

# 2024 COMMUNITY SURVEY



June 2024

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# 01 INTRODUCTION



# Background and Objectives

**This report presents the findings of the City of Medicine Hat's 2024 Community Survey.** The main purpose of this survey is to better understand community sentiment around a variety of City topics.

Key research topics include:

- Quality of life
- Important local issues
- Importance of and satisfaction with City services
- Value for taxes and balancing taxation and service delivery levels
- Communications and customer service
- Council, Administration, and municipal operations

Insight gained by this research will help the City make important decisions regarding planning, budgeting, and service improvements.



# Methodology

Ipsos conducted both a **random telephone** survey and a **non-random online** survey between May 6 and 24, 2024.



## TELEPHONE SURVEY

- Provides a random and representative sampling of community opinions
- All respondents screened to confirm they are adult (18+ years) residents of Medicine Hat
- Households with members who work for the City and/or with elected officials of the City were excluded from the survey



## ONLINE SURVEY

- Provides all residents an opportunity to provide feedback
- Focus on inclusiveness means that residents self-select whether to take part or not, and the results should not be considered as representative of the population
- Asked the same upfront screening questions as the telephone survey but online respondents allowed to continue regardless of their responses
- Maximum of 3 surveys per IP address accepted
- City responsible for promoting the online survey

Due to these methodological differences, the results of the telephone survey and the online survey are reported separately.

Additional details on each approach can be found on the following page.

# Methodology (continued)

## Telephone Survey

- 400 interviews with adult (18+ years) Medicine Hat residents
- Conducted using numbers from cellphones (95%) and landlines (5%)
- Final data weighted to ensure the gender/age distribution reflects that of the actual population in Medicine Hat according to 2021 Canadian Census data
- Overall results accurate to within  $\pm 4.9$  percentage points, nineteen times out of twenty
  - Margin of error will be larger for sample subgroups

## Online Survey

- Total of 531 surveys completed
- After removing the surveys that exceeded the IP address limit, the final online sample size is 509
- Of these 509 respondents:
  - 450 meet the same qualifying criteria as the telephone survey
  - 59 would have been screened out of the telephone survey for one or more of the following reasons: non-residents, <18 years of age, live in households with members who work for the City and/or elected City officials, refusal to answer the upfront screening questions
- **The online results shown in this report are based on the 450 respondents who meet the same qualifying criteria as the telephone survey**
  - Results for households with City staff/elected officials and non-residents can be found in the detailed tables for the online survey under a separate cover
- No weighting was applied, and no margin of error is applicable



# Notes to Reader

## Interpreting and Viewing the Results

- Some totals in the report may not add to 100%. Some summary statistics (e.g., total satisfied) may not match their component parts. The numbers are correct, and the apparent errors are due to rounding.
- Analysis of some of the statistically significant demographic results is included where applicable for the telephone survey. While a number of significant differences may appear in the cross-tabulation output, not all differences warrant discussion.

## Tracking to Previous Surveys

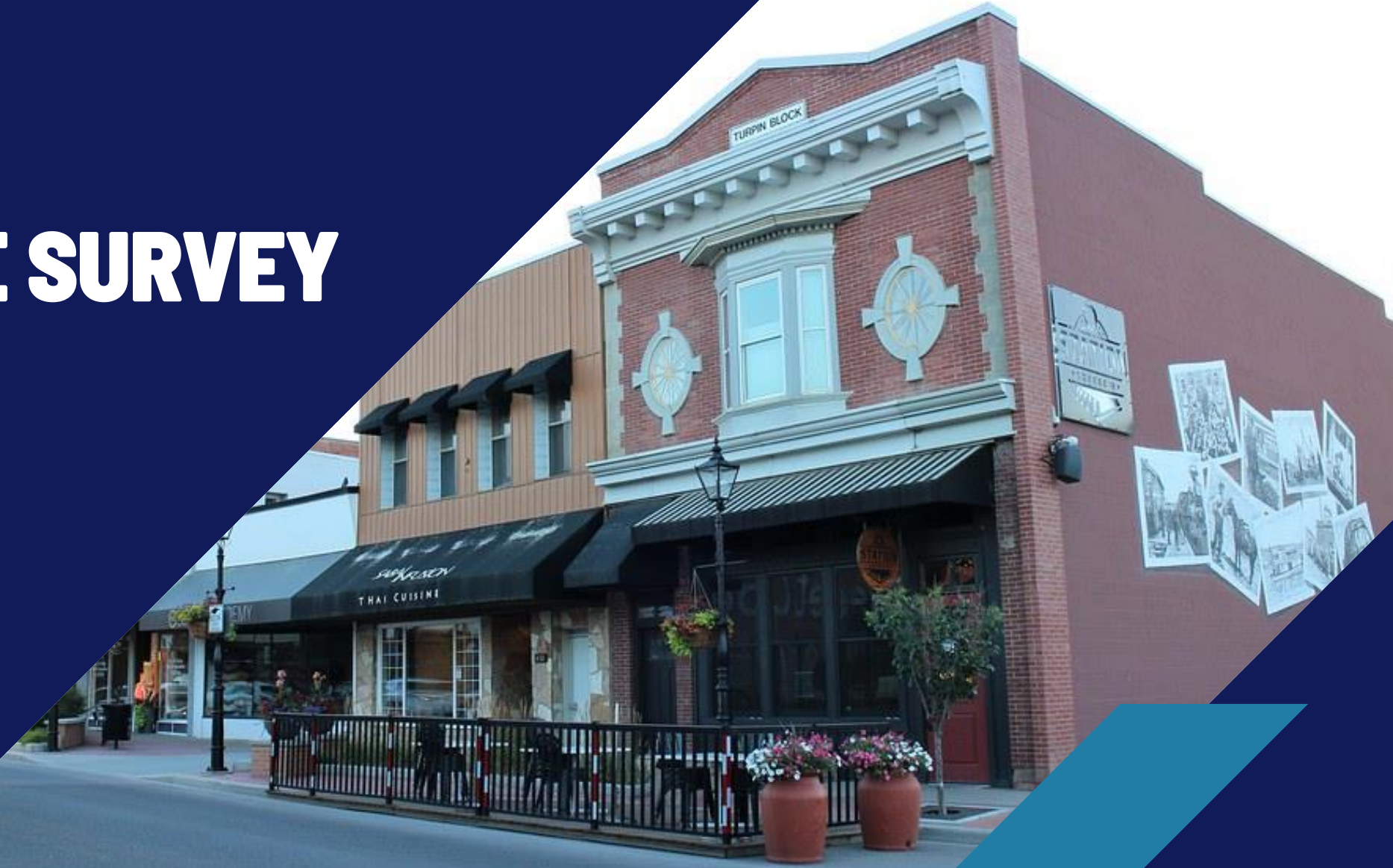
- Where possible, this year's telephone survey results have been compared to the City's 2022 Community Survey to understand how attitudes and priorities are changing, identify new or emerging issues, and monitor perceptions of the City's performance.
- Arrows ( ▲ ▼ ) are used to denote any significant differences between 2024 and 2022.

## Normative Comparisons

- Where possible, the City's telephone survey results have been compared to Ipsos' database of municipal norms to provide benchmarks against which the City can evaluate its performance.
- These norms are based on research Ipsos has conducted in other Canadian municipalities within the past five years.



# 02 TELEPHONE SURVEY RESULTS





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# Executive Summary



## QUALITY OF LIFE

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- Perceptions of the overall quality of life in Medicine Hat are positive but down from 2022.
- A growing number feel that the quality of life has ‘worsened’ over the past three years, led by concerns over the rising cost of living and increased poverty/homelessness.
- Nonetheless, a strong majority continue to say they are likely to recommend Medicine Hat as a place to live.



## IMPORTANT LOCAL ISSUES

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- The public issue agenda is evolving. This year’s top three most important local issues are social, municipal government services, and City leadership/governance (including mentions of Mayor and Council).
- Mentions of City leadership/governance are up significantly this year as compared to 2022. Social issues also see a spike in mentions.



## CITY SERVICES

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- Overall satisfaction with City services remains high.
- Residents are also largely satisfied with specific services provided by the City.
  - The overall highest satisfaction ratings go to *garbage and recycling services* and *parks, trails, and other green space*.
  - The lowest scoring service is *communication with residents*. Satisfaction with this service has declined since 2022.
- All the evaluated services are important to residents.
  - The one service scoring relatively lower is *public transit*; however, almost all public transit users say this service is important.



## FINANCIAL PLANNING

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- A majority say they receive good value for their municipal tax dollars. However, perceptions of poor value are growing.
- More residents say the City should cut services than increase taxes although neither of these options is chosen by a majority of residents.
- The tolerance for tax increases has declined. A softening in perceived value combined with high cost of living pressures may be impacting residents’ tolerance for tax increases.

# Executive Summary (continued)



## COMMUNICATIONS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

- The most frequently requested type of information continues to be “City taxes/property taxes/budget”. However, there is a growing desire for “transparent/open/fact-based information”.
- “Email” remains the best way of communicating information to citizens, followed by “social media”.
- Claimed contact with the City is up this year, with half saying they have personally contacted or dealt with the City in the last 12 months.
- Most of those who have contacted the City say they are satisfied with the service received.
  - Staff’s courteousness scores highest overall.
  - Conversely, ability to resolve issues is the lowest rated service element.
  - Satisfaction with staff’s helpfulness has declined this year as compared to 2022.



## PERCEPTIONS OF COUNCIL, ADMINISTRATION, AND MUNICIPAL OPERATIONS

- Satisfaction with Council and Administration has dropped significantly this year.
  - Just less than half say they are satisfied with the City’s municipal government as a whole.
  - Residents are more satisfied with Administration than with Council.
- Most residents continue to agree that the City fosters a community that is inclusive and accepting of all.
- However, perceptions of other aspects of the City’s municipal operations are less positive and have declined significantly from 2022. This includes metrics related to:
  - Accountability to the community for leadership and good governance
  - Doing the best it can with the money available
  - Using input from citizens in decision-making about City projects and services
  - Providing citizens with opportunities to have meaningful input into decision-making
  - Practicing open and accessible government

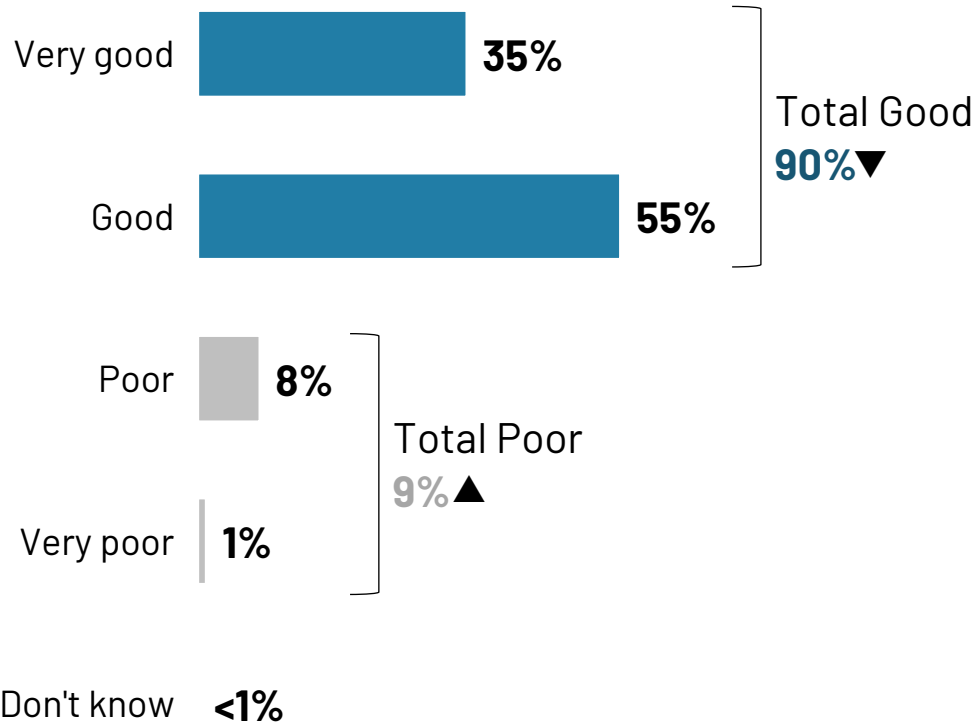


# DETAILED RESULTS

# QUALITY OF LIFE

# Overall Quality of Life

- Perceptions of the overall quality of life in Medicine Hat are positive (90% total good) but down 5 percentage points from 2022.
- Despite this drop, overall perceptions this year are on par with the municipal norm.
- Those rating the overall quality of life as ‘very good/good’ are more likely to:
  - Live South of the highway (96% versus 86% of North of the river, 89% of South of the river and North of Seven Persons Creek, 92% of South of Seven Persons Creek and North of the highway)
  - Be homeowners (93% versus 85% of renters)



2022	NORM
36%	35%
58%	56%
5%	7%
<1%	1%
0%	1%

Base: All respondents – 2024 (n=400); 2022 (n=400)  
 Q3. How would you rate the overall quality of life in the City of Medicine Hat today?

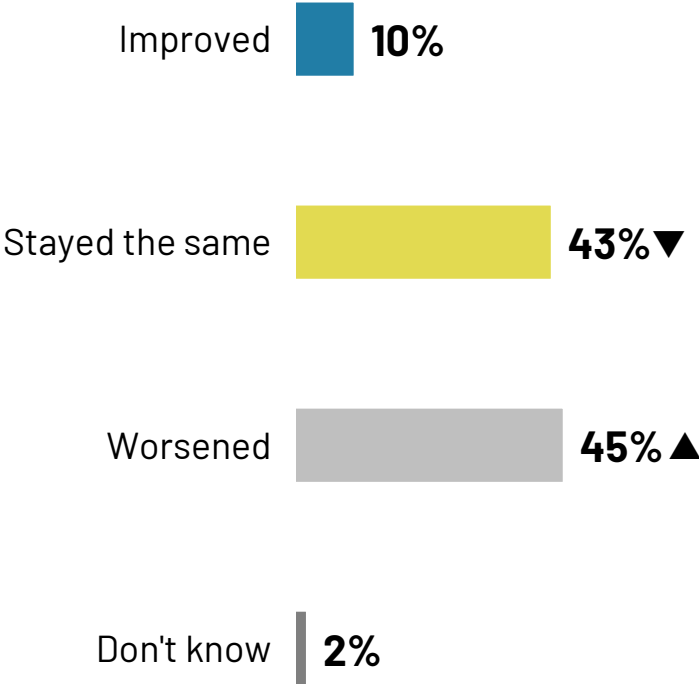
▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than 2022.





# Change in Quality of Life Past Three Years

- Perceptions of change in the quality of life have deteriorated, with more than four-in-ten (45%) saying this has ‘worsened’ over the past three years (up 8 points from 2022 and higher than the municipal norm).
- Those saying the quality of life has ‘worsened’ are more likely to:
  - Be 35-54 years of age (60% versus 38% of 18-34 years, 38% of 55+ years)
  - Have lived in Medicine Hat for 21+ years (52% versus 30% of 10 years or less, 43% of 11-20 years)
  - Live in households with children under the age of 18 (54% versus 41% of those without children at home)



NET SCORE

Improved – Worsened

**2024: -35 ▼**

**2022: -26**

Norm: -24

2022	NORM
11%	15%
51%	45%
37%	39%
1%	1%

Base: All respondents – 2024 (n=400); 2022 (n=400)  
 Q4. Do you feel that the quality of life in the City of Medicine Hat in the past three years has improved, stayed the same, or worsened?








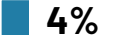




▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than 2022.



# Reasons Quality of Life Has Improved

(among those saying the quality of life has improved – coded open-ends)

- The three most frequently mentioned reasons for saying the quality of life has 'improved' are "good amenities/services (unspecified)" (19%), "economic development/more local businesses" (17%), and "more job opportunities" (14%).
- However, these results should be interpreted with caution due to small sample sizes.

		2022
Good amenities/services (unspecified)	 <b>19%</b>	<b>12%</b>
Economic development/more local businesses	 <b>17%</b>	<b>13%</b>
More job opportunities	 <b>14%</b>	<b>0%</b>
City leadership/governance (incl. mentions of Mayor & Council)	 <b>12%</b>	<b>11%</b>
Pandemic is over	 <b>7%</b>	<b>0%</b>
Growth/development	 <b>6%</b>	<b>3%</b>
Utilities managed better	 <b>5%</b>	<b>0%</b>
Community involvement/engagement	 <b>4%</b>	<b>3%</b>
Improved/getting better (unspecified)	 <b>3%</b>	<b>5%</b>
More activities/things to do	 <b>2%</b>	<b>17%</b>
Other	 <b>6%</b>	<b>20%</b>
Don't know	 <b>3%</b>	<b>5%</b>

\* Small base size (<50), interpret with caution.  
Base: Those saying the quality of life has improved – 2024 (n=37)\*; 2022 (n=42)\*  
Q5. Why do you think the quality of life has improved?

Year-over-year comparisons are directional in nature only due to small sample sizes.

# Reasons Quality of Life Has Worsened

(among those saying the quality of life has worsened – coded open-ends)

- Affordability concerns are driving perceptions of a worsening quality of life, with 35% of those saying the quality of life has 'worsened' attributing this to "it is more expensive/cost of living".
- Another 16% point to "poverty/homelessness", up 13 points from 2022.
- Concerns around "City leadership/governance (including mentions of Mayor and Council)" round out the top three, garnering 8% of mentions.

		2022
It is more expensive/cost of living	35%	27%
Poverty/homelessness	16%▲	3%
City leadership/governance (incl. mentions of Mayor & Council)	8%	5%
Crime/public safety/policing	7%	6%
COVID-19	4%▼	29%
Drug use/addiction	4%	2%
Healthcare	3%▲	0%
High taxes	3%	1%
Lack of housing/affordable housing	3%▲	0%
Lack of amenities/services	2%▼	7%
Lack of growth/development (incl. declining/stagnant population)	2%	2%
Unemployment	2%▼	8%
Don't know	2%	1%

Note: Mentions <2% not shown in current year.

Base: Those saying the quality of life has worsened – 2024 (n=188); 2022 (n=152)

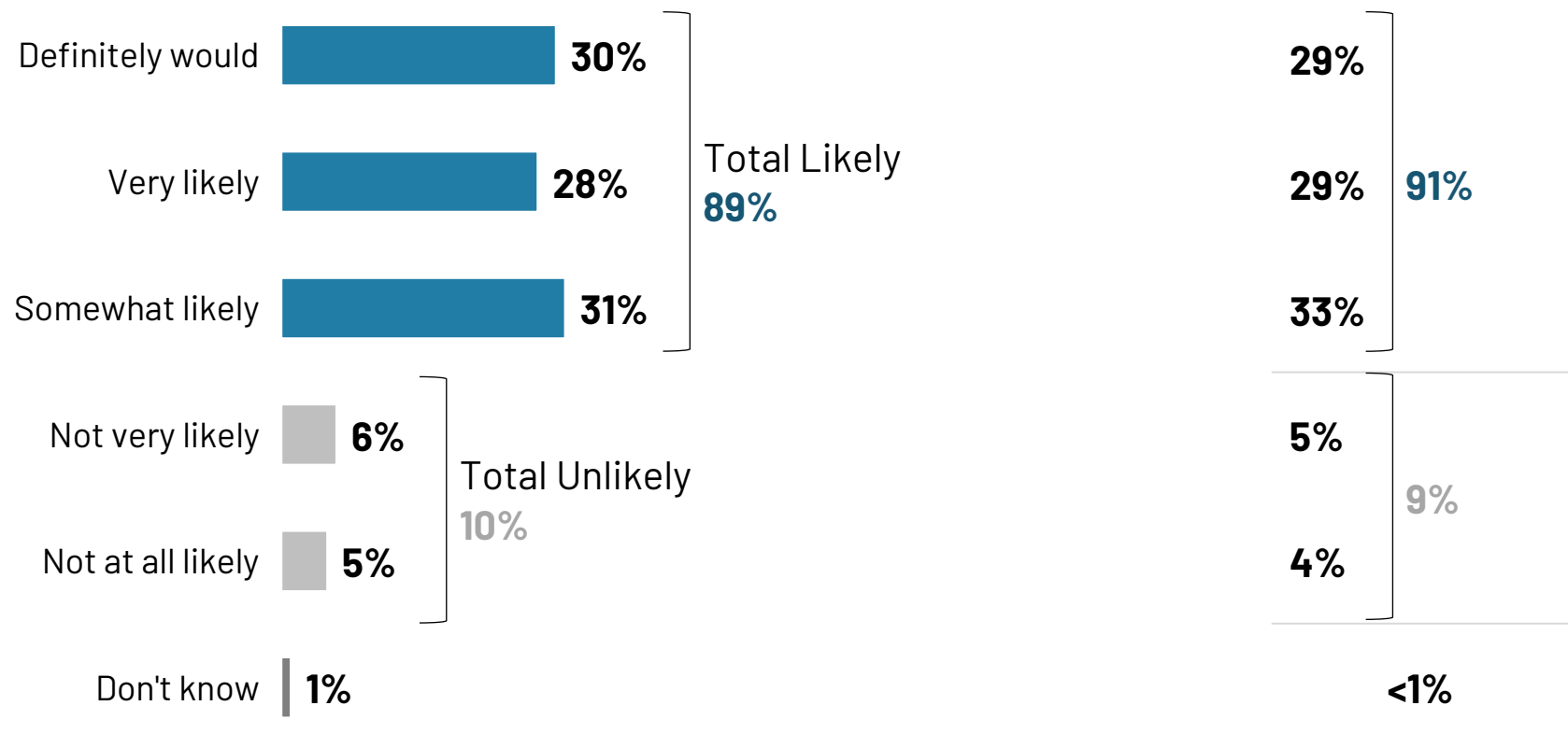
Q6. Why do you think the quality of life has worsened?

▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than 2022.



# Likelihood of Recommending Medicine Hat as a Place to Live

- Despite declining perceptions around quality of life, a strong majority (89%) continue to say they are likely to recommend Medicine Hat as a place to live, on par with 2022.
- The likelihood of recommending Medicine Hat as a place to live is higher among those living South of the highway as well as those living South of Seven Persons Creek and North of the highway (both 92% versus 83% of North of the river, 89% of South of the river and North of Seven Persons Creek).



Base: All respondents – 2024 (n=400); 2022 (n=400)  
Q7. Overall, how likely are you to recommend the City of Medicine Hat as a place to live?

▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than 2022.



# IMPORTANT LOCAL ISSUES

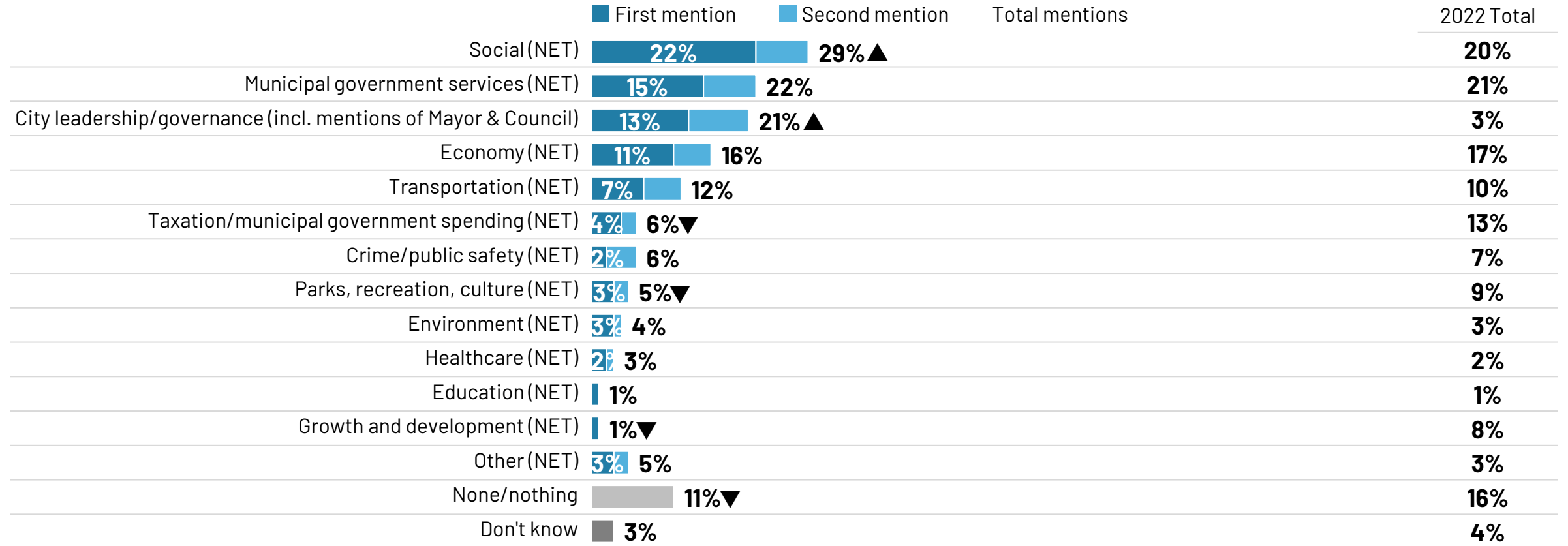
# Important Local Issues

(coded open-ends, multiple mentions allowed)

- The public issue agenda is evolving. This year's top three most important local issues are **social** (29%), **municipal government services** (22%), and **City leadership/governance** (21%).
  - The **social** Net includes mentions of "poverty/homelessness" (16%), "housing/lack of affordable housing" (10%), "drug abuse/addiction" (6%), "mental health" (1%), "seniors' issues" (<1%), and "other social mentions" (<1%).
  - The **municipal government services** Net is primarily comprised of mentions related to "utilities costs" (15%). Other mentions include "garbage/recycling" (1%), "infrastructure (unspecified)" (1%), "city cleanliness" (<1%), and "other municipal government services mentions" (5%).
  - **City leadership/governance** is a stand alone-code that includes mentions of Mayor and Council. It is the most frequently mentioned issue overall when responses are not categorized into the broader thematic Nets.
- Mentions of **City leadership/governance** are up 18 points this year as compared to 2022. **Social** issues also see a spike in mentions (up 9 points).
- Conversely, issues that are less likely to be mentioned this year are **taxation/municipal government spending** (down 7 points), **growth and development** (down 7 points), and **parks, recreation, culture** (down 4 points).
- Demographic differences include:
  - **Social** issues are mentioned more often by renters (39% versus 25% of homeowners) and those living in households with children under the age of 18 (38% versus 25% of those without children at home).
  - **Municipal government services** are mentioned more often by those who have lived in Medicine Hat for 21+ years (28% versus 13% of 10 years or less, 21% of 11-20 years) and homeowners (28% versus 9% of renters).
  - **City leadership/governance** is mentioned more often by those who are 55+ years of age (29% versus 7% of 18-34 years, 19% of 35-54 years), those who have lived in Medicine Hat for 21+ years (26% versus 11% of 10 years or less, 18% of 11-20 years), and homeowners (26% versus 7% of renters).

# Important Local Issues

(coded open-ends, multiple mentions allowed)



A "NET" is a combination of two or more mentions that cover a specific theme.

COVID-19 removed this year. Mentions were 2% in 2022.

Base: All respondents - 2024 (n=400); 2022 (n=400)

Q1. In your view, as a resident of the City of Medicine Hat, what is the most important issue facing your community, that is the one issue you feel should receive the greatest attention from local leaders? Are there any other important local issues?

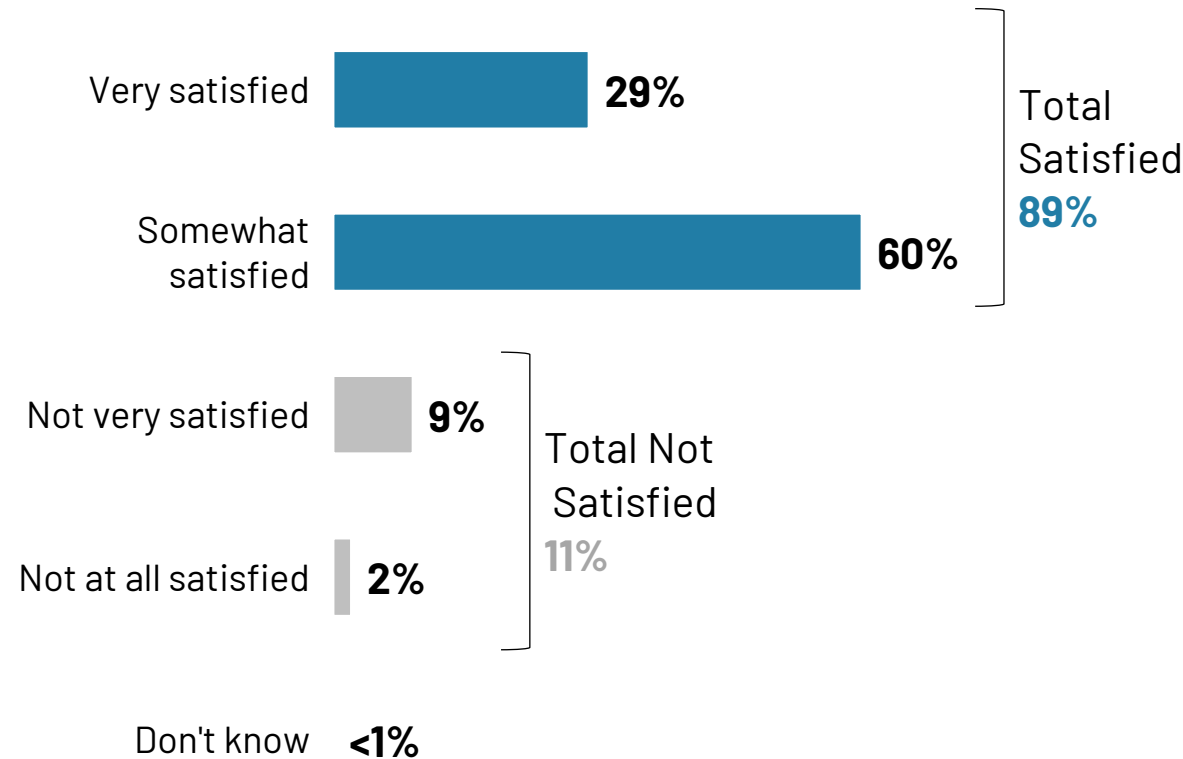
▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than 2022.

# CITY SERVICES



# Overall Satisfaction with City Services

- Overall satisfaction with City services remains high (89%).
- This year’s results are on par with both 2022 and the municipal norm.
- Overall satisfaction is higher among:
  - Those aged 55+ years and 18-34 years (93% and 92% versus 80% of 35-54 years)
  - Those living South of Seven Persons Creek and North of the highway as well as those South of the highway (94% and 93% versus 78% of North of the river, 89% of South of the river and North of Seven Persons Creek)



	2022	NORM
Total Satisfied	90%	86%
Very satisfied	31%	28%
Somewhat satisfied	59%	58%
Total Not Satisfied	9%	14%
Not very satisfied	8%	11%
Not at all satisfied	1%	3%
Don't know	1%	0%

Base: All respondents – 2024 (n=400); 2022 (n=400)  
Q9. Now, please tell me how satisfied you are with the City of Medicine Hat’s services on a scale of very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, not very satisfied, not at all satisfied. The first one is the overall level and quality of services provided by the City of Medicine Hat.

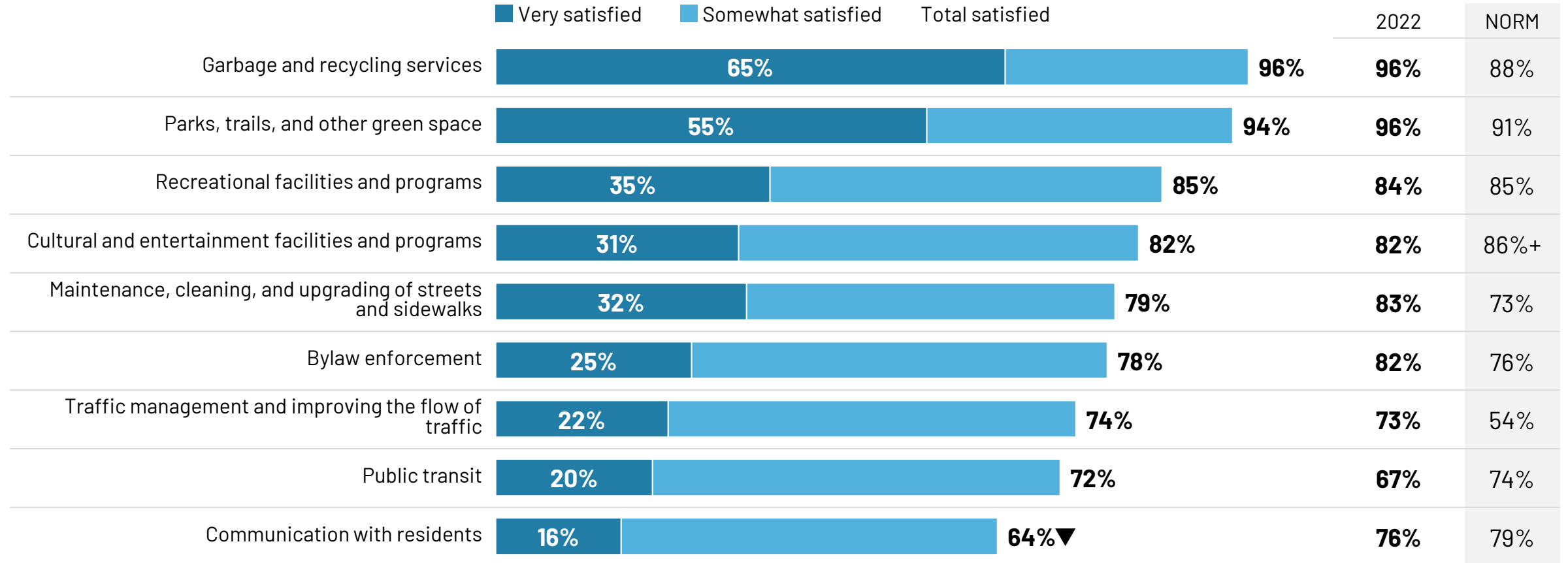
▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than 2022.



# Satisfaction with Specific City Services

- Residents are largely satisfied with specific services provided by the City.
- Services receiving the overall highest satisfaction ratings (90% or more) are **garbage and recycling services** (96%) and **parks, trails, and other green space** (94%).
- Strong satisfaction ratings (80% or more) are also seen for **recreational facilities and programs** (85%) and **cultural and entertainment facilities and programs** (82%).
- While slightly lower, a majority of citizens are also satisfied with **maintenance, cleaning, and upgrading of streets and sidewalks** (79%), **bylaw enforcement** (78%), **traffic management and improving the flow of traffic** (74%), and **public transit** (72%).
  - Satisfaction with public transit is statistically similar among transit users and non-users.
- The lowest scoring service is **communication with residents** (64%). Satisfaction with this service is down 12 points from 2022. It also sits lower than the municipal norm.
- Medicine Hat scores higher than the municipal norm on several services, including **garbage and recycling services, maintenance, cleaning, and upgrading of streets and sidewalks**, and **traffic management and improving the flow of traffic**.
- Demographic differences include:
  - Satisfaction with **recreational facilities and programs** is higher among those who have lived in Medicine Hat for 10 years or less (93% versus 80% of 21+ years, 88% of 11-20 years).
  - Satisfaction with **cultural and entertainment facilities and programs** is higher among those who are 55+ years of age (88% versus 74% of 35-54 years, 81% of 18-34 years) and those living in households without children under the age of 18 (85% versus 75% of those with children at home).
  - Satisfaction with **maintenance, cleaning, and upgrading of streets and sidewalks** is higher among those who are 18-34 years of age (87% versus 71% of 35-54 years, 80% of 55+ years).
  - Satisfaction with **bylaw enforcement** is higher among those who are 18-34 years of age (85% versus 73% of 55+ years, 78% of 35-54 years).
  - Satisfaction with **public transit** is higher among those living South of Seven Persons Creek and North of the highway (80% versus 61% of North of the river, 68% of South of the river and North of Seven Persons Creek, 74% of South of the highway).
  - Satisfaction with **communication with residents** is higher among those who are 18-34 years of age (71% versus 56% of 35-54 years, 66% of 55+ years).

# Satisfaction with Specific City Services



+ Slightly different question wording.

Base: All respondents – 2024 (n=400); 2022 (n=400)

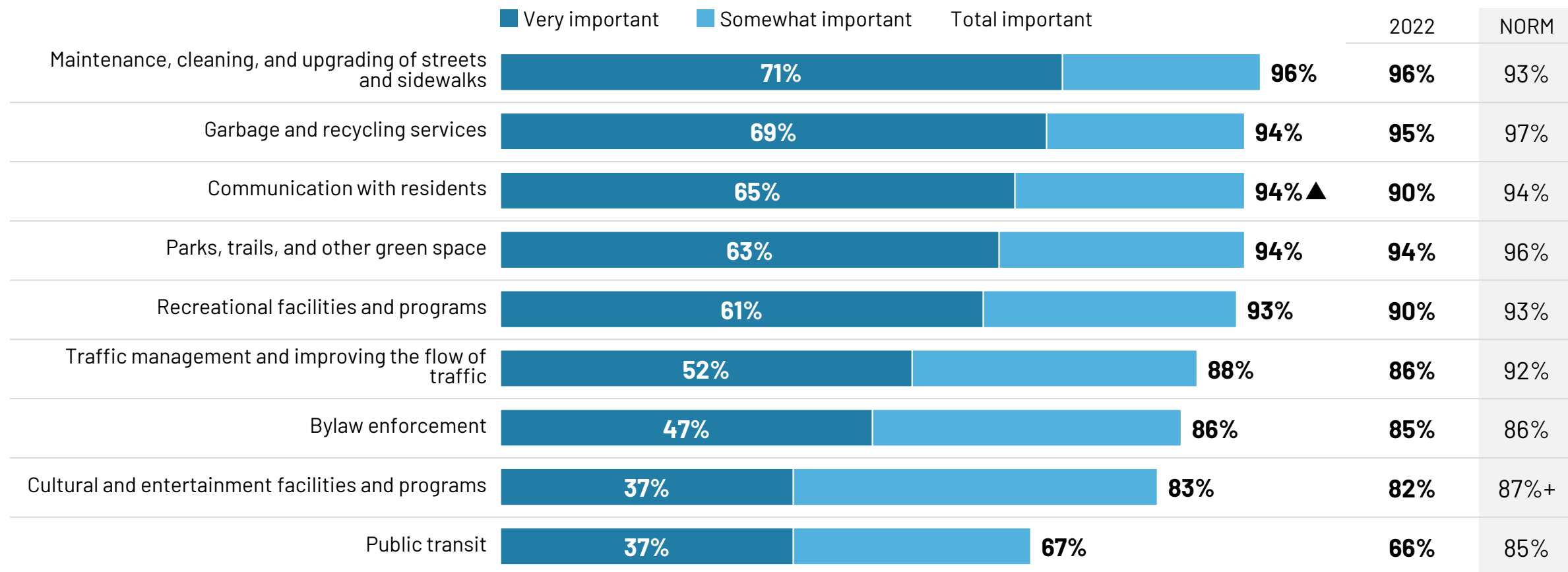
Q9. Now, please tell me how satisfied you are with the City of Medicine Hat's services on a scale of very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, not very satisfied, not at all satisfied.

▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than 2022.

# Importance of Specific City Services

- All the evaluated services are important to citizens.
- The overall most important services (rated important by 90% or more of residents) are **maintenance, cleaning, and upgrading of streets and sidewalks** (96%), **garbage and recycling services** (94%), **communication with residents** (94%), **parks, trails, and other green space** (94%), and **recreational facilities and programs** (93%).
- Other highly important services (rated important by 80% or more of residents) are **traffic management and improving the flow of traffic** (88%), **bylaw enforcement** (86%), and **cultural and entertainment facilities and programs** (83%).
- The one service scoring relatively lower is **public transit**, which is important to 67% of residents. The importance attached to public transit in Medicine Hat is lower than average (norm of 85%).
  - Importance rises to 97% among public transit users (versus 63% of non-users).
- This year's results are consistent with 2022, with one exception. Specifically, the importance attached to **communication with residents** is up a statistically significant 4 points this year. While the importance of this service has increased, it is still in line with the municipal norm.
- Demographic differences include:
  - **Recreational facilities and programs** are more important to those who are <55 years of age (includes 96% of 18-34 years and 95% of 35-54 years versus 89% of 55+ years).
  - **Traffic management and improving the flow of traffic** is more important to those who have lived in Medicine Hat for 11+ years (includes 90% of both 11-20 years and 21+ years versus 79% of 10 years or less).
  - **Bylaw enforcement** is more important to those who have lived in Medicine Hat for 11+ years (includes 90% of 11-20 years and 88% of 21+ years versus 78% of 10 years or less).
  - **Cultural and entertainment facilities and programs** are more important to women (87% versus 79% of men).
  - **Public transit** is more important to renters (76% versus 63% of homeowners).

# Importance of Specific City Services



+ Slightly different question wording.

Base: All respondents – 2024 (n=400); 2022 (n=400)

Q8. I am going to read a list of services provided to you by the City of Medicine Hat. Please rate how important each one is to you on a scale of very important, somewhat important, not very important, not at all important.

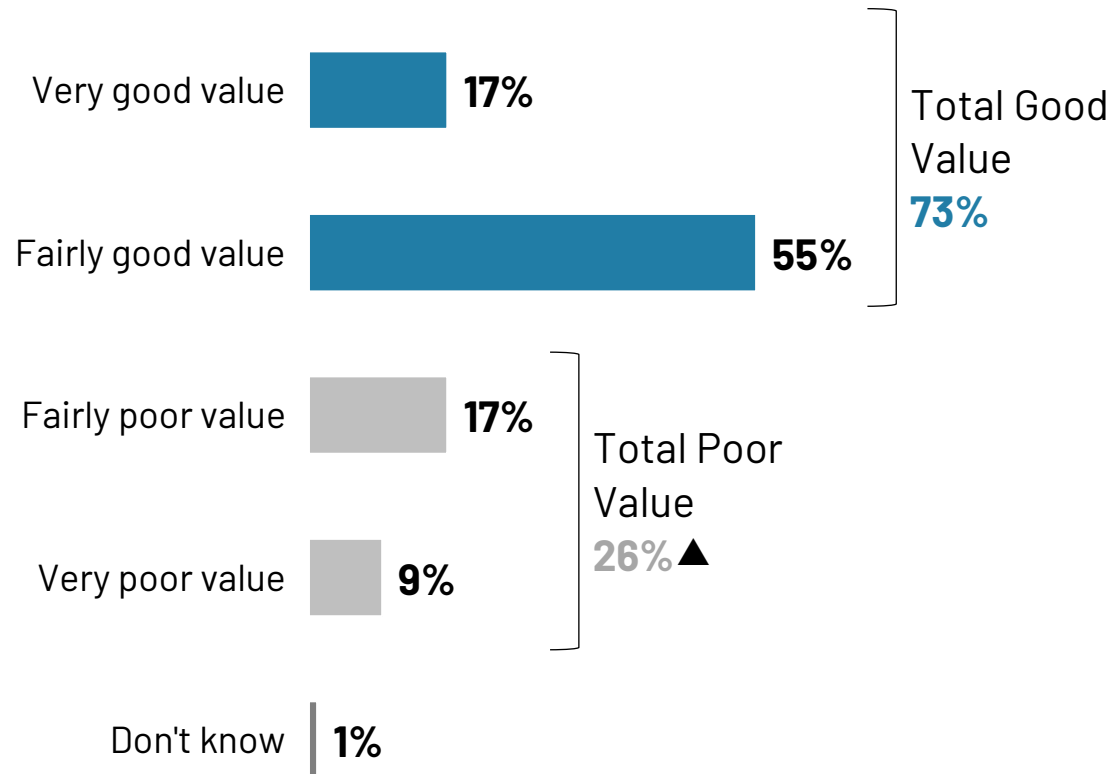
▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than 2022.



# FINANCIAL PLANNING

# Value for Tax Dollars

- A majority (73%) say they receive good value for their taxes.
- However, perceptions of poor value are growing (26%, up 6 points) and sit slightly higher than the municipal norm.
- Perceived value is higher among:
  - Those who are 55+ years of age (82% versus 61% of 35-54 years, 70% of 18-34 years)
  - Those who have lived in Medicine Hat for 10 years or less (81% versus 68% of 21+ years, 74% of 11-20 years)
- Those living North of the river are less likely to say they receive good value (64% versus 78% of South of Seven Persons Creek and North of the highway, 76% of South of the river and North of Seven Persons Creek, 75% of South of the highway).



2022		NORM	
19%	78%	17%	76%
59%		59%	
14%	20%	15%	21%
6%		6%	
2%		3%	

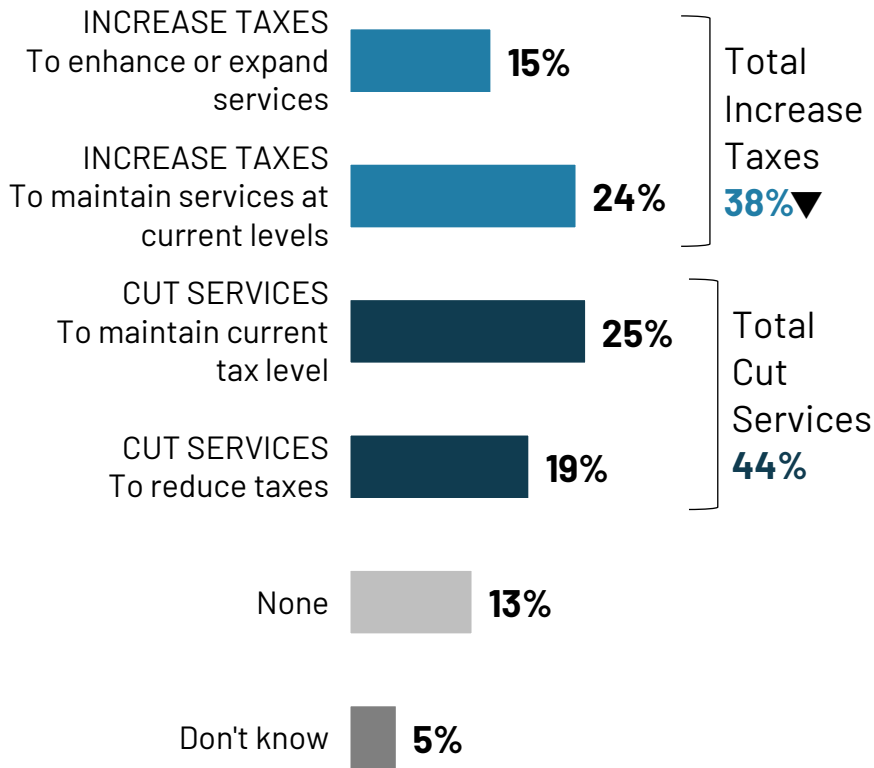
Base: All respondents – 2024 (n=400); 2022 (n=400)  
 Q10. Thinking about all the programs and services you receive from the City of Medicine Hat, would you say that overall you get good value or poor value for your tax dollars? (Is that very or fairly good/poor value?)

▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than 2022.



# Balancing Taxation and Service Delivery Levels

- More residents say the City should cut services (44%) than increase taxes (38%) although neither of these options is chosen by a majority of residents.
- The tolerance for tax increases has declined (down 7 points from 2022) and is also lower than the municipal norm. A softening in perceived value combined with high cost of living pressures may be impacting residents’ tolerance for tax increases.
- Preference for a reduction in services is stronger among those <55 years of age (includes 55% of 18-34 years and 50% of 35-54 years versus 33% of 55+ years).



2022		NORM	
16%	45%	19%	50%
29%		31%	
26%	42%	24%	39%
16%		15%	
10%		9%	
4%		2%	

Base: All respondents – 2024 (n=400); 2022 (n=400)  
 Q11. Municipal property taxes are the primary way to pay for services provided by the City of Medicine Hat. Due to the increased cost of maintaining current service levels and infrastructure, the City must balance taxation and service delivery levels. To deal with this situation, which one of the following four options would you most like the City of Medicine Hat to pursue?

▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than 2022.

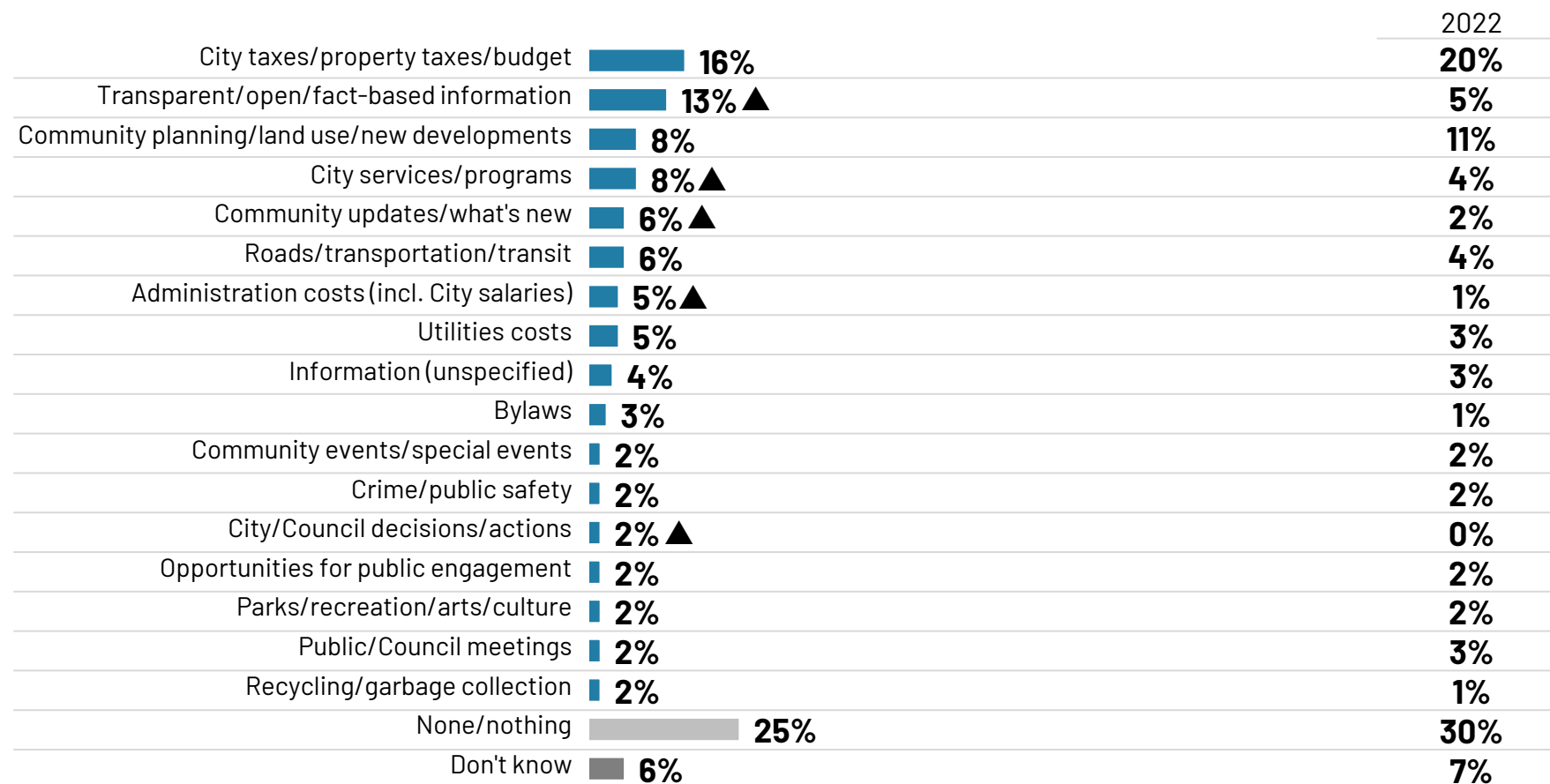


# COMMUNICATIONS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

# Information Needs

(coded open-ends, multiple responses allowed)

- Residents are interested in receiving a variety of information from the City.
- The most frequently requested type of information continues to be “City taxes/property taxes/ budget” (16%).
- However, there is a growing desire for “transparent/open/ fact-based information” (13%, up 8 points from 2022).
- Just over three-in-ten (31%) indicate they have no immediate information needs (includes 25% saying “none/nothing” and 6% saying “don’t know”).



Note: Mentions <2% not shown in current year.

Base: All respondents – 2024 (n=400); 2022 (n=400)

Q12. Thinking about your information needs, what kinds of information do you want the City of Medicine Hat to provide you with? Any others?

▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than 2022.



# Preferred Methods of Communication

(coded open-ends, multiple responses allowed)

- “Email” remains the best way of communicating information to citizens (35%). The preference for email is consistent with the municipal norm.
- “Social media (Twitter, Facebook, etc.)” sits in second (28%, up 8 points).
- While “email” is the number one mention across all age groups, mentions are particularly high among those <55 years of age (includes 44% of 18-34 years and 40% of 35-54 years versus 27% of 55+ years).
- Younger residents (18-34 years) are the most likely to mention “social media” (39% versus 21% of 55+ years, 30% of 35-54 years).
- While “newspaper” sits fifth overall (12%), it places second among those who are 55+ years (23% versus 2% of 35-54 years, 6% of 18-34 years).

		2022	NORM
Email	35%	30%	43%
Social media (Twitter, Facebook, etc.)	28%▲	20%	17%
Mail	16%▲	10%	25%
City website	15%	14%	15%
Newspaper	12%▼	17%	16%
TV	12%	12%	3%
Newsletter/pamphlet/flyer/brochure	10%	10%	12%
Radio	8%▼	14%	4%
Internet (unspecified)	5%	5%	5%
Telephone	5%	6%	6%
City meetings (Council, public hearings, etc.)	3%	2%	2%
Text	3%	4%	3%
None/nothing	3%	3%	
Don't know	2%	3%	

Note: Mentions <2% not shown in current year.

Base: All respondents - 2024 (n=400); 2022 (n=400)

Q13. What methods would be best for the City of Medicine Hat to communicate information to you? Any others?

▲▼ Significantly higher/lower than 2022.

# Contacted City and Satisfaction with Customer Service

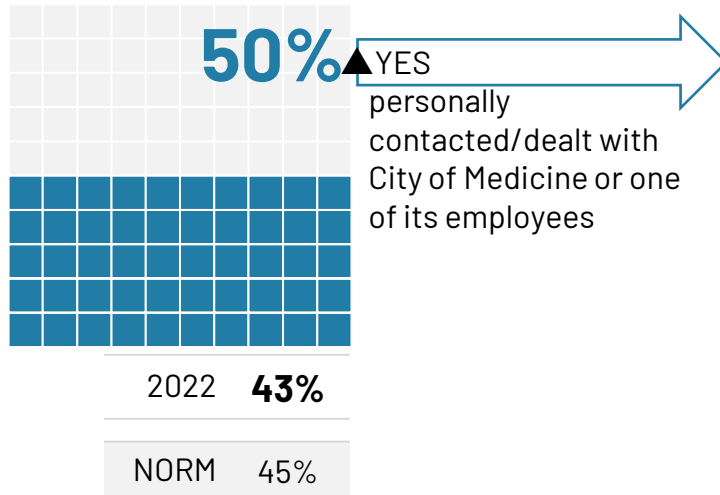
## Contacted City Last 12 Months

- Half (50%) say they have personally contacted or dealt with the City of Medicine Hat or one of its employees in the last 12 months.
- Claimed contact with the City is up 7 points from 2022 although still comparable to the municipal norm.
- Claimed contact is higher among:
  - Those living North of the river (59% versus 44% of South of the highway, 48% of South of Seven Persons Creek and North of the highway, 52% of South of the river and North of Seven Persons Creek)
  - Homeowners (54% versus 40% of renters)

## Satisfaction with Customer Service

- Most of those who have contacted the City are satisfied with the City's customer service.
- Overall, 80% say they are satisfied with **the overall service received**.
- When looking at specific customer service attributes, **staff's courteousness** scores highest overall (89% satisfied).
- Strong satisfaction ratings are also seen for **staff's knowledge** (84%), **staff's helpfulness** (83%), **the speed and timeliness of service** (82%), and **the ease of reaching staff** (81%).
- **Staff's ability to resolve issues** scores relatively lower (76%).
- This year's results are similar to 2022 with the exception of **staff's helpfulness**, which is down 7 points. However, satisfaction is still on par with the municipal norm.

# Contacted City and Satisfaction with Customer Service



	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Total satisfied	2022	NORM
The overall service you received	49%		80%	85%	83%
Staff's courteousness	66%		89%	95%	91%
Staff's knowledge	56%		84%	89%	86%
Staff's helpfulness	54%		83%▼	90%	86%
The speed and timeliness of service	51%		82%	85%	81%
The ease of reaching staff	50%		81%	84%	84%
Staff's ability to resolve your issue	48%		76%	82%	77%

Base: All respondents – 2024 (n=400); 2022 (n=400)

Q14. In the last 12 months, have you personally contacted or dealt with the City of Medicine Hat or one of its employees?

Base: Those saying they contacted City of Medicine Hat in past 12 months – 2024 (n=203); 2022 (n=171)

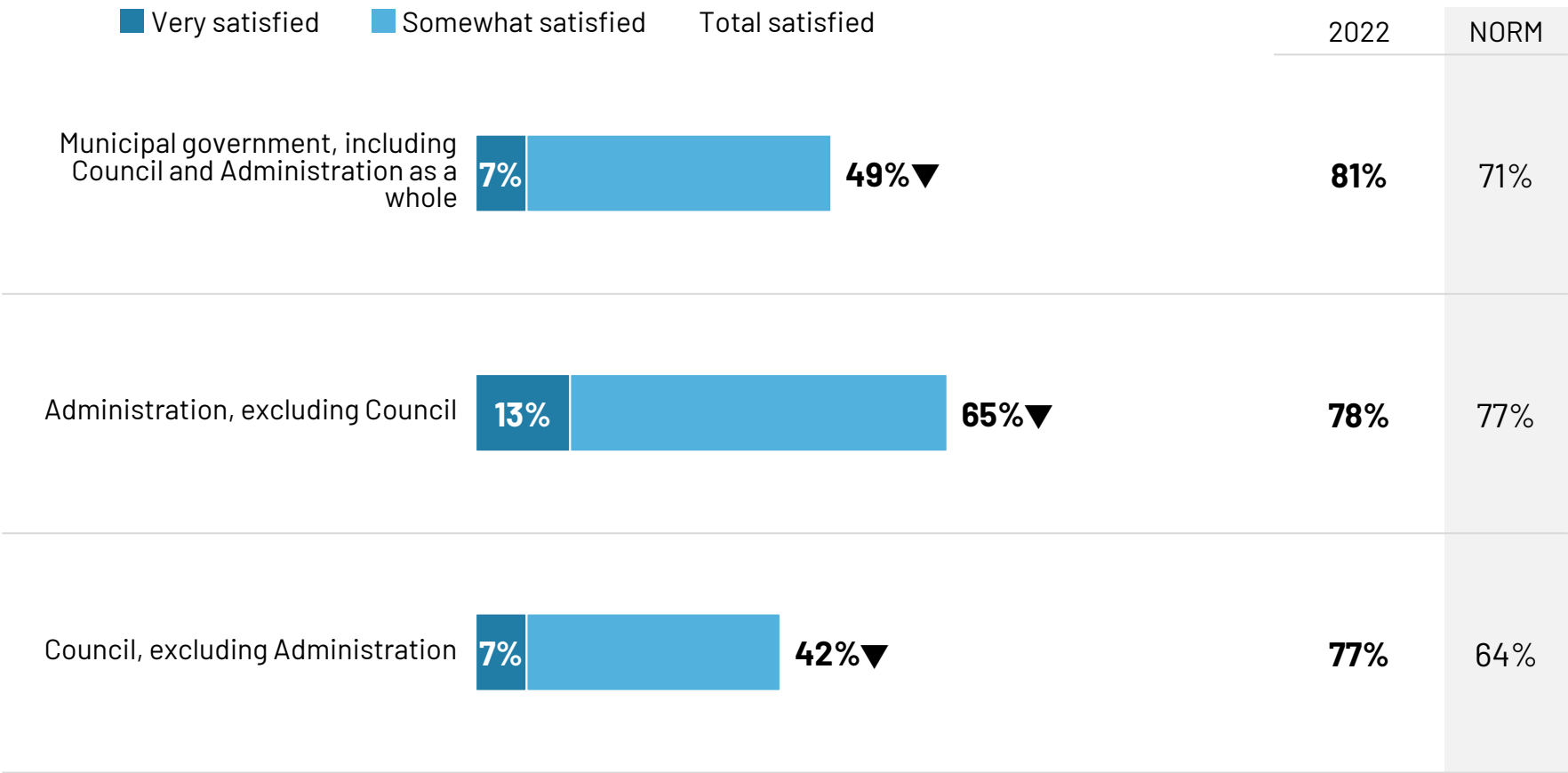
Q15. Thinking of your most recent contact experience, how satisfied are you with ...?

▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than 2022.

# PERCEPTIONS OF COUNCIL, ADMINISTRATION, AND MUNICIPAL OPERATIONS

# Satisfaction with Council and Administration

- Satisfaction with Council and Administration has dropped significantly this year and now sits notably lower than the municipal norm on all measures.
- Just less than half (49%) say they are satisfied with the City's municipal government as a whole.
- Residents are more satisfied with Administration (65%) than with Council (42%).
- Overall satisfaction with municipal government is higher among:
  - Those living South of the highway and South of the river and North of Seven Persons Creek (54% and 53% versus 38% of South of Seven Persons Creek and North of the highway, 46% of North of the river)
  - Those who have lived in Medicine Hat for 10 years or less (68% versus 38% of 21+ years, 53% of 11-20 years)



Base: All respondents – 2024 (n=400); 2022 (n=400)  
Q16. Taking everything into account, how satisfied are you with the way the City of Medicine Hat's ... is going about running the community?

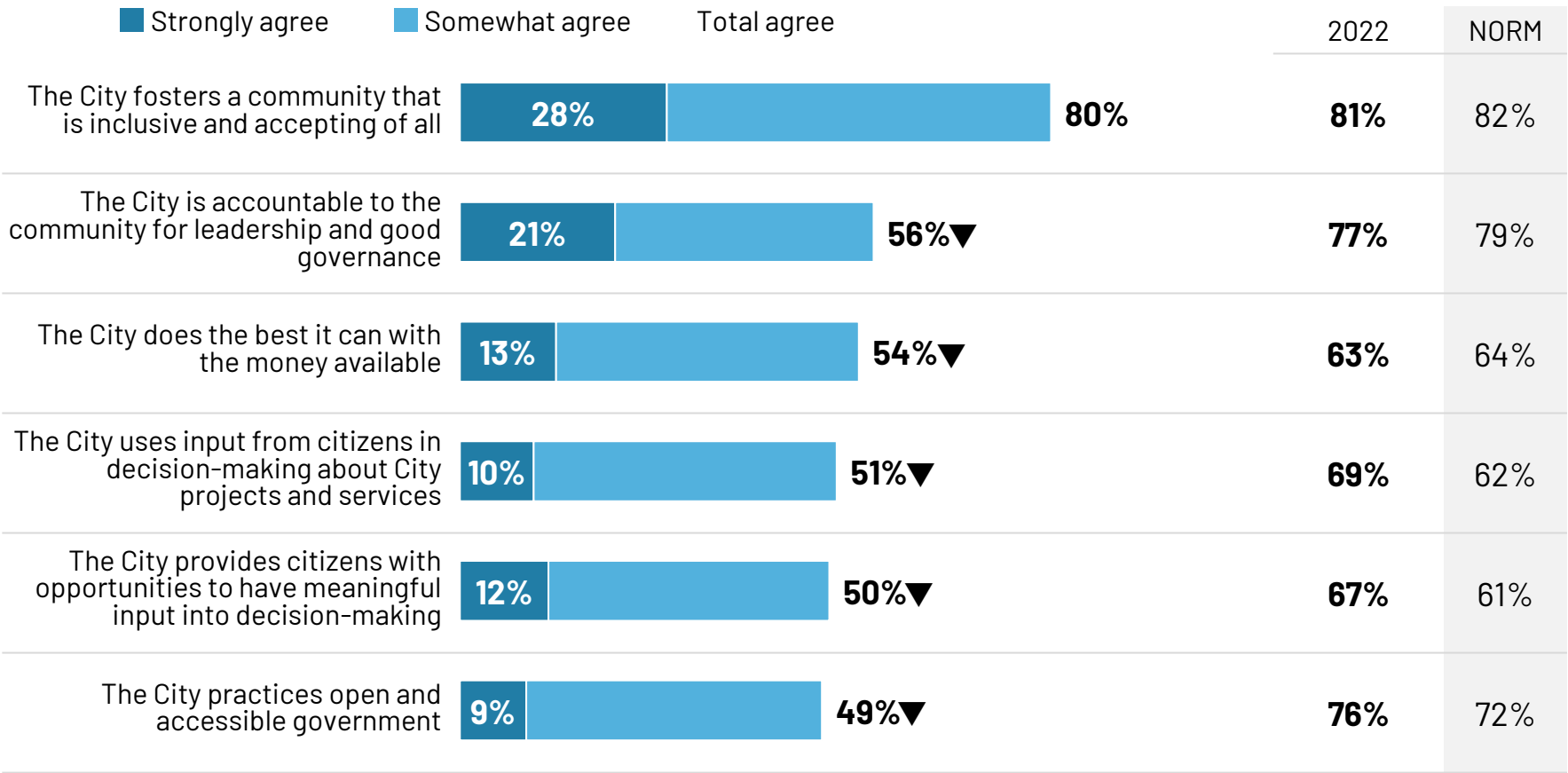
▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than 2022.





# Perceptions of Municipal Operations

- Most (80%) residents agree that the City fosters a community that is inclusive and accepting of all, on par with both 2022 and the municipal norm.
- However, perceptions of other aspects of the City’s municipal operations are less positive and have declined significantly from 2022.
- Medicine Hat residents’ views in these areas are also below the municipal norm.



Base: All respondents – 2024 (n=400); 2022 (n=400)  
Q17. Thinking about your personal dealings with the City of Medicine Hat, your general impressions, and anything you may have read, seen or heard, please indicate if you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

▲ ▼ Significantly higher/lower than 2022.



# 03 APPENDIX: ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# Executive Summary

## Comparison of Online to Telephone

- Overall, online survey respondents provide lower ratings than telephone survey respondents on most measures.
- Online survey respondents are particularly critical of Council, Administration, and municipal operations, with most demonstrating strong unfavourable views in these areas.
- City leadership/governance is identified as the number one local issue by online survey respondents. All other issues are mentioned much less often.



VS.



# Comparison of Online to Telephone for Key Survey Metrics (page 1 of 2)

	Online	Telephone
Overall Quality of Life	62% total good	90% total good
Change in Quality of Life Past Three Years	77% worsened	45% worsened
Likelihood of Recommending Medicine Hat as a Place to Live	57% likely	89% likely
Important Local Issues (Top 3)	City leadership/governance (48%) Social (20%) Municipal government services (20%)	Social (29%) Municipal government services (22%) City leadership/governance (21%)
Overall Satisfaction with City Services	59% total satisfied	89% total satisfied
Value for Taxes	41% total good value	73% total good value
Balancing Taxation and Service Delivery Levels	25% total increase taxes 54% total cut services	38% total increase taxes 44% total cut services
Contacted City Last 12 Months	62% yes	50% yes
Satisfaction with Overall Customer Service	59% total satisfied	80% total satisfied



# Comparison of Online to Telephone for Key Survey Metrics (page 2 of 2)

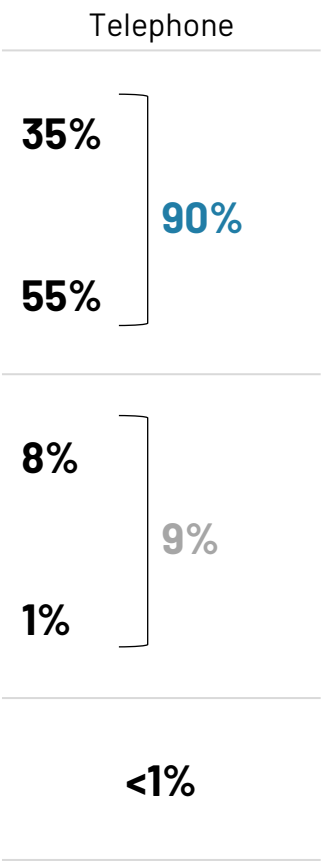
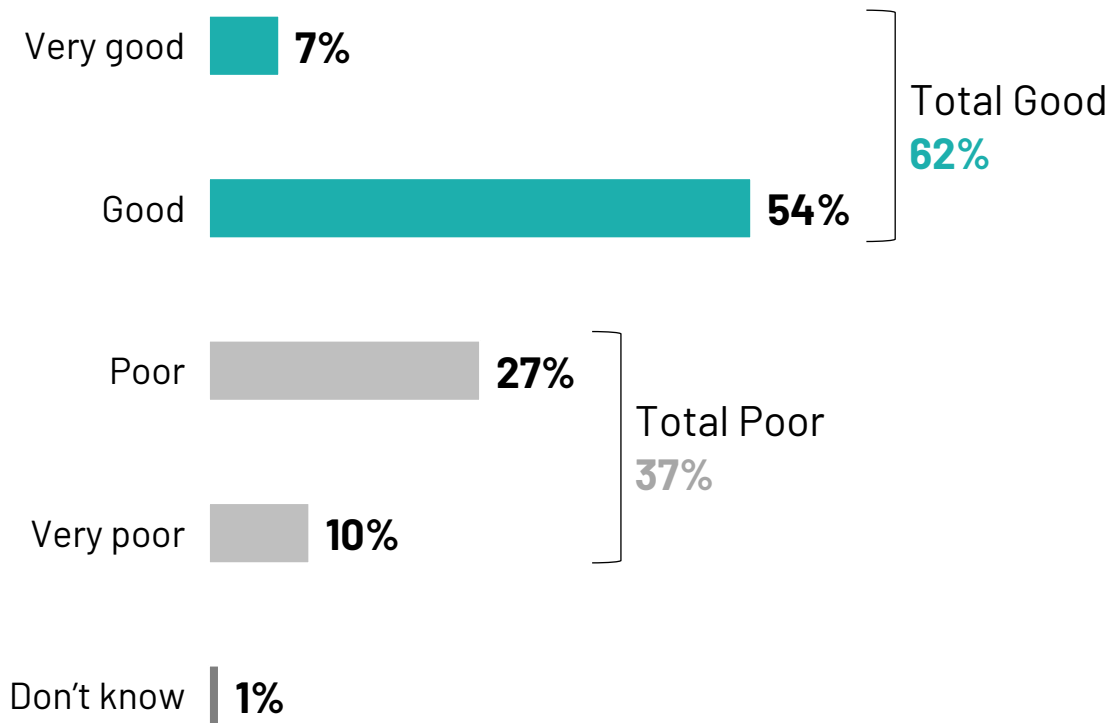
	Online	Telephone
<b>Satisfaction with Council and Administration</b>		
Municipal government as a whole	8% total satisfied	49% total satisfied
Administration, excluding Council	22% total satisfied	65% total satisfied
Council, excluding Administration	7% total satisfied	42% total satisfied
<b>Perceptions of Municipal Operations</b>		
The City fosters a community that is inclusive and accepting of all	30% total agree	80% total agree
The City is accountable to the community for leadership and good governance	23% total agree	56% total agree
The City does the best it can with the money available	17% total agree	54% total agree
The City uses input from citizens in decision-making about City projects and services	16% total agree	51% total agree
The City provides citizens with opportunities to have meaningful input into decision-making	13% total agree	50% total agree
The City practices open and accessible government	9% total agree	49% total agree

# QUALITY OF LIFE



# Overall Quality of Life

- In total, 62% of online survey respondents rate the overall quality of life in Medicine Hat as good compared to 90% of telephone survey respondents.
- Nearly four-in-ten (37%) online survey respondents rate the quality of life poorly.

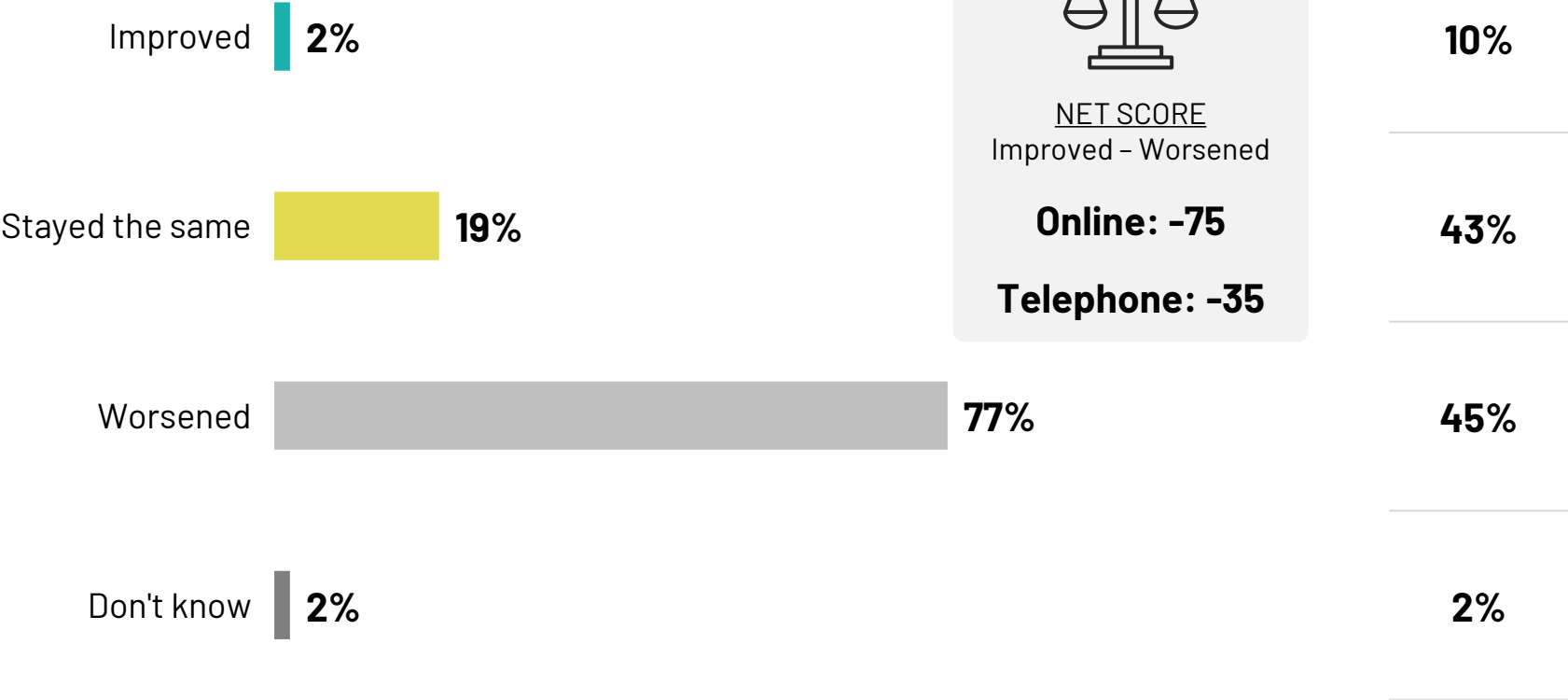


Base: All respondents – Online (n=450); Telephone(n=400)  
Q3. How would you rate the overall quality of life in the City of Medicine Hat today?



# Change in Quality of Life Past Three Years

- Most (77%) online survey respondents say the quality of life in Medicine Hat has ‘worsened’ over the past three years compared to 45% of telephone survey respondents.
- Another 19% feel it has ‘stayed the same’ and only 2% say ‘improved’.



Base: All respondents – Online (n=450); Telephone (n=400)  
Q4. Do you feel that the quality of life in the City of Medicine Hat in the past three years has improved, stayed the same, or worsened?



# Reasons Quality of Life has Improved

(among those saying the quality of life has improved – coded open-ends)

- Only 8 online survey respondents say the quality of life has 'improved' over the past three years.
- As this sample size is too small for coding, the verbatim comments explaining why they feel the quality of life has 'improved' have been included instead.



Bike paths and walking trails.

Efforts being made to bring new events downtown.

The female Mayor is trying to clean things up in City Hall.

Downtown revitalization.

City has implemented the MDP, Recreation Master Plan, and Draft Environmental Framework. I see positive signs of environmental protection of our natural areas. We need to do more. And City has made some excellent improvements in dealing with housing and utilities.

The changes to the City's zoning laws.

Don't know.

Don't know.

## Telephone Top 5 Reasons

Good amenities/services (unspecified) **19%**

Economic development/ more local businesses **17%**

More job opportunities **14%**

City leadership/ governance (incl. mentions of Mayor & Council) **12%**

Pandemic is over **7%**

\* Small base size (<50), interpret with caution.

\*\* Very small base size (<25), interpret with extreme caution.












Base: Those saying the quality of life has improved - Online (n=8)\*\*; Telephone (n=37)\*

Q5. Why do you think the quality of life has improved?

# Reasons Quality of Life Has Worsened

(among those saying the quality of life has worsened – coded open-ends)

- One-third (33%) of online survey respondents saying the quality of life has 'worsened' attribute this to "it is more expensive/cost of living". This is also the number one mention in the telephone survey.
- "City leadership/governance (including mentions of Mayor & Council)" sits in second (24%). Mentions are notably higher online than among telephone survey respondents.

		Telephone
It is more expensive/cost of living	 <b>33%</b>	<b>35%</b>
City leadership/governance (incl. mentions of Mayor & Council)	 <b>24%</b>	<b>8%</b>
Poverty/homelessness	 <b>9%</b>	<b>16%</b>
High taxes	 <b>6%</b>	<b>3%</b>
Crime/public safety/policing	 <b>5%</b>	<b>7%</b>
Lack of housing/affordable housing	 <b>4%</b>	<b>3%</b>
Drug use/addiction	 <b>3%</b>	<b>4%</b>
Lack of economic development/attacting business	 <b>3%</b>	<b>1%</b>
Unemployment	 <b>3%</b>	<b>2%</b>
Lack of growth/development (incl. declining/stagnant population)	 <b>2%</b>	<b>2%</b>
Don't know	 <b>2%</b>	<b>2%</b>

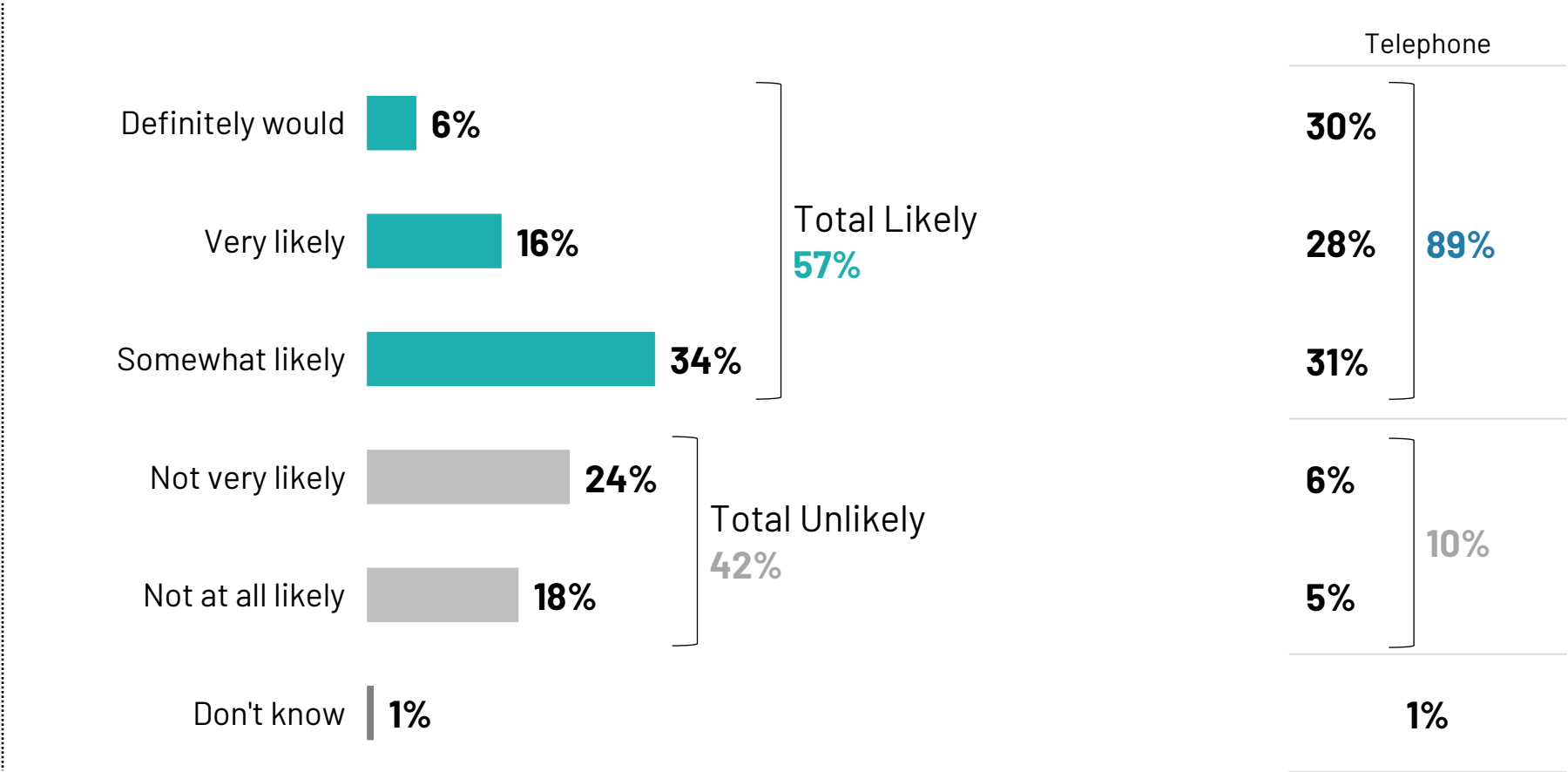
Note: Online mentions <2% not shown.

Base: Those saying the quality of life has worsened – Online (n=347); Telephone (n=188)

Q6. Why do you think the quality of life has worsened?

# Likelihood of Recommending Medicine Hat as a Place to Live

- Overall, 57% of online survey respondents say they are likely to recommend Medicine Hat as a place to live compared to 89% of telephone survey respondents.
- More than four-in-ten (42%) say they are unlikely to recommend Medicine Hat as a place to live.



Base: All respondents – Online (n=450); Telephone (n=400)  
Q7. Overall, how likely are you to recommend the City of Medicine Hat as a place to live?



# IMPORTANT LOCAL ISSUES

# Important Local Issues

(coded open-ends, multiple mentions allowed)

- City leadership/governance (including mentions of Mayor and Council) is the number one local issue among online survey respondents (48%, more than double what is mentioned by those participating in the random telephone survey).
- All other issues are mentioned much less often. These include social (20%), municipal government services (20%), the economy (16%), and taxation/municipal government spending (16%).

	First mention	Second mention	Total mentions	Telephone
City leadership/governance (incl. mentions of Mayor & Council)	34%	14%	48%	21%
Social (NET)	16%	4%	20%	29%
Municipal government services (NET)	14%	6%	20%	22%
Economy (NET)	12%	4%	16%	16%
Taxation/municipal government spending (NET)	10%	6%	16%	6%
Crime/public safety (NET)	3%	3%	6%	6%
Transportation (NET)	2%	2%	4%	12%
Environment (NET)	1%	2%	3%	4%
Growth and development (NET)	1%	1%	2%	1%
Parks, recreation, culture (NET)	1%	1%	2%	5%
Healthcare (NET)	1%	0%	1%	3%
Education (NET)	<1%	0%	<1%	1%
Other (NET)	2%	3%	5%	5%
None/don't know	0%	4%	4%	14%

A "NET" is a combination of two or more mentions that cover a specific theme.  
 COVID-19 removed this year. Mentions were 0% online and 2% telephone in 2022.

Base: All respondents – Online (n=450); Telephone (n=400)

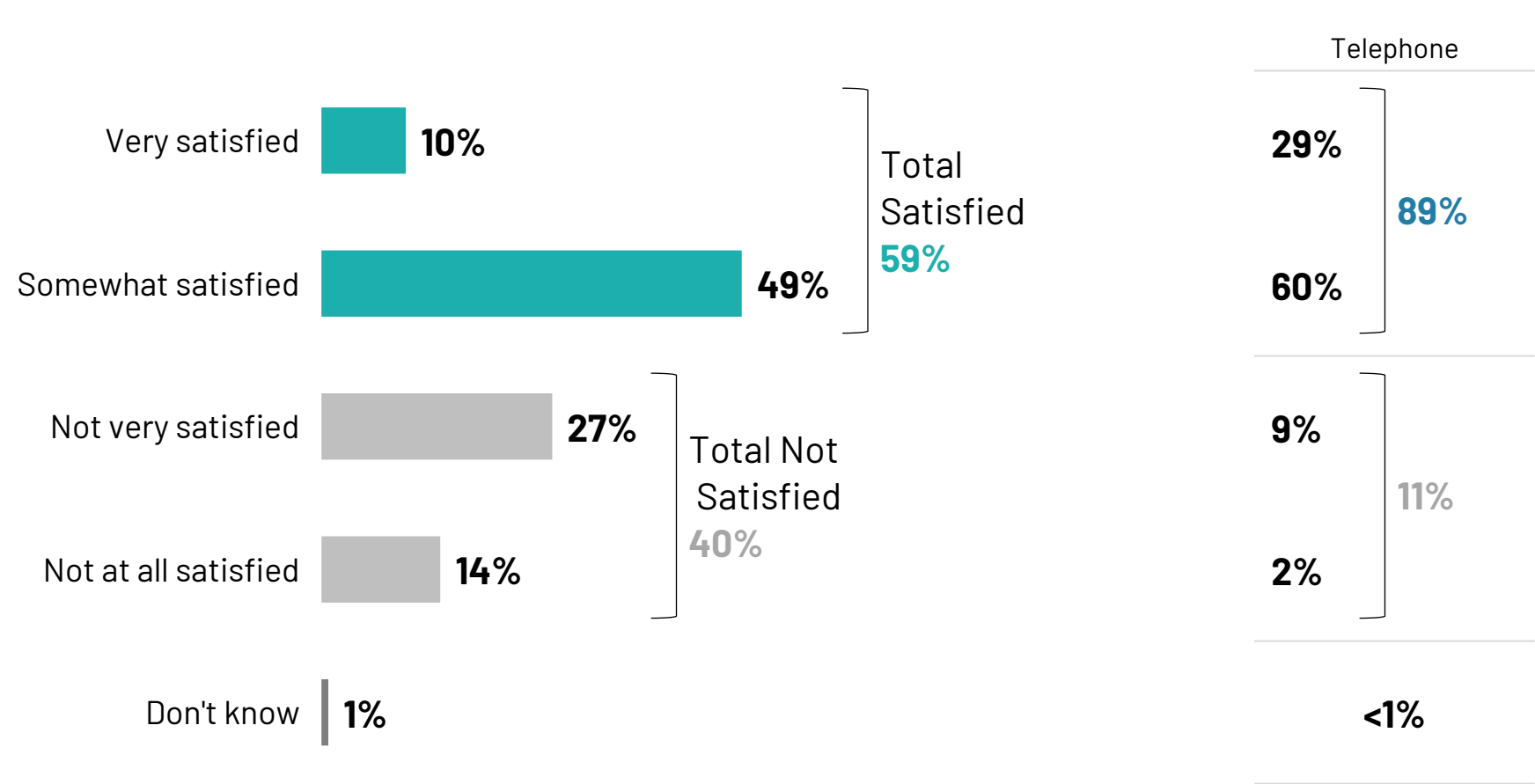
Q1. In your view, as a resident of the City of :Medicine Hat, what is the most important issue facing your community, that is the one issue you feel should receive the greatest attention from local leaders? Are there any other important local issues?



# CITY SERVICES

# Overall Satisfaction with City Services

- Only 59% of online survey respondents say they are satisfied with the overall level and quality of City services compared to 89% of telephone survey respondents.
- Four-in-ten (40%) are not satisfied.

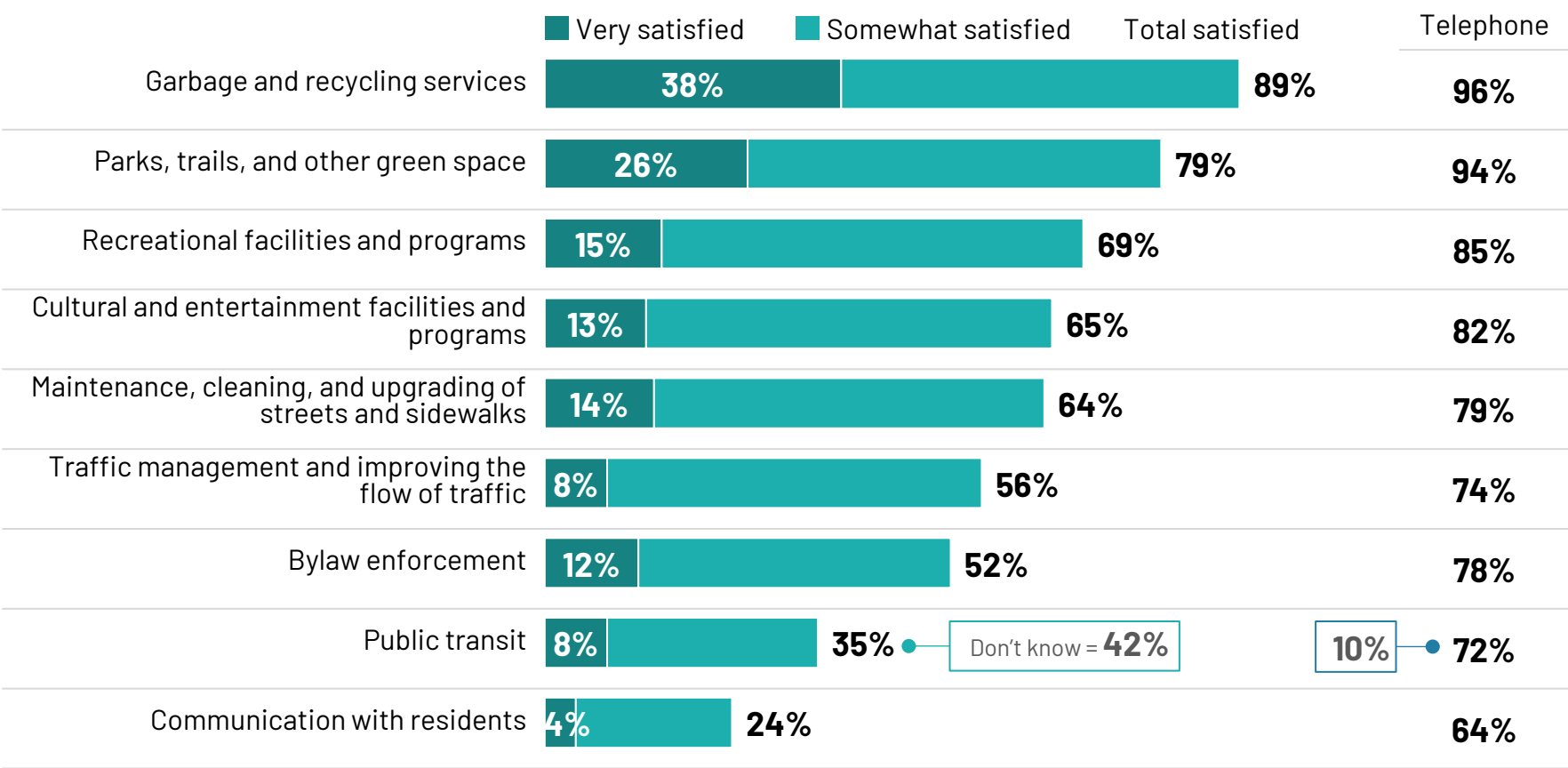


Base: All respondents – Online (n=450); Telephone (n=400)  
Q9. Now, please tell me how satisfied you are with the City of Medicine Hat’s services on a scale of very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, not very satisfied, not at all satisfied. The first one is the overall level and quality of services provided by the City of Medicine Hat.



# Satisfaction with Specific City Services

- Satisfaction with specific City services is lower among online survey respondents in all instances.
- The biggest difference is seen for communication with residents, with only 24% of online respondents saying they are satisfied compared to 64% of telephone respondents.
- The next biggest gap is for public transit (35% online versus 72% telephone). However, online survey respondents are much more likely to say they ‘don’t know’ how to evaluate this service.

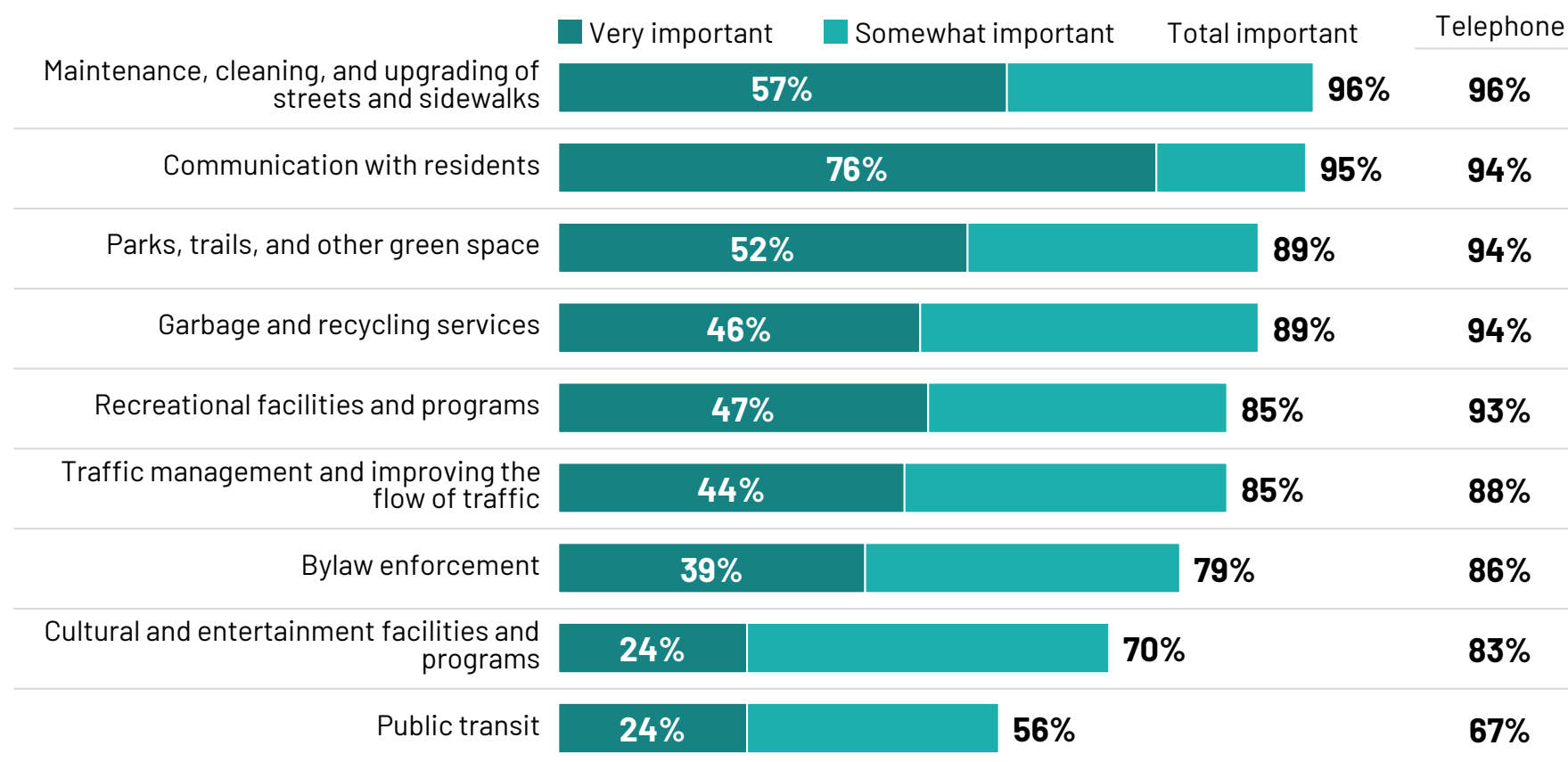


Base: All respondents – Online (n=450); Telephone (n=400)  
Q9. Now, please tell me how satisfied you are with the City of Medicine Hat’s services on a scale of very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, not very satisfied, not at all satisfied.



# Importance of Specific City Services

- Similar to the telephone survey, all the evaluated services are important to online survey respondents.
- Two services that stand out as being rated lower online are cultural and entertainment facilities and programs (70% online versus 83% telephone) and public transit (56% online versus 67% telephone).



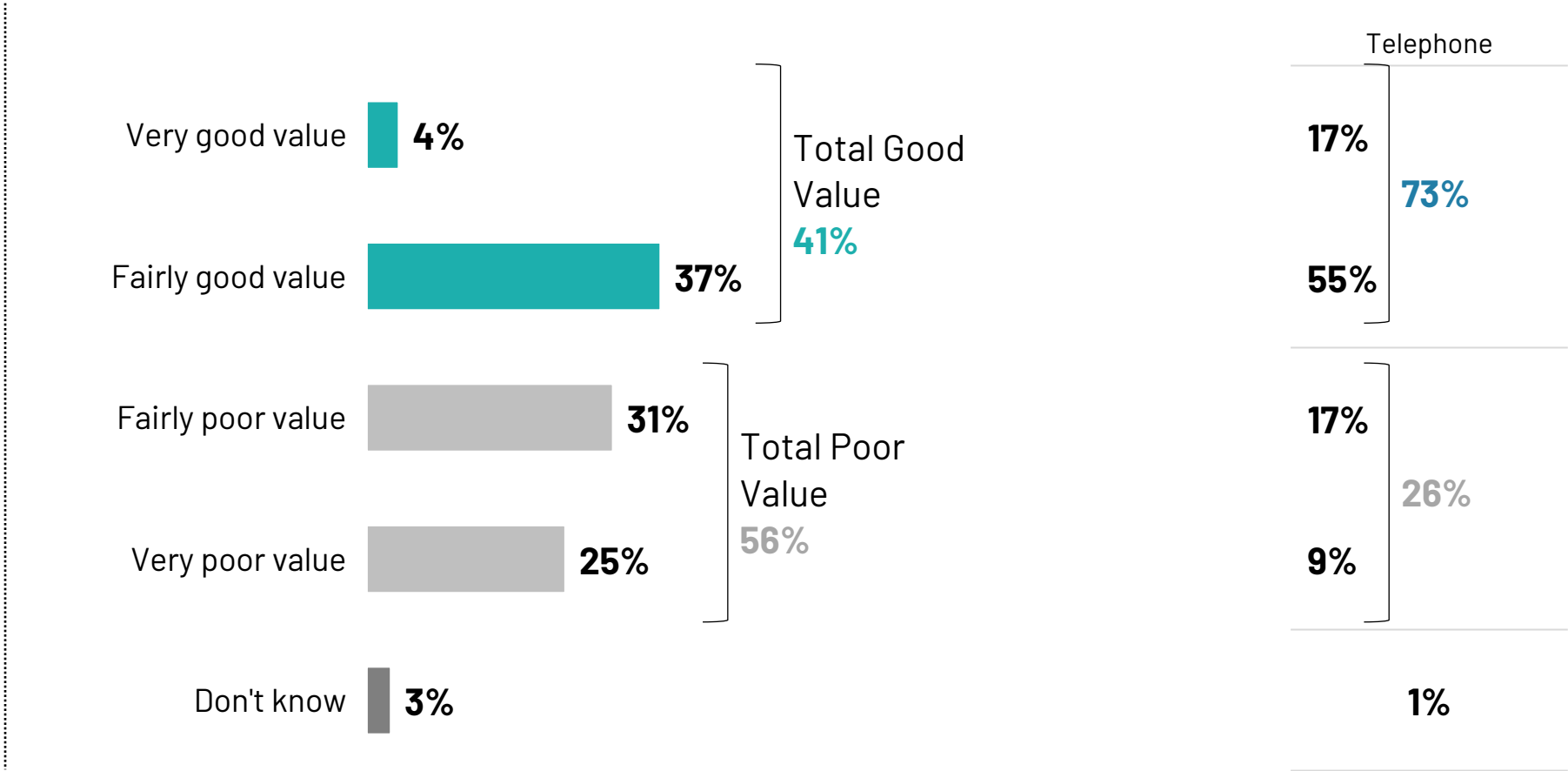
Base: All respondents – Online (n=450); Telephone (n=400)

Q8. I am going to read a list of services provided to you by the City of Medicine Hat. Please rate how important each one is to you on a scale of very important, somewhat important, not very important, not at all important.

# FINANCIAL PLANNING

# Value for Taxes

- Only a minority (41%) of online survey respondents say they receive good value for their municipal tax dollars.
- Most (56%) rate the value for taxes poorly.
- This is different from the telephone survey, where 73% say they receive good value for the taxes they pay to the City.

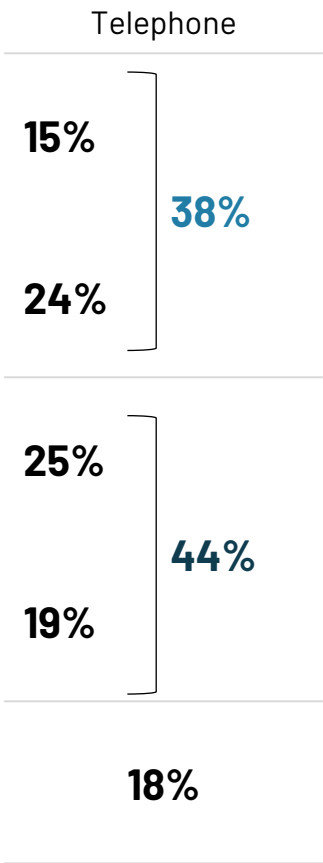
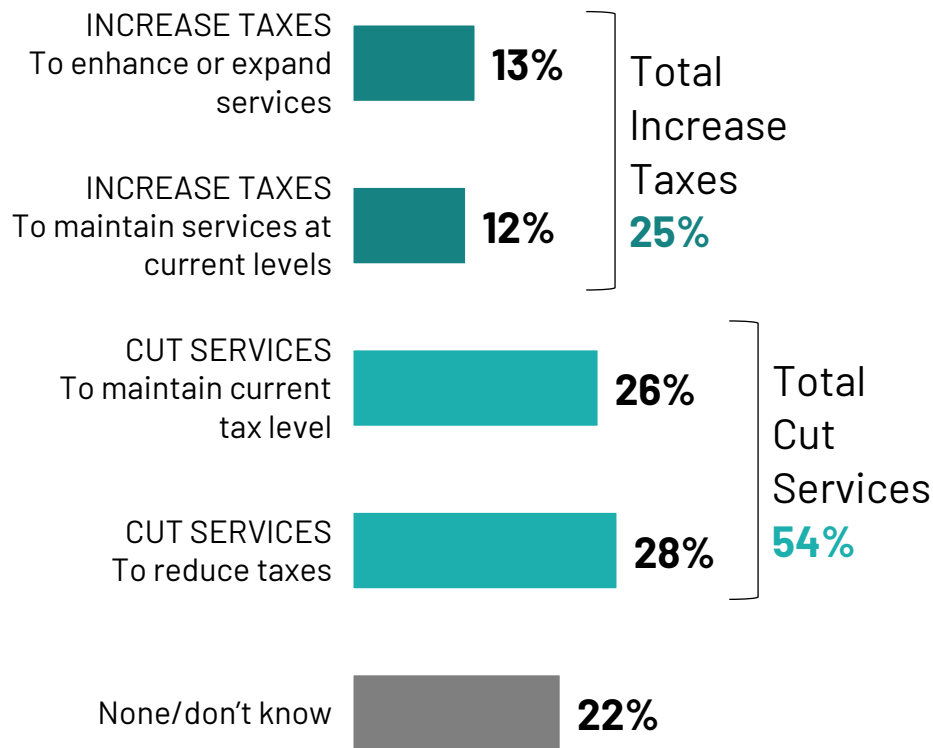


Base: All respondents – Online (n=450); Telephone (n=400)  
Q10. Thinking about all the programs and services you receive from the City of Medicine Hat, would you say that overall you get good value or poor value for your tax dollars? (Is that very or fairly good/poor value?)



# Balancing Taxation and Service Delivery Levels

- When it comes to balancing taxation and service delivery levels, 54% of online survey respondents say they would prefer the City cut services while 25% opt for a tax increase.
- While this same sentiment is shared among telephone survey respondents, it is felt more strongly online.



Base: All respondents – Online (n=450); Telephone (n=400)  
Q11. Municipal property taxes are the primary way to pay for services provided by the City of Medicine Hat. Due to the increased cost of maintaining current service levels and infrastructure, the City must balance taxation and service delivery levels. To deal with this situation, which one of the following four options would you most like the City of Medicine Hat to pursue?



# COMMUNICATIONS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE



# Information Needs

(coded open-ends, multiple responses allowed)

- Online survey respondents' number one request for information is "transparent/open/fact-based information" (21%), followed by "City taxes/property taxes/budget" (20%).
- These were also the top two mentions in the telephone survey although the order is reversed.
- Online respondents are also interested in receiving information about "City/Council decisions/actions" (13%) and "Administration costs (including City salaries)" (11%). Both these responses are mentioned more frequently online than via the telephone.

		Telephone
Transparent/open/fact-based information	21%	13%
City taxes/property taxes/budget	20%	16%
City/Council decisions/actions	13%	2%
Administration costs (incl. City salaries)	11%	5%
Community planning/land use/new developments	4%	8%
Utilities costs	4%	5%
Opportunities for public engagement	3%	2%
Bylaws	2%	3%
Community events/special events	2%	2%
Information (unspecified)	2%	4%
City services/programs (unspecified)	2%	8%
Public/Council meetings	2%	2%
Roads/transportation/transit	2%	6%
None/nothing/don't know	26%	31%

Note: Online mentions <2% not shown.















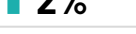
Base: All respondents - Online (n=450); Telephone (n=400)

Q12. Thinking about your information needs, what kinds of information do you want the City of Medicine Hat to provide you with? Any others?

# Preferred Methods of Communication

(coded open-ends, multiple responses allowed)

- Online survey respondents are most interested in receiving information from the City via "email" (27%) and "social media (Twitter, Facebook, etc.)" (25%).
- These were also the top two mentions in the telephone survey.

		Telephone
Email	 <b>27%</b>	<b>35%</b>
Social media (Twitter, Facebook, etc.)	 <b>25%</b>	<b>28%</b>
Internet (unspecified)	 <b>10%</b>	<b>5%</b>
City meetings (Council, public hearings, etc.)	 <b>7%</b>	<b>3%</b>
Mail	 <b>6%</b>	<b>16%</b>
News (unspecified)	 <b>6%</b>	<b>&lt;1%</b>
Newspaper	 <b>6%</b>	<b>12%</b>
City website	 <b>5%</b>	<b>15%</b>
Open houses/public consultations	 <b>4%</b>	<b>1%</b>
Newsletter/pamphlet/flyer/brochure	 <b>2%</b>	<b>10%</b>
Radio	 <b>2%</b>	<b>8%</b>
Text	 <b>2%</b>	<b>3%</b>
TV	 <b>2%</b>	<b>12%</b>
With utility bills	 <b>2%</b>	<b>1%</b>
None/nothing/don't know	 <b>19%</b>	<b>5%</b>

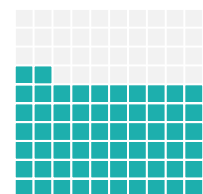
Note: Online mentions <2% not shown.

Base: All respondents - Online (n=450); Telephone (n=400)

Q13. What methods would be best for the City of Medicine Hat to communicate information to you? Any others?

# Contacted City and Satisfaction with Customer Service

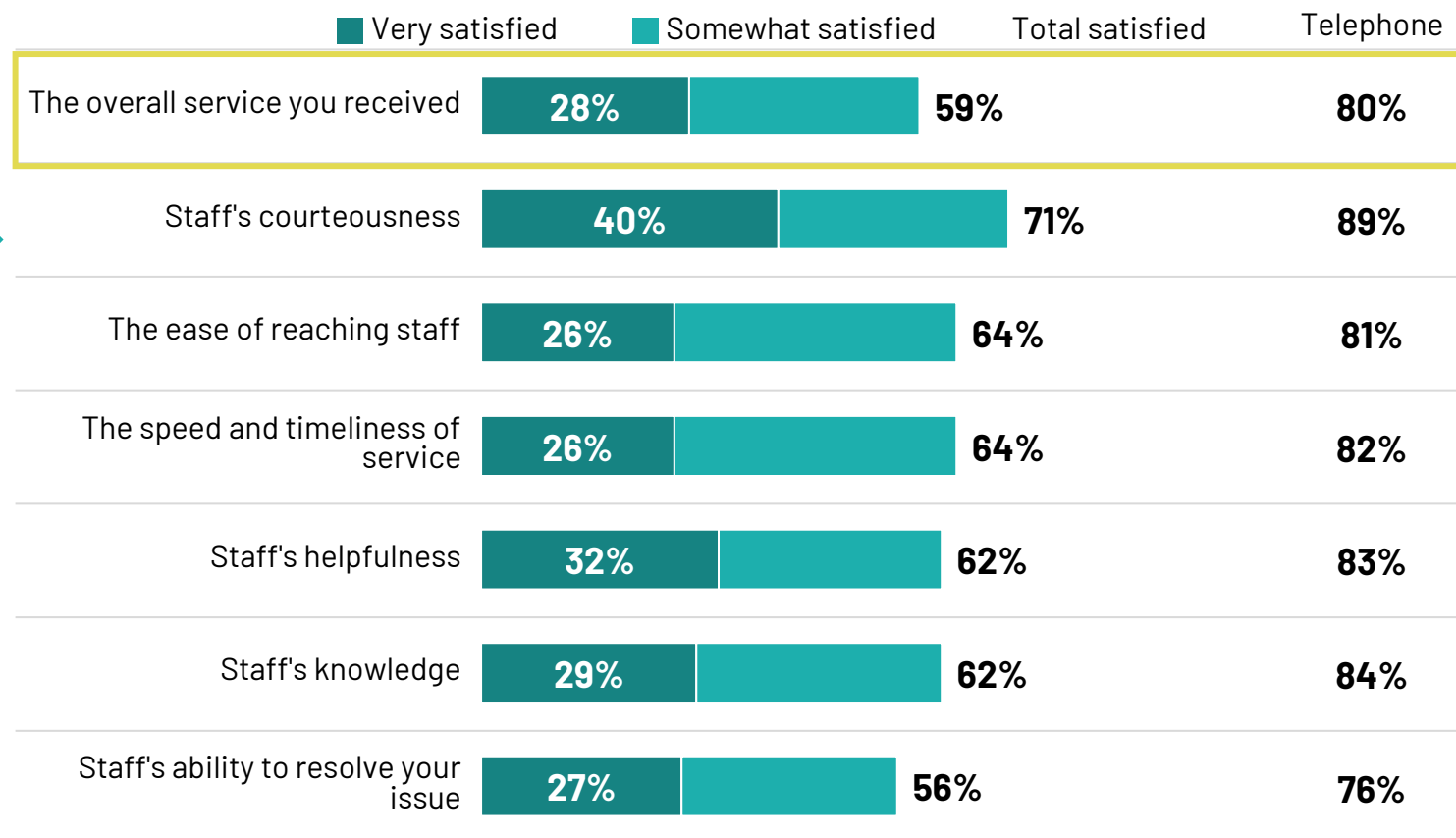
- Claimed contact with the City is higher among online survey respondents, with 62% saying they personally contacted or dealt with the City or one of its employees in the last 12 months compared to 50% of telephone survey respondents.
- Satisfaction with the City's customer service is lower among online survey respondents. For example, only 59% of online respondents who contacted the City say they are satisfied with the overall service received compared to 80% of telephone respondents.



62%

YES  
personally  
contacted/  
dealt with  
City of  
Medicine or  
one of its  
employees

Telephone  
50%

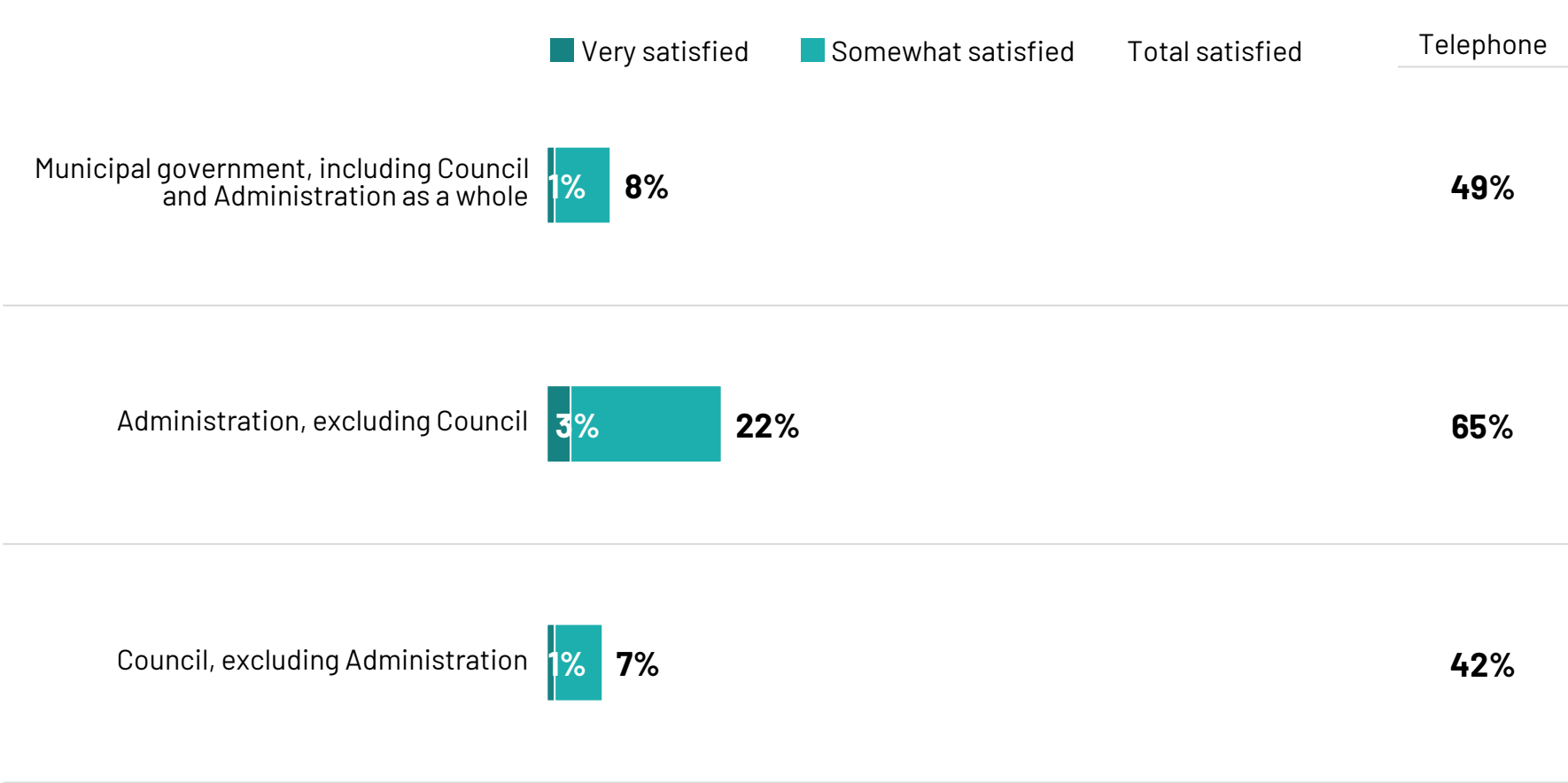


Base: All respondents – Online (n=450); Telephone (n=400)  
Q14. In the last 12 months, have you personally contacted or dealt with the City of Medicine Hat or one of its employees?  
Base: Those saying they contacted City of Medicine Hat in past 12 months – Online (n=281); Telephone (n=203)  
Q15. Thinking of your most recent contact experience, how satisfied are you with ...?

# PERCEPTIONS OF COUNCIL, ADMINISTRATION, AND MUNICIPAL OPERATIONS

# Satisfaction with Council and Administration

- Very few online survey respondents say they are satisfied with the way Council and Administration are going about running the community. Satisfaction ratings are notably lower online than via the telephone.
- Only 8% of online respondents say they are satisfied with the City’s municipal government as a whole compared to 49% of telephone respondents.
- While satisfaction is higher with Administration (22%) than with Council (7%), neither scores highly overall.

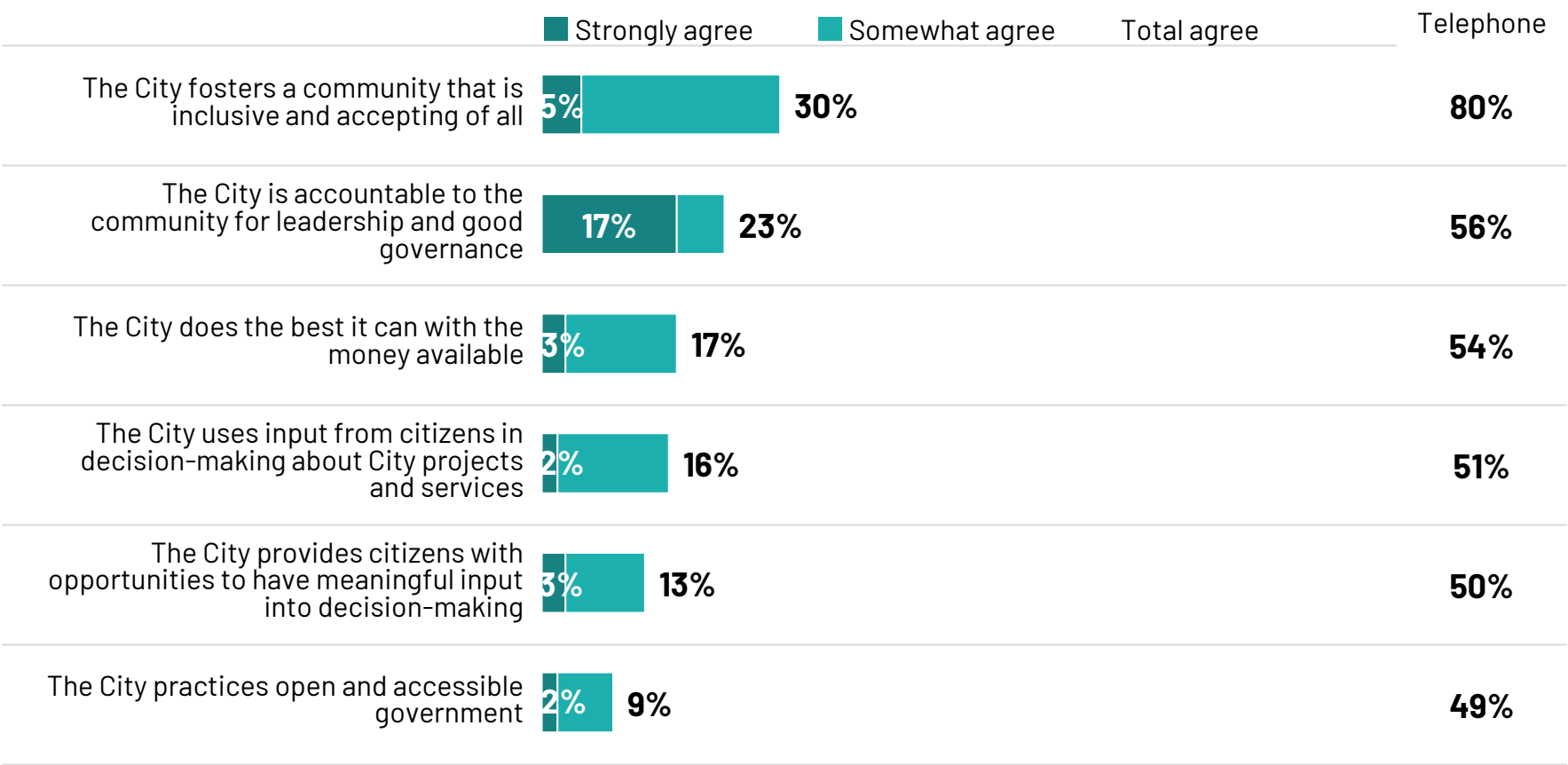


Base: All respondents – Online (n=450); Telephone (n=400)  
Q16. Taking everything into account, how satisfied are you with the way the each of the following is going about running the community?



# Perceptions of Municipal Operations

- Online survey respondents are also much more critical of the City's municipal operations, with only a minority agreeing with each of the evaluated statements.
- The statement garnering the overall highest level of agreement is 'the City fosters a community that is inclusive and accepting of all' (30% compared to 80% of telephone survey respondents).
- The statement with the lowest level of agreement is 'the City practices open and accessible government' (9% compared to 49% of telephone survey respondents).



Base: All respondents – Online (n=450); Telephone (n=400)  
Q17. Thinking about your personal dealings with the City of Medicine Hat, your general impressions, and anything you may have read, seen or heard, please indicate if you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.



# 04

## APPENDIX: SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS



# Sample Characteristics

	Phone Unweighted (n=400)	Phone Weighted (n=400)	Online Unweighted (n=450)
<b>GENDER</b>			
Male	54%	48%	37%
Female	46%	52%	59%
Other	0%	0%	1%
Prefer not to answer	0%	0%	3%
<b>AGE</b>			
18-34	17%	24%	10%
35-54	42%	31%	41%
55+	41%	44%	48%
<b>CHILDREN &lt;18 IN HH</b>			
With children	34%	31%	26%
Without children	66%	69%	70%
Prefer not to answer	0%	0%	4%
<b>AREA OF CITY LIVE IN</b>			
North of the river	27%	26%	24%
South of the river & north of Seven Persons Creek	22%	22%	18%
South of Seven Persons Creek & north of the highway	23%	24%	24%
South of the highway	25%	25%	23%
Prefer not to answer	3%	3%	11%

	Phone Unweighted (n=400)	Phone Weighted (n=400)	Online Unweighted (n=450)
<b>YEARS LIVING IN MEDICINE HAT</b>			
10 years or less	22%	23%	15%
11 to 20 years	28%	27%	20%
21+ years	51%	51%	60%
Prefer not to answer	0%	0%	5%
Average # of years	25.0	24.8	29.5
<b>PUBLIC TRANSIT USAGE</b>			
Once a week or more often	6%	5%	5%
At least once a week but not weekly	3%	3%	3%
Less than once a month but at least yearly	5%	4%	4%
Rarely or never use public transit	87%	87%	83%
Prefer not to answer	0%	0%	4%
<b>HOME OWNERSHIP</b>			
Own	72%	70%	82%
Rent	28%	29%	13%
Prefer not to answer	1%	1%	5%