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**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** M. Kovacs, Manager of Customer Service

**NOTED:** R. James-Reid, Executive Director of Access Barrie *R Reid*  
C. Ladd, Chief Administrative Officer *[Signature]*

**RE:** 2013 Citizen Satisfaction Survey Results

**DATE:** December 30, 2013

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The City recently embarked on a Citizen Satisfaction Survey to measure residents' satisfaction with municipal services and government. This survey builds on two previous surveys conducted in the fall of 2008 and 2011.

### **Methodology**

From Tuesday, November 19 to Wednesday, November 27, FORUM Research conducted a random telephone survey of 1,018 Barrie residents, 18 years of age or older. Quotas were established to ensure data was collected within each City ward. Survey results were compared to findings from 2008 and 2011.

### **2013 survey results highlights:**

- Overall, the results are very positive.
- Two out of three residents (67%) rate the Quality of Life in Barrie as Excellent or Very Good. This KPI (key performance indicator) has reversed its downward trend and is up 5 percentage points (pp), regaining ground lost in 2008.
- Citizen Engagement currently registers at 71 / 100. This is a new KPI that will be tracked for future surveys.
- Two-thirds of residents are now highly or moderately satisfied with local government. This is the highest this KPI has been since the benchmarking study of 2008, increasing 16 percentage points since 2008 and 7 per cent over 2011.
- Consistent with the increase in satisfaction with local government is a corresponding increase in satisfaction with the work the city is doing in...
  - Managing Economic Development, up 25 percentage points
  - Managing Growth and Environmental Protection, up 25 percentage points
  - Creating a Vibrant City Centre, up 23 percentage points
  - Strengthening City's financial condition, up 21 percentage points

- Improving community involvement, up 15 percentage points
- There has been a significant decrease in satisfaction with the Perceived Value of Services Provided for Taxes Paid with a drop of 8 percentage points.
- Satisfaction with services and programs has been trending downward since 2008. Satisfaction in this area has dropped from 75% to 71% since 2011. The key areas for improving overall satisfaction with services and programs are:
  - Barrie Transit
  - City Planning
  - General Road condition, including surface conditions such as potholes
  - Building permits, inspection service for new buildings and renovations
  - Seniors/disabled persons services
- In order to keep overall satisfaction with Local Government high, residents suggest that the most important issues facing City Council are:
  - Job creation;
  - Increasing efforts to divert waste from the landfill;
  - Affordable housing.

Results of the 2013 Citizen Satisfaction Survey can be viewed on [barrie.ca](http://barrie.ca). Presentation of the full report will be made at General Committee by Forum Research on Monday January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2014. Questions and queries can be directed to ACCESS Barrie.



## **INTRODUCTION:**

Hello, I'm \_\_\_\_\_ from Forum Research, calling on behalf of the City of Barrie. We are conducting a community survey about services provided by the City. Your views are very important to the successful completion of this study and will be used to evaluate and improve City of Barrie services.

May I please speak to the [ALTERNATE: male/female] in your household who is 18 years of age or older and who is having the next birthday?

If asked: The survey is about 20 minutes. To confirm the study is authorized by the City of Barrie call 705-726-4242 during regular office hours or visit the City of Barrie website at [www.barrie.ca](http://www.barrie.ca).

Re-introduce yourself if necessary and continue with screening

## **A. Screener Section:**

A1. Are you or is anyone in your household currently employed by the City of Barrie?

1 - Yes            *Thank and end*

2 - No

A2. In what year were you born?

\_\_\_\_\_ *Record year*

99 – Refused

A3. Respondent is: *[Do not ask]*

1 - Male

2 - Female

## **B. Overall Satisfaction Section:**

B1. To begin, please think about the overall quality of life in the City of Barrie for you and your family, in comparison to other communities where you could live. Would you say, overall, the quality of life in Barrie is....?

[Read list]

5. Excellent

4. Very good

3. Good

3. Fair

1. Poor

99 – DK/NA



B2. Next, how satisfied are you with the City of Barrie's local government? Please use a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means "not at all satisfied" and 10 means "very satisfied".

1 – Not at all satisfied

...

...

10 – Very satisfied

99 – DK/NA

B3. Taking into consideration all City of Barrie services and programs, based on your personal experiences or general impressions, overall, how satisfied are you with the services provided by the City of Barrie?

Please use a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means "not at all satisfied" and 10 means "very satisfied".

1 – Not at all satisfied

...

...

10 – Very satisfied

99 – DK/NA

B4. Using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means strongly disagree and 5 means strongly agree, please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

- a) I feel connected to my community
- b) I tell others that Barrie is a lively and vibrant community with lots to do
- c) I recommend Barrie as place to live
- d) I tell others that Barrie has a high quality of life

B5. Of the following topics facing Barrie City Council today, please indicate how important you feel each is using a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is not important and 10 is very important. How important to you is...? Read and Rotate

- 1. Improvement to Highway 400 interchanges
- 2. University campus in Barrie
- 3. Support for arts such as visual arts, theatre, dance, music, literature and other creative arts
- 4. Increase recreational and commercial development opportunities along the waterfront
- 5. Increase investment in downtown revitalization
- 6. Increase efforts to divert waste from the landfill
- 7. Creating jobs
- 8. Support for affordable housing

B6. Overall, how satisfied are you with the action plans and work the City of Barrie is doing in each of the following areas: Please use a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means “not at all satisfied” and 10 means “very satisfied”, [Read list. Randomize]

1 – Not at all satisfied

...

...

10 – Very satisfied

99 – DK/NA

1. Creating Jobs - Directing and managing economic development, that is, building a stronger diversified economy
2. Managing growth and protecting the environment, that is, planning growth to ensure protection of the environment and improved transportation choices
3. Strengthening Barrie’s financial condition, that is, ensuring Barrie can afford its financial and service commitments
4. Creating a vibrant and healthy city centre, that is, transforming the city centre and improving the overall experience downtown
5. Improving and expanding community involvement and city interactions, that is, new opportunities for better dialogue, information sharing and public feedback on City services and initiatives

### **C. Satisfaction with Services and Programs**

C1. Next, I am going to read you a list of specific services provided or funded by the City of Barrie to residents. For each service, rate your level of satisfaction using a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means “not at all satisfied” and 10 means “very satisfied”. Please rate your level of satisfaction based on your personal experiences in the past 12 months. If you have had no personal experience with the service please indicate by answering “DK or NA”

First, how satisfied are you with...? **[READ IN RANDOMIZED ORDER – RANDOM SET OF 2/3 OF ITEMS TO EACH RESPONDENT]**

1 – Not at all satisfied

...

...

10 – Very satisfied

99 – DK/NA

1. Public libraries
2. Barrie police services
3. Barrie public transit
4. Garbage and recycling collection services
5. Parks, trails and green spaces/tree maintenance
6. Recreation facilities including pools, arenas and recreation centres
7. Recreational programs such as youth, seniors and family programs
8. The quality of drinking water
9. Fire rescue services
10. Fire prevention and fire education services
11. Winter road maintenance including snow and ice management
12. General road condition, including surface conditions such as potholes



13. Summer road maintenance, including major road construction and resurfacing
14. Transportation network including traffic flow and control
15. Economic development including promoting the City as a place to locate a business
16. City of Barrie online services
17. Support for arts and culture including support to arts organizations, artists, festivals, events and celebrations
18. Building permits, inspection services for new buildings, and renovations
19. City Planning – i.e. the development and redevelopment of residential, commercial, Institutional, Industrial and Open Space lands
20. Bylaw enforcement for animal control and parking infractions
21. Bylaw enforcement for property maintenance and land use infractions
22. Seniors/disabled persons service

## **D. Customer Service Satisfaction Information Related**

D1. Have you contacted the City in the past year to obtain information or make a complaint about city programs or services?

1. Yes
2. No

*If yes, continue; otherwise skip to section E*

D2. Which of the following programs or services did you contact the city about?

1. Yes
  2. No
- 
- A. Garbage and recycling
  - B. Taxes
  - C. Recreation programs
  - D. Recreation facilities
  - E. Special events
  - F. Parks or trails
  - G. Road conditions
  - H. Building permits
  - I. Fire Prevention or Fire permit
  - J. Business license or certificate
  - K. Personal licenses i.e. wedding or death certificates
  - L. Infraction ticket (parking, sign, bylaw)
  - M. Public transit
  - N. Parking
  - O. City planning
  - P. Public libraries
  - Q. Water services
  - R. Fire emergency services
  - S. Police services
  - T. general City information
  - U. Job postings



- V. Records or freedom of information requests
- W. City Council services
- X. OTHER - Specify

**Respondent to complete series D3-D6 for each item mentioned in D2. Series to be completed one item at a time.**

D3. When you did you last contact the city about (*insert from D2*). Was it...

- 1. Within the last 3 months
- 2. Between 3 and 6 months ago
- 3. More than 6 months ago.

D4. Was contact by phone, in person, by email, mail or internet? [*One response only*]

- 1. By phone
- 2. In person
- 3. Email
- 4. Mail
- 5. Internet

D5. Overall, how satisfied were you with your last contact about (*insert from D2*). Read out scale.

1 – Not at all satisfied

...

...

10 – Very satisfied

99 – DK/NA

D6. *If codes 1-4 in D5 ask*, What could the City do to increase your satisfaction regarding (*insert for D2*)?

**Repeat D3-D6 for all items selected in D2.**

## **E. Customer Service Satisfaction Transactional**

E1. Have you performed any of the following transactions with the city in the past year?

- 1. Yes
  - 2. No
  - 3. Don't Know / Not sure
- 
- A. Property tax payments
  - B. Permit application
  - C. Pay for or sign up for Recreation programs
  - D. Pay for or reserve Recreation facilities
  - E. Bylaw infractions
  - F. Building permits
  - G. Fire permit
  - H. Special events
  - I. Parks booking



- J. Business license or certificates
- K. Personal licenses i.e. wedding or death certificates
- L. Infraction ticket (parking, sign, bylaw)
- M. Public transit
- N. Parking
- O. Libraries
- P. Water services
- Q. Fire emergency services
- R. Job postings
- S. Records request or freedom of information requests
- T. OTHER - Specify

**Respondent to complete series E2-E5 for each item mentioned in E1.**

E2. When you did you last perform a transaction related to *(insert from E1)*. Read out...

- 1. Within the last 3 months
- 2. Between 3 and months ago
- 3. More than 6 months ago.

E3. Was this conducted in person, by phone, email, mail or internet? **[One response only]**

- 1. By phone
- 2. In person
- 3. Email
- 4. Mail
- 5. Internet

E4. Overall, how satisfied were you with your ability to perform a transaction related to *(insert from E1)*  
**Read out scale.**

- 1 – Not at all satisfied
- ...
- ...
- 10 – Very satisfied
- 99 – DK/NA

**E5. If codes 1-4 in E4 ask, What could the City do to increase your satisfaction with future transactions regarding *(insert for E1)*?**

**Repeat E2-E5 for all items selected in E1.**



**G. Property Taxes**

G1. Do you own or rent a home in the City of Barrie?

- 1. Own
- 2. Rent **[Go to Section H]**
- 9. DK/NA **[Go to Section H]**

G2. Over half of your property tax bill goes to Provincial education costs and the City’s service partners including Police, the County of Simcoe, and healthcare services. This means that less than half of your property tax bill is used by the City to fund municipal services. Thinking about the amount of your tax bill that pays for City services, would you say you receive...? **(Read list)**

- 4. Very good value for your tax dollars
- 3. Good value
- 2. Fair value
- 1. or, Poor value for your tax dollars
- 9. DK/NA

G3. **[If poor value in question G2, ask]** What is the main reason you feel that way?

- 1. Poor spending of tax dollars/planning
- 2. Increase of taxes for poor services
- 3. Taxes are too high in general
- 4. Shortage of healthcare staff/long waiting list
- 5. Poor infrastructure/road maintenance
- 6. Paying taxes for services that I don’t use
- 7. Poor planning/no vision for the future
- 97. Nothing
- 98. Other Specify
- 99. DK/NA

G4. To address infrastructure renewal needs like road repairs, some municipalities have included a special additional tax levy that would be designated for that purpose. Please indicate if you would you agree to a similar approach in Barrie if it helped the City address roads & infrastructure renewal more quickly using a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is strong disagree and 10 is strongly agree?

1. Strongly Disagree

.

.

10. Strongly Agree

99. Not sure

G5. Thinking about the relationship between services provided by the City and the taxes you pay, which of the following **best** describes you

- 1. You would be willing to pay more in taxes in order to have city service increased.
- 2. You would minimize tax increases while keeping current service levels in place.
- 3. You would like taxes to go down and are prepared to have of service decrease.



G6. Using a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is strongly disagree and 10 is strongly agree, how much do you agree with the following statement:

“The cost of growth should be paid for by the purchasers of new home or developers to the maximum extent possible (legislated limits).”

**H. Demographic Section:**

[READ]

In order for us to better understand the different views and needs of citizens, the next few questions allow us to analyze the data into sub-groups. I would like to assure you that nothing will be recorded to link your answers with you or your household.

H1. About how long have you lived in the City of Barrie?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Record number of years
- 99. DK/NA/Refused

H2. Including yourself, how many people in each of the following age groups live in your household? How many are [Read list. Record actual number]

- 1. Under 13 years old
- 2. Between 13 and 18 years old
- 3. Between 19 and 44 years old
- 4. Between 45 and 64 years old
- 5. 65 years of age or older
- 99. DK/NA/Refused

H3. Which of the following best describes your own current employment status?

**READ if necessary – CODE ONE ONLY**

- 1. Working full-time
- 2. Working part-time
- 3. Going to school and working
- 4. Going to school and not working
- 5. Unemployed or laid off
- 6. Stay at home full-time
- 7. Retired
- 8. Disability pension **Do not read out**
- 99. DK/NA/Refused



H4. *[If codes 1 or 2 in question H3, ask:]* Do you primarily work in the...?

*[Read list. Allow one response only]*

*[Interviewer note: if questioned we are looking for the location that they would consider to be their primary commuting location]*

1. Municipality of Barrie
2. Other locations in Simcoe County
3. York region
4. or, other locations in the Greater Toronto Area
99. DK/NA/Refused

**[READ]**

Those are all of the questions I have. On behalf of the City of Barrie thank you for your time.