



**City of Kingston
Report to Council
Report Number 25-083**

To:	Mayor and Members of Council
From:	Neil Carbone, Commissioner, Corporate & Emergency Services
Resource Staff:	Brent Fowler, Director, Corporate Asset Management & Fleet
Date of Meeting:	May 20, 2025
Subject:	2025 Asset Management Public Engagement Overview & Results

Council Strategic Plan Alignment:

Theme: Regulatory & compliance

Goal: See above

Executive Summary:

In alignment with Ontario Regulation 588/17 – Asset Management Planning for Municipal Infrastructure, the City of Kingston conducted a multi-phased public engagement process to inform the development of proposed Levels of Service (LOS) for the 2025 Asset Management Plan (AMP). The Asset Management Plan (AMP) Public Engagement process commenced in November 2024, with an internal focus group consisting of Senior City staff which helped to inform the design of the AMP Survey launched on Get Involved Kingston in January supported by additional pop-up events and other engagement tactics. This report provides an overview of the engagement tools and activities that were utilized and summarizes the feedback received during the engagement process.

The service and asset categories selected for Public Engagement represented 13 of 24 areas outlined in the City's Corporate Asset Management plans. Priority was placed on those assets and services that the community interacts with the most.

Within those selected, many relate directly to the following Council 2023-2026 Strategic Priorities:

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- Build an active and connected community
- Lead environmental stewardship and climate action
- Drive inclusive economic growth

Overall participants expressed a strong preference to:

- maintain current levels of service with modest cost increases.
- prioritize investment in transportation infrastructure (roads, sidewalks), natural assets, and core facilities.
- allocate more resources toward transportation asset capital maintenance needs.

It is important to note that while there was a relatively high level of engagement through the community survey and other channels, public engagement is just one of several sources of information, alongside best practices, fiscal constraints, and other strategies, which will help support the development of the City's Asset Management Plan, service levels, and financial planning decisions.

Recommendation:

This report is for information only.

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Authorizing Signatures:

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY COMMISSIONER

**Neil Carbone, Commissioner,
Corporate & Emergency
Services**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

**Lanie Hurdle, Chief
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Jennifer Campbell, Commissioner, Community Services

David Fell, President & CEO, Utilities Kingston Not required

Ian Semple, Acting Commissioner, Transportation & Infrastructure Services

Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer

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Options/Discussion:**Background**

The City of Kingston's Asset Management Plan (AMP) ensures infrastructure assets are managed to meet residents' current and future needs. Maintaining, updating or replacing assets is crucial to delivering services to both residents and visitors to the City. The City is preparing to meet the final phase of Ontario Regulation 588/17 – Asset Management Planning for Municipal Infrastructure – which requires all municipalities to establish proposed levels of service targets for all infrastructure assets supported by a sustainable 10-year lifecycle management and financial strategy. Public engagement is a requirement of this phase, providing residents with an opportunity to help inform how infrastructure investments are prioritized and delivered over time.

Guided by the City's Public Engagement Framework (*aligned with the International Association of Public Participation, IAP2 standards*), the 2025 Asset Management Public Engagement Plan was implemented from November 2024 through February 2025 by the City's Corporate Asset Management & Fleet and Communications & Public Engagement Departments. Engagement took place at the Inform, Consult and Collaborate levels of the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation. The objectives were to increase public awareness of asset management principles and to understand community expectations regarding service levels and associated funding strategies.

The engagement featured a mix of online and in-person methods including an online survey, four pop-up events, focus group discussions with internal participants, and open-ended feedback options through Get Involved Kingston. As the first public engagement of its kind focused specifically on Asset Management in Kingston, this multifaceted approach allowed residents to reflect on the public facing services they value most, consider trade-offs between service levels and cost, and express preferences for maintaining, enhancing, or adjusting service delivery.

The 2025 AMP engagement focused on 12 key service and asset categories that excluded some services and assets that the City manages that are subject to provincial regulations and or legal requirements, plus rate-funded infrastructure operated by Utilities Kingston. This public feedback will help inform the proposed asset levels of service and long-term financing strategies to be included in the final AMP.

Internal Focus Group

An in-person Focus Group session with senior City staff was held on November 6, 2024, to inform the development of the public survey and proposed Levels of Service for the 2025 Asset Management Plan. The session included representatives from departments responsible for asset management planning, infrastructure delivery, and service provision.

The session featured a presentation, interactive polling using Mentimeter, and a facilitated discussion using Mural boards. Key objectives included:

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- Identifying alignment with Council's strategic priorities and commitments
- Highlighting barriers and constraints in delivering current or increased service levels
- Determining which asset categories were most appropriate for public input
- Providing internal context on lifecycle strategies and financial realities

Staff emphasized the need for clear public communication about trade-offs between service levels and cost and highlighted the importance of prioritizing services where levels should be maintained. Barriers identified included staffing capacity, budget constraints, supply chain challenges, and aging infrastructure.

The insights gathered were used to shape the design of the public survey and will be incorporated into the final Asset Management Plan to ensure it reflects both community expectations and operational realities.

Asset Management Plan Survey Overview

The Asset Management public engagement survey was open January 24, 2025 to February 24, 2025. The survey sought feedback on asset management principles while collecting input on their satisfaction with current service levels, willingness to pay for critical infrastructure improvements, and priorities for future investment. The survey consisted of 18 questions covering a wide range of topics, including:

- Satisfaction with asset condition across various service areas
- Preferences regarding property tax or user fee adjustments
- Trade-offs between increasing, maintaining, or decreasing service levels
- Ranking of service categories based on perceived importance
- Open-ended feedback and scenario-based choices to assess values and priorities

410 participants completed surveys or submitted ideas through the engagement tools. As reported to staff by the consultant, this number of completed surveys ranks as one of the largest for an Ontario Municipal Asset Management survey (with Waterloo, Niagara Region and Peterborough cited as comparable municipalities).

Communications tactics included:

- Curbex signs at parks and facilities
- Paid and organic social media campaigns (including an explainer video with 23,000+ views)
- News releases, City newsletters, and local print media
- Posters at municipal facilities and messaging through some City digital apps and displays
- Targeted outreach to user groups, council members, and internal participants

To encourage participation, survey respondents were entered into a prize draw for a chance to win transit or fitness passes, theatre tickets or a tree planting package options to enjoy some of the diverse assets and infrastructure the City has to offer.

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Four in-person pop-up events were held at community facilities to increase awareness of asset management and gather input on service levels. Events took place at the Rideau Heights Community Centre, Kingston East Community Centre, INVISTA Centre, and Artillery Park Aquatic Centre.

Approximately 80 residents engaged with staff, completed surveys, and participated in an interactive sticker activity to identify services to maintain, improve, or decrease. A total of 58 sticky notes and 21 written comments were collected. Participants showed strong support for maintaining or improving asset service levels related to roads, transit, sidewalks, recreation facilities, and natural assets, with no submissions suggesting service reductions.

Who We Heard From

Based on the Get Involved Kingston engagement statistics:

- 410 participants completed surveys or submitted ideas through the engagement tools,
- The project page received over 2,600 visits,
- 77 participants engaged with the City for the first time. 80 participants submitted feedback and took part in engagement activities at the pop-ups,
- 21 additional comments were submitted via ballot boxes located at recreation facilities.
- Survey respondents self-identified their district, with broad representation across the city (see Figure A below).

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Figure A: Location of Survey Respondents by District

This broad participation helped ensure that a diverse range of perspectives and priorities were captured to support the development of the City's 2025 Asset Management Plan.

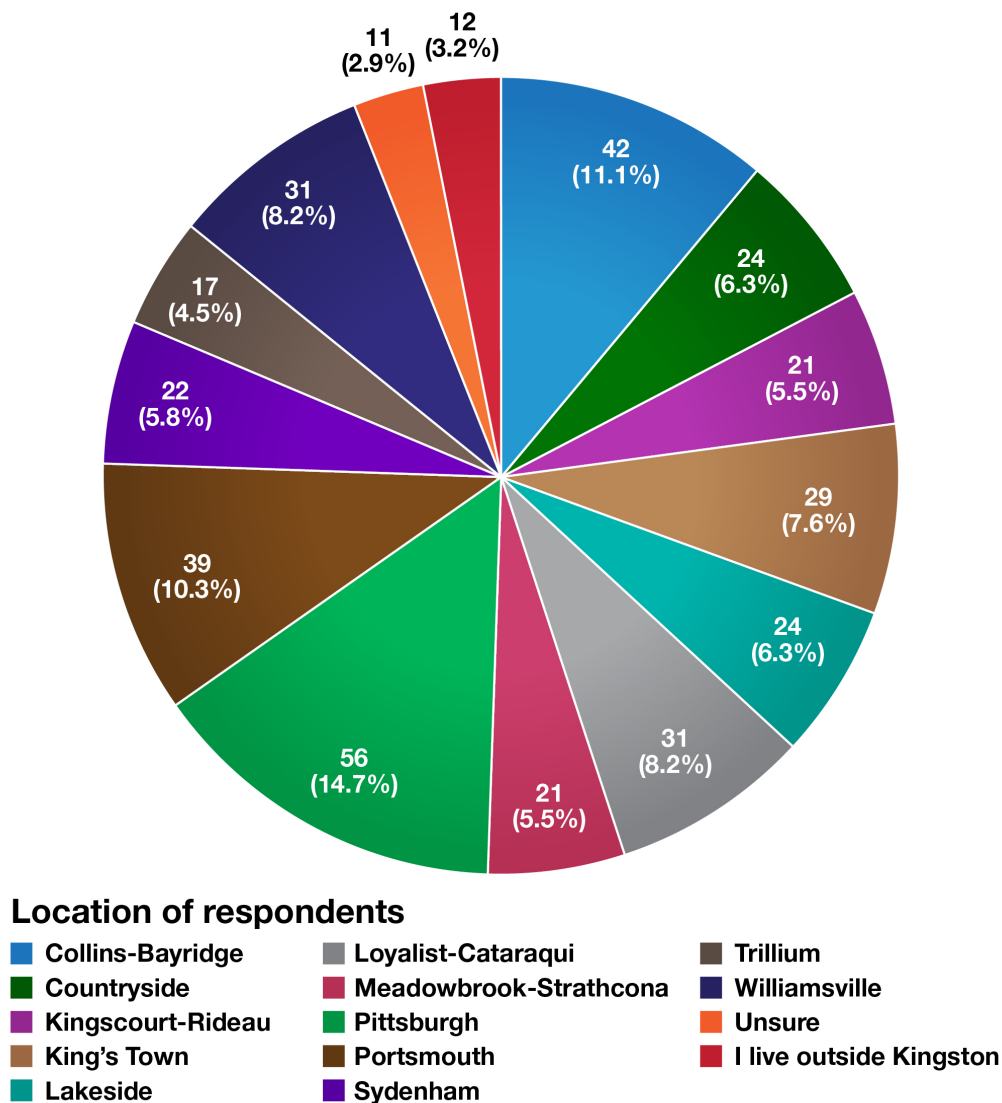
**What We Learned**

Exhibit A summarizes the 2025 Asset Management public engagement results. A majority of participants indicated a desire to maintain current service levels, even if it means modest increases in household costs. There was also strong support for targeted investment in infrastructure improvements, particularly in roads, sidewalks, cycling infrastructure, and natural assets like the urban tree canopy.

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Key highlights from the engagement include:

- 62% of survey respondents supported increasing taxes slightly to maintain service levels; only 5% preferred cutting services to reduce costs. Respondents from Pittsburgh (14.7%), Collins-Bayridge (11.1%) and Portsmouth (10.3%) had highest representation in the survey.
- The most common priorities for improvement were:
 - Roads
 - Sidewalks, pathways, and cycling infrastructure
 - Urban forests, shoreline, and other natural assets
- The services respondents were most satisfied with were:
 - Cultural heritage assets (including public art, civic collection, and museum collections)
 - Arts and culture venue assets (Tett Centre/Kingston Grand Theatre)
- The most frequently selected services for potential reductions (if necessary) were:
 - Cultural heritage asset management (Public art, museum and civic collections)
 - Arts & Culture venue asset management (Tett Centre/ Grand Theatre)
 - Wildlife Protection Infrastructure (example; turtle fencing and crossings)

Satisfaction with current infrastructure varied. While residents were generally satisfied with recreation, heritage, and arts and culture, they expressed concerns with the condition of roads, sidewalks, and cycling infrastructure, which received the most responses indicating a need for improvement.

Respondents preferred approaches that emphasized fiscal responsibility and cost-efficiency, but also supported increasing user fees, exploring alternative funding sources (like grants and partnerships), and improving communication about infrastructure needs.

Pop-up engagement activity results further echoed these sentiments, with participants overwhelmingly supporting maintaining or improving service levels across asset categories. Notably, no participants recommended service reductions.

Feedback from the Ideas tool and open-ended survey questions revealed a desire for more accessible communication, transparency in budget decisions, and sustainable investment planning. Over 100 respondents expressed interest in participating in future discussions on Kingston's Asset Management strategy.

This feedback will be included with other inputs to help inform decisions on proposed asset levels of service, infrastructure priorities, and long-term financial strategies. It will also guide future planning cycles, helping to align asset management practices with community values and expectations.

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Future Engagement Planning

An online focus group is scheduled at the end of May for those survey participants who expressed interest in ongoing involvement, providing additional input and an education opportunity regarding Asset Management.

Public engagement will continue to be a key component of the City's Asset Management Program beyond the development of the 2025 Plan. As infrastructure planning becomes more integrated and long-term in scope, the City is committed to providing ongoing, transparent, and inclusive engagement opportunities.

Future strategies may include:

- The development of a dedicated Asset Management web page, designed to provide residents with clear, accessible information on Asset Management initiatives, programs, infrastructure priorities, levels of service, and lifecycle planning
- Progress updates through Get Involved Kingston, social media, and community newsletters
- Targeted outreach efforts to engage a diverse cross-section of the community typically under-represented in engagement efforts
- Educational content to increase understanding of how asset management affects service delivery and funding decisions
- Follow-up activities, including virtual focus groups and surveys, to maintain momentum and engagement with participants from this consultation

By establishing a dedicated online presence and embedding engagement strategies and activities throughout the asset management cycle, the City aims to foster a more informed and involved community as we plan for long-term infrastructure sustainability.

Existing Policy/By-Law

[City of Kingston - Asset Management Policy, Version 1.0, April 2019](#)

[City of Kingston Public Notice Policy](#)

Financial Considerations

While there are no financial implications at this time, the process revealed the majority of survey respondents (62%), support the modest increase of funding through increased taxes and user fees to improve or maintain certain asset service levels.

Importantly, increasing funding through fees or taxation is but one of several complimentary strategies that the City can and will consider to achieve proposed service levels. Other strategies to reduce the need for greater funding can include:

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- Extending assets' useful life and or reducing intervention needs through improved data collection
- Deferring or deprioritizing some new investments
- Rationalizing assets as services change
- Considering levels of acceptable risk
- Maximizing alternative revenue sources (e.g. for growth-related investments)
- Revising service levels

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Exhibits Attached:

Exhibit A – Asset Management Public Engagement Consultation – What We Heard Summary Report



Asset Management Public Engagement Consultation

“What We Heard” Summary Report
City of Kingston

April 2025



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1.0 Introduction

In 2024 the City of Kingston developed an Asset Management Plan (AMP) for all assets not included in previous AMPs. The scope of this AMP included 21 asset service categories. The following five volumes of the AMP were approved by Council on November 19, 2024, as well as the Corporate Facilities AMP:

- Volume 1 – Infrastructure, Transportation, Transit, & Emergency Services
- Volume 2 – Corporate Services & Parking Operations
- Volume 3 – Community Services
- Volume 4 – Parks, Parkland, & Trails
- Volume 5 – Police, Libraries, City Real Estate & Environment.

The project objectives for the 2024 AMP include:

1. **Meet Compliance:** Comply with the provincial requirements (O. Reg. 588/17: Asset Management Planning for Municipal Infrastructure) regarding content, methodology, and schedule.
2. **Demonstrate Alignment:** Align with the City's Strategic Asset Management Policy and the Core Asset Management Framework.
3. **Develop Asset Inventories:** Provide a clear and concise summary of the City's asset inventories in these service areas, as well as their current replacement value, age, estimated service life, and condition using available data.
4. **Establish Levels of Service (LOS):** Review, refine and establish Customer and Technical LOS and performance indicators based on industry best practices in consultation with the City and document the City's current performance using available data.
5. **Conduct Risk Assessment:** Complete a risk assessment that considers probability of failure, consequence(s) of failure, risk mitigation and redundancy, and organizational risk tolerance.
6. **Develop Lifecycle Strategies:** Evaluate, develop, and update asset lifecycle strategies, including acquisition, operations, maintenance, renewal, and

disposal, to deliver the desired LOS in a sustainable way. This includes identifying dependencies and scopes of work for key actions to maintain the current LOS over the 10-year planning period.

7. **Develop Financing Strategy:** Develop and recommend for each service area and relevant asset category a financing strategy that includes projections for capital and operating costs as well as proposed funding strategies.

The next phase of the asset management journey, to comply with O. Reg. 588/17 phase 4, is required by July 1, 2025. Required under the next phase is to establish proposed Levels of Service and a financing strategy to achieve the service levels.

At the meeting with the AM Steering Committee (Oct 16, 2024), it was confirmed that the infrastructure assets operated by Utilities Kingston will be excluded from the public engagement work. Therefore, the assets within scope are funded by property taxes, Development Charges, fees (e.g. program fees or transit rider fees) and grants. There are no rate-based assets in the scope.

1.1 Project Objective

The objective for the public engagement phase is to help inform proposed Levels of Service for the City's 2025 AMP update.

1.2 Scope of Assets

The scope of assets to be included in the Level of Service public engagement phase represents 24 asset service categories in the following six groups:

- 1-Infrastructure, Transportation, Transit & Emergency Services
- 2- Corporate Services & Parking Operations
- 3-Community Services
- 4-Parks, Parkland & Trails
- 5-Police, Libraries, City Real Estate & Environment
- 6-Transportation, Stormwater & Facilities

1.3 Scope of Work

At the outset of the project, a Public Engagement Consultation Plan was developed collaboratively to provide clear delineation on the roles and responsibilities of the City and the Consultant across the various project tasks. Key messages, risks, and mitigation strategies were identified to ensure a cohesive project identity was communicated to engaged parties.

The following events were identified in the proposal and scheduled through the Public Engagement Consultation Plan:

- Project Website (virtual)
- Focus Group (in-person)
- Public Survey Questionnaire (virtual)

A Public Open House was originally included in the Public Engagement Consultation Plan but was amended to be four in-person Pop-Up Events" held at strategic locations across the City.

Additional consultation activities may be completed throughout the 2025 AMP update.

1.4 Consultation Process

The Consultation process was guided by overarching engagement goals and objectives:

- This Project is an opportunity for participants to shape the vision of Kingston, in the long term.
- Fostering engagement and partnerships is one of the key priorities of the Kingston Strategic Plan Update, 2023 (Objective 4: "Foster a Caring and Inclusive Community", and Task 4.4: "Celebrate and enable civic engagement").
- This Project is a way to pre-emptively determine what residents' vision and priorities are for the future of Kingston.

- The City is dedicated to providing a variety of methods and tools to ensure all can participate in the conversation.
- Transparency, inclusivity and structuring activities according to the community's needs are all foundational elements of this engagement program.

1.5 Next Steps

Findings from this round of consultation will be presented to Council for information purposes. Level of service preferences from respondents will be used to help guide the next phase of asset management work in Spring/Summer 2025 which includes establishing proposed levels of service and a financing strategy to achieve the targets (i.e. phase 4 of O.Reg. 588/17).



2.0 “What We Heard” Summary

Consultation activities identified that participants expressed a strong preference for maintaining current service levels at a slight increase to household costs, with a willingness to pay more for improvements in specific areas such as sidewalks, pathways, cycling infrastructure, roads, and natural assets like the City’s urban tree canopy. There is a notable emphasis on the maintenance and upkeep of transportation assets over “non-essential” service categories. Respondents suggested to explore alternative funding sources. Overall, **the public sentiment indicates a desire for cost-effective levels of service that maintain the status-quo and highlights the community’s interest in transportation asset categories.**

The consultation findings can help inform level of service decisions moving forward. Respondents would prefer the City prioritizes the maintenance and improvement of transportation assets. Additionally, some residents have expressed interest in the City sourcing funding for asset categories through alternative streams of income, such as through grants, partnerships with other organizations, or increasing user fees. The City should consider these preferences and concerns to guide the next phase of AMP updates, ensuring that service levels reflect the community's vision and priorities.



3.0 Consultation Activities

A series of activities to support community and stakeholder engagement were held throughout the project process. The activities were designed to provide multiple opportunities to gather feedback, including both in-person and online methods. The following section provides a synopsis of the approaches used to gather input.

3.1 Focus Group

The Focus Group with City staff was organized to identify strategic priorities already established by Council and any Council-approved levels of service already committed to. The goal of the focus group is to determine:

- Current alignment with City of Kingston strategic priorities
- Department capacities to increase levels of service
- Barriers to providing expected or projected levels of service.

The purpose of the Focus Group was to gather input from senior staff at the City (internal Focus Group) that will inform the design of the public survey. For example, determine which asset categories will be presented to the public via the online survey questionnaire; and identify any Council approved service levels that are not open to adjustment as part of the survey.

The Project Team hosted an in-person Focus Group with 15 senior staff at the City of Kingston on Wednesday, November 6, 2024 from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM.

The following sub-section provides key highlights from the Focus Group.

3.1.1 Activity – Mentimeter

Three warm-up questions were presented to attendees to familiarize participants with the Mentimeter tool and format. The questions also served as a reminder to use clear language to avoid misunderstandings of intent when drafting survey questions, and to spark friendly debate and discussion between attendees.

Priorities and Commitments

The first four technical questions centered on Council priorities and commitments. Through the questions, it was identified that Council primarily documents its commitments in the Strategic Plan and Council Resolutions, and other documents such as the Official Plan, Master Plans, and Asset Management Plans.

In replying to the question of what Strategic Plan objectives relate to infrastructure and asset management, the following points were raised:

- Build an Active and Connected Community;
- Lead Environmental Stewardship and Climate Action;
- Drive Inclusive Economic Growth;
- Service levels;
- Invest an additional \$35M over 4 years to repair roads in poor condition;
- Demonstrating climate leadership;
- Reducing greenhouse gasses; and,
- Construct the Confederation Basin promenade.

Council priorities and commitments that have been approved and were identified as related to a service area represented by a Focus Group attendee are:

- Maintaining financial sustainability;
- Targeting graffiti and beautify streets;
- Transitioning to a zero-emission fleet;
- Building three (3) major active transportation connections;
- Improving road safety and move to vision zero; and,
- Evaluating, visioning, and renewing aging facilities.

(Timeline Questions) How strongly do you agree?

- Many commitments have timeline associated with it (4.1 out of 5)
- Many commitments are conditional on funding to pay for it (3.1 out of 5)
- Some commitments are already funded (3.0 out of 5)
- Most of the commitments are not time bound (2.3 out of 5)

Focus Group attendees indicated that they felt that the commitments were predominantly not time bound, but do have a timeline associated with them, implying flexibility in delivery as long as commitments meet their final deadlines. Attendees also indicated that some commitments are conditional on funding and some of them are already funded, however through discussion it was indicated that the response of “already funded” did not mean that the projects had received complete funding required to finish and deliver the commitments.

Asset Service Categories

The next section of questions polled attendees on the Asset Service Categories and the appropriateness of categories to be presented to the public in the survey. The following categories received high indicators of inclusion (a mean score of 4.0 or higher out of 5):

- Indoor Recreation and Marinas (4.9);
- Transit (4.6);
- Library Services (4.2);
- Arts & Culture Services (4.1);
- Park Amenities (4.1); and,
- Parking Equipment, Lots, & Structures (4.1);

The following categories received an indication that they should be included, with some discussion on how to best present them to the public (a mean score of 3.0 to 3.9):

- Transportation (3.8);
- Facilities (3.8).
- Parking Structures (3.7);
- Traffic Control & Safety (3.5);
- Fire & Emergency Services (3.4);
- Airport Operations (3.3);
- Solid Waste (3.3);
- Heritage Services (3.3); and,
- Park Facilities (3.3).

A new category was suggested for public polling, which was Shoreline Protection.

Lifecycle Management and Financial Strategy

The final Mentimeter section focused on lifecycle management and financial strategies for asset management. Focus Group attendees indicated that the monthly cost options to be put forward for public consideration should be the options of: a reduction from current cost (leading to a reduction in level of service); the same as current cost (leading to a reduction in level of service); and an increase of \$10 per month. Further discussion was had as to how much of an increase would be required to meet Council's commitments and priorities, and how best to represent this increase – as a monthly dollar amount, percentage of annual property tax, etc. It was determined that the Finance department would collaborate in drafting the survey to assist with the mathematical breakdown and align with how the budget is presented to the public.

(Service Questions) How strongly do you agree?

- Prioritize services where maintaining service levels is the strategy (and reduce other services) (4.1 out of 5)
- Adjust service levels to what we can afford is the strategy (3.8 out of 5)
- Reduce size of asset portfolio to maintain service levels is the strategy (2.3 out of 5)
- Keep doing what we are doing and hope for the best is the strategy (1.4 out of 5)

Finally, attendees indicated that the ideal strategy is to either prioritize services where service levels should be maintained, thereby reduce service levels in non-prioritized categories. The follow-up strategy choice is to adjust service levels to what the City can afford.

3.2 Pop-Up Events

Staff also hosted four pop-up sessions across the City, where facility users from different neighbourhoods and demographics could stop by and learn more about asset

management, take the survey on the spot and participate in an activity related to service level improvement.

Other mechanisms for gathering feedback on the asset management plan included comment boxes at facilities (21 submissions) and poster boards for contributions at in-person pop-ups (58 submissions).

80 people discussed asset management with staff at facility pop-ups, with 58 sticky notes added as part of the engagement activity. The pop-up activity asked attendees to submit which services they felt should be decreased, maintained, or improved:

- Services to decrease (likely pay the same \$ or less): 0 submissions
- Services to maintain (likely pay more \$\$): 24 submissions
 - Transportation assets (6): Transit (3), Roads (1), Intersections (1), Waaban Crossing (1)
 - Facilities (10): Rec facilities (3), Kingston East Community Centre (2), Rideau Heights Community Centre (1), Tett Centre (1), Grand Theatre (1), Heritage Services (1), Artillery Park (1)
 - Natural assets and parks (7): Parks (3), Trees (1), City Park (1), Lemoine Point (1), Park Benches (1)
 - Solid Waste (1)
- Services to improve (pay more \$\$\$): 34 submissions
 - Transportation assets (20): Transit (8), Roads (6), Sidewalks (3), Cycling lanes (2), Parking (1)
 - Facilities (6): Libraries (2), Pools (2), Artillery Park (1), Community spaces and meetings rooms (1)
 - Natural assets and parks (6): Outdoors courts (2), dog parks (2), KP Trail at Belle Park (1), Tree canopy (1)
 - Public Works (2): Snowplows (1), Garbage (1)

3.2.1 Ballot Boxes

Ballot boxes were placed at the front desk of four recreation facilities (Rideau Heights Community Centre, Kingston East Community Centre, INVISTA Centre and Artillery Park Aquatic Centre) for visitors to share feedback specific to assets at those facilities.

The ballot boxes were placed at the front desk of Rideau Heights Community Centre (5 comments), Artillery Park Aquatic Centre (7 comments), INVISTA Centre (6 comments) and Kingston East Community Centre (2 comments). One submission was also provided via email to the customer experience team. The question prompted facility users to provide feedback about the assets at each facility, or City-owned assets more generally. Some comments spoke to more than one theme. A total of 21 comments were submitted. Feedback received included comments on:

- Recreation facilities infrastructure and equipment (11 comments): repairs and infrastructure issues identified, requests for specific equipment, temperature issues
- Transportation assets (6 comments): signage in parking lots, praise for transit and requests for more stops, including rurally, need for stoplight at specific location, suggestions for road repair and maintenance
- General positive feedback (4 comments): praise for each of the four facilities
- Programming (3 comments): praise for sport programming, request for more family and senior programs
- Planning (2 comments): request for more pools, negative comment about soccer stadium proposal
- Solid waste (1 comment): request for more garbage cans in public areas

3.3 Public Online Survey Questionnaire

An online survey questionnaire was created in order to provide the opportunity for digital engagement. The survey was open from January 24 until February 24 on Get Involved Kingston. It consisted of 18 questions, asking participants for input on their satisfaction with, and expectations of, municipal services and assets, suggestions for improvements, their willingness to pay to maintain or increase services, and finally, priorities for funding allocation.

The survey was shared with the community in offline and digital formats, including:

- Curbex signs at City Parks and Market Square
- News release + inclusion in Get Involved Kingston newsletters
- Media coverage in 2 publication articles
- Social media posts on Facebook, LinkedIn, X and Instagram, including an explainer video that received 23,000+ views
- Paid advertising on Reddit, Instagram and Facebook
- Print advertising in Kingston This Week newspaper
- Posters distributed to City facilities and Transit transfer points
- Messaging on digital networks across City facilities and libraries
- Linked from 2 City apps: Solid Waste App and Online Property Tax Portal

Targeted emails to user groups of various City facilities including sports fields, Tett Centre and recreation facilities, as well as internal groups: City staff, EITP Committee and City Council

Survey respondents were entered to win prizes, including Grand Theatre tickets, a fitness pass, a transit pass and a tree as part of the Neighbourhood Tree Planting program.

Other options for online engagement included a quick poll on the project page (no login-in required), and feedback was also accepted via email and CRM.

3.3.1 Who we heard from?

410 engaged participants completed the survey, submitted poll responses and contributed to the ideas tool (384 total survey submissions). 118 participants indicated that they are interested in further engagement with regards to asset management levels of service. From the online survey page, web traffic statistics showed:

- 2,610 aware participants visited the project page to learn more
- 77 participants engaged with the City for the first time on Get Involved Kingston

Through self-reported demographic questions (Q12-16), it was determined that respondents to the survey were:

- From the following districts / wards: Pittsburgh (14.7%), Collins-Bayridge (11.1%), and Portsmouth (10.3%)
- Diverse in age, with 22.1% of respondents between the ages of 55-64, another 22.1% being between 35-44, 18.9% between the ages of 65-75, 15.6% between the ages of 45-54, 14.2% between the ages of 25-34, 5.7% over the age of 75, and 1.4% between the ages of 18-24
- Primarily full-time residents of the city (95%)
- Primarily part of two-member households (45.9%), followed by three-member households (17.7%) and four-person households (17.2%)
- Primarily part of a household with an annual income of \$100,000 - \$149,000 (29.3%)

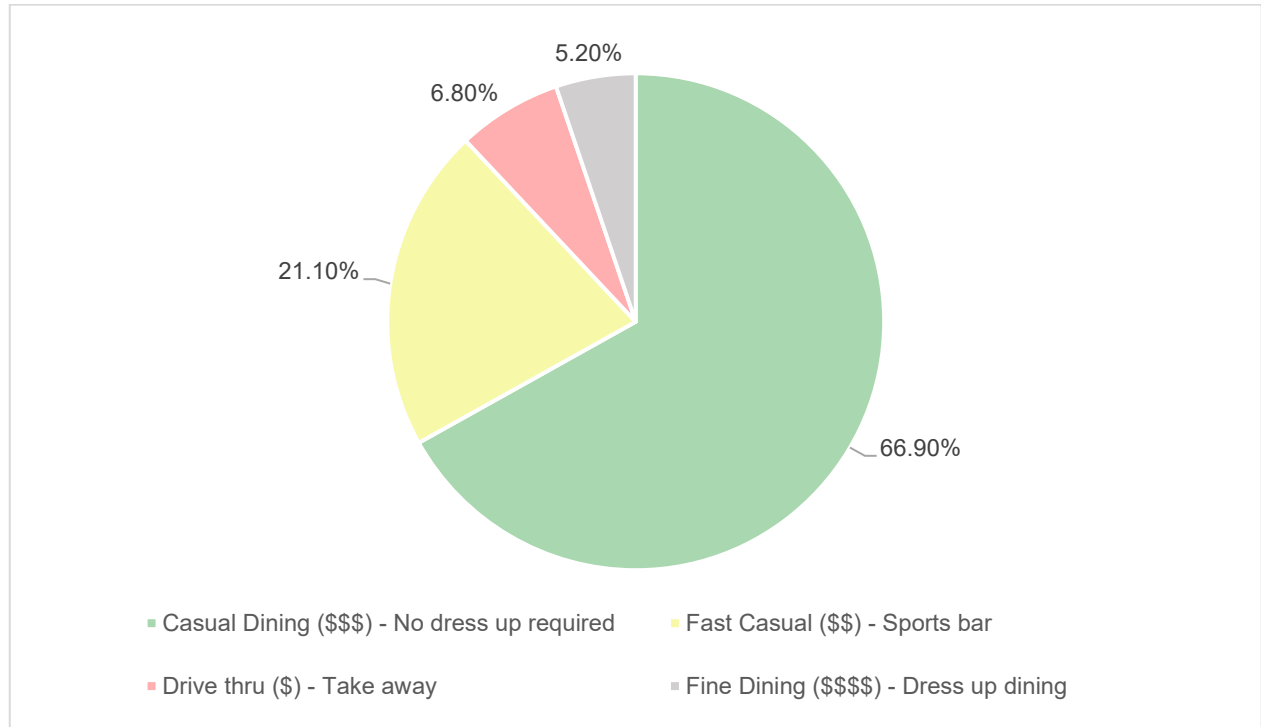
3.3.2 What we Heard?

The following is a summary of responses and themes identified by staff in the survey and from open feedback questions.

3.3.2.1 Summary of survey questions (Q1-3, 5-11)

Q1: Thinking about the delivery of municipal services like a restaurant, which of the following best describes how you would prefer to receive services from Kingston?

A large majority (66.9%) of respondents indicated that they would prefer to receive services as “Casual Dining (\$\$\$) – No dress up required”. The remaining respondents chose “Fast Casual (\$\$) – Sports bar” (21.1%), “Drive thru (\$) – Take away” (6.8%), and “Fine Dining (\$\$\$\$) – Dress up dining” (5.2%).



Q2: How satisfied are you with the transportation services you use in the City of Kingston? Rank your satisfaction of each service from 1 “Dissatisfied - Service needs improving” to “3 - Satisfied – Leave service as is”. For services that you do not use, please select “N/A”.

Categories for this question included:

- Roads
- Sidewalks, pathways and cycling infrastructure
- Intersections and pedestrian crossings
- Public Transit Buses & Shelters
- Parking equipment, lots and structures

For Roads, a majority of respondents selected “Dissatisfied” (181 responses), followed by “Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied” (91 responses), “Satisfied” (69 responses), and “N/A” (43 responses).

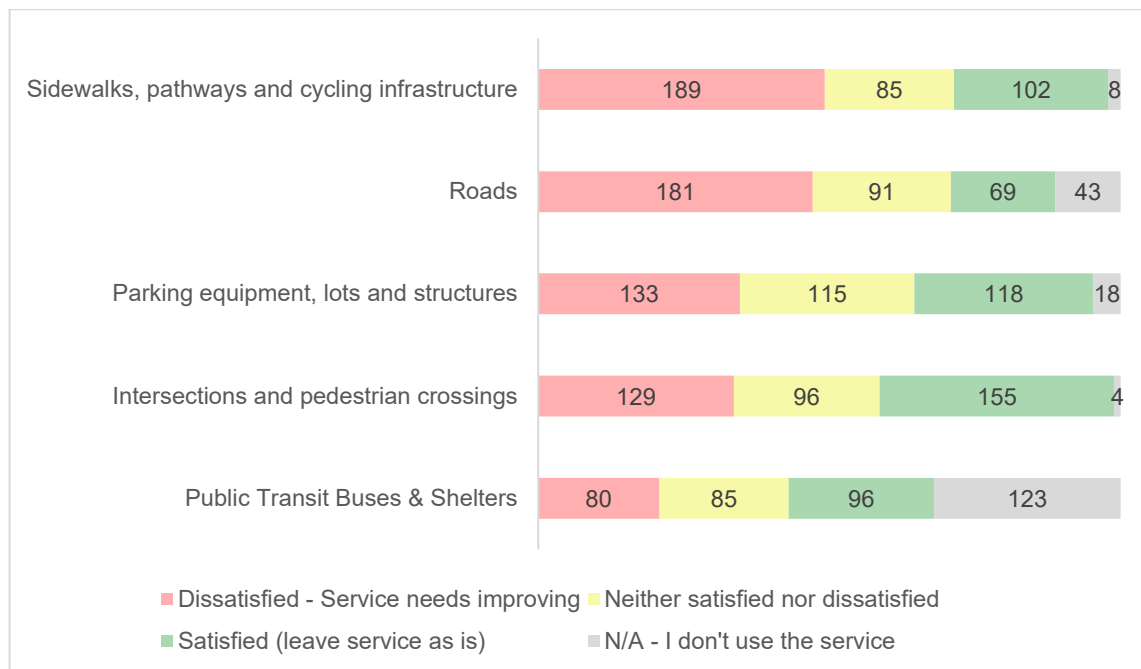
For Sidewalks, pathways and cycling infrastructure, a majority of respondents selected “Dissatisfied” (189 responses), followed by “Satisfied” (102 responses), “Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied” (85 responses), and “N/A” (8 responses).



For Intersections and pedestrian crossings, a majority of respondents selected “Satisfied” (155 responses), followed by “Dissatisfied” (129 responses), “Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied” (96 responses), and “N/A” (4 responses).

For Public Transit Buses & Shelters, a majority of respondents selected “N/A” (123 responses), followed by “Satisfied” (96 responses), “Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied” (85 responses), and “Dissatisfied” (80 responses).

For Parking equipment, lots and structures, a majority of respondents selected “Dissatisfied” (133 responses), followed by “Satisfied” (118 responses), “Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied” (115 responses), and “N/A” (18 responses).

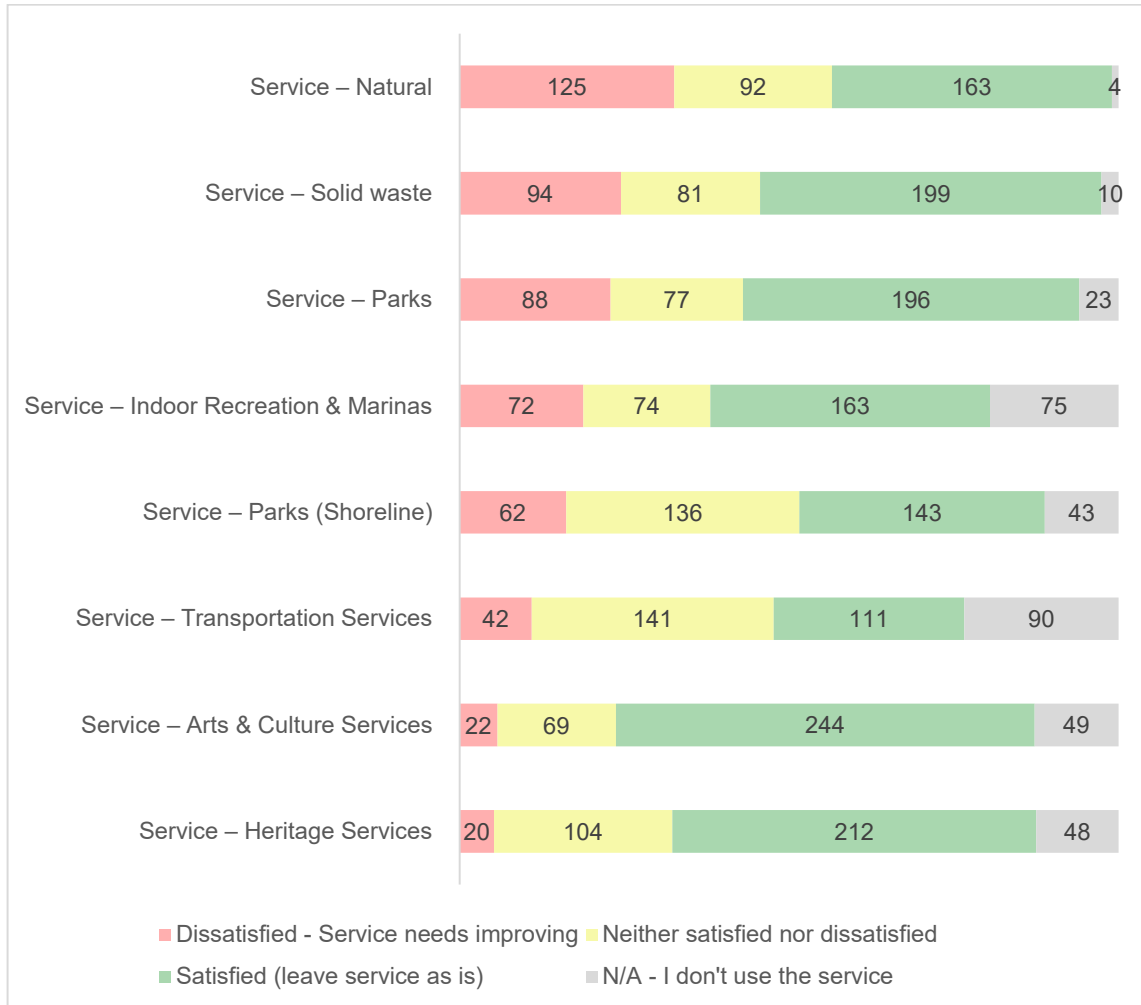


Q3: How satisfied are you with other services you use in the City of Kingston? Rank your satisfaction of each service from 1 “Dissatisfied - Service needs improving” to “3 - Satisfied – Leave service as is”. For services that you do not use, please select “N/A”.

Categories for this question included:

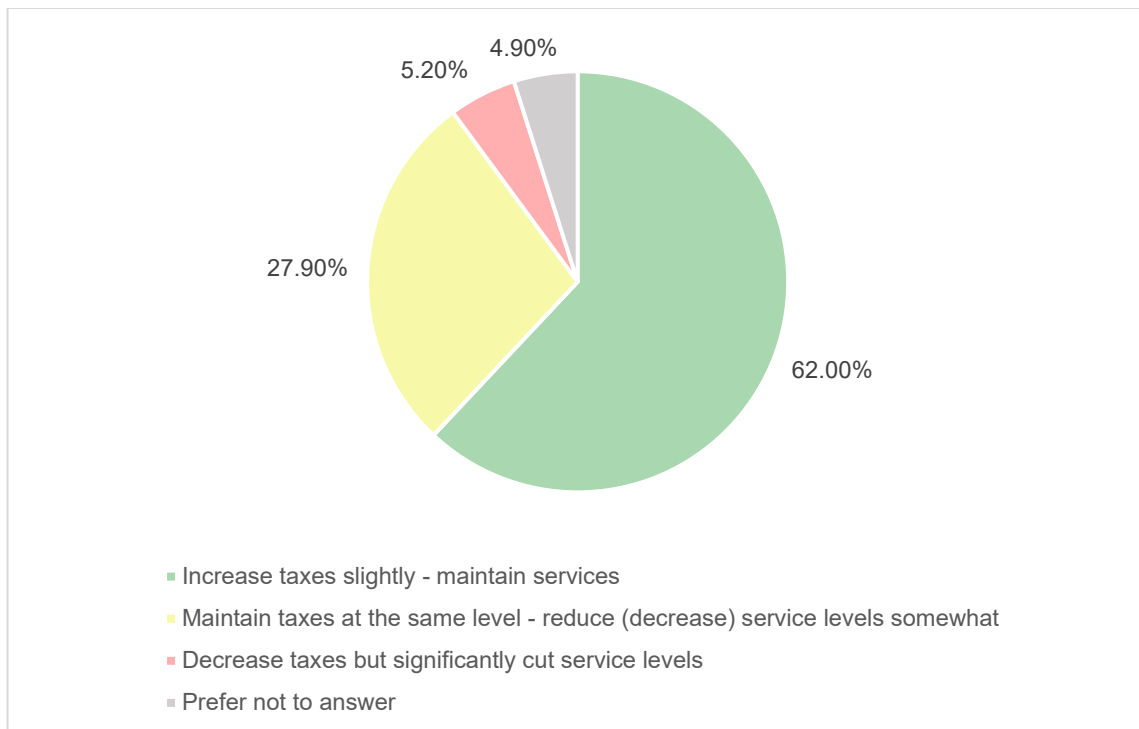
- Service – Indoor Recreation & Marinas (Assets – Artillery park, Rideau Heights, INVISTA, Aquatics Pool and equipment, Ice rinks, fitness centre and equipment, Marinas etc.)
- Service – Arts & Culture Services (Assets - Kingston Grand Theatre and Tett Centre)
- Service – Parks (Assets – parks, trails, playgrounds, equipment, splash pads, tennis and pickleball courts, picnic shelters, outdoor ice rinks, skateparks, etc.)
- Service – Solid Waste (Assets – Garbage trucks, bins and carts)
- Service – Natural (Assets – Urban Tree Canopy, forests, shoreline, beaches, wetlands, watercourse etc.)
- Service – Heritage Services (Assets – City Hall, Frontenac County Courthouse, Outdoor and Civic Collection, PumpHouse Collection, MacLachlan Woodworking Museum Collection)
- Service – Transportation Services (Assets - Wildlife Protection Infrastructure)
- Service – Parks (Assets - Shoreline Protection / Flood Mitigation Infrastructure)

In nearly every category, respondents indicated they were satisfied with current levels of service, selecting “Satisfied (leave service as is)” as the majority answer. ‘Service – Transportation Services (Assets - Wildlife Protection Infrastructure)’ was the only category where respondents indicated a different majority answer, selecting “Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied”, potentially indicating confusion over the asset category and it’s meaning.



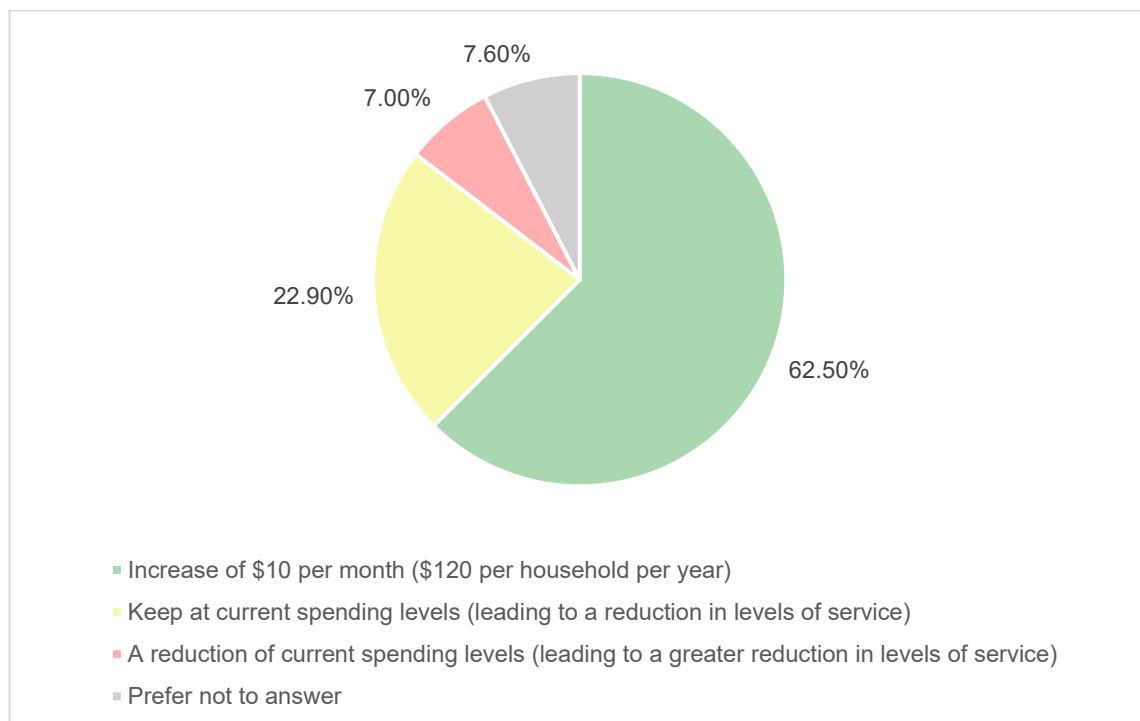
Q5: Which of the following options would you most like Kingston to pursue to pay for infrastructure assets to deliver services?

A large majority of respondents (62.0%) indicated that they would prefer to “Increase taxes slightly – maintain services”. 27.9% of respondents indicated that they would prefer the City “Maintain taxes at the same level – reduce (decrease) service levels somewhat”. 5.2% responded that they would prefer the City “Decrease taxes but significantly cut service levels”, and 4.9% declined to answer.



Q6: Considering the above, which option would you prefer?

To supplement Question 5, respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they would prefer changes to costs. A large majority of respondents (62.5%) indicated that they would prefer an “increase of \$10 per month (\$120 per household per year). The second highest percentage of answers was “Keep at current spending levels (leading to a reduction in level of service)” at 22.9%. 7.6% of respondents declined to answer, and 7.0% of respondents indicated a preference towards “A reduction of current spending levels (leading to a greater reduction in levels of service)”.



Q7: Scenario 1: Recreation Centre Closure

A recreation centre is worsening in condition such that it will need significant repair. Using the assumption that you use this facility at a moderate frequency, which of the following options would you prefer?

A large majority of respondents (58.1%) indicated a preference to “Increase usage fees to repair the recreation centre to maintain current service”. 24.0% of respondents indicated a preference to “Pay an increase in tax dollars to repair the recreation centre to maintain current service”. 11.2% of respondents selected to “Close the facility and

use an alternative recreation centre”, and 6.8% of respondents indicated a preference to “Limit the types of activities at the recreation centre”.

Q8: Scenario 2: Roads

The road network is deteriorating, and there is insufficient funding to be able to maintain all the paved roads in fair condition. Which of the following options would you prefer?

A majority of respondents (46.1%) indicated a preference towards an “Increase in the tax rate in order to afford to maintain paved roads in good condition”. 34.4% of respondents indicated a preference to “Maintain Arterial and Collector roads (high traffic) in good condition and local roads (low traffic) in poor condition”. 18.0% of respondents selected to “Reduce the Level of Service from paved to surface treated and/or gravel but maintain the overall network in good condition”, and 1.6% indicated a preference to “Continue to use very poor condition road surface as is”.

Q9: Scenario 3: Playground Closure

An outdoor play structure at a park is deteriorating in condition. This presents a public safety issue and must be closed until repairs can be made. Which of the following options would you prefer?

A majority of respondents (42.4%) indicated a preference to “Prioritize play equipment replacement over building other new park amenities to reduce the tax/resource impact”. 30.7% of respondents indicated a preference towards “A small increase in tax dollars/additional resources to repair the play structure to a condition where it is safe for the public and maintain the old infrastructure for longer periods of time”. 14.1% of respondents chose to “Permanently remove the play structure”, while 9.1% of respondents chose “A larger increase in tax dollars/additional resources to replace the entire play structure with one of a similar size and play value”. Only 3.6% of respondents chose “An increase in tax dollars/additional resources to replace the entire play structure with a new but smaller structure”.

Q10: It is expected that as the cost of living and inflation will continue to rise, so will the costs for the City of Kingston to provide services. Increases in service levels may require an increase in funding. Based on the possible funding and

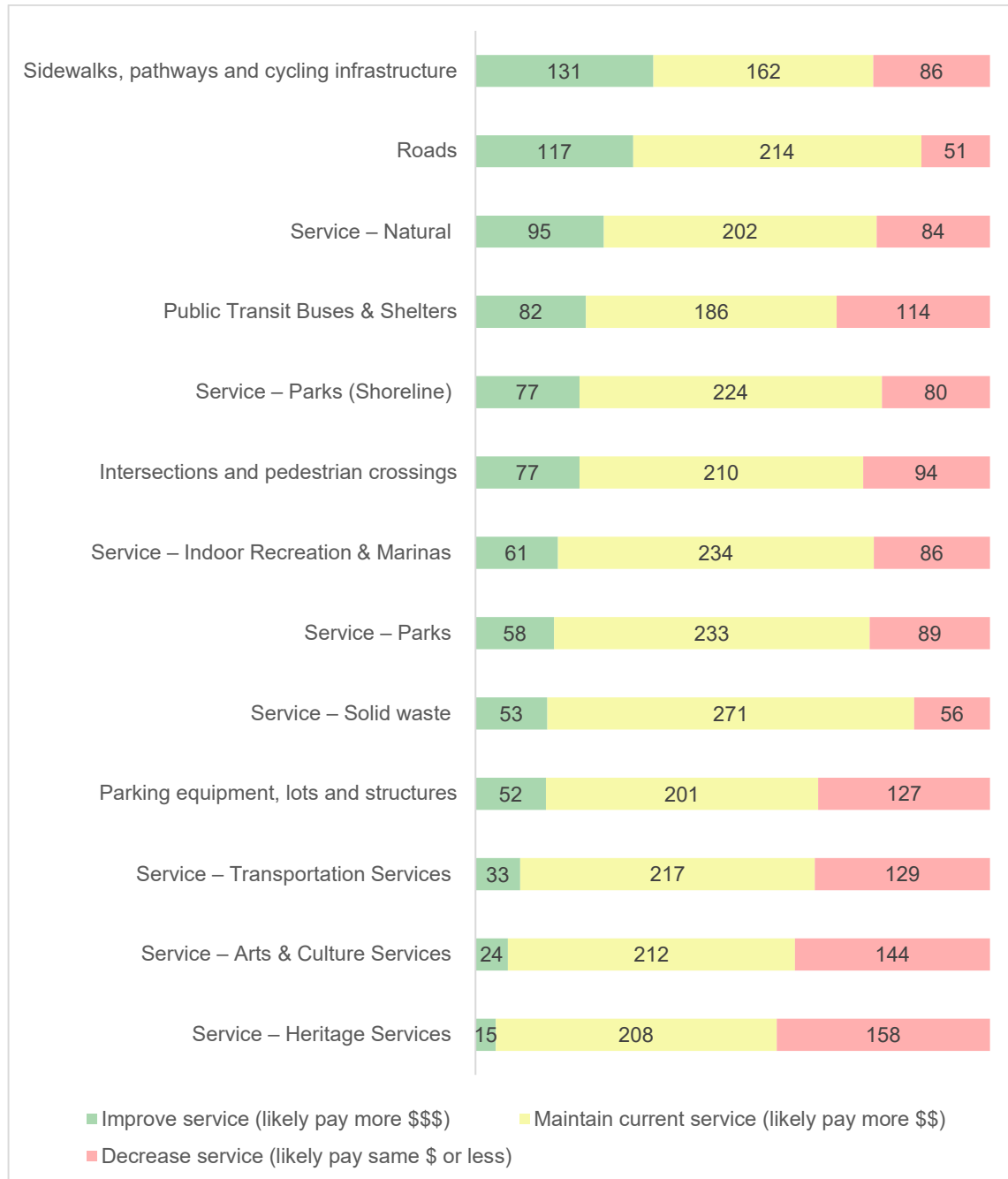
service level outcomes, please indicate your preference for maintaining, increasing or decreasing the service levels for each of the service areas / assets.

Categories for this question included:

- Roads
- Sidewalks, pathways and cycling infrastructure
- Intersections and pedestrian crossings
- Public Transit Buses & Shelters
- Parking equipment, lots and structures
- Service – Indoor Recreation & Marinas (Assets – Artillery park, Rideau Heights, INVISTA, Aquatics Pool and equipment, Ice rinks, fitness centre and equipment, Marinas etc.)
- Service – Arts & Culture Services (Assets - Kingston Grand Theatre and Tett Centre)
- Service – Parks (Assets – parks, trails, playgrounds, equipment, splash pads, tennis and pickleball courts, picnic shelters, outdoor ice rinks, skateparks, etc.)
- Service – Solid Waste (Assets – Garbage trucks, bins and carts)
- Service – Natural (Assets – Urban Tree Canopy, forests, shoreline, beaches, wetlands, watercourse etc.)
- Service – Heritage Services (Assets – City Hall, Frontenac County Courthouse, Outdoor and Civic Collection, PumpHouse Collection, MacLachlan Woodworking Museum Collection)
- Service – Transportation Services (Assets - Wildlife Protection Infrastructure)
- Service – Parks (Assets - Shoreline Protection / Flood Mitigation Infrastructure)

In every category, respondents indicated a majority preference to “Maintain current service (likely pay more \$\$)”. The three categories with the highest number of responses for “Improve service (likely pay more \$\$)” are ‘Sidewalks, pathways and cycling infrastructure’, ‘Roads’, and ‘Service – Natural (Assets – Urban Tree Canopy, forests, shoreline, beaches, wetlands, watercourse etc.)’, in that order. The three categories with the highest number of responses for “Decrease service (likely pay same \$ or less)”, are ‘Service – Heritage Services (Assets – City Hall, Frontenac County

Courthouse, Outdoor and Civic Collection, PumpHouse Collection, MacLachlan Woodworking Museum Collection)', 'Service – Arts & Culture Services (Assets - Kingston Grand Theatre and Tett Centre)', and 'Service – Transportation Services (Assets - Wildlife Protection Infrastructure)', in that order.



Q11: There may be circumstances when the City of Kingston will need to make decisions on where to allocate funding with limited resources.

Please rank services that should be prioritized for funding, 1 being the most important service to you, 13 being least important.

Respondents ranked the services in the following order, from most to least important:

Service	Average Rank
Roads	3.86
Sidewalks, pathways and cycling infrastructure	5.18
Service – Solid Waste (Assets – Garbage trucks, bins and carts)	5.76
Service – Parks (Assets – parks, trails, playgrounds, equipment, splash pads, tennis and pickleball courts, picnic shelters, outdoor ice rinks, skateparks, etc.)	6.15
Intersections and pedestrian crossings	6.42
Service – Natural (Assets – Urban Tree Canopy, forests, shoreline, beaches, wetlands, watercourse etc.)	6.54
Public Transit Buses & Shelters	6.76
Service – Indoor Recreation & Marinas (Assets – Artillery park, Rideau Heights, INVISTA, Aquatics Pool and equipment, Ice rinks, fitness centre and equipment, Marinas etc.)	7.08
Service – Parks (Assets - Shoreline Protection / Flood Mitigation Infrastructure)	7.53
Parking equipment, lots and structures	7.93
Service – Transportation Services (Assets - Wildlife Protection Infrastructure)	8.93
Service – Arts & Culture Services (Assets - Kingston Grand Theatre and Tett Centre)	9.08
Service – Heritage Services (Assets – City Hall, Frontenac County Courthouse, Outdoor and Civic Collection, PumpHouse Collection, MacLachlan Woodworking Museum Collection)	9.79

3.3.2.2 Summary of comment themes (Q4)

When asked to share reasoning behind ranking their satisfaction with services, 200 users provided comments. Overall, feedback is line with the results seen in questions 2 and 3, with an emphasis on the maintenance and upkeep of transportation assets over other assets.

Comments were tagged by asset/service category themes. Note that many comments mentioned multiple asset themes.

Transportation Assets

Roads (74 comments)

- The majority of these comments focused on the condition of roads, which are frequently described as being poor (mentions of potholes, uneven surfaces).
- There are calls for more consistent and effective road maintenance, including better repairs of potholes and resurfacing of major streets (specific mentions of downtown core, Earl Street, Sydenham Street and Centennial Drive).

Sidewalks and Cycling Paths (67 comments)

- Many comments express support for improved bike lanes, with suggestions for protection from car traffic and additional infrastructure to fix incomplete lanes. There's also a desire for better connectivity across the network.
- Comments also emphasize repairing damaged sidewalks and improving maintenance (especially snow clearing in the winter), with concerns about accessibility.

Parking (37 comments)

- Many comments share the sentiment that parking lots, especially those downtown, are in poor condition and need upgrades and general maintenance
- There is a desire for more parking facilities, especially for disabled and senior citizens, with mention that the lack of parking negatively impacts businesses.

- There are some issues identified with parking payment systems (meters and app). Some believe that parking should cover its costs and potentially generate revenue. Others think the City should divest from managing parking lots.

Public Transit (34 comments)

- There is a strong desire for more efficient, accessible and well-maintained transit services. Comments related to assets include calls for dedicated bus lanes and functionally-designed shelters to protect from the elements.
- Many comments focus on transit planning and services specifically (routes, scheduling and payment options) and better maintenance on buses and at shelters.

Intersections and Pedestrian Crossings (32 comments)

- Comments reflect that many intersections are considered unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists (specific mentions of Union and Barrie, Gore Road and Hwy 15). Other comments suggest that some traffic lights are poorly timed, causing unnecessary delays and congestion.
- There are calls for improved winter maintenance at pedestrian crossings, as well as more visible and frequent crosswalks on major roads with better illumination.

Environmental Assets

Parks and Trails (59 comments)

- Comments reflect that many parks and trails need improved levels of service. Some comments call for better maintenance of existing parks before creating new ones.
- There is a request for more amenities at parks including splash pads and rinks.
- Suggestions to plant more trees, including fruit trees, and to use underutilized green spaces for community gardens.

Natural Assets (35 comments)

- There is an emphasis on the need for more trees and better maintenance of existing trees, as well as concerns about removal of mature trees for new

developments. The City's tree planting programs are appreciated but more efforts can be made.

- Call for prioritizations of sustainable development and green growth, with a desire for more green spaces, trails and natural areas throughout the city, as well as maintenance and upgrades of current spaces.

Shoreline Protection (25 comments)

- Some comments on shoreline protection highlight concerns about the impact of development on shorelines. Comments also suggest that there is a need for more consistent maintenance and protection of shorelines.
- Other comments ask for enhanced public access to the waterfront and better connectivity of shoreline pathways are desired.

Wildlife Protection (7 comments)

- Some respondents are unclear about what "Wildlife Protection" infrastructure refers to, suggesting the need for better communication on these assets.
- There are environmental concerns about the impact of development on wildlife, as well as specific issues identified with coyotes and turtle barriers.

Facilities and Designated Locations

Indoor Recreation and Marinas (41 comments)

- Comments about indoor recreation state the need for more facilities and amenities, with specific mentions of pools and additional programming. Respondents also highlight the need for upgrades to current facilities and additional maintenance.
- There were also a few comments about marinas, that spoke to the state of disrepair at marinas, as well as the call for significant improvement to the infrastructure. Some users were concerned about public funding of marinas.

Arts and Culture (17 comments)

- There are mixed feelings about the City's investment in arts and culture, with some seeing it as unnecessary spending and others recognizing its importance.

- Of comments that are supportive, there is a call for better support for artists, improved public amenities and greater accessibility and affordability for arts and culture services.

Heritage Services (15 comments)

- Comments reflect a need for better maintenance of heritage sites, such as City Hall and the Frontenac County Courthouse. The MacLachlan Woodworking Museum is seen as underutilized and could benefit from hosting private events to increase usage and income.
- Heritage designations are appreciated for public offices but seen as impractical for homes, especially during a housing crisis. Some suggest removing heritage designations from dilapidated buildings to repurpose them.

Other Assets/Comment Themes

Solid Waste (40 comments)

- The majority of solid waste comments focus on the decline in service quality (including pick-up issues and inadequate collection scheduling).
- In terms of assets, there are calls for better bins to prevent litter and hydraulic trucks for efficiency, as well as more recycling receptacles in public spaces.

Assets – General (28 comments)

- General comments on assets (without referencing a specific service category) include some praise for the general state of infrastructure, and a desire of upgrades and repairs to meet service expectations.
- There is also an ask to focus spending on essential municipal services over “wants” and a call for better distribution of services across neighbourhoods.

Other (56 comments)

- Planning/Development: Comments reflect a desire for more sustainable development practices including preserving mature trees and integrating more green spaces into new housing developments. There are some concerns about

new developments being car-dependent, as well as the impact of high-rise development on the City's historical character and natural views.

- Costs/Budget: Some concerns about overspending, inefficient budgeting and calls for fiscal responsibility. Other comments acknowledge high tax rates and dissatisfaction with services received for taxes paid.
- Public Restrooms: A few comments ask for more year-round public restrooms (in parks, at City Hall) and for better maintenance of current facilities.
- Libraries: Desire for additional hours and funding for libraries.

3.3.2.3 Summary of comment themes (Q17)

The final question asked participants for any additional comments on the asset management plan and 195 users answered this question.

Overall, feedback received emphasizes the need to prioritize essential services like transportation assets. Some comments express concerns about the City's ability to maintain service levels and the impact of inflation on costs. There are also strong calls for cost-effective services and fiscal responsibility, and other comments that ask for improvements across multiple asset categories.

Comments were tagged by asset/service category themes. Note that many comments mentioned multiple asset themes. A summary of each theme is below.

Budget Management (63 comments)

- There are concerns about budget management and calls for greater fiscal responsibility. Some residents are worried about high taxes and suggest reallocating funds from various departments (i.e. police, as well as non-essential services). There is a desire for more transparency and public input in budget decisions, with an emphasis on cost-effectiveness.
- There are suggestions to explore alternative funding sources like grants, as well as some support for increased user fees and calls to monetize underutilized revenue from City assets rather than relying on municipal taxes. There are also

comments that emphasize tax equity and the need to better support low-income residents.

Transportation Assets (52 comments)

- Roads (38 comments): Concerns about poor condition of roads and the need for better maintenance. Strong support to prioritize roads as an essential service.
- Sidewalk and Cycling Paths (23 comments): Emphasis on the importance of active transportation and calls for better maintenance and upkeep of sidewalks and bike infrastructure.
- Parking (12 comments): Suggestions to minimize surface-level lots in favor of other parking infrastructure, concerns about lack of parking downtown and suggestions to include public parking in new development plans, as well as increasing parking fees for revenue generation.
- Public Transit (18 comments): Transit comments mainly focus on service (calls for more routes and emphasis on the importance of reliable transit). Some comments highlight a desire for more shelters and benches at bus stops.
- Intersections and Pedestrian Crossings (8 comments): Some criticism of current traffic light programming leading to traffic congestion. There are also some concerns about pedestrian safety and intersection design, with emphasis on long-term planning improvements rather than short fixes.

Environmental Assets (27 comments)

- Parks and Trails (18 comments): Emphasis on protecting green spaces and the need for better maintenance of parks and trails, with a specific mention of dog park cleanliness. There is also encouragement to include parks in new neighbourhoods.
- Natural Assets (10 comments): There is a call to increase tree cover to combat rising temperatures, as well as preserving existing trees, with some appreciation of tree planting efforts. There is also a criticism of cutting down natural assets for new developments.

- Shoreline Protection (3 comments): Sentiment that the City should keep developments away from the water and protect the existing shoreline. Also suggestion for better promotion of shoreline protection assets.
- Wildlife Protection (3 comments): There is emphasis on protecting wildlife and diverse ecosystems in Kingston. There is also some confusion about what this asset category refers to.

Indoor Recreation and Marinas (16 comments)

- Some comments share the need for facility upgrades and better maintenance.
- Some criticism of perceived excessive spending on recreation facilities when essential infrastructure needs are unmet.
- Desire for community involvement in maintaining and running recreational facilities. There are also calls for more indoor ice rinks and pools.

Assets – General (37 comments)

- These comments highlight the need for better prioritization, funding strategies, community involvement, and transparency in managing general assets, with a focus on maintaining quality of life and efficient use of resources.
- Suggestions that some assets should not be categorized together (i.e. Portsmouth Harbour and INVISTA Centre) as they service different user groups.
- Some comments express satisfaction with City services, while others are concerned about the City's ability to maintain current service levels.

Other Comments

- Arts and Culture (6 comments): There is some concern about focusing on arts and culture services over essential assets. There are suggestions for increasing public art and some support for higher user fees or privatization.
- Solid Waste (6 comments): There is a call to focus on essential services, including solid waste. Some praise for the current solid waste system, and some calls for a better recycling program, such as wheelie bins to make recycling easier and more efficient.

- Heritage Services (3 comments): Concerns about prioritizing development over heritage preservation. There are also suggestions for revenue generation: increasing user fees, renting out buildings for events or filming and leveraging partnerships.
- Emergency Services (10 comments): Comments about the need for more fire stations and a few comments with concerns about the increased police budget.

3.4 Quick Poll

In addition to Question 8, the same scenario was included as an anonymous poll on the webpage as an easily accessible, low barrier way to engage with the AMP. 39 users participated in the quick poll.

- 17 respondents chose “Maintain Arterial and Collector roads (high traffic) in good condition and local roads (low traffic) in poor condition”
- 13 respondents chose “Increase in tax rate in order to afford to maintain paved roads in good condition”
- 8 respondents chose “Reduce the Level of Service from paved to surface treated and/or gravel but maintain the overall network in good condition”
- 1 respondent chose “Continue to use very poor condition road surface as is”



4.0 Other Comments Received

The “Ideas Tool” asked users “What can we do to better educated the public on asset management?” and two users submitted responses.

One comment about marina funding and has been included in the theme summaries above. The second comment for improving awareness of asset management suggested engaging with residents with physical media including mailed flyers and local publications. These tactics will be considered for future engagement plans related to asset management.

