

REPORT

Finance

To: Mayor Johnstone and Members of Council
Date: October 28, 2024

From: Shehzad Somji
Chief Financial Officer
File:

Item #: 2024-589

Subject: 2025 Budget Public Survey Responses

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the 2025 Budget Survey responses from Residents and Businesses, as presented in Appendix A and B to the staff report titled “2025 Budget Public Survey Responses” dated October 28, 2024 from the Chief Financial Officer, be received for information.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this budget survey is to gather feedback and input from city residents and business owners/operators to better understand financial priorities, challenges, and preferences. The results will help guide budget allocation decisions and ensure that resources are distributed effectively to meet the needs of the community while promoting transparency and fiscal responsibility.

BACKGROUND

An important component in the development of an annual budget is input from residents and businesses. Council provided direction to staff at the July 8, 2024 Council meeting to proceed with the budget survey utilizing the services of Ipsos to gather the responses.

DISCUSSION

The recommended approach to gather input was to directly mail the survey to a random sample of 10,000 New Westminster residential addresses and all available business addresses in the City, estimated to be 1,735. For those residents who were not part of

the random selection, the survey was made available on the City’s website and Finance staff promoted the survey in various City facilities. The following table identifies the dates, times and location that Finance staff promoted the survey:

Date	Time	Location
August 19, 2024	10 am – 2 pm	Main Library
August 21, 2024	4 pm – 8 pm	TACC
August 23, 2024	8 am – 12 pm	QBCC
August 26, 2024	10 am – 2 pm	Century House
August 28, 2024	4 pm – 8 pm	QBCC
August 30, 2024	8 am – 12 pm	TACC
August 19 – 30, 2024	8 am – 4:30 pm	City Hall

The total responses received were as follows:

Survey Type	Mailed	Responses	Response Rate
Random	10,000	721	7.2%
Open	n/a	178	
Business	1,735	28	1.6%

Ipsos will be attending the Council meeting to present the results of the survey.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Council approved a \$35,000 service enhancement in the 2024 budget with the actual cost being \$47,500. Staff have offset the additional cost through savings in other areas.

OPTIONS

Options for Council’s consideration include:

1. THAT the 2025 Budget Survey responses from Residents and Businesses, as presented in Appendix A and B to the staff report titled “2025 Budget Public Survey Responses” dated October 28, 2024 from the Chief Financial Officer, be received for information.; or
2. THAT Council provide staff with alternate direction.

Option #1 is recommended.

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A – Resident Survey Results

Appendix B – Business Survey Results

APPROVALS

This report was approved by:

Shehzad Somji, Chief Financial Officer

Lisa Spitale, Chief Administrative Officer