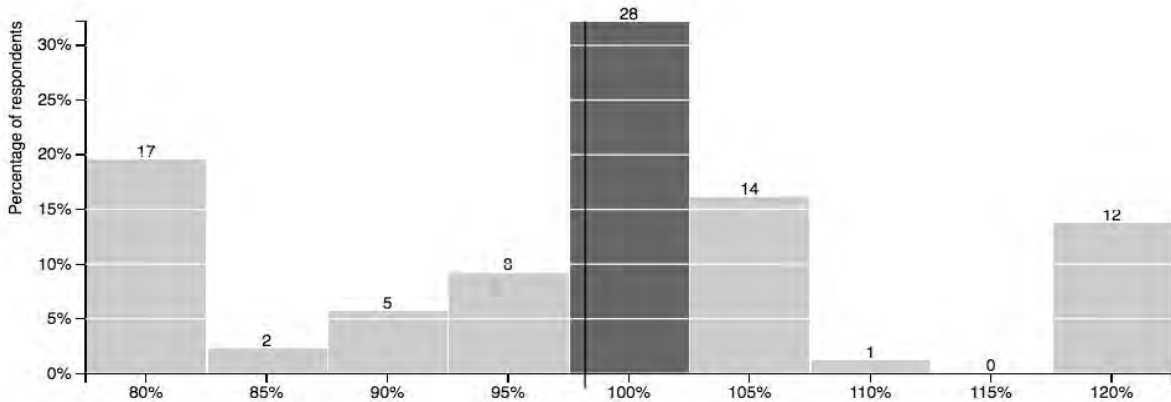
Transit

How would you adjust your property tax funding for Transit services?



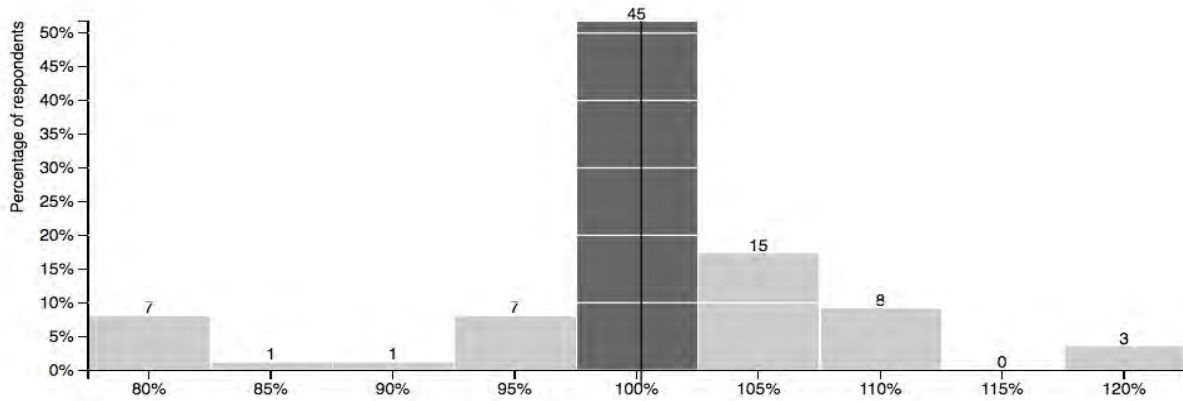
Community Energy Plan

How would you adjust your property tax funding for Community Energy Plan initiatives?



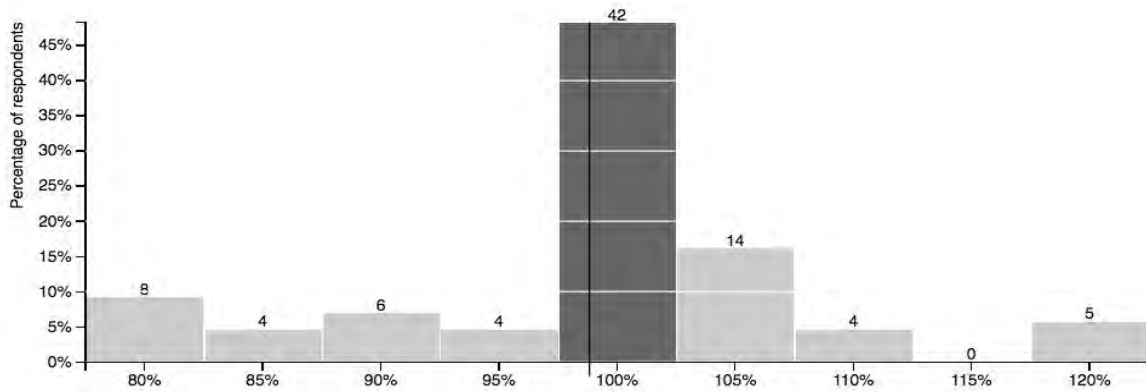
Maintenance of Roads and Sidewalks

How would you adjust your property tax funding for Road Maintenance in the city?



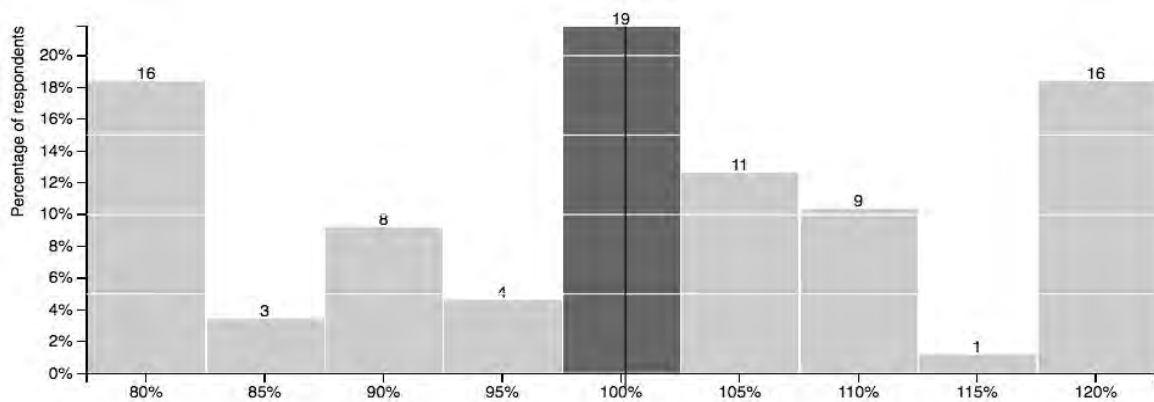
Emergency Services

How would you adjust your property tax funding for the City of Yellowknife Emergency Services?



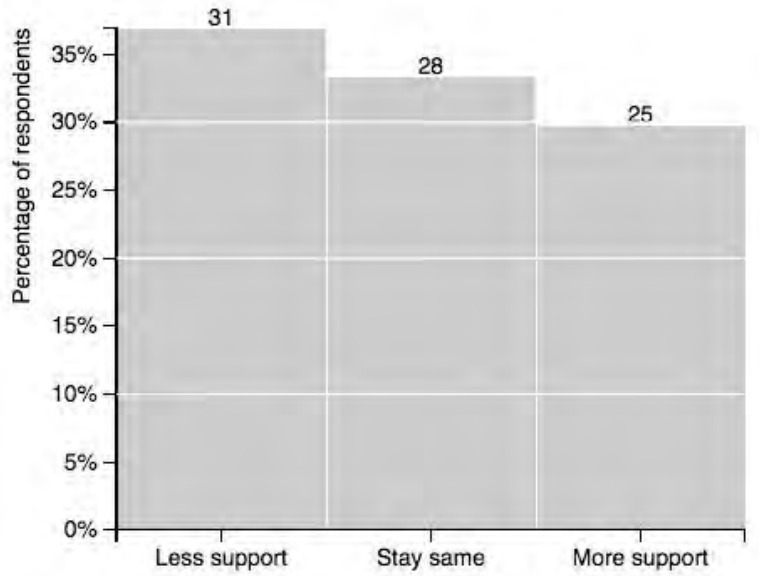
Homelessness

How would you adjust your property tax funding to support initiatives to end homelessness?



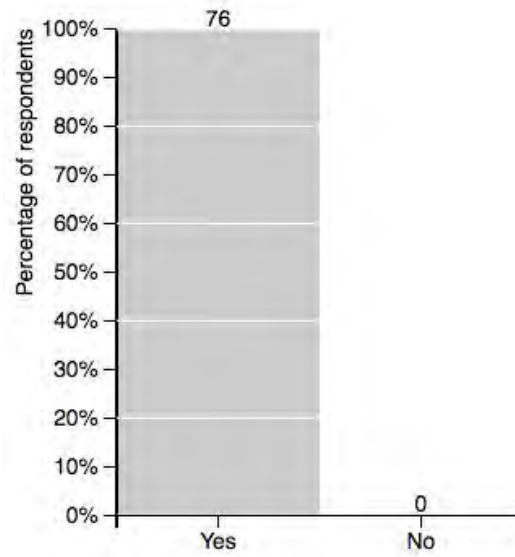
Downtown Revitalization

What amount of property tax funding would you be willing to contribute towards Downtown Revitalization as outlined in this section?

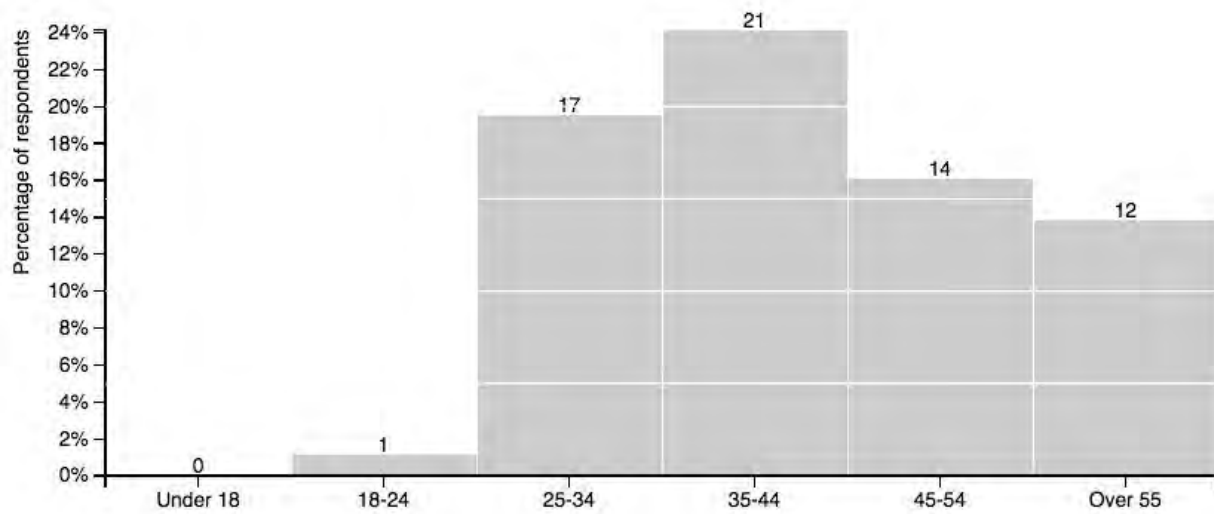


Tell us about yourself

Are you a resident of Yellowknife?



Age



Comments

Do you have any comments on these specific programs or services? [Community Grants, Recreation, Parks and Trails]

Advance works for waterfront access
Continue upgrading trails, replace wood that is disintegrating along Frame Lake Trail, example at kids swingset and near sandy part of trail at Niven Beach area. Remove willows at Niven Beach and rejuvenate beach area for summer use with picnic tables or benches.
Especially with increased tourism usage we need to present the best Yellowknife has to offer!
Faced with and in the context of tax increases, what we can afford has to be reviewed and reconsidered
Grants that provide incentives for businesses to hire low skilled persons (wage subsidies)
I think the City is doing good with its recreation facilities and in supporting local groups and events.
I would reduce the RPT portion more than the slider is letting me.
Individuals are being taxed more federally so community grants can go down as well. If people are expected to do more with less than so can these community groups. As for recreation maintain current facilities, nature is easy enough to navigate we do not need trails or more parks.
It's time to shift the balance to the arts and a bit away from sports.. there's been plenty enough spent of sports facilities over the las few years...
let NGOs or community groups use money wisely. typically these groups can develop and deliver programs cheaper than the City
maintain and improve existing parks, trails
Pool upgrade needs to be prioritized. The city has been putting a ton of money into outdoor recreation enhancements which can only be used 3/4 of the year due to our climate. A pool upgrade could be used 100% of the year.
Recreation is lacking and community grants are less desirable and often are placed into poor project IMO.
Stop giving grant to snow king. Does he even pay property tax?
The city really needs a replacement for the RIMP that is a complete rec centre including a gym. Amalgamating the multiplex, fieldhouse, and space in the middle into 1 big rec centre complex would be a good use of resources.
The field house space is poorly used in terms of its potential. The indoor playground is a great idea and important rec space for families in winter but it is way too small and very limited in the young age it serves. The pool in my mind is of utmost priority to start. This serves every age, is constantly busy and is not able to keep up with the demand for its use. It's really too bad and poorly planned to have three separate buildings (multiples field house pool) that could have been done as one rev centre. Thinking it's s good idea to go south and visit every community and see how these are built and just how much they are utilized. Our long winters cry out for a proper facility. Hopefully there's some way to improve our current situation because the kam lake location is large enough to support that
The YK cemetery needs sodding and seeding and levelling in many sections. More irrigation is needed to water the grass there.
These are nice to haves, not needs. Investment should decrease in tough times
User fees. Not everyone uses theses facilities so why should we all pay ??
We need a new pool complex - this needs to be made a priority as there are very few positive recreation resources for families and youth to access throughout the winter months. This needs to be prioritized over a new library/ community center.

we need better trails and a better energy efficient pool
We need more walking/hiking trails in the city. There is lots of "green space" but much of it is inaccessible if you have any kind of mobility issues
Where is the library on this survey? It doesn't seem like a priority when it isn't even mentioned and we desperately need a new one. However, you will not get much feedback suggesting this by omitting any mention of it. Very disappointing. Once again, sports facilities and programs get all of the attention.
Yellowknife desperately needs a new pool and more than one pool is needed. Proper change rooms are also needed.

Do you have any comments on these specific programs or services? [Transit Services]

A strong transit system means everyone can get around Yellowknife without undue hardship.
Buses are far too expensive and not nearly accessible enough to make them a via option for travel to and from the city core. The distance the buses travel are not worth the fare.
Give the bus operator incentives to increase ridership...perhaps let them keep revenue in excess of contract estimates. Let seniors ride free during off peak times, 10-3 and evenings.
I do not use these services but seem to be adequate.
I have no benefits from the public transportation
i wont use this until they make the route in niven go both ways not just one direction
I've been riding transit for a long time, and I find the service is currently the best it's ever been. The new buses are great, especially with their ability to accommodate people with mobility issues or baby strollers. Even with all of the construction this past summer, the drivers have been surprisingly consistent with their schedules. I really appreciate the Find My Bus app, but unfortunately, this has only worked for two of the three bus routes for quite some time.
Increase user fees, encourage walking and ride-sharing. Would mini-bus or van service suffice in non-peak hours to reduce costs?
let us know how many people uses the public transport (buses). I see a lot of empty buses driving around Yellowknife. It looks like the same service can be provided with a mini van. again user fee.
Lets increase ridership by lowering the cost of riding the buses to as close to zero as possible... especially for those on income assistance.
Level can be maintained if City is able to increase transit users by increasing the coverage areas. i.e cover more areas for bus to run.
more efficient way to operate the bus system during non peak hours, ? smaller buses during that time?
Never use it
One bus line that might increase overall ridership would be a bus that just does the loop every 15 minutes or so, to give an actual advantage over walking (and a reasonable alternative to driving)
Other than at peak times when I see a bus it is usually empty.
There needs to be a bus that goes down Kam Lake Road to allow the many residents and workers in Kam Lake a way to get to and from the area, other than driving.
until an effective Transit can be developed in Yellowknife, lower funding
Why are the busses empty all day
Yellowknife does not need a Find My Bus app, the city is not large enough for such a feature, wait 20 minutes and your bus will arrive
Your busses drive by me empty most of the day, reduce services except at rush hours and school close

Do you have any comments on these specific programs or services? [Community Energy Plan Initiatives]

An increase here would be money well spent. Specific programs to get homes off of heating oil and towards geothermal heat pumps would be good too.
Anything to create less pollutants is a great idea.
Get rid of the big buses that are mostly empty
I disagree with spending lots of money on alternative unreliable energy when mankind's contribution to climate change is likely miniscule and we are fools if we think we can control climate to any degree that will make a change. Canada is a minor player when it comes to emissions and is more than likely already carbon neutral due to its size and low density population.
let's see economic payback for energy programs in real dollars and cents that include payback on capital items. lets be smart and save money, not just "being green" - sustainability has a larger definition than "being green" - its about saving "green" (or blue, purple, reds and browns)
More smart investment in community energy means reduced expenses in the long term.
Remove unnecessary traffic lights and stop signals, reprogram all the traffic lights so that it we don't have to stop for the wind to cross the road, and show us how the city Cares about mother earth. Don't dump all the charges on our shoulders and expect the money from us.
The city is doing a pretty good job on this...
The City should offer incentives to home owners and businesses to go more green with things such as solar panels.
These initiatives cost to much money and duplicate infrastructure.
These should be self financing over 20 years...use borrowed money for viable options
This is very important and it should start with the City reducing the amount of fuel it consumes in light vehicles.
Yellowknife has hydro power. We need do no more.

Do you have any comments on these specific programs or services? [Road Maintenance]

Active snow plowing after big snow dumps then removal once or twice a year as needed depending on need. Some years two removals are not necessary. Active pothole filling in spring so larger costs are avoided.
Be more efficient with how this service is provided
Better coordination needed to reduce traffic tie ups.
City is doing a good job with road and sidewalk maintenance
I decreased this one, not because I want to see services cut, but because in the 20 years I have lived here I don't see the services changing despite very high taxes - roads are quite terrible in the winter.
I don't see any improvements at all. I pay 2800 in property tax and our neighborhood has no paved road no sidewalk and no traffic lights. The people who pay under 1000 in Property tax has more benefits than us. Ask them for increased rate.
I love that you are fixing them, but project management is a major issue.
I'm satisfied with the amount of maintenance the city currently does with the streets. Our neighborhood is cleared twice a year, which seems adequate. The downtown streets should receive the most care since there's no where for snow to be clear to, other than the streets. And I think the snow issue could be partially improved if homeowners, as required, didn't clear snow from their properties onto the streets...this rule doesn't appear to be enforced anywhere.
It depends on whether the snowplow would be the whole street and not just down the centre. From curb to curb

it's good as is
Make sure that roads are built properly with no shortcuts. Look at the drops in Forrest Dr. And then those residences have line breaks, all due to poor road construction
Not saying this is not important, but perhaps giving contracts to somebody else than NWT Construction for once might help secure better bids in the future.
Roads are always bad.
The city is doing a pretty good job on this...
The City should consider Courts at the same level as the rest of the roads. Emergency vehicles must be able to access and maneuver in Courts and not just on main roads.
The City's program management of road maintenance is terrible. It shouldn't have taken 4 months to complete the Franklin Drive upgrades. This has to lead to cost overruns.
There was enough ridiculously poor planned road work projects this past year. They need to work on creating a timeline and a reduced-public impact clause in their project contracts.
This is the cities responsibility - take it seriously
This item doesn't provide enough specificity to accurately reflect my views. I believe public infrastructure maintenance and construction are important functions for the city, but there are many projects that are unnecessary that fall into this category. There is money to save here that I can't point out. Last year's budget survey was much better in this regard. Also, you guys need to look at road construction methods and new technologies. There are ways to reduce the extremely high frequency of maintenance it looks like is occurring.
Transportation by road and sidewalks is one of the main methods to get around town. A good upgraded road and sidewalk system is good for residents and visitors.

Do you have any comments on these specific programs or services? [Emergency Services]

Emergencies are when people need help the most, I am happy to pay more for this service. Also IMPLEMENT 911 service!!!!
Hopefully with the addition of the Homelessness action plan, this will assist in relieving the emergency services so they can be available for emergencies and the citizens can get quicker assistance (especially in the ER).
I believe that bylaw has to be restructured - it is not a police force but seems to be operating like one. Ghost cars etc., only a small item but when one thinks about what is associated - I believe this department could be slashed and tax payers would not see the difference
I only wanted to raise this one by a couple dollars not as big of a jump as it was forcing me to do.
Implement a complete ALL USER PAY for all emergency services
Increase user rates so that users pay for utilising the service instead of property taxes covering it.
Just to note your "City of Yellowknife's Fire Division" link in this survey question connects to City of Saskatoon's emergency services...maybe someone was copying and pasting and forgot the correct link. Regarding municipal enforcement, is there seriously an "Unsightly Lands" by-law in this city? Because touring around town, you would hardly believe it...I mean, who owns that decrepit house across the street from Adam Dental, is that not unsightly?
Keep the funding for the services as they are
Knowing how much an ambulance costs in Yellowknife would make a person think twice before calling for one.
Let us block the emergency vehicles by adding more stop signals and keeping the traffic lights in front of the firehall.
Nothing on fire and ambulance, but MED consumes far too much money for the value it

provides to city taxpayers. The department is overstaffed, underworked, has an entrenched management culture that could use updating, and last but not least needs to spend far less time inside vehicles and far more time out on the downtown streets if it ever wants to provide value for it's current out-of-control level of funding. Start by cutting 50% of funding and positions and scale up from there as needed.
Reduce expenditures on med equipment....they don't need to of the line police vehicles and equipment. End charge for necessary fire callout and save everyone \$100 on fire insurance
Stop wasting money making by-laws if you are not going to enforce them. Satisfied with the services at current funding.
The city of Yellowknife needs to shift the priority of the By-Law Officers to have physical on the ground presence in all areas. The city has more litter around it than the dump, but not one ticket is issued for littering. There is dog poo littering frame lake trail, and off leash dogs all over the city. I don't see officers patrolling for any other By Law but traffic. As well, I see By-Law driving around texting on cell phones.
The City should also spend some money and bring the speed limit standards to the same level as the rest of the country. Non-Residential zones Eg. downtown, and Franklin north of the 50/50 corner, school draw, Cam lake road, range lake road, they should be a 50km/h zone. split and double lane roads should be 60km/h. Eg all of old airport road, the road from explorer to Jackfish, and Franklin from the end of the school zone to old airport road.
The fall needs more full time staff which hopefully reduces the overtime costs (off set)?
The fire department is doing an outstanding job!!! Do we have By-law officers to enforce traffic laws??? They must be on the city buses
The new Community Outreach van service will likely decrease the burden on YES, so increase funding to the Outreach service and decrease YES.
There is too much "traffic enforcement" (the polite term) as it is.
These are obviously important but they are wasted on the homeless/intoxicated calls. Making emergency service workers tired for when there is a real emergency is poor planning.
this should be decreasing as money is spent on homeless people. time to reevaluate
We weren't asked to comment on MED budget. Had I been, I would suggest a substantial decrease with the difference being put towards more proactive social supports and positive interventions.
You have at least twice the number of municipale enforcement officers compared to comparable jurisdictions. They provide very limited public safety functions. They do not need top of the line big city cruisers, computers, ghost cars and other paraphernalia to carry out their limited traffic and dog catching duties. Get the department back in control

Do you have any comments on these specific programs or services? [End Homelessness]

10 year plan is ridiculous.
As above. Increase these services and decrease budgets from other areas.
City should approach GNWT to open shelters in other NWT towns. Many homeless people in Yellowknife are from other communities, so other regional centres should do their part to support homeless people.
Do something.
I do not in any way support the implementation of the 10-year homelessness plan. The cost savings are not realizable (they are not cash savings) which means it is pure expenditure; there will be no cash reduction in costs in other areas. Yellowknife residents should not be subsidizing the majority of an NWT-wide problem.
I love the idea of the community outreach and sobering center - even with a downtown focus;

<p>however, I think the concerns regarding safety voiced over and over again by community members needs to be acknowledged and more of a community policing presence needs to be made- perhaps the addition of a regular RCMP member being on foot patrols duty in the 2-3 block radius. This would allow for the increased presence/ feel of safety and also reduce the need for private security providers to become involved in any issues as I have noted that they are inappropriately trained for working with the types of incidences that are necessary - often escalating the situation.</p>
<p>I love the idea of the community outreach and sobering center - even with a downtown focus; however, I think the concerns regarding safety voiced over and over again by community members needs to be acknowledged and more of a community policing presence needs to be made- perhaps the addition of a regular RCMP member being on foot patrols duty in the 2-3 block radius. This would allow for the increased presence/ feel of safety and also reduce the need for private security providers to become involved in any issues as I have noted that they are inappropriately trained for working with the types of incidences that are necessary - often escalating the situation.</p>
<p>I seriously doubt this problem with go away. Giving some of these people a home would not solve some of the problems in the city as I don't believe these people will want to stay home. They enjoy their social life on the streets.</p>
<p>If the city is trying to curb homelessness on its own, we are throwing away money. This problem belongs to all levels of government and should be addressed as such.</p>
<p>If you fund more, how exactly you are going to end it. If you give then free food and shelter, more homeless people will move here.</p>
<p>increase this as money spent here decreases money spent on emergency services at least 10 fold</p>
<p>Lobby the GNWT and the Federal Government for money for these initiatives - the responsibility of homelessness should not fall on the residents of Yellowknife.</p>
<p>More investment into preventing this issue will mean reduced expenses in the long term and more people contributing to society. This is a SMART long term investment.</p>
<p>Our taxes that is going into helping the homeless is not working. Maybe time for Vagrancy laws</p>
<p>Reducing homessness is the best way to reduce costs to other services (hospital, welfare, clinic services etc). These are territorial systems that will see a reduction in demand so I would hope they are also funding this plan equally, if not more. If not, I suggest this conversation take place.</p>
<p>Great to see a shift to housing first priorities! Build more each year as this intervention has seen success in other jurisdictions</p>
<p>Stop letting inmates from other communities be released in Yellowknife. Common sense is a powerful things when you use it.</p>
<p>Street outreach is taking the load off your paramedics and fire department it is cost effective and ethical. A sobering centre is needed.</p>
<p>The City should not be into this type of programming - this is a territorial issue.</p>
<p>There is a bigger issue than homelessness that needs to be addressed. Funding should be put towards dealing with mental health/drug addictions and alcohol addiction.</p>
<p>There is a reason homeless people are homeless, we should not be wasting tax dollars on the drunk losers down town. They should be spent on an education program to help the ones who want to finds jobs get back into the workforce. All else is just throwing pearls before swine.</p>
<p>These services amount to recognizing the human rights of those who benefit from them... I encourage you to find more funding for all of them... looking after those in need will do much to enhance the quality of life for all...</p>
<p>This is a problem brought on by the GNWT dropping extremely important programs and a treatment centre. Homelessness and addictions should be funded by GNWT</p>

This is important. Equally important is getting a good lawyer to make the GNWT deal with their part of the responsibilities.
Try Aviva funding for the sobering centre
We have to do something but this is a GNWT responsibility
While I don't believe this is solely the City's responsibility I am very pleased with the leadership shown in the effort to end homelessness.
you build it and they will come... and they did more people on the streets hanging out than previous years. Most are not homeless as they have homes in their community

Do you have any comments on Downtown Revitalization?

Along with ending homelessness this should be the City's top priority. The two go hand in hand.
Anti-littering should just be a By-Law with a \$1500 fine. Just like in Ontario. Patios were a good idea. public washrooms are a good idea.
What else would be a good idea? Anti-Loitering! there should also be a By-Law officer on foot patrol from the post office to the day shelter.
Downtown is dead. I'm not willing to support more to bring back a dead zone.
Downtown is Yellowknife's face. If we present a vibrant downtown it will increase a sense of community among residents and create a draw for visitors.
foster an environment for Business to revitalize downtown. The city should guide businesses and not be at the forefront picking winners
I don't go downtown because with the cost of living in Yellowknife, I cannot afford to shop downtown or go to the movies, etc. also the City should not be spending money on beautifying the City if it does not have a plan to maintain it.
I encourage the city to take one step at a time given the size and scope of these kinds of visions, and also to address the homelessness crisis to create the conditions that enable a downtown to become revitalized.
I have been paying taxes here for 20 years and other than Sombe K park I can't think of anything that has revitalized downtown. The only thing that will revitalize downtown is if more business start opening there or there are more people living in the area. However the cost of land in the area probably prohibits this as does the lack of parking. Making patios won't work because it is fall/winter here for 8 months out of the year. Public washrooms should be provided that is something that is easy to do you don't need to develop a strategy and then quantify the results. Just do it.
I really believe that the most important part of Downtown Revitalization is actually to support: Yellowknife Street Outreach Sobering Centre Day Shelter Housing First and the Yellowknife 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness
I think there needs to be even more garbage and recycling cans available, not just on the corners of Franklin, but down the odd roads as well.
I would reduce this amount to help balance other increases i
If you plant trees to make sure they are watered. Fresh soil is added anything to keep them alive
Invest in downtown after the homeless issues are solved. Who wants to shop where you have to

be stepping over spit, garbage and cigarette butts while trying to avoid the drunks and panhandlers.
It will be littered with booze bottles, cigarette butts, vomit, coffee cups and odd pieces of clothing every day so why bother.
More shopping downtown and helping the malls become a more attractive place to visit. During the week the core is booming, but during the weekend like most downtown cores, it is almost a ghost town. We should try to have more events/festivals or even just volunteer opportunities for people in the downtown on weekends.
Need more parking for people who shop and work downtown. Need less harassment on the streets, give the homeless people homes.
Needs to be kept clean (spit, garbage etc.and needs to have less intoxicated people hanging around
Revitalization is dependant on a greater population living in the area along with added tourist activity.
Revitalize with same budget except for increase to the Street Outreach Program as stated above. You could decrease budget on Win Your Space program. Increase personnel/staff time to pick up garbage from overflowing garbage bins. Invest in small vacuum units to suck up broken glass on streets and cigarette butts.
The downtown is a waste land of ridiculous pricing, intoxication, and violence. Put money where it can actually make a difference.
This is not just a Yellowknife problem...it's happening in every city in North America...let's not pretend it's just parking or street people...it also includes Amazon and Walmart and real estate costs
Tired of hearing about downtown revitalization - money spent by the city on land that they should have never purchased. Economy has worsened.
Until homelessness issue is addressed there is no point spending more money to revitalize downtown.
Until you make inroads on sobering, addictions support and homelessness you would be wasting money on downtown revitalization and beautification. Quit wasting money on "revitalization" and build a bloody washroom for the homeless folks.
When will 50th street between 49 ave and Franklin be repairs. Everything that side of Franklin Ave. seems to be lower priority.

Use the space below to provide any feedback not previously mentioned that you have on the City budget or the simulated budget exercise:

Administration (people and cost) should not be growing faster than population and tax base...I'd like to see info on city costs relative to these indicators, as well as to CPI and GNWT growth.
I barely get any service. I would rather pay the same amount the residents of Norseman dr as i barely get the same level of service
I would like to see no raise in taxes and if there were any I would want to see it go toward repaying any debt. I am sick of governments at all levels increasing taxes and spending while letting debt continue to grow. It might not be glamorous but it is one of the easiest things to do and nobody can argue about the results.
I would like to see the council seriously consider the costs of a new pool before we no longer have a choice. The pool requires upgrading and attention and is no where comparable to the aquatic services available in other similar size cities. Some research into costs would be appreciated.
It would be nice if Municipal Enforcement would enforce the noise bylaw all summer when neighbours repeatedly party until 4 am and set off crazy huge fireworks more than once at 2 am

that kept landing in our tinder dry back yard with no repercussions.
Last year's budget survey was substantially superior to this one. There are more cost savings I could find if there was more specificity in this survey. Although this survey is screaming "there could be a reduction in service" at me, there are many city activities that do not need to happen. The city should focus its scarce resources on more core programming or functions and stop doing things that don't need to be done. For example, you can immediately stop putting four-way stops on every single intersection in the city.
More dollars towards recreation and services that can keep kids and family busy and healthy. Subsidizing recreation services would be one possible idea. More importantly make it so that inmates of NSCC must be released back into their community instead of being released onto Yellowknife streets!!
See above comments
The City needs to address all the illegal dumping around town, its getting out of control.
The city should be doing nominal property tax increases annually (i.e. 1 - 2%) to keep up with CPI. It is challenging to accept a significant property tax increase where the political will over the years has not been to keep pace with CPI. Current residents pay for the savings of past residents.
The City should offer a discounted water rate in the summer so that residents can maintain their yards. Currently the cost of watering a lawn and/or garden in addition to day to day family life use makes one consider what they have to sacrifice if they want to have a lawn and/or garden.
The city's priority should be to reduce the cost of living of citizens while maintaining core services (roads/water/sewer). The goal of every budget should be to reduce taxes. A lot of citizens do not receive employment pay raises every year like unionized government workers. City administration must start going into budget deliberations every year without the expectation of increased budgets. Decreased budgets and reduced spending should be the expectation and goal.
The Ontario government is taking steps to make sure multiresidential apartment buildings are charged property taxes at similar rates to other residential properties, with a goal of lowering the cost of renting. I would like to see the City of Yellowknife examine whether a similar adjustment is possible in Yellowknife, and what impact that could have on lowering rental rates. An article mentioning this and other changes, as well as some reports on the issue by the federation of rental housing providers of Ontario, are linked below: https://beta.theglobeandmail.com/real-estate/toronto/ontario-housing-16-big-changes-explained-in-charts/article34757648/?ref=http://www.theglobeandmail.com& https://www.frpo.org/resources/topics-issues/property-tax
This survey is very biased. There are many,many other aspects of the city's budget that are included.
Trim travel budget, trim fancy Big Screen TV's in facilities, trim colour advertisements and brochures (for unnecessary promo ie hotel tax brochure), trim consulting reports, trim signage kiosk things with no ads on them. More boots on the ground keeping city clean and well kept and green.
Very illustrative and thought-provoking tool - thanks for developing it.