



# 2025 Operating Budget

## Phase 2: Public Engagement Report

# Background & Objectives

## Background

A municipality's annual budget is an important policy document that dictates how the City will collect and allocate resources to best improve and maintain City services and infrastructure for the community.

The City of Belleville's budget is broken down into two components: capital and operating. While residents have always been welcome to take part in the budget process by providing their feedback to their council representatives, there has been a significant effort in recent years to encourage more thorough public engagement in the process.

The first phase of the engagement process for the 2025 capital and operating budgets consisted of a short, high-level Preliminary Budget Survey to gauge residents spending priorities. Questions in the survey looked at ranking and prioritizing City services. Feedback collected during this phase was used to develop guidelines for budget preparations.

The second phase in the engagement approach entails a detailed breakdown of the proposed budgets. The draft operating budget was made available to the public on Jan. 24. Ratepayers were asked to review the draft document and provide their input on specific items identified by staff in their draft budgets, in the form of a survey.

## Objectives

The goal behind this year's communications and engagement strategy was as follows:

- Provide residents with additional educational material and resources around the budget process.
- Encourage direct engagement from as many residents as possible.
- Provide council and staff with public feedback to help shape a budget and plan that best serves their residents.



# Engagement Strategy

## Timeline

- July & August – Presentation of preliminary survey results to Council and obtain operating & capital budget guidelines.
- October – Draft Capital Budget posted and public survey released to obtain feedback.
- Nov. 18 – Capital Budget Council meeting and presentation of feedback. View the agenda online.
- Jan. 24 – Operating Budget posted and public survey released to obtain feedback.
- Feb. 20 and 21 – Operating Budget Council meetings and presentation of feedback received.



## Tactics

Communications has used a number of channels to inform and engage the public through this phase of engagement, including:

- Budget Webpage
- Online Survey
- Budget 101 Document
- Project Email/Comment Card
- Direct Mailouts in Tax Notices
- Media Release
- Email to News Subscribers
- Website Alert
- Social Media (Paid & Organic)
- Community Press Ad
- InQuinte/Quinte News Ads
- Roadside Signs
- Transit App Banner
- Budget 101 Newsletter
- Belleville Updates Newsletter

# Results & Metrics

Communications around the 2025 Operating Budget Survey have garnered the following results:

## Webpage

Total views of webpage during survey period (Jan. 24-Feb. 13):

- Belleville.ca/Budget – 623 (451% increase compared to previous period of Jan. 3-24)
- News Release – 97

## Social Media

Social media metrics during survey period (Jan. 24-Feb. 13):

- Facebook (Organic) – 1 Post Total with Average Reach of 1,516 and Engagement of 27
- Facebook (Paid) – 1 Boosted Post with Reach of 9,442 and Engagement of 552
- Twitter – 2 Organic Posts Total with Average Reach of 256 and Engagement of 4

## Digital

- Email to News Subscribers – Reached 385 Subscribers
- Belleville Updates Newsletter – Reached 373 Subscribers
- Belleville's Budget 101 Newsletter – Reached 166 Subscribers
- InQuinte Ad – Ran for 2 Weeks with Approximately 13,390 Total Impressions and 126 Clicks
- Quinte News Ad – Ran for 2 Weeks with 702,495 Total Impressions and 252 Clicks

## Print

- Community Press Ad – Total Reach of Approx. 18,553 Belleville Households
- Informational Buck Slip – Mailed to Approx. 22,000 Belleville Households in Tax Notices

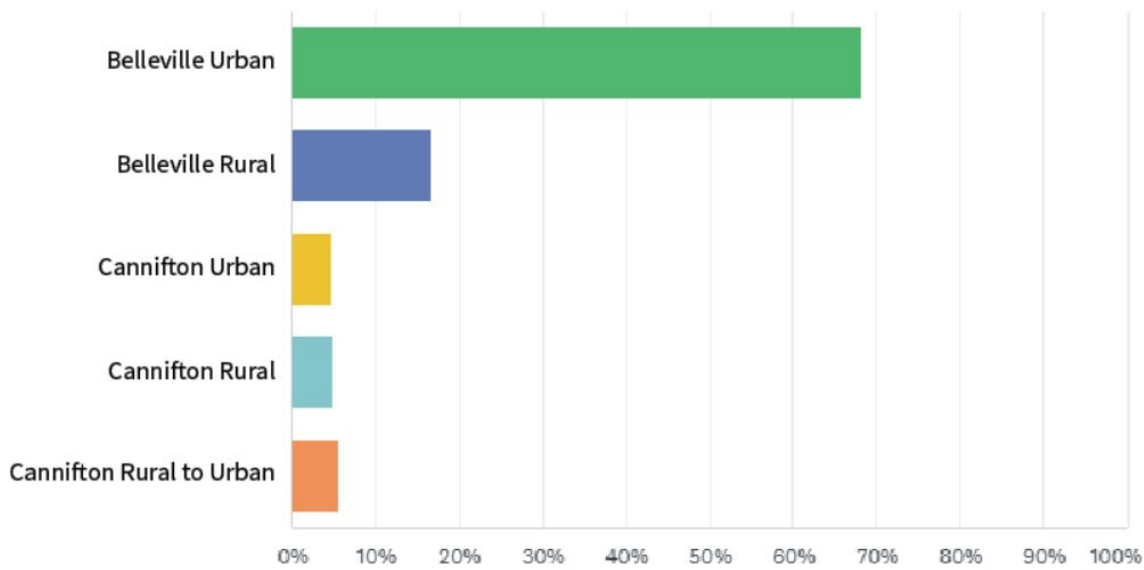
The results above were collected using Google Analytics, Meta Business Suite, Twitter Analytics, iCreate reporting and annual average daily traffic (as last reported in 2014).



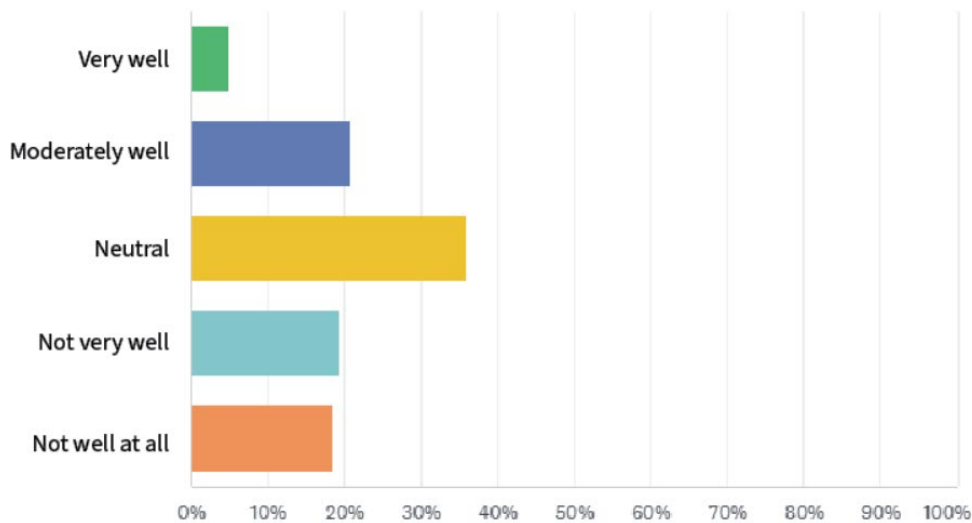
# Survey Summary

The 2025 Operating Budget Survey ran from Jan. 24 to Feb. 13 and received a total of 594 responses. Below is a summary of those responses and the feedback received through the survey period. A summary of comments under “Please Specify” for questions 3, 5, 6, 8 and 10 can be found beneath each question. See Appendix A for detailed responses.

## Q1: Which tax billing area do you live in?



## Q2: In your opinion, how well does the 2025 Draft Operating Budget align with the budgetary guidelines established and community priorities listed above?

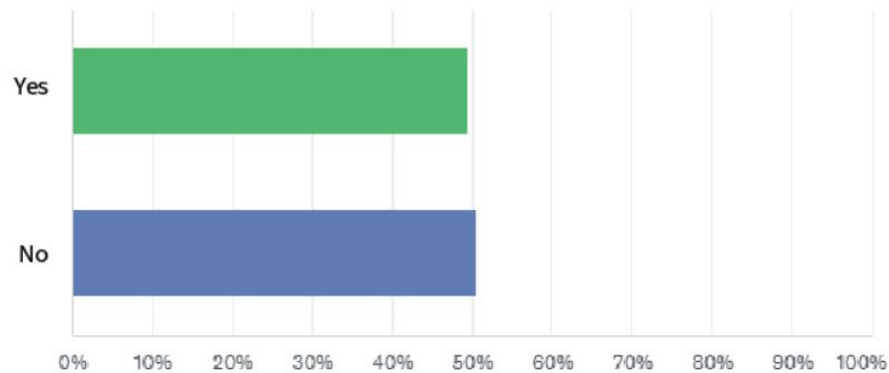


## Q3: Please elaborate on your previous answer to the previous question, "In your opinion, how well does the 2025 Draft Operating Budget align with the budgetary guidelines established and community priorities listed above?".

Below is a summary of the 96 total responses received.

- **Concerns Over Protective Services Spending** – Many respondents feel that too much of the budget is allocated to police and fire services, with some advocating for contracting out policing to the OPP or reducing funding altogether. Others argue that police training is inadequate, especially regarding mental health issues, and that resources should be redirected toward healthcare and social services instead.
- **High Tax Burden and Cost of Living Pressures** – A number of residents express frustration over rising property taxes, particularly for those on fixed incomes. Many believe the City should freeze or reduce taxes, citing financial hardships and concerns that tax increases are not justified by improvements in services.
- **Healthcare and Doctor Recruitment Priorities** – There is a sentiment that not enough budget is allocated to healthcare, doctor recruitment, and addressing the local healthcare crisis. Many argue that more funding should go to hospitals, medical services, and social support instead of protective services.
- **Public Transit and Infrastructure Issues** – Complaints about the City's public transit system are common, including route changes that have made commuting more difficult and long wait times. There is also dissatisfaction with road maintenance, particularly potholes and neglected areas, with calls for more investment in transportation and infrastructure.
- **Spending Efficiency and Budget Transparency** – Many residents feel the City is mismanaging funds, with concerns over excessive administrative costs and ineffective budget allocations. Some call for better financial oversight, cost-cutting measures, and an overall re-evaluation of spending priorities to ensure funds are used more effectively.

**Q4: Included in the Operating Budget are proposed Operating Issues that reflect new initiatives and an incremental cost from the 2024 Operating Budget. Are you generally satisfied with these new initiatives?**

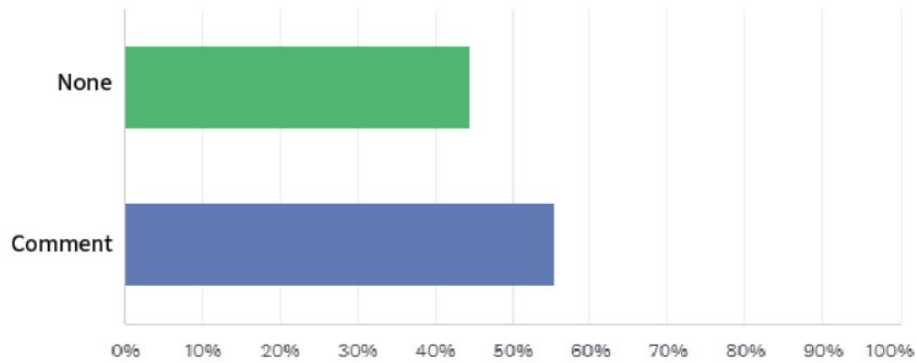


**Q5: You answered, "No" to the previous question, "Included in the Operating Budget are proposed Operating Issues that reflect new initiatives and an incremental cost from the 2024 Operating Budget. Are you generally satisfied with these new initiatives?". Can you please elaborate?**

Below is a summary of the 97 total responses received.

- Opposition to Tax Increases – Respondents feel that taxes are already too high and strongly oppose any further increases. Some suggest finding cost savings within existing budgets rather than increasing taxes.
- Concerns About Spending Priorities – There is frustration over perceived wasteful spending on initiatives such as homeless programs, policing, and non-essential projects. Some believe funds should be better allocated to core services.
- Transit Issues – Complaints about unreliable bus service, canceled routes, and a lack of investment in improving transit were common. Many call for hiring more drivers and restoring cut services.
- Lack of Transparency and Public Engagement – Several respondents feel that budget decisions and spending priorities are not clearly communicated. They want easy-to-understand summaries.
- Calls for Cost-Saving Measures and Efficiency – Some believe the City should conduct audits, reduce unnecessary staff or spending, and operate more efficiently instead of continually increasing the budget. Some suggested wage caps for City employees.

## Q6: In your opinion, what changes or improvements would you suggest for the 2025 Draft Operating Budget to better meet the needs of the community?

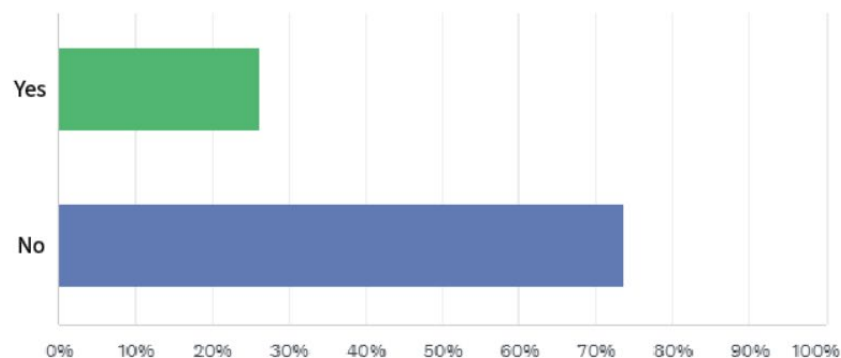


Below is a summary of the 100 total responses received.

- Lower Taxes & Reduce Spending – Respondents are frustrated with rising taxes and want the City to find ways to cut spending, including reducing administrative costs, reviewing City employee salaries, and prioritizing essential services over discretionary spending.
- Improve Public Transit – There is a demand for better public transit, including reinstating canceled routes, ensuring buses are reliable and on schedule, and hiring more drivers to improve service.
- Healthcare & Doctor Recruitment – Many people want increased funding for healthcare services and doctor recruitment, seeing it as a crucial need for the community.
- Reevaluate Police & Protective Services Budget – Some residents believe the police budget is too high and should be reduced, while others want a more efficient use of resources rather than continued hiring and spending increases.
- Infrastructure & Road Repairs – Calls for better road maintenance, improved downtown development, and fairer investment in both urban and rural infrastructure were frequent, with concerns about unfinished projects and deteriorating streets.



**Q7: The City has released Departmental Operating Plans that detail each department's roles, responsibilities, recent accomplishments, 2025 initiatives, and key performance indicators (KPIs). These KPIs have been compiled into a dashboard for convenient review, accessible by clicking here. Are there any additional KPIs you believe would be beneficial for the community?**

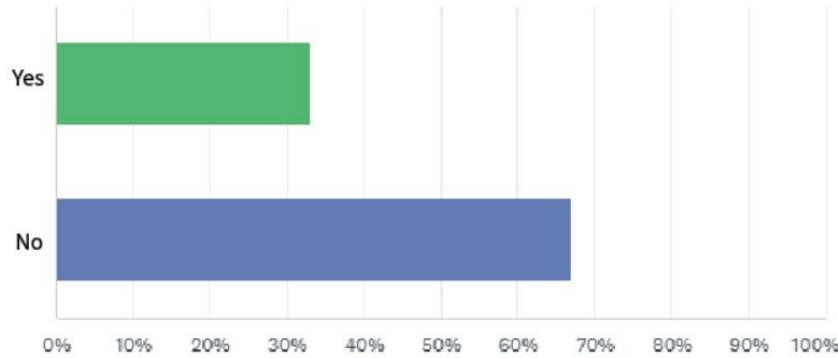


**Q8: You answered "Yes" to, "Are there any additional KPIs you believe would be beneficial for the community?". Please elaborate.**

Below is a summary of the 45 total responses received.

- Public Safety & Police Services Metrics – Respondents believe there should be measurable KPIs for police performance, efficiency, and budgeting.
- Transit System Performance – Residents feel current transit KPIs don't reflect the quality or reliability of service. They suggest adding KPIs for service efficiency, adherence to schedules, and customer satisfaction.
- Affordability & Cost Efficiency – There is concern about rising costs for City services, property taxes, and living expenses. Residents want KPIs that track cost savings, budget efficiency, and affordability for average citizens.
- Housing & Social Services – Multiple comments highlight the need for KPIs on affordable housing availability, homelessness reduction, and mental health support effectiveness.
- Budget Transparency & Accountability – Respondents request better tracking of how City funds are used, including historical budget accuracy, cost-per-resident analysis, and clearer breakdowns of spending effectiveness.

## Q9: Are there any specific topics surrounding the City's operating budget and process that you wish you had more information on?



## Q10: Please specify the topics surrounding the City's operating budget and process that you wish you had more information and background on.

Below is a summary of the 56 total responses received.

- Protective Services & Public Safety Spending – Residents want more transparency on police and fire service budgets, including cost-benefit analyses and proof of efficiency. Some also want protective services separated in budget reports.
- Taxation & Cost Efficiency – There is concern about rising taxes without noticeable improvements in services. People are asking for audits, cost-saving measures, and clearer reporting on where tax dollars are being spent.
- Doctor Recruitment & Healthcare Investment – Multiple comments highlight a desire for more information on doctor recruitment strategies, spending, and outcomes, as well as a push for healthcare investment over recreation projects.
- Transit & Infrastructure Spending – Residents question changes to transit routes, budget allocation for road and sidewalk upgrades, and the effectiveness of transportation investments.
- Casino & Other Revenue Transparency – Some want details on how casino revenue, speed camera fines, and other City-generated funds are used, with calls for audits and clear reporting on financial allocations.

# Appendix A

Below is a detailed look at the responses from questions 3, 5, 6, 8 and 10 of the survey.

## **Q3: Please elaborate on your previous answer to the previous question, "In your opinion, how well does the 2025 Draft Operating Budget align with the budgetary guidelines established and community priorities listed above?"**

- What has been done to insure that 'protective services' are efficient and effective ? It seems to me that the budget is out of control - time to contract OPP it seems.
- There are places like Kingston where the bus transit is free for college students and it should be implemented in Belleville too. Which would help the students.
- We are allocating the most dollars to protective services. A tiny portion of the population (homeless) is using the lion's share of our tax dollars. More needs to go to doctor recruitment. More needs to go to cultural activities. There is nothing to do in this town, especially for teenagers. Why isn't the CAA arena bringing in shows in the off season? YOU used public dollars for that arena. Stop protecting [redacted] and the Empire. You should be making more money off that arena. We are between Toronto and Montreal. Artists should be stopping here. It's unheard of that it sits empty when the Sens aren't playing. Wake up.
- This city misaligned the priorities. Ore put towards increasing the staff and the salaries then doctor recruitment. Increase user fees for those using services and decrease the input.
- They don't care about us
- Why is the health care and housing getting the least amount where by that's the most important thing that people are suffering? And look at our roads ,the whole town is full of pot holes, don't they deserve better portion of budget. I m no expert, but do we have that many crime and fire in town that we need majority of budget in protection?
- we pay one of the highest rates of tax in Ontario and you have no right to raise it anymore in this financially challenged time. You are making this a sanctuary city ruining the downtown.Incompetent leadership.
- That is a large increase for people on a fixed income.no tax break for seniors.

- The police should not be getting any more money. Especially the Belleville police. They are not trained properly, they have no awareness of mental health issues or crisis's nor do they have the skills to deal with these issues which is what mainly affects our area. The money should go to more mental health services, not the police detachment which training doesn't even adhere to our communities needs. They fill up our court system and waste more money and time with people that have been antagonized by the police and not criminals. I've personally witnessed this multiple times. Why are people who are more mentally unwell than me, allowed to dictate my life and make such big decisions and have so much power when they are the most unwell people in our community. If they are to be paid more, atleast give them the proper training to deal with the issues that our community struggles with the most. The police are suppose to protect us and it feels quite the opposite in this community. I personally have been [redacted] while having a mental health crisis as a [redacted]. It's extremely wrong to give them more money. I am now afraid of any police officer especially the ones in Belleville. I've also been told from the OPP that Belleville Police Department has different training and standards than the OPP where they are taught and made to think it's okay to be physical in situations that do not call for this type of action. The police should defunded, not more funded.
- Y'all suck
- Stop increasing property taxes. Its grown so much woth new builds leave as is for 1 year. Support your community
- Poor Public transport. My house bus route was changed, there was direct bus from my house to loyalist college, students used to reach college in 10 mins, which now increased to 45mins, which is pathetic. No free garbage bags, every city allows three free bags, but for Belleville we have to buy tags, that is again pathetic. No free street parking, even if we have guests there is no space for street parking. In the night parking should be free.
- Snow budget sucks
- no
- You waste money like know tomorrow
- Why an increase and not a reduction? For the benefit of the tax payer in these difficult times!
- Largest increase (+5M) for protective services not listed in community priorities nor justified elsewhere. At least a portion of that could be well applied against the priorities.
- Look at efficiencies. Not increasing budgets
- We have so much overlapping funding being spend on the addiction- we need to separate addiction unhorses and situational unhoused. Why not just open a form of hospital would that not be cheaper then increasing funding for community programs from jhs, Hastings county, hospital, emergency services after hours etc ?
- It's so frustrating! I waited for an hour today, and the bus driver didn't even stop for two minutes at the stop. Yet, the transit app still says there are 13 minutes left. This is so disappointing.
- It's so frustrating! I waited for an hour today, and the bus driver didn't even stop for two minutes at the stop. Yet, the transit app still says there are 13 minutes left. This is so disappointing.
- Bring in the OPP to police our city are city police force is a joke
- I feel like no matter what the budget you have. you won't fix what is wrong. put money into the city, listen to the people
- This community needs more doctors and way better health care services but your budget won't help with that. Recreational and culture can be much lower should be 5% and give Health Care the 14% Police and Fire take way too much knowing that the police will take 90% of what's being allocated and the fire dept will still rely on volunteers. This is a joke try again do better. Is their any money being saved? Probably ly not right.
- The overall response from the previous survey may have been 5% but I responded looking for a balanced or decrease in tax rate

- I live on at Bridge St West and Marshall road. It is ridiculous that the city does not budget to get water and sewer services to this neighborhood. We have low to no water in the area wells and must truck in or purchase bottled water. I have lived in the area for over 50 years during those years the city has spent millions rejuvenating the downtown core at least 5 times. Our neighborhood has been promised water since the 1970's. Disgraceful for families to go without water a necessity of life when millions have been spent over the years giving the downtown core a redo.
- Seems like Health needs more budgetary support.
- Defund the cops.
- Belleville does a very poor job prioritizing things and getting things done.
- Bus schedules and add the numbers of bus. Make every next bus arrive every 20 mins atleast instead of 40 mins
- More Police enforcement of drug problems. Get rid of bail that just encourages repest offenders
- Not enough focus on transit and making it work better
- You guys are spending way more on transportation but bus routes are planned are wastage of time and are inconvenient. 10 number which was the most used bus was eliminated from route for no reason. And 3 number bus is 3 times more expensive for management than 10 number bus .
- Bus service is very poor. And walmart side needs to be more than 1 bus and north front also needs to be more than 1 bus
- spend less on protective services, more on health and transportation. all the criminals are so strung out on fentanyl they can't commit other crimes so the drug epidemic solved the crime epidemic. However the buses can't keep a decent schedule for more than 8 hours so people are stranded across town and have to walk through sketchy areas just to get home at night. Also I don't know anyone in this town that has a doctor, is Belleville such a toilet that no doctor will settle for it?
- Garbage bag tags should be included in tax as with increases taxes each year, it does not make sense to increase the price of bag tag. It should've been charged as people of Belleville already pays more tax than other big city
- why are we not giving the environment and social & family services more but giving so much to the police for no reason??? maybe help the homeless?
- The mayor got into office spouting no tax increases, well that sure doesn't look like it! Everything is increasing and people can't afford what they have already. I don't know how taxing people more, during this difficult time, is something anyone wants. More people are building houses in this town which generates tax dollars, so in my opinion make what taxes we have work instead of taxing Belleville residents to death!!!
- The budget for police services is completely absurd and out of line with every other area of the budget.
- Reduce employment at the city
- Lower the taxes
- we have no doctors, hospital wait times are horrible, clinics are a joke, anyone without a doctor are at high risk of long term illness or death due to lack of medical check ups - never mind that you can't afford to put a roof over your head and food on the table sad state we live in having to choose spending hours in the hospital because we have no doctors and deciding do I want a roof over my head this month or food on the table
- 4% for development to housing and low % for medical during an epidemic is laughable
- Increases
- Too much spending, too much taxing
- this is a joke, you ask for our opinion but at the end of the day you will do what you want with OUR money
- increasing taxes in a time when people can barley afford to put a roof over their head let alone food on the table is unacceptable
- No employee of the city of Belleville deserves a raise by taxing citizens more

- Hard to see the justification for Cannifton getting the highest tax increase when they already pay the highest property taxes in the area. Think there needs to be more focus on expanding facilities for recreational sports and activities. The wellness is booked all the time and kids programs fill up immediately. I can never get my kids signed up for things like skating lessons or programs because they all fill up so fast. Belleville's population keeps increasing and our facilities just stay the same
- I would like to see a larger portion spent on environmental
- Extremely poorly. Belleville continues to spend taxpayer money inefficiently and ineffectively while demonstrating a complete lack of restraint. Taxes and spending should be lowered, not raised
- Increases should not exceed 2%
- How does \$47M or 34% for protective services align with other cities? How is it I pay \$8500 for property taxes and my street doesn't even get snow plowed in a reasonable time frame.
- The city is out of control with spending! There has to be a better way! The majority of the increase is being pushed by fire and police. Nothing towards supporting the homeless etc. Belleville needs to consider the OPP for policing!
- Nearly 45 million for 'Protective Services' is absurd. It's more than double most other categories. Our infrastructure is in severe disrepair and we are spending approx 1/3 of the annual budget on Police and Fire. We have a housing crisis and trades that are seeing a slow down due to the cost of living and how that drags down the construction industries. The city should be better allocating funds to infrastructure projects so that local trades have access to projects that will pay their bills, all while making the city more livable - especially for our extremely high tax dollars.
- I do not agree with the budget as a whole. We need a tax increase freeze. Belleville urban taxes are way too high on newer homes. The general office staff city wages are too high. Our Fire Department needs to be able to cut costs. What is the 250k one time family practitioner bonus? Seems unneeded.
- joke raising taxes when people can't afford basic needs for living
- Every damn year rural taxes are put up to pay for downtown issues and ours get dropped the second something else needs to be done, my taxes are going up because of a fire plan that directly admits I will see a worse coverage for fire
- one of the higher tax increases for less services than Belleville Urban. No transit, poor road lighting, slowest emergency response
- Spending way too much
- One of the biggest issues in our city is homeless and income services. You just made things worse
- Base admin costs need to be cut. Recreational user fee increases discourages boaters and other family activities. Bumping up protective is a benefit IF all of it goes to recruitment of Police and front line equipment.
- I am not sure how/why Recreation & Cultural receive more funds than health care.
- More should be spent on social/healthcare services and the environment rather than on police.
- Waste
- Stop putting our tax dollars into helping the homeless and putting it back on roads and lower income housing
- Protective services way too high, hire security guards to perform lesser tasks. Fire departments need to come up with ways to reduce services we live in Belleville not Toronto. Outsource and save us some money.
- Protection service budget is way too much hire more security guards to handle smaller issues. Fire departments should be looking at ways to decrease budgets for the amount of calls they attend. Hire more nurse practitioners to handle patient needs.
- Community priorities are not tax increases, start to trim some of the fat cats. Policing and fire are the biggest fat cats, and our policing in Belleville is ridiculous
- Transportation should be further increased.

- I don't think any program should see an increase. Especially the Drs. We still don't have Drs, money isn't going to fix that. City council should take a pay cut. Stop raising our taxes for your pocket. We can't afford a hike!!!
- "1. Reducing the Burden on Residents: The current property tax rates can be burdensome, especially for low-income households and retirees. I recommend exploring options to reduce property taxes for these groups or introducing targeted tax credits that provide direct financial relief to those who need it most. 2. Supporting Local Businesses: Small businesses are the backbone of our local economy, and many are facing increasing costs. I propose reducing taxes for small businesses or offering tax incentives for those creating jobs or providing essential services. Lowering the tax burden for businesses can help keep costs down for consumers and encourage further investment in our community. 3. Encouraging Sustainable Practices: With growing environmental concerns, I believe the city should consider providing tax incentives for eco-friendly initiatives. Offering tax reductions for businesses and residents who invest in energy-efficient upgrades or renewable energy sources could foster a greener future for Belleville while offering financial savings. 4. Promoting Economic Growth: Tax relief could also be strategically targeted to stimulate specific sectors that contribute to long-term economic growth. Businesses in industries such as technology, healthcare, and green energy should be encouraged through tax breaks to help stimulate local employment and investment."
- It appears percentages are above 5 % ..... well over what was claimed initially
- Police and Fire service costs seem to be out of control. I see no change to traffic safety, people are speeding and do not care. How does Belleville's spending per capita match other jurisdictions?
- Transportation, recreation and social services spending is out of control. Increase user fees.
- As a retired person I wish that I could get a 5-6% increase in my pensions. How much are the city increases in salary next year
- Too high of a tax increase AGAIN. Not in alignment with salaries and / or cost of living. People do not get a 5% pay increase per year.
- Still over 5% in some areas. Why are we not looking at increases more in line with inflation. Believe 5% was suppose to be max. Would have been ok to be under that instead of over
- We have a healthcare crisis in this country and we are allocation a 10.5 percent increase to an already inflated police budget. 28 million dollars to our police service that already had a new building built? and for what? Quinte Health gets 275,000 dollars a year. Absolutely shameful use of taxpayer dollars.
- Our tax rates are already way too high. Should budget within our means.
- Unable to afford the current tax rate and tax increase on top of it? Struggling to pay for food.
- I didn't see a balance in priorities
- Why are city taxpayers putting in additional funds for healthcare, doctor recruitment and social welfare when this is a county/ provincial issue?
- Need more emphasis on roads especially in the east end. They are AWFUL!!!!
- No.
- Retired cost of living increases not much kind of a high increase you can do better than that
- 9.4% increase is to high.
- Get people in government that know how to actually get things done and get rid of of bloated management and office personal
- You can slice up the increase any way you want to but it is still a 9.4% increase
- Regardless of your guidelines and community priorities, the tax increase is simply too high. Figure out how to get the tax increases at or below inflation.

**Q5: You answered, "No" to the previous question, "Included in the Operating Budget are proposed Operating Issues that reflect new initiatives and an incremental cost from the 2024 Operating Budget. Are you generally satisfied with these new initiatives?". Can you please elaborate?**

- Too complex to follow.
- Too many taxes
- To vague and questions don't cover specific topics
- Not satisfied. The waste of funds on useless initiatives is staggering in this city.
- They took away a lot of stops, fired drivers, new ones are rude, and its more ???
- Belleville is taking in all the undesirables from across the province to get grants and fund NGO's who take huge salaries. The city is becoming a dirty disgrace.
- It is not the initiatives that I'm dissatisfied with, it is the way they are communicated. If you want the public to meaningfully engage you can't expect us to dig through agendas and financial reports to find the specific information to which you are referring. The public needs easy to read summaries and easy to find background information.
- Y'all don't listen anyway
- You wouldn't listen anyhow
- Harbour costs should be 100% user, taxpayers should not subsidize people with expense boats, this is essentially a cottage on the water. Not a fan as a taxpayers covering cost of the Bridge Hub, unfortunately other areas will send their issues to us to continually look after them, no guarantee the province will keep up with their responsibility and costs
- I dont approve of any new spending. Municipal taxes are way too high already
- Please improve bus routes first
- Do something about bus cancelation 10 minutes after bus was to leave and other busses left on time
- no
- Police and library increases are too high
- Why are there no cost savings programs?
- no
- Keep at current level
- Nowadays buses won't come in time.
- It's silly to invest so much in homeless relief, the more money we allocate to it, the more other cities just send us their people, and it becomes a never ending problem. The more we invest the more we will need to keep on investing.
- Residents are suffering and tired of tax increases , hoe about we have dept audits and time studies done on all city departments? It's sad when you see one man working at a task 3 or 4 trucks on scene just watching
- Spend spend spend.. how about you relax and try to save a buck. Lower taxes and focus on what people really need.
- The service is super unreliable. Busses drive past people at stops without stopping regularly and routes are canceled without warning. For 75 bucks a month I expect busses to not randomly decide not to pick people up
- Too costly in these economic times
- Several items like MPAC funding for example should not be a city responsibility



- Until the city of Belleville acknowledges that certain residents are living without water and addresses the issue its operating expenditures do not reflect reality in terms of necessary expenditures.
- Defund the cops.
- I think there should be cap on wage increases and a wage increase is most likely in the operating budget proposal.
- no
- This hub is going just encourage more to show up in Belleville. No drugs available no drug problem.
- 10 number bus should be back at its same route
- hire more bus drivers and fire whoever is managing this colossal trainwreck of a transit system!!!!
- Insufficient data to make an informed decision. Can not see any attempt to exclude well intended but non residential disbursements ie charitable donations from expenditures required exclusively for city operations. Not intentionally saying they are wrong but they should be itemized separately as my charity may not align with yours . An example is expenses incurred with the fairgrounds relocation.
- Health care budget need to increase with increasing population of city of Belleville
- no
- Too costly.
- Don't raise taxes for a proposal; you see how much tax dollars you have and if that's not enough you wait for new housing that generates more tax dollars you need for the proposals! People don't have anymore money to give you for all your proposals!
- No, tax are already to high!!!!
- No money wasted on project not needed in the city like that fountain display on dundas at the bridge
- Protective Services increases are excessive.
- why are the country people seeing such an increase in taxes, we don't get any of the benefit the town people do, your driving us all out of the city, friendly city is a joke
- Wasted money on bridge lights for outdated sewage water treatment updates. Little access to public information to water information regarding ppm ammonia, nitrate, phosphate ect
- stop wasting OUR money
- people can't afford higher rates your putting us on the streets
- Why do they deserve to make more but our services are less
- need to find a way to get protective services down, full time fire fighters in rural area are not required
- See last comment
- Reductions to all city services is preferred to prevent tax increases
- See previous
- This city needs to become more Efficient wasting money left right and center
- The city needs to find efficiency's from within. We need to hold the staff accountable for performance or lack of.
- Why the hell do I need to pay more for policing when they admittedly don't even patrol in my area
- Spending too much on homeless
- the inflation rate is currently under 2% but you continue to increase taxes by 5%. You refer to a consultant HR and Facilities space needs but propose a \$150,000 project budget? seems awfully rich to me
- Waste
- Why are the departments that make money not paying for these increase in others
- No
- I said what needed to be said. Stop raising our taxes. Cut programs. Stop giving my money to the crack heads.
- There should not be increases to taxes to pay people more. The sunshine list is ridiculous for how much officials make.
- Would like to see funding for events/community programs, not decreased (instead of increase to long-term care & dr. recruitment)

- I see no notation on cost controls. How are contacts let? What duration? What targets? How well did departments hit their targets from last year? How is spending audited? Health Care is a provincial matter. I get that we are short Doctors, but what the [redacted] is the Province doing to assist Belleville... nothing.
- Funding for some of these 'new' initiatives should be found in existing budgets and not as additional expenditures. Also, now that the provincial government is providing funds for 'The Bridge', that entire expenditure should be stricken from the proposed operating costs. As well, Council should keep in mind that the cost of living is far below the 5%-5.7% proposed in the rate increase. Further, Council should bear in mind that a lot of ratepayers in the city are retired and the increase to their pensions falls far below the 5 - 5.7% proposed increase. Furthermore, increases to pension income must cover ALL increases including food, shelter, insurance, etc, etc, etc. In a lot of cases, the proposed rate increase would 'eat' ALL of the increase to a pensioners income and then some. Both the city employees who drafted the budget and the members of City Council need to do a better job and limit increases to at or below the inflation rate.
- This survey is not helpful to the average citizen. But it is not surprising you would set your survey up like this.
- Everyone has to stop brainstorming ideas to make something better every year. Perhaps the city should have a year of just providing the best of the present services without any increase.
- No.
- Not if they add to budget increase
- No new initiatives
- Wishing more allotted to both Health and Environmental services.
- No
- No
- All initiatives come with a huge cost
- Well my understanding is road work will commence this year from Octavia st to Henry St which leaves Dunbar St off the list which does not seem logical. From yeoman st to Sinclair is repaired and next is Dunbar which was left out. I do not understand why all roads will be repaired except for Dunbar St which I happen to live on. This does not make sense to me.
- Water/ wastewater upgrades should be primarily paid for by the developers.
- No
- More money should be going to social housing and more assistance to homeless issue.
- Property value adds no cost to a municipality, therefore, the tax levy should exclude any this info. I disagree with the concept to increase capital spending and hiring in order to speed up completion of a project(s), in any given year. Taxpayers cannot SPEED UP their income and net worth on demand. I suggest that you remove/defer one capital project.
- Speed cameras are causing people to do 10 under the speed limit it's going to cause an accident... but all u care about is money
- No increase is acceptable. Find savings to fund new spends.
- Too much
- Lower Police budget. Lower Parks budget.
- No
- No Too much for policing and conservation
- Stop wasting money on homeless programs that don't include them working and not committing crimes
- Have are made by your ability to manage
- For those on fixed incomes, 9.4% is unaffordable
- Tired of having to do with less , These city employees instead of raises should have to do with less like the average person.
- Taxes are too high. I'm sure you can find some savings

## Q6: In your opinion, what changes or improvements would you suggest for the 2025 Draft Operating Budget to better meet the needs of the community?

- Cap 'protective services' at 3%.
- make more parking free in the downtown and at least some residential area throughout the night
- Get that downtown hopping like Kingston. It's dead. No one wants to go to Loyalist because there is no experience. There isn't a coffee shop open past 8 p.m. There is no nightlife for college students who have money to spend. There is NOTHING to do here except go to a mediocre restaurant. The homeless crisis has this city gripped. We need to do something on that front without ignoring other development.
- Trash your speed cameras, cost way to high, and they are not practical at all
- Infrastructure and basic requirements for the general population. Stop pandering to small sections of the population.
- They could listen to the people who use the system
- lower taxes and stop funding NGO who are not helping with the situation of drug and mental health but only giving themselves money and bringing in more "clients" from all over the provinvcce. Belleville has become a dirt bag city while the people who manage it make huge salaries.
- Disappointed to see transit passes go up. Transit users pay twice, once on their taxes and once on the fair.
- We should never fund things like Doctor recruitment or the Bridge which are Provincial Responsibilities. Sad that the Province only comes good for the Bridge when they want to buy our votes for their unnecessary election.
- More funding for mental health services. No more money to police.
- Taxes are to high
- Listed previously
- Lower taxes by any means necessary
- Improve bus routes, cancelled bus routes should be re-looked. People are suffering because of bus route changes
- I'd like an increase for hospital and Healthcare services and environmental services please. Thank you in advance
- I'd like an increase in for the hospital and Healthcare services and environmental services raised higher than shown. Thank you in advance
- The tax payers need more money in their pocket. Why do politicians think the only way to budget is to increase spending and taxes to pay for it. Be bold and buck the same old same old. The people of Belleville will thank you for it!
- Do something with transit. Having routes cancelled mid day is a bit ridiculous. Should have more drivers available
- I would suggest a larger Healthcare budget to bring in more family practitioners
- I'm concerned with the fees charged by Quinte Conservation becoming discouraging of people getting out and active and using these areas. Equally concerned these fees don't represent good value for the money.
- No tax increases increases to employee expectations ie 100% employee involvement , the city is utilizing its employees at less then a 40% capacity
- fix the buses system
- Need to fix the bus transit, put back the old #2 bus route to solve excessibitiy to the service to the people who mostly rely on it to bring groceries back home and not walk half a kilometer with heavy loads..

- How about some common sense government for a change. Like let's engage our brains here for a second.
- Hire people who can actually do their job. The bus is always late or doesn't show up. It's affecting my job
- MAKE THE BUSES ACTUALLY RELIABLE
- Protective services are too expensive. Crime is down yet this aspect is continually hiring.
- All departments need to cut waste and become more efficient
- Defund the cops
- Wage freeze for senior leadership
- Increase to hire police services, reduce administration costs, fix the streets, reduce other areas, as these areas need attention.
- Why so many city employees are on the sunshine list. Why we need so many new police officers each year when a team could be formed from existing ones to respond to drugs/crime. A bus service that realizes the industrial park does operate before 7am on a Sunday.
- Make our streets safer and protect us from the homeless criminal ailment.
- Either lower taxes, or a transit system that actually runs when it's supposed to
- Get rid of HUB
- Better transit
- Just change the bus routes they suck ass
- improve bus service! hire more drivers so that the schedule is more than a dream flitting away the moment we open our eyes! other than that focus on recruiting doctors!
- Better explanations of costs as discretionary versus necessary costs
- i gave you my answer earlier
- Lower taxes.
- Make cuts or improvements to align with how much money this town is generating! My budget at home is my total income. If I'm expected to keep a budget for my family within my income I would think a city with "top notch employees" should be able to do the same!
- Reduce the level of employment at the city level
- Look at social services. The Hub will dig into this sooner than later. Housing around that area will be affected, socially and safety, traffic, damage etc. Looking ahead is not the city's strong suit.
- Lower number of council members to reduce cost of wages in their salaries and put the money back into the community
- Protective Services increases are excessive.
- more money for doctors/medical care, better housing, pay cuts to city staff, lets see you live on the average wage in this town, not enough high paying jobs to be able to afford living here
- Housing, medical increase
- Bus service facility & no speed camera on main city roads
- no increase in taxes
- Increased investment in doctor recruitment is vital.
- Increase funding to Arts and Culture from 60,000 in grants to \$100,000
- Again the tax increase does not make sense when the cost for everything in the city is also going up. Wellness centre released all the price increase plans coming up and it's starting to get ridiculous. Plus now the justification for the tax increase? We have the same taxes as Toronto. This is insane
- Reduce city expenditures
- More social housing
- 2%
- Find more efficient ways of policing and spending money
- No tax increase. The City of Belleville is continuing to make poor decisions.
- increasing taxes of rural owners doesn't make sense when we don't get the same service as in town people
- Road repairs! They are awful!

- Things are going to get desperate for a lot of people because of Conservative tariffs and austerity, and oligarchy. We need to be ready to meet people's needs who can't get by. Or they will beg, borrow, steal or kill to get it. A little Robin Hood can go a long way if we can get people off the streets who are stable enough and don't want to be there. People need jobs and places to live that give them dignity. Otherwise we will just end up in gated communities.
- Include rural area in plans and actually complete full projects as planned for them, I have had a massive hole in the road infrastructure of my house that has never been properly fixed because for the last 8 years my road was supposed to be redone and curbs put in but downtown has always come first
- have a better breakdown of actual services for each area of what the taxes are covering and make 1 document instead of multiple
- View through the lense of a resident. Spend on services that have a positive direct impact on aafety, minimize and cut where possible the Admin and legacy contracts that become parasitic without diligent review
- Why does the fire plan automatically get approved?
- I live on sunningdale Dr. I am the only home with a street light as I rent it from hydro . Our street should have them supplied by the city for safety and security. We also have alot of dead trees that should be looked into. Our whole street needs to be redone along with sidewalks and speed bumps. These are a few upgrades that would be nice if you could look into them . Thank-you [redacted]
- see previous comment
- No tax increases, your citizens are stuggling to keep a roof over their heads. Stop comparing Belleville to other cities when making decisions, we are Belleville, not Kingston or anywhere else.
- Focus on long term and environmental
- Find away to lower taxes not raise them
- "1. Reducing the Burden on Residents: The current property tax rates can be burdensome, especially for low-income households and retirees. I recommend exploring options to reduce property taxes for these groups or introducing targeted tax credits that provide direct financial relief to those who need it most. 2. Supporting Local Businesses: Small businesses are the backbone of our local economy, and many are facing increasing costs. I propose reducing taxes for small businesses or offering tax incentives for those creating jobs or providing essential services. Lowering the tax burden for businesses can help keep costs down for consumers and encourage further investment in our community. 3. Encouraging Sustainable Practices: With growing environmental concerns, I believe the city should consider providing tax incentives for eco-friendly initiatives. Offering tax reductions for businesses and residents who invest in energy-efficient upgrades or renewable energy sources could foster a greener future for Belleville while offering financial savings. 4. Promoting Economic Growth: Tax relief could also be strategically targeted to stimulate specific sectors that contribute to long-term economic growth. Businesses in industries such as technology, healthcare, and green energy should be encouraged through tax breaks to help stimulate local employment and investment."
- Would like to see funding for community programs/events, not decreased, instead of increase to dr. recruitment & long-term care
- Metrics of how various departments within the City met their goals and objectives. How much revenue has the City received from photo radar?
- Outlined in previous comments.
- REDUCE POLICE SPENDING
- Ditto from previous comment
- Keep increase in line with inflation
- Less money spent on an already inflated police budget and more money spent on healthcare.
- Too high
- Look at costs in areas least important to the public
- As previously stated when road repairs are done they should be for all streets in the same area
- increase doctor recruitment budget efforts

- Start holding the governments at the county/ provincial levels to start putting in their share of funds to offset the financial burden for city taxpayers
- Spent money on the roads. They are awful. Drive in the east end and see how bad they are.
- Use casino money for more than "invisible infrastructure"
- Fire [redacted] to save some payroll
- I request allowing the taxpayers the ability to vote on two budget options every year. One budget at zero % increase and a 2nd or 3rd at different tax levy amounts.
- In the future before u do anything big in belleville maybe everyone that lives here should be able to vote yes or no for it....
- Dollar saved for any new dollar spent.
- Better bus service to Pine St east of McDonald Ave.
- less for recreation programs and move some of that money to recruit more doctors , parents can find activities for their children to keep busy and exercise.
- Every effort possible to keep tax hikes at a minimum in financially straining times
- Drop the 1% from 2024 that goes to homeless, why should tax payers foot bill for someone else's problems. Half around here are not even from quinte area, just just arrive since we offer more
- Cut spending
- Stop social justice spending
- Reduce parks and rec budgets and other non essential services. Tariffs are going to have a significant effect on the Belleville economy- lost jobs, taxation etc. we need to be ready
- Doesn't matter what I think, I an average person
- Policing budget is rising but city police are still challenged to do their job. How much does it take to get proper police coverage for our city.
- Stop wasting taxpayer funds on positions that are secondary jobs to the primary jobs that provide services. Expand your span of control for managers, and stop sending city workers to rural areas to cut grass around ponds and trails.

## Q8: You answered, "Yes" to, "Are there any additional KPIs you believe would be beneficial for the community?" Please elaborate.

- I did not see any KPIs involving police services. Is this an area that can be measured using KPIs?
- Reduction of cost / overhead of city departments such as the mayor's office.
- Longer routes
- By-law enforcement needs expansion and to follow the rule of law instead of allowing rich individuals to destroy heritage properties and infringe on the rights of everyone destroying the downtown with their empty derelict buildings getting a tax break. Who runs the city? The old high school boys network headed by the rich popular narcissist? Everyone knows.
- Transit KPI does not measure the quality of the service provided or its usefulness. There are similar issues in other areas. Just because you meet the spending target on parks and recreation, does not mean you are meeting the needs of residents or providing a quality service. Resident's are concerned with quality services.
- Can not think of anything right now
- Mental health supports. Affordable housing. Family doctors. Better bus transportation.
- The link to KPI's didn't work twice... however I'd like if we had a blood donation available in town, so you don't have to travel to a kingston for it. With an increase for the Hospital and Healthcare services, maybe it'd be possible. Thank you again
- The link to the KPI's didn't work twice...however, I'd like if possible for blood donation to be possible in town instead of having to travel to Kingston. I feel with a better increase for the hospital and Healthcare services, it could be possible and helpful. Thank you again
- KPI on cost savings for all departments.
- Police... as a key part of Protective Services. See comment re. \$5M 2025 budget increase. :)
- No
- Bring in the OPP get rid of our city police there incompetent
- Curious to know how often they meet their timelines for pickup/dropoff
- Could not read the KPI's - we're not downloaded
- A KPI to track department efficiencies
- Job well done
- A transit system that actually runs when it's supposed to. Price went up, while service goes downhill. Whoever is in charge should be fired, and replaced by someone that actually uses the busses.
- Repave streets in Easy Hill . It is embarrassing when people come to visit and see their conditions
- We want 10 number bus back
- no
- Yes start cleaning up the vagrants and the drugs
- No
- how happy are the people living here, how affordable it is to the people living here, what improvements have you made to make the city a better living place, stop wasting money on a fair grounds that are not accessible to the public that don't drive, start listening to the people that pay your wages, we are not happy
- It's B for Belleville, need to make sure it's not gonna be B for Brampton here. Better safety and discipline in community.
- Increased investment in doctor and nurse practitioners in our region. Building of more affordable housing.

- Cost per resident of emergency services for own police vs OPP
- housing affordability - the housing prices rather renting or owning do not match the low income jobs here - building more houses is not fixing this issue, building affordable houses and implementing affordable rent should be at the forefront, rent should not be higher or the same as a mortgage payment
- Number of affordable housing spots. Number of homeless individuals who are not drug users.
- A sight that works
- I am generally ok. However, as a senior citizen on gov't income, anything above 2% increase decreases my available limited funds.
- why don't you look at the average salary for Belleville residents - most are saying they can no longer afford to buy meat - yet taxes go up 5%
- Cost of success look at how much these are being paid and how much they're actually benefitting the taxpayers
- N/A
- Would like to see funding for community programs/events, not decreased, instead of increase to dr. recruitment & long-term care
- not applicable
- Your CAO KPI's are completely useless data. They are projections of data that you don't have. I would like to see a KPI of the percentage of recreation facility user groups that are actual Belleville based groups ( Bulls, Bearcats, etc) and not regional based groups ( Quinte Red Devils, development groups, etc.)
- No
- Previous Budget Accuracy = Actual expenses compared to actual budget and then compare that figure to inflation for the previous year.
- We should have vote on big changes like the speed cameras and the hub we had no say so now our tent goes up to pay for this how is that fair to us?????
- The paramount KPI should measure a decrease in overall cost to the taxpayer.
- No
- Yes



## **Q10: Please specify the topics surrounding the City's operating budget and process that you wish you had more information and background on.**

- Again, proof that 'protective services' are effective and efficient.
- Protective services.
- Tone Deaf to taxpayers, totally ignorant of East Hill issues, complete joke
- Why they need more money from us for a worse service
- Salaries paid to the useless NGO'S the city supports.
- Again, easy to read summaries would be helpful.
- Everything
- What the money for police is going to and how that will benefit the residents of Belleville.
- What y'all plan to do about the homeless population cause I live close to church street and im tired of being afraid to walk down there
- Why are taxes so high in this city?
- Cost savings! Have they ever heard of the concept?
- Transit
- None
- buses
- Everything. Seems to me that salaries are going up but nothing will change. Let's see who's getting a raise and why exactly. I want to see the intent of hiring? How many more useless positions have been created ??
- Protective services
- Somehow the governing portion which is what we're paying our counselors and such and finances and such is more than what we're putting towards three of the other categories this seems really strange.
- Nice
- More transparency regarding the number of staff at City Hall, where there is overlapping that can be reduced. Transportation, why the changes of the schedule, after all the bus shelters were built and now part of those shelters are left - unused.
- All of it
- Lets have an audit of where all the casino money has gone. Also audit the Veridian Elexicon money received by the city that should have went to electricity users in city at the time of sale as a ctedit on their account each year.
- 10 number bus should be back
- The proposed east 401 intersection and changes to surrounding land zoning
- Capital projects
- Cultural diversity, equity
- I'd like to see how much money the city is generating from these speed cameras and community conservation park tolls, as well as the cost to the city in order to take that money from our residents!
- Doctor Recruitment costs and outcomes. Protection/safety Cost Benefit Analysis. Planning for more people and how that affects each tax payer, knowing that new homes' taxes are very high.
- All of it where every single dollar goes including all donated money to the city to be accounted for of where the funds went on what projects l the city
- Need More business opportunities here in Belleville. Compare to volume of business, expensive rent and not sufficient space available.
- Wages and handouts

- doctor recruitment
- Housing
- Specific strategies related to doctor recruitment
- Doctor recruitment and fire services spending receipts
- this is all very confusing, hard to follow and understand, also don't understand why the rural residents are seeing such a high tax increase when we they don't have the infrastructure the in town residents do - the new fair grounds are a waste of tax payers money, nothing has happened in the land since the building was built other than filling in the pond - waste of money out there when we have health care issues, homeless issues extra, lets spend the money on things that people need
- Roads and homeless
- How the decision are made when canceling projects that have been on the budgets for years
- a better breakdown per area, too generalized
- Roads and sidewalk upgrades
- What is done with waste water and water budget excess, is it be used for upgrades? Or salary increases? Or spend on protective services?
- The Hub, now that province has confirmed their plan for mental health in Belleville. What and why is the citizen of Belleville going to be paying extra for The Hub
- Environmental plans and attracting doctors
- A detailed breakout of every Public servant from city representatives to medical to policing. At the public deserve to know how much of their tax dollars are being allocated for all these and to agree upon it not the city
- Would like to see funding for community programs/events, not decreased, instead of increase to dr. recruitment & long-term care
- Monies from photo radar, how much revenue has this generated? Licensing of B&B's how did that go? Real metrics on targets and achieved goals. How contracts are made, and priced. How do we know we are receiving good value for money spent.
- protection services
- Water Systems
- Work on the roads and the homeless situation.
- Who determines where and what casino monies is directed to.
- year over year change for each department's budget and a return on investment analysis on all infra structure and all other completed projects. I would like to read a list of cost reductions obtained each year.
- recruiting more doctors, the full amount of getting new doctors. Instead of so much money being spent on recreation programs, facilities etc, increase the amount to get more doctors.
- Show areas where department are actually reducing costs. City budget only ever increase but money is spent on productivity enhancement but reductions are never realized. The next year the budget increases again
- Why and how much are we wasting on homeless drug users
- Fire services separated from police services. They shouldn't be grouped together in the budget.

# Appendix B

The comments below were received through posts relating to the operating budget on the City's social media channels throughout the consultation period:

- This council will still blow 500k on garbage that could have been crafted in a garage. Summer patios that nobody uses and takes up parking. Would any taxpayer thing it's smart to pay 25k for a 15ft by 5 ft patio deck?
- Idk but please explain how my taxes are higher in Belleville then the county? For less then 900 sq ft place which wouldn't include the outside I pay more then what I paid on 2 acres in a 2500 sq ft house with a 400 sq ft detached garage? Considering I have the exact same services. Garbage and road clean up! Maybe it's time for the council to take a PAY FREEZE!
- For the amount of taxes we pay you would think that our roads would in good shape look at bridge St West from front to Sidney
- City would save so much money if Snow plows & Side Walk Plows avoided making messes of neighborhoods already cleaned by the taxpayers that reside on those streets...Speed limit 40 on Northfront heavier fines...Speed camera's on Northfront always from Moira to the Mall...Set of lights at McDonalds on Northfront.
- Would like to know how are you going to protect the homes and businesses on Station St. Once the hub is built..
- Get rid of city police go with OPP (same) as all the communities surrounding the city
- Better bus services in areas once served. The current one has caused a great deal of disruption for those using the service.
- We need the no. 10 bus back on because I have to take the #2 bus to thermal and then caught the no. 7 to go to Walmart.
- Fix the roads.
- Fire and police command 34% of the entire budget. They rely on naive ratepayers who give blind loyalty to anybody in a uniform
- Fix the roads
- Cut flower garden / garden funds, in order to allow West Hill Green Space to remain only a green space.
- So between the provincial.and federal funds, casino, speeding tickets and the tax hike for a small town we are taking in a lot of money how about we drop the tax hike. I realize us people that got a speeding ticket are the true criminals while i watch people that the money is going to are smoking [redacted] in public and stealing constantly are causing this problem but they are the ones taken care of. Hmmm
- Bag tags should be included as we pay taxes
- Stop your pay raises and mileage rates! No one is getting raises like that anymore!
- Remove City police and bring in the OPP
- As if they will pay even the slightest attention to anything we say...
- crackdown to get rid of drug dealers and buyers. No buyers...no drugs. No bail. Longer sentences like minimum of 5 years first offence...10 the next etc. No dealers...no druggies. They will move on to where they can get them. Time to get tough. Costing higher taxes for police, fire, paramedics and ambulances and puts others at risk who may need care by help bring delayed. Governments have to step up and change laws and priorities. No longer feeling sorry for these people when the best up people, steal and cause damages. Enough is enough.