

Township of Scugog Staff Report

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Report Number: FIN-2017-030

Prepared by : Dianne Valentim, CPA, CGA, Director of Finance / Treasurer

Department: Finance

Report to: Council

Date: December 10, 2018

Reference: **Strategic Direction #6** – Encourage the involvement of all Scugog citizens in sustaining and enhancing the quality of our life in our community.

Report Title: 2019 Budget Survey Results

Recommendations:

1. **That** report FIN-2018-030 - 2019 Budget Survey Results be received for information;
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1. Background:

The Township 2019 Budget Process has started and community engagement is a key part in the process. For the past two years an online budget survey was posted on the Township website and hard copies were available at the Library and Scugog Recreation and Community Centre. The 2019 Budget Survey was available from September 1 – 30, 2018. The survey was advertised on the Township website, Twitter, Facebook and the local newspaper.

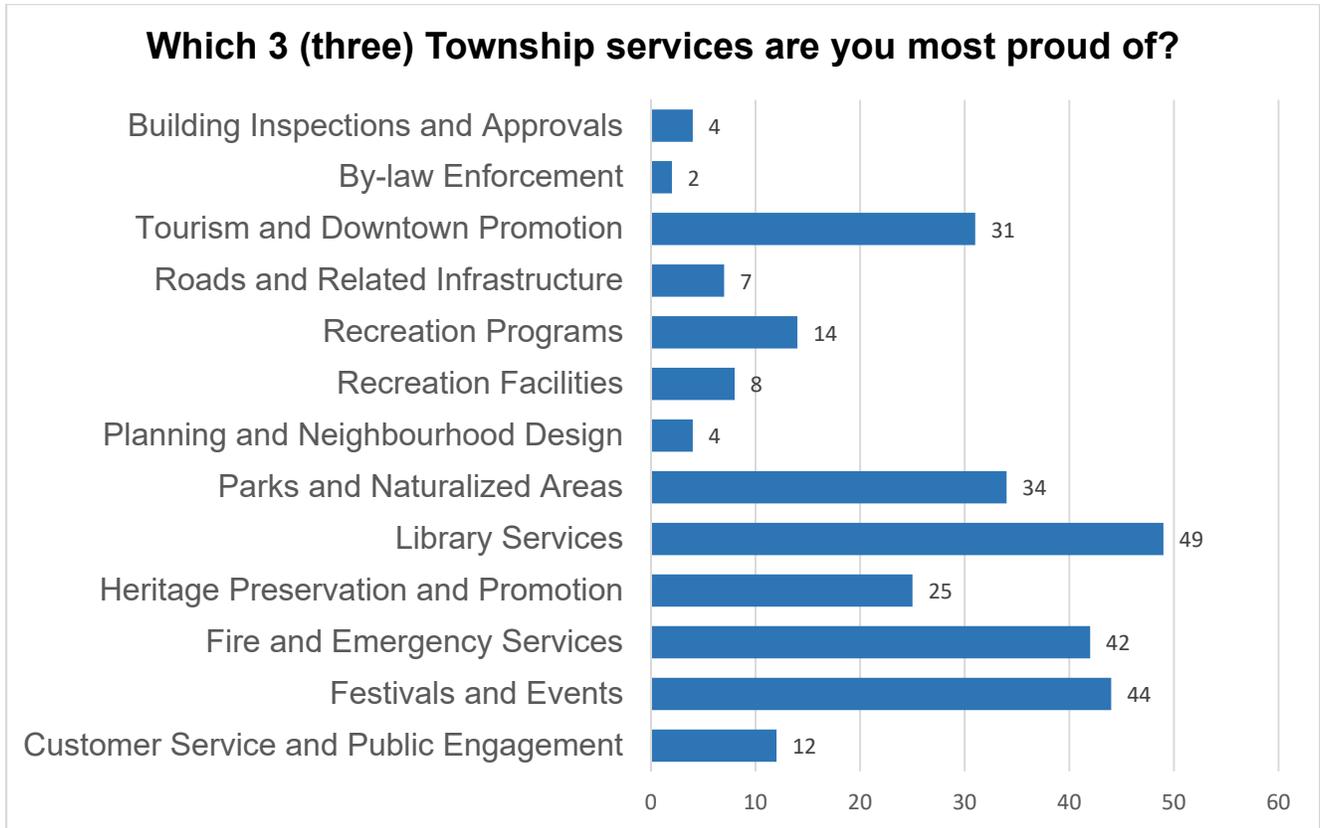
2. Discussion

Responses for the 2019 Budget Survey was down from 2018, but still higher than the initial survey form 2016. This year a total of 95 responses were received, compared to 134 received in 2017. Staff will review the timing and promotion of the survey to try and engage more feedback.

The survey results are included below.

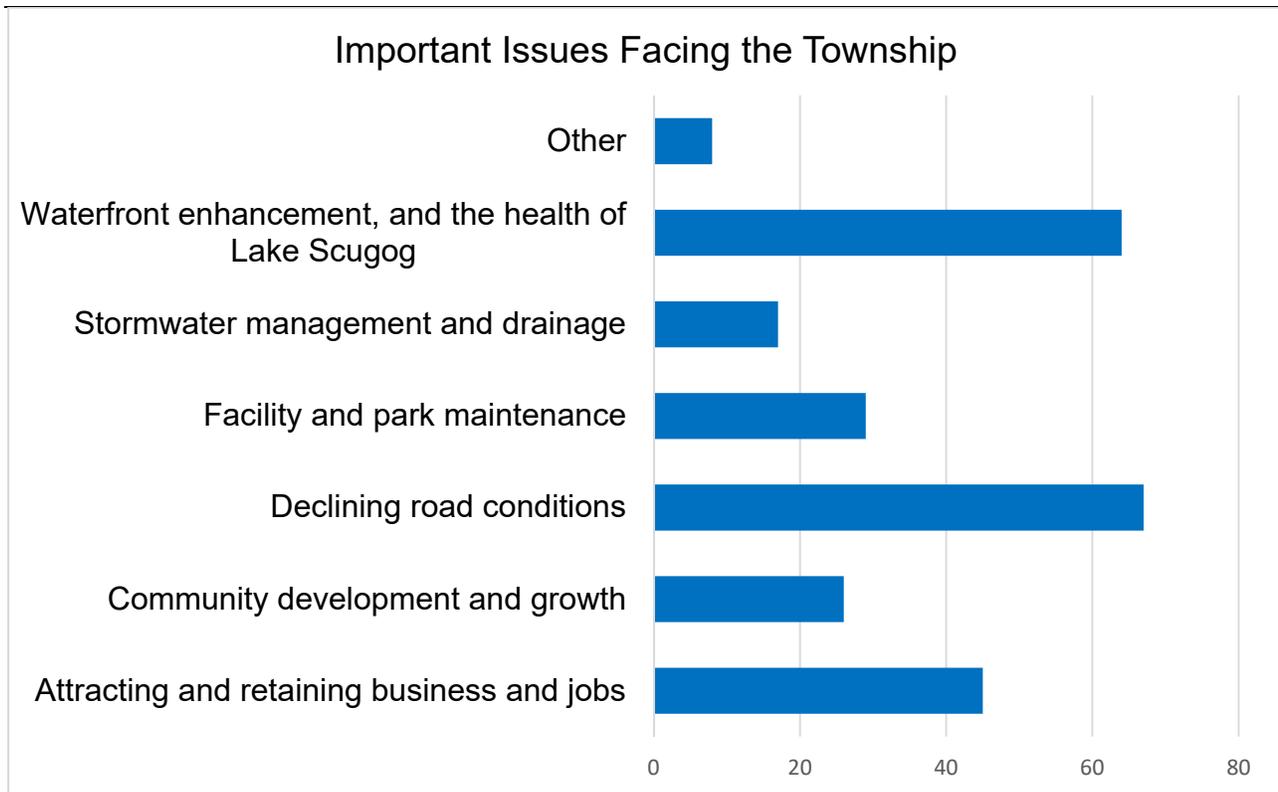
Language/comments deemed by staff to be inappropriate/offensive, duplicates, as well as those that identify an individual staff or a specific group of staff, have been removed. In order to improve readability, obvious spelling errors, typos and grammatical issues were corrected.

Otherwise, the information is presented as submitted by the residents.



Respondents were most proud of Library Services, Festival and Events and Fire and Emergency Services. These results are very similar to the findings in the last budget survey.

Similar to last year, the three most important issues facing the Township include declining road conditions, the waterfront enhancement and the health of Lake Scugog and attracting and retaining business and jobs.



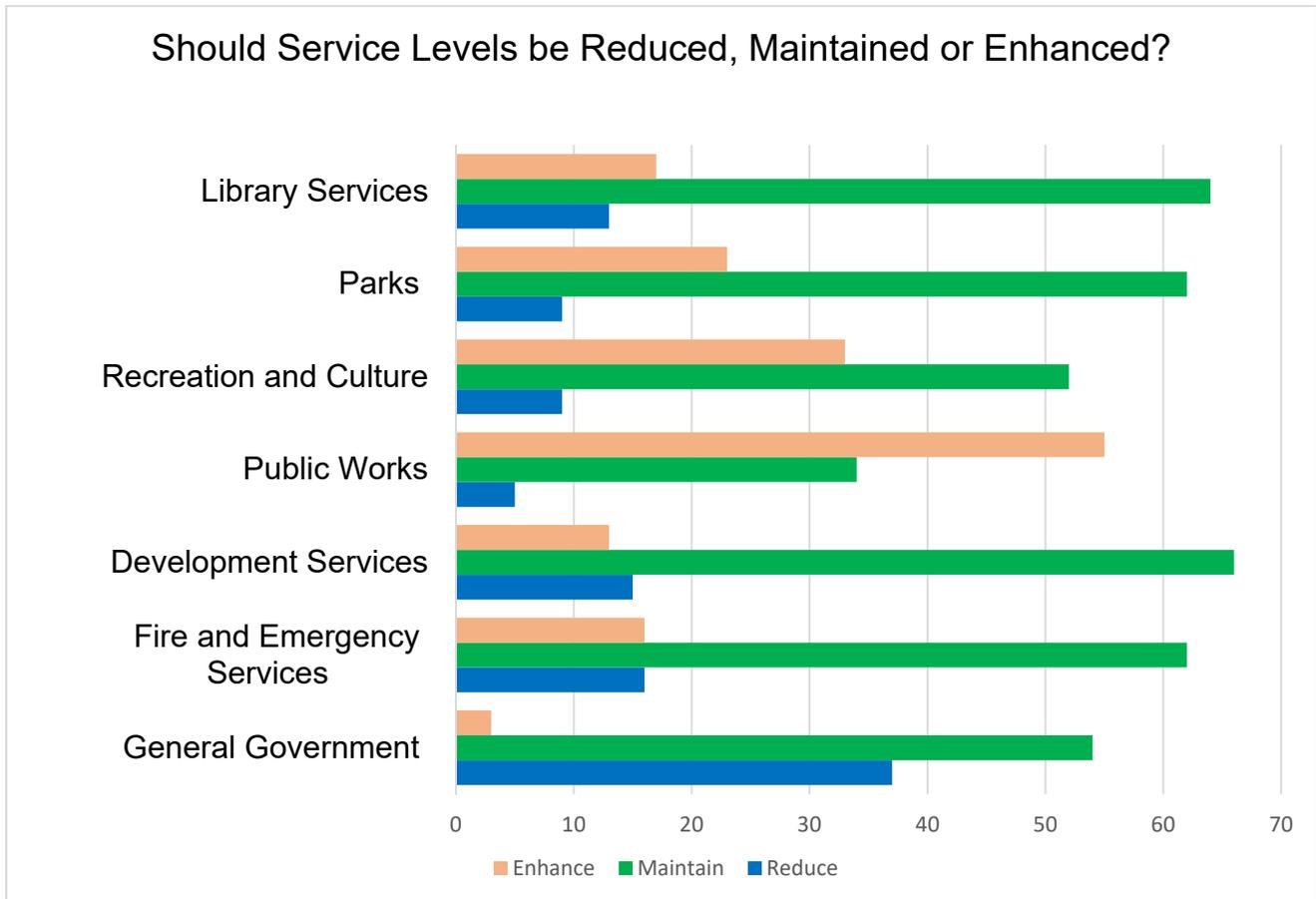
Respondents were provided with a graphical representation of how the average residential taxes were divided amongst the various Township departments. A brief description was also provided as to what areas of responsibility fall into each department.

- General Government (includes Council, Office of the CAO and HR, Corporate Services(Customer service and IT) and Finance)
- Fire and Emergency Services (includes fire suppression services and fire prevention programs; training and education related to prevention; detection or extinguishment of fires and emergency rescue services)
- Development Services (includes heritage preservation and promotion, economic development and tourism, planning and neighbourhood design, by-law enforcement, building permit processing and building inspections)
- Public Works (includes construction projects, roads and sidewalk maintenance, signage, street lighting, snow plowing, storm sewers and local roads and bridges)
- Recreation and Culture (includes recreation programs; managing and operating recreation facilities such as Scugog Community and Recreation Centre (SCRC), Blackstock and community halls; public pool; Scugog Island Museum and support local sport and special event initiatives).
- Parks (includes managing and operating parks, trails, splash pad, playgrounds and sports fields)

- Library Services (includes programming, books for borrowing, videos, music, computers and meeting facilities)

Respondents were then asked if the various services should be reduced, maintained or enhanced based on the prior year allocation.

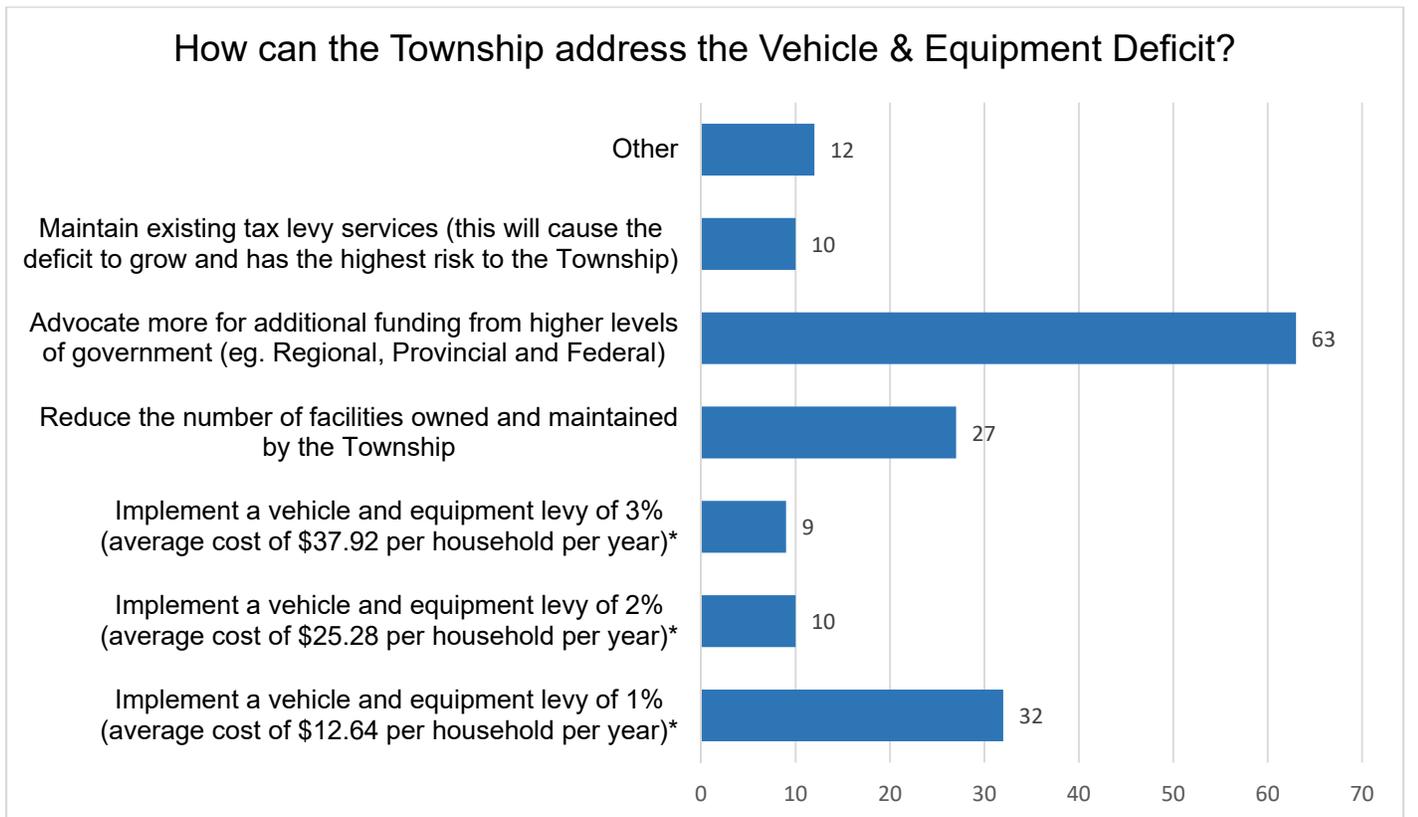
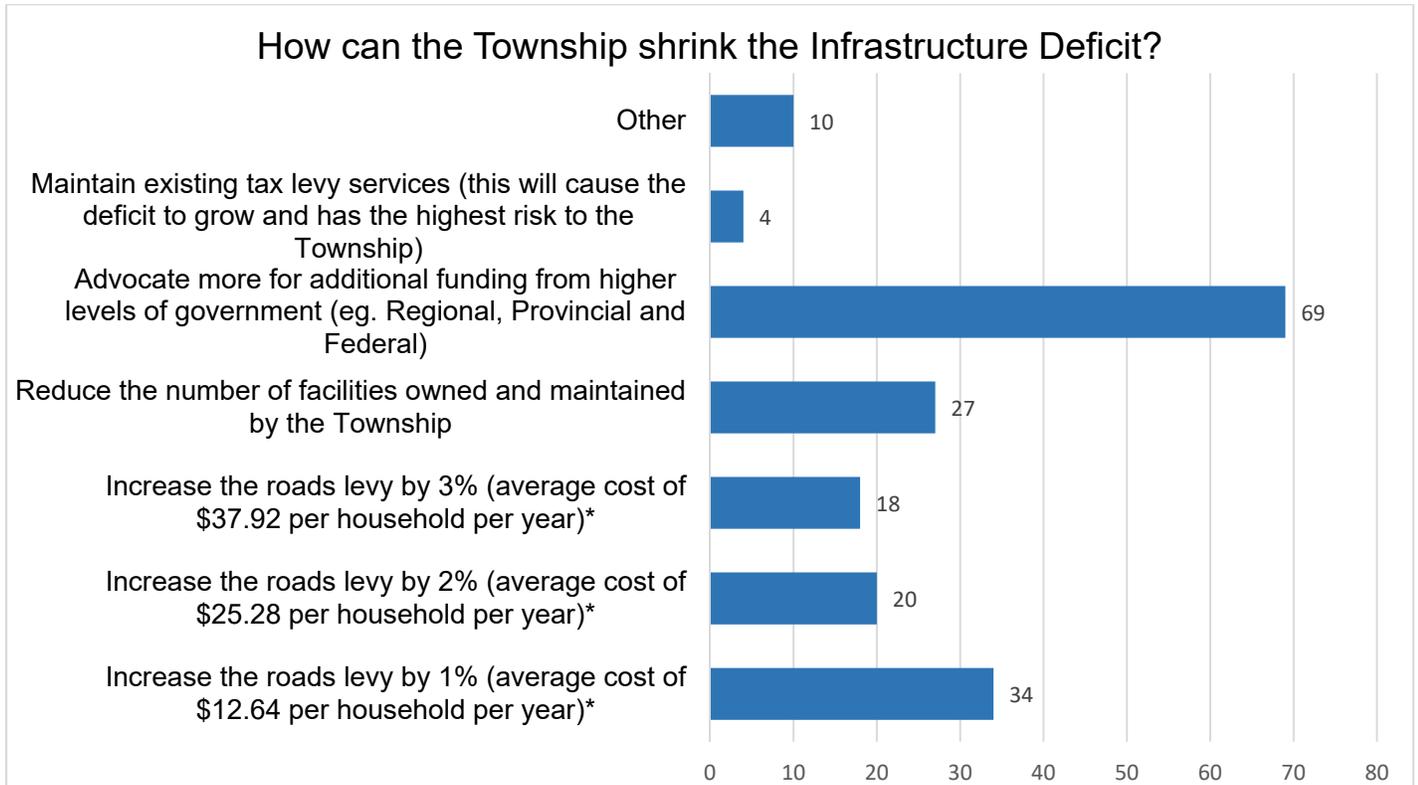
Most respondents feel that the allocations should be maintained with the exception of Public Works, where respondents feel that funding should be enhanced in this area.



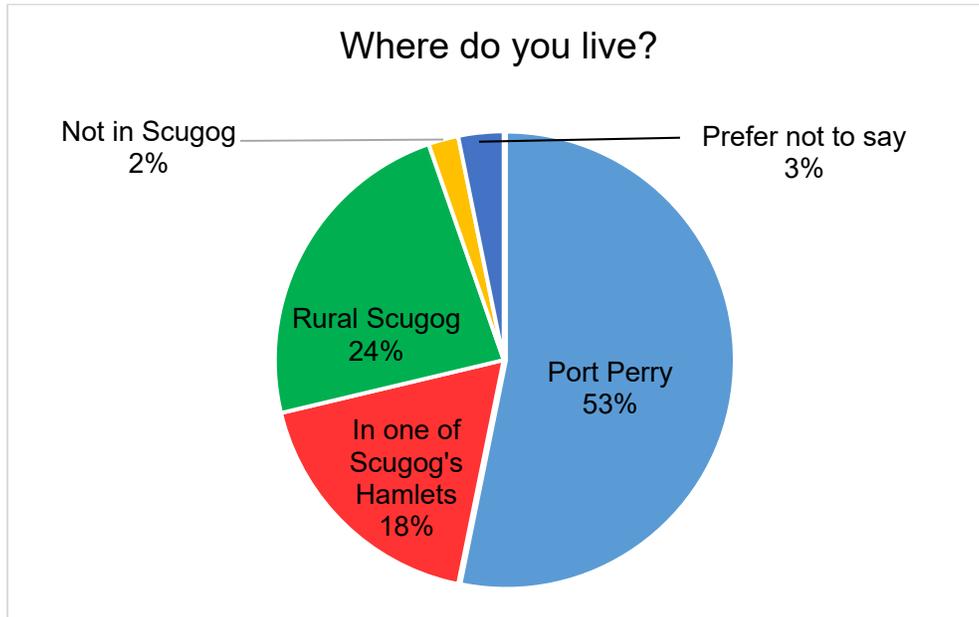
It has been communicated over the last couple of years that the Township has an infrastructure deficit. This is defined as the decline in infrastructure spending, combined with an increase in the cost of building additional infrastructure vs the funding allocated to maintain that infrastructure. In order to shrink this deficit, enhanced spending on these assets is required. Two specific areas were identified on this survey, roads and vehicles and equipment.

Overwhelmingly, respondents feel that the municipality should advocate for additional funding from higher levels of government. This is something that staff also feel very strongly about and are continually searching for new opportunities to tap into grants and other revenue sources. However, this is not enough. Municipalities also need to direct additional

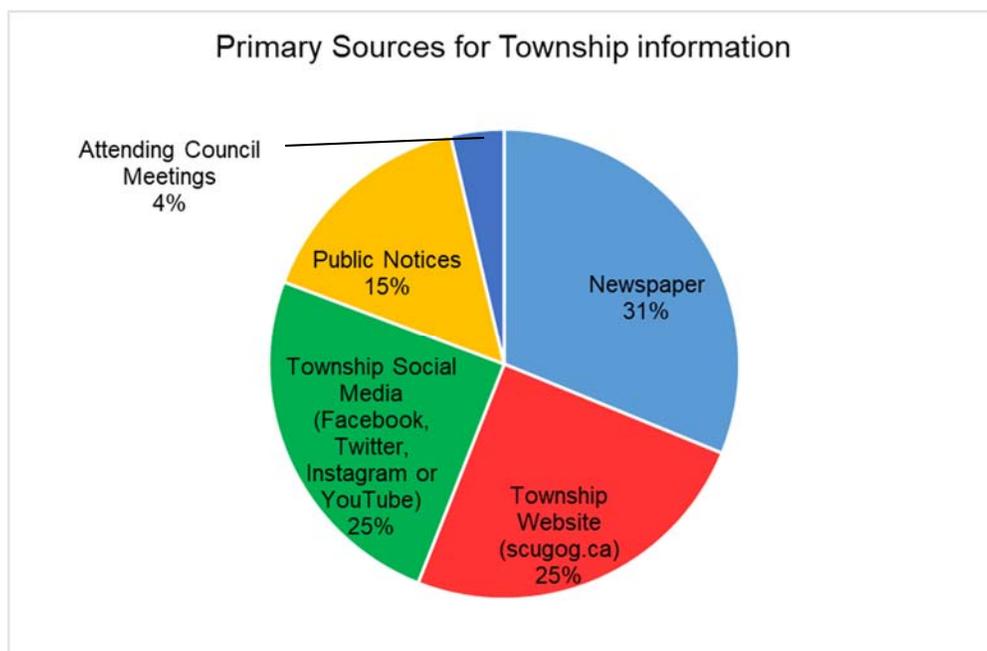
resources to address the infrastructure gap. Over 40% of respondents agree that an increase in the roads levy should be considered to address the infrastructure deficit and approximately 31% agree that a new vehicle & equipment levy should be created.



Demographics of respondents as well as areas of communication were requested to assist staff with communication outreach. The results show that over 50% of respondents live in Port Perry.



The newspaper is still the most popular means that respondents receive their Township information, however, the Township website and other social media streams are getting traction and the percentages have increased over the prior year (25% (2018) vs 20.8% for Township website in 2017 and 17.9% Township Social Media for 2017).



A general comments section was also included in the survey with the information received outlined below.

<p>8. General Comments: Is there anything you would like to say about how the Township of Scugog should budget for the Township's future?</p>
<p>We need new up to date recreational facilities including an indoor pool and dedicated gym available for year round use available for all ages.</p> <p>Senior facilities are old and out dated while the senior population will continue to grow.</p>
<p>We need an indoor swimming pool</p> <p>Please push for Hwy 7A to become regional road because it's not high enough on the province's priority list. Hwy 7A is a nightmare through Port Perry, no left turns should be allowed.</p>
<p>Let's reduce unnecessary expenditures (food trays in plastic for Council meetings? How about "lug a mug" and cheese/crackers/apples on a plate for those who may need it? Other: Can we motivate citizens to volunteer to help build trails & weed gardens?</p>
<p>Focus investments on core municipal functions (roads, infrastructure); stop spending on nice-to-haves and Councilor pet projects like concerts that lose tens of thousands of dollars, unwarranted crossing guards, and failed internet corporations.</p>
<p>Train future Council. No more wasting money on crazy ideas such as a municipal internet company.</p> <p>No more committees that provide funds for committee members only (ie Heritage Grant). No more grants for downtown</p>
<p>Remove full-time fire dept. Understanding that the number of firefighters we have is insufficient to actually respond to a fire and knowing they still depend on volunteers it is a waste of money. Return to a fully volunteer dept. to save money</p>
<p>I'm hesitant to vote for the 'reduce the number of facilities owned and maintained by the Township' because an analysis for each facility should be done to determine if it's a loss leader or not. Some locations could be profitable.</p>
<p>Blackstock roads especially Devitts Road</p>
<p>More Ball Diamonds and reduce Ice fee for Minor hockey.</p>
<p>We need an indoor pool – shouldn't have to go to Oshawa or Uxbridge.</p>

Please fix old Scugog road (south of Blackstock). It's awful!!!
<p>Our budget items MUST indicate what items are required by laws. What is mandatory for the township to fund and what is optional.</p> <p>Libraries and a fire service (Chief excepted) is optional for two extreme examples. Priority to mandatory that is the law</p>
We should have an indoor public pool!!!! It would create jobs and give revenue to the town for programs!!
Making the town of Port Perry more accessible to pedestrians would be great. Our sidewalks are horrible and traffic is terrible. We need better police presence.
Keep the fairgrounds, we need green spaces. We don't want Port Perry to turn into a densely packed suburb and lose all of its charm.
<p>Where are families and kids to go for recreation and activities?</p> <p>Baseball tournaments were held in Scugog, bringing people from all over. No effort was made to clean the facilities and the grass wasn't even cut. It was a huge embarrassment. SHAME.</p>
I think it is time for the municipalities of Brock, Scugog and Uxbridge to look at working together to reduce duplication and costs, particularly administrative costs. In fact it may be time to merge the three townships.
Take away the grant program for renovations to heritage buildings and apply this money to your infrastructure funding deficit.
Lake health as #1 priority. And you should not cut any services to the Scugog Island First Nation. They have given generously to our community. We are all treaty people with a responsibility to support and respect our First Nations neighbours.
The township should be concentrating on required services, they should not be involved in private endeavors such as internet or music festivals (although they should verbally support these), that is not what our taxes are intended for,
Charge non-residents for parking.
Would like to see council take a detailed look at our Fire Service Chief and operating budget. We have a good budget and we don't see equipment being maintained, any benefit from the full time fire fighters etc. Need to hold the Chief responsible!

<p>You say that you've improved roads in the ward 4 area. I disagree. You've fixed some roads in Caesarea. We pay high taxes in Scugog and get no services in Caesarea. Everything is focused on Port Perry. I receive garbage pickup for my taxes. Woohoo</p>
<p>Close Birdseye pool. Build recreation centre with a pool, fitness centre, indoor track. Downsize fulltime fire dept. staff by 2. No union allows doublehatters to back fill in volunteer ranks. Savings of \$200,000/yr minimum.</p>
<p>Do not increase taxes. It is up to Council to find better ways to provide taxpayers with essential services.</p> <p>Cut all and non-essential services to pay for deficits.</p>
<p>Get better leadership in the fire department & lay off the Full Time firefighter staff = deficit gone without any risk to property & safety because they don't actually respond to calls and the Volunteers can cover the work for a fraction of the cost</p>
<p>Advocate for improved health care accessibility, such as longer walk in clinic hours, a CT scan at our hospital. This should be a priority not only because of our increasing population but because it is the standard of care for Ontario</p>
<p>Focus on parks - increase and maintain parks equipment for families, increase usability of splash pad (use Uxbridge's as a great example of a nice splash pad with tables and covered area)</p>
<p>There should be more private sector use of Scugog's assets. For example.... music festival should have been done by the private sector only. Also, preserving the old mill as an historical site may limit uses that the private sector may use it for.</p>
<p>Increase fees for new builders that want to build a new complex. Charge all illegal fishing and littering! It will make money and help lake.</p> <p>We NEED a second road or bridge onto Scugog Island. Pressure OLG, MSFN and new hotel to assist with this.</p>
<p>Living in Port Perry I feel more emphases are placed on keeping visitors to Port Perry happier than people living here</p> <p>I pay huge taxes for what? I am disabled live and on a corner lot. Every snow fall the plow plugs in my driveway, the service to help this was cancelled.</p>
<p>Do not allow developers to take over the town. It is false economy to build more houses to increase tax income and then not be able to support the additional population.</p>
<p>Smart spending should be mandate fo the Township. Wasted tax dollars on lawsuits and more staff a small township does not need. Number one way to reduce costs is to cut</p>

Overheads. Survey (SMART) should be blasted to e-mails you have on hand,not hidden. Transparency matters.
I would like to see 24/7 full time fire protection services
Love view crossing causeway, love library, mill, and improvements to waterfront. Need better weed control in lake. Why not put "Port Perry" on the roof of the mill so it can be seen from air and lake (bright yellow). Need better deal from casino.
More affordable senior housing. Average pensioner receive less than \$2000/mth. Rents of \$1000+are out of line. Remember you will be a senior one day. Maybe financially you will be able to afford rent/mtg payments but most seniors can't.
Better indoor community spaces. Upgrade tech at library. Give seniors club a better home, indoor pool and exercise equip. Upgrade Townhall, fix the tower, paint the inside. People are priced out of basic amenities, becoming unaffordable
Contain the costs
The reason I don't b**** about my taxes is because our great library & staff, parks(especially boat launch)and path along Lake Scugog along Canterbury Common addressed from Kent St. Kent Ferndale and her late husband should have plaque for doing good in Port Perry
Indoor Pool
POOL!!
How much do we spend on outside consultants and other professionals? We have highly qualified and well paid staff and a committed, diligent council. Surely they can collectively make sensible well informed decisions without seeking private consultants.

3. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications related to this report.

4. Conclusion:

The budget survey is one of the important tools used to help create public engagement in the budget process. The results of the survey again this year, indicate that the respondents believe that the budget priorities should be focused on declining roads and they do recognize the need to address the Township infrastructure deficit. Staff will continue to advocate for additional funding from higher levels of government. In addition to this, a large percentage of

respondents are also in favour of a levy increase being directed towards the roads and vehicles and equipment.

Staff will utilize the results of the budget survey in combination with the Council list of Items, the Asset Management Plan, Strategic Plan and various other master plans to identify the priorities in the 2019 Budget.

The Township will continue to promote the budget process to try and continue to increase engagement from the community.

Respectfully Submitted:

Reviewed By:

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Paul Allore
Chief Administrative Officer
