



**CITY OF VAUGHAN
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (WORKING SESSION) AGENDA**

If you wish to speak to an item listed on the Agenda, please pre-register by completing a Request to Speak Form online, emailing clerks@vaughan.ca, or contacting Service Vaughan at 905-832-2281, by 12 noon on the last business day before the meeting.

Wednesday, March 5, 2025

1:00 p.m.

Committee Rooms 242/243

2nd Floor, Vaughan City Hall

2141 Major Mackenzie Drive

Vaughan, Ontario

Indigenous Land Acknowledgement (prior to the commencement of the meeting)

	Pages
1. CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA	
2. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST	
3. COMMUNICATIONS	
4. PRESENTATIONS	
5. DETERMINATION OF ITEMS REQUIRING SEPARATE DISCUSSION INCLUDING MEMBERS RESOLUTION(S)	
1. 2024 CITIZEN AND BUSINESS SURVEY RESULTS Report of the Deputy City Manager, Strategic Initiatives, with respect to the above.	3
2. PUBLIC FACING ACTIVE INFRASTRUCTURE CONSTRUCTION MAP VIEWER Report of the Deputy City Manager, Infrastructure Development, with respect to the above.	117
6. ADOPTION OF ITEMS NOT REQUIRING SEPARATE DISCUSSION	

7. CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS REQUIRING SEPARATE DISCUSSION
8. CONSIDERATION OF STATUTORY / AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORTS
9. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS
10. NEW BUSINESS
11. ADJOURNMENT

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Committee of the Whole (Working Session) Report

DATE: Wednesday, March 5, 2025

WARD(S): ALL

TITLE: 2024 CITIZEN AND BUSINESS SURVEY RESULTS

FROM:

Michael Genova, Deputy City Manager, Strategic Initiatives

ACTION: FOR INFORMATION

Purpose

To share insights and findings from the 2024 Citizen and Business Surveys.

Report Highlights

- The City of Vaughan conducted the 2024 Citizen and Business Surveys in fall 2024 through a third-party market research consulting firm, Ipsos. The results of both surveys are statistically significant.
- The surveys were delivered through an updated methodological approach and the results are not directly comparable to previous years.
- Quality of life is high in Vaughan, with 91 per cent of residents rating their quality of life as “very good” or “good.”
- Eighty-seven per cent of residents are satisfied with the delivery of services provided by the City, with only 12 per cent saying they’re dissatisfied.
- The most important issues facing Vaughan in the eyes of residents are transportation (39 per cent) and public safety (31 per cent).
- Businesses view the local business environment positively, with 85 per cent rating the city’s business environment as “good” or “very good.”
- Vaughan’s location continues to be a major draw for businesses, as its proximity to major transportation assets, supply chains and talent provides a strong value proposition.
- The results will be shared across all City departments to guide the implementation of the current Strategic Plan and inform future plans through data-driven decision-making.

Recommendation

1. That the presentation and staff report be received for information.

Background

Every two years, the City conducts a statistically significant Citizen Survey and Business Survey to gather feedback from residents and businesses on topics such as top-of-mind issues, preferences for accessing City services and satisfaction with City services. These surveys provide an important opportunity to build stronger relationships with the public and showcase Vaughan's commitment to Service Excellence. As we continue to deliver on the 2022-2026 Term of Council strategic priorities, the information gathered through the 2024 Citizen and Business Surveys will contribute to measuring the impact of City services and inform data-driven decision-making.

Ipsos, a third-party market research consulting firm, was retained to complete both surveys.

2024 CITIZEN SURVEY

The City has conducted the Citizen Survey since 2007, with the last survey conducted in 2022. The questionnaire is designed to determine the issues most critical to the community and measure quality of life, satisfaction with City services and value for tax dollars, among other crucial topics. The data collected is a key driver for decision-making and informs policy decisions, budgetary spending and continuous improvement – ensuring organizational priorities are aligned with residents' needs.

The 2024 Citizen Survey was designed to collect insights from residents on:

- quality of life.
- service delivery and operations.
- contact with the City of Vaughan and its employees.
- financial sustainability.
- planning, growth and development.
- transportation and safety.
- community safety.
- public information and engagement.

The 2024 Citizen Survey was conducted from Oct. 16 to Nov. 19, 2024, and garnered 1,102 responses – the highest response rate achieved to date for this survey.

For the first time, the Citizen Survey was delivered using a mail-to-online approach. Twenty thousand randomly sampled Vaughan households received an invitation in the mail to complete the statistically significant survey. Each mailed invitation included a unique access code, ensuring residents could only participate in the survey once. Additionally, a 1-800 number was provided for those who preferred to complete the survey by phone or required an alternate format, and all residents were offered the opportunity to participate in an open-link (no code required) version of the survey.

Given the updated methodological approach, the 2024 Citizen Survey data represents a new baseline for future benchmarking and comparison.

Previous Citizen Surveys were conducted by telephone using random digital dialing. However, shifts in society away from landlines, the increasing cost and challenges associated with reaching Vaughan residents by cellphone and declining telephone survey response rates necessitated a new surveying approach to ensure the quality and representativeness of the 2024 Citizen Survey data. An address-based sampling method using mailed invitations was selected for this year's survey. This approach is the most representative means of sampling survey respondents as it includes all households within the city, including single-family homes and multi-unit buildings. Additionally, the address-based sample was stratified by ward to ensure survey completions were proportionate to the population of residents in each ward, and the final survey sample was weighted according to the latest Statistics Canada census to enhance representativeness further.

The results collected via an address-based sampling approach are not directly comparable to those collected previously by phone. This is due to the inherent biases associated with each administration method, which may create slight differences in survey findings. Therefore, any differences between the 2024 Citizen Survey results and past surveys may be due to the change in methodology and not because of a real change in resident perspectives. Given the challenges associated with telephone surveys will only increase over time, the 2024 survey represented an opportunity to reset and establish a new benchmark that aligns with current surveying best practices, as many municipalities across Canada are making similar methodological transitions.

By conducting a statistically significant survey, the results collected are representative of all Vaughan residents.

The sample collected has been weighted based on age, gender and geographic location within Vaughan to match the city's general population based on 2021 census data. The survey results are accurate to within +/- 3.6 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. This is referred to as the margin of error. It describes the maximum deviation of the sample results from the real values. The larger the margin of error, the less confidence there is that the results match the "true" figures for the entire population. In surveys that are referred to as representative of the entire population, an acceptable margin of error is between four and eight per cent. A margin of error below four per cent is considered even more representative and reflective of the perceptions of the entire population.

Where available, national normative comparisons were added to the report findings. These comparisons are drawn from a database of municipal norms maintained by Ipsos, providing valuable context and benchmarks against which Vaughan can evaluate its performance. The database comprises survey findings for select questions from other municipal governments nationwide.

2024 BUSINESS SURVEY

In 2018, the Economic Development department undertook its first business survey to gather insights and establish benchmarks on the private sector's operating outlooks, industry needs, readiness for change and service requirements from the City. A follow-up survey was conducted in 2022 to support ongoing improvement and benchmarking. Survey findings are used to enhance programming and services and provide strategic insights for current and future Economic Development Action Plans.

Business and job growth are fundamental to Vaughan's economic vitality. With more than 19,700 firms employing nearly 220,000 people, Vaughan's economic base is the largest employment centre in York Region. Attracting and retaining high-quality, well-paying jobs across various sectors promotes economic resilience and ensures residents can work and thrive where they live.

The objectives of the 2024 Business Survey included the following:

- gauge whether local businesses are growing, declining or stagnating
- determine factors influencing business operations and growth (macro- and micro-economic trends)
- understand readiness for change
- understand planned investments
- understand the perception and use of municipal business services
- understand perceived opportunities that will make Vaughan more competitive as a business investment location

The 2024 Business Survey received responses from more than 350 respondents. Of the businesses that participated, 82 per cent had fewer than 20 employees. These results closely align with the breakdown of the city’s business community, where 87 per cent of all businesses have fewer than 20 employees.

The Business Survey was delivered using a mixed-method approach of mail-to-online surveying and telephone interviews. Survey respondents were drawn from the 2022 York Region Employment Survey (YRES) database, which includes a variety of industries and business sizes. One thousand letters were sent to randomly selected businesses, asking them to participate in the survey. Mailed invites included a unique access code, ensuring businesses could only participate in the survey once. In addition, emails were sent to businesses inviting them to participate. All Vaughan businesses were offered the opportunity to participate in an open-link (no code required) version of the survey.

As the sampling framework was limited to contacts from the 2022 YRES database, the survey results can be considered accurate within +/- 5.2 per cent, 19 times out of 20 on the overall sample.

The 2024 Business Survey received responses from more than 350 respondents (276 via telephone and 77 online) between Oct. 18 and Dec. 10, 2024. Of those businesses that responded, 39 per cent have less than five employees, 42 per cent have five to 19 employees, eight per cent have 20 to 49 employees, seven per cent have 50 to 99 employees, two per cent have 100 to 299 employees and one per cent have 500 employees or more. These results closely align with the breakdown of the city’s business community, where 87 per cent of Vaughan’s 19,700 businesses have fewer than 20 employees.

The top five industry sectors that participated in the business survey were:

- construction (17 per cent)
- education, healthcare and/or social assistance (14 per cent)
- professional scientific and technical and/or business services (11 per cent)
- manufacturing (11 per cent)
- accommodation and food services (nine per cent)

Previous Reports/Authority
[RESULTS OF THE 2022 CITIZEN AND BUSINESS SURVEYS](#)

Committee of the Whole (2), Feb. 14, 2023

Analysis and Options

2024 CITIZEN SURVEY RESULTS

Quality of life is high in Vaughan, with 91 per cent of residents rating their quality of life as "very good" or "good."

The majority (71 per cent) rate their quality of life as "good," and less than one in 10 residents (nine per cent) rate their quality of life as "poor" or "very poor." When compared with normative data from other municipalities across Canada, Vaughan is on par, with the normative average resting at 90 per cent. Quality of life is high across all wards in the city, but particularly so in Ward 2 and Ward 5 (94 per cent each). When analyzed demographically, residents aged 55 years and older are more likely to rate their quality of life as "very good" compared to those aged 35 to 54, who are more likely to rate their quality of life as "poor."

Overall satisfaction with City services is strong, with 87 per cent of residents "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with services received.

Almost nine in 10 (87 per cent) are satisfied with the delivery of services provided by the City, with almost a quarter (24 per cent) saying they are "very satisfied." Just over one in 10 (12 per cent) are dissatisfied with the delivery of the services provided by the City. Similar to quality of life, this finding is also in line with other municipalities, as the normative average is 85 per cent satisfied (very or somewhat) and 13 per cent dissatisfied (very or somewhat). Demographically, residents in Ward 5 rate their satisfaction the highest (91 per cent), and residents aged 55 and older are more likely to say they are "very satisfied" with the delivery of services compared to those aged 35 to 54.

Satisfaction is highest for Vaughan Fire and Rescue Service, Vaughan Public Libraries and waste collection, and lowest for planning-related services and traffic management.

When asked to individually rate the City's services, satisfaction was the highest for fire services (97 per cent), local public libraries (94 per cent), waste collection (86 per cent) and off-road multi-use trails/natural trails (84 per cent). Satisfaction ranges between 70 per cent to 82 per cent for the majority of services, including recreation facilities and

programs, snow removal (roads, sidewalks and windrows), arts and culture, development and maintenance of parks and greenspaces and Vaughan Animal Services. Fewer are satisfied with financial services (68 per cent), cycling infrastructure and bike lanes (68 per cent), maintenance of local roads (65 per cent), by-law and compliance (62 per cent), and building permits and inspection services (60 per cent). The greatest areas for improvement are processing and involving the public in the review of development applications (59 per cent), land use and community planning (52 per cent) and traffic management (29 per cent).

When analyzed geographically, satisfaction levels are relatively consistent across wards. The following table provides a breakdown of satisfaction by ward, with statistically significant differences bolded.

Table 1. Satisfaction with the City's services by ward

TOTAL SATISFIED (VERY + SOMEWHAT)					
	WARD 1	WARD 2	WARD 3	WARD 4	WARD 5
Arts and culture (e.g. Canada Day event, Concerts in the Parks)	87%	80%	77%	76%	82%
Building permits and inspection services	68%	56%	53%	60%	67%
Business support services	78%	86%	63%	71%	80%
By-law and compliance	72%	56%	55%	63%	71%
Cycling infrastructure and bike lanes	68%	78%	59%	64%	72%
End of driveway snow removal (windrow clearing)	67%	76%	68%	71%	65%
Financial services, such as property tax bill, bill payments and City accounting	71%	71%	61%	67%	71%
Fire services	98%	99%	93%	97%	98%
Garbage, recycling, organics and yard waste collection	89%	82%	87%	85%	88%
General road condition and maintenance of local/neighbourhood roads	63%	69%	60%	65%	68%
Land use and community planning	52%	53%	44%	52%	59%
Local public libraries	92%	94%	92%	96%	95%
Maintenance of parks and greenspace	79%	84%	79%	76%	82%
Off-road multi-use/natural trails (e.g. Humber River Trail, Bartley Smith Greenway Trail)	84%	88%	81%	78%	89%
Online services	88%	86%	80%	79%	81%
Parks development (including quantity and quality of playgrounds, sports fields and trails)	88%	79%	74%	64%	80%
Processing and involving the public in the review of development applications	56%	59%	53%	65%	63%

Recreation and fitness facilities (including community centres, arenas and pools)	90%	86%	77%	73%	86%
Recreation and fitness service programs	87%	81%	75%	75%	80%
Road snow removal	80%	83%	79%	81%	77%
Service Vaughan, which is the contact centre for Vaughan residents to call and email for questions about City services	73%	76%	78%	78%	77%
Sidewalk snow removal	77%	83%	80%	78%	75%
Sidewalks and street lighting	80%	84%	77%	82%	80%
Traffic management (including traffic calming and improving the flow of traffic)	36%	27%	20%	32%	37%
Vaughan Animal Services	81%	76%	76%	81%	67%

Vaughan’s satisfaction scores are similar to other municipalities for most services. Satisfaction is higher among Vaughan residents for fire services (+two percentage points), road snow removal services (+seven percentage points) and local public libraries (+three percentage points), but lower for maintenance of parks and greenspace (-10 percentage points), by-law and compliance (-14 percentage points), land use and community planning (-15 percentage points) and traffic management (-24 percentage points). While helpful, Ipsos has provided these comparisons with caution, as their municipal norms database still includes data collected by telephone-based surveying and methodological biases may exist.

To better understand the relative contribution of each service to overall satisfaction, Ipsos developed an action grid to display the correlation between overall satisfaction and the perceived performance of each service area (Figure 1). Primary strengths are services with high perceived performance and a higher impact on overall satisfaction. Efforts should be made to maintain high levels of satisfaction with these key services. Six services fall into this category – Service Vaughan, business support services, online services, maintenance of parks and greenspaces, recreation and fitness facilities, and sidewalks and street lighting. Conversely, primary areas of improvement are services with lower perceived performance and a higher impact on overall satisfaction. Efforts should be made to improve satisfaction in these areas to increase overall satisfaction scores. In this category were value for tax dollars, by-law and compliance, financial services (e.g. property tax bill, bill payments and City accounting), general road condition and maintenance, land use and community planning, and building permits and inspection services.

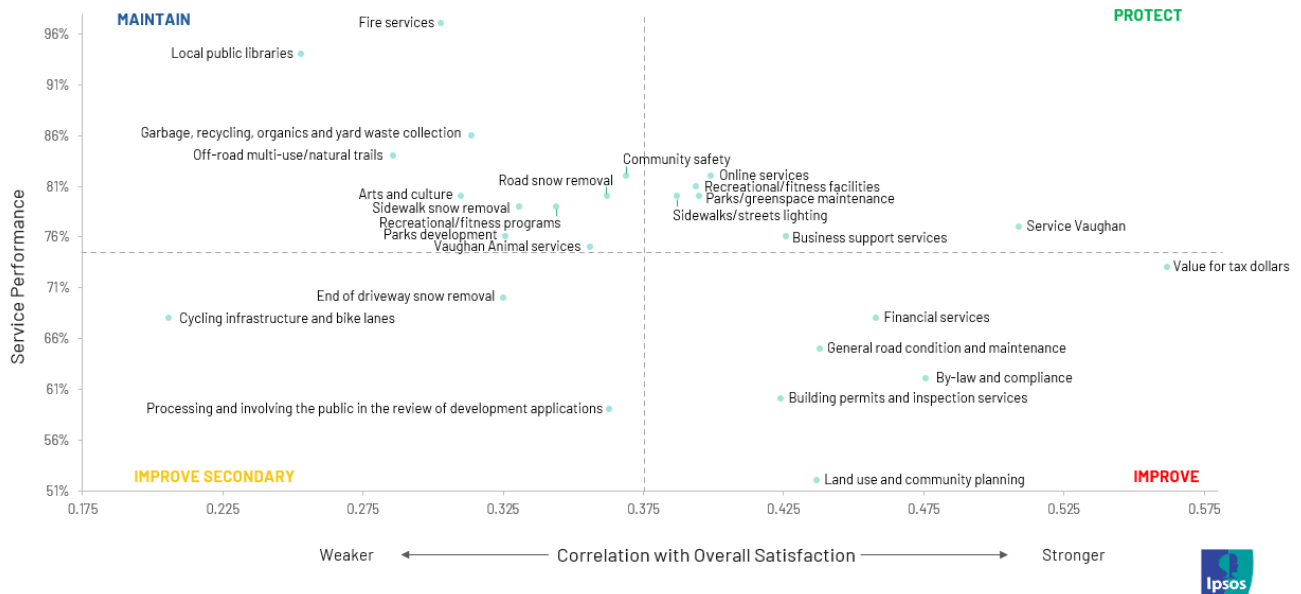


Figure 1 Key drivers for satisfaction with City services

Almost three-quarters (73 per cent) of residents feel they get good value for their tax dollars, and a small majority (55 per cent) would prefer to maintain taxes, even if it means cuts to services.

Thinking about the programs and services they receive from the City, 73 per cent of residents say they get “very good” or “fairly good” value for their tax dollars, with 12 per cent saying “very good” value. Just over a quarter (27 per cent) say they get “poor value” for their tax dollars, with eight per cent saying “very poor value.” This is slightly lower than other municipalities, where 76 per cent say they get “good” or “very good” value for their tax dollars, and 22 per cent say they get “poor” or “very poor” value.

When asked their perspectives on increasing or decreasing municipal taxes, a small majority (55 per cent) think the City should maintain taxes even if it means cuts to services. Conversely, 45 per cent support increased taxes, with 34 per cent of residents supporting an increase if needed to maintain current service levels, and fewer (11 per cent) supporting increased taxes to add new services and facilities in Vaughan.

When asked about funding City services, residents prefer increasing user fees (48 per cent) to increasing property taxes (two per cent). Over a quarter (26 per cent) would prefer no increase to user fees or property taxes, even if it means cuts to services, and 16 per cent would prefer a combination of user fees and taxes. Demographically, residents who own their home are more likely to prefer funding City services via user fees (54 per cent) compared to those who rent (29 per cent).

Overall, residents are satisfied with their experience when they contact the City, particularly staff's professionalism and ability to understand their needs.

Almost half (48 per cent) of residents say they have communicated with the City or one of its employees in the past 12 months. Just under two-thirds (65 per cent) did so by phone, followed by 32 per cent who chose email. Just under a quarter (24 per cent) contacted the City in person or via an online program/application. The primary reason for contacting the City was to report an issue (54 per cent), followed by public works-related service requests (39 per cent), registering or inquiring about recreation programs (33 per cent) and paying a City bill or fee (32 per cent). When asked about their experience, more than three-quarters (77 per cent) say they are satisfied with the overall service they received. This finding is slightly lower than other municipalities, which report 82 per cent overall satisfaction with the contact experience. In particular, Vaughan residents are satisfied with staff's professionalism (87 per cent), staff's ability to understand their needs (78 per cent) and the ease or convenience of accessing the service (76 per cent). Slightly fewer were satisfied with staff's ability to resolve their issue (71 per cent) and the timeliness of service (69 per cent).

When asked about their preferred method to contact the City, more than six in 10 (61 per cent) said via telephone or email, and more than half (54 per cent) said the City's website. Less preferred methods of contact are in person (17 per cent), social media (10 per cent) and through Members of Council (six per cent).

Aligning with City and Council priorities, the most important issues facing Vaughan in the eyes of residents are transportation (39 per cent) and public safety (31 per cent).

When asked to provide the most important issue facing their community, almost four in 10 (39 per cent) said transportation, consisting mainly of traffic congestion (30 per cent) and the need to improve public transit (nine per cent). Crime and safety is the second most important issue (33 per cent). The next most important issues are infrastructure improvements (18 per cent) and improving municipal government (15 per cent), which includes improving services, garbage collection, cleanliness and snow removal. Other issues further down the list are housing affordability (five per cent), taxes (five per cent) and the cost of living (four per cent).

When asked about transportation and road safety, congestion, speeding and driver behaviour are the top concerns.

Seven in 10 (72 per cent) feel road congestion and traffic are the top transportation issues in Vaughan, followed by speeding (38 per cent), disobeying the rules of the road (36 per cent) and distracted driving (31 per cent). Lower on the list are the state of the roads (23 per cent), pedestrian safety (17 per cent), cycling safety (10 per cent) and

road safety around schools (nine per cent). Geographically, those in Ward 3 are more likely to cite road congestion and traffic as their top transportation and road safety issue (82 per cent) compared to those in Ward 5 (65 per cent).

Eight in 10 (83 per cent) residents would describe the city of Vaughan as safe, but 54 per cent feel safety has worsened in the past three years.

Of the 83 per cent who describe Vaughan as safe, almost two in 10 (19 per cent) say it's "very safe" and nearly two-thirds (64 per cent) say it's "safe." Conversely, 18 per cent would describe Vaughan as "not very safe" and three per cent would say it's "not at all safe." Geographically, residents in Ward 5 are more likely to describe Vaughan as safe (89 per cent), whereas residents in Ward 3 are more likely to say it's not safe. These findings are slightly lower than other municipalities, where 38 per cent say they feel "very safe," 52 per cent say they feel "somewhat safe," eight per cent say they feel "not very safe" and one per cent feel "not at all safe."

When asked if they feel community safety in Vaughan has changed over the past three years, more than half (54 per cent) said community safety has worsened, while four in 10 (41 per cent) say it has stayed the same and only five per cent think it has improved. Residents who are more likely to feel it has worsened have a higher household income (more than \$150,000 per year before taxes), own their home and live in Ward 3 compared to Ward 4 or Ward 5.

Almost three-quarters (74 per cent) of residents think it's possible for Vaughan to grow while maintaining the quality of life they have come to enjoy in the city.

Of the 74 per cent, a third (33 per cent) strongly agree with that sentiment. Six in 10 (61 per cent) think the City does a good job of managing the level of development and growth in Vaughan, and a similar proportion feel the City keeps residents informed about how it plans to deal with growth. However, four in 10 (40 per cent) disagree.

More than three-quarters (76 per cent) of residents are happy with the communications they receive, with mailed notices, newsletters and brochures as the preferred method to receive information.

When asked how well the City communicates with residents about its services, programs, policies and plans, more than three-quarters (76 per cent) rate this as "good" or "very good." Residents in Vaughan are slightly more likely to provide a higher rating for communications compared to residents in other communities across the country, as the normative average for a positive rating (very good or good) is 70 per cent.

When asked how they prefer to receive communications, 62 per cent chose notices, newsletters and brochures sent through mail. This was followed by eNewsletters sent by City staff (47 per cent), roadside signage (43 per cent) and the City's website (38 per cent). Less popular methods were digital signs in front of their local community centre or library (29 per cent), social media (29 per cent), media (26 per cent) and eNewsletters sent by a Member of Council (26 per cent).

Of those who participated in a City engagement activity, many felt well-informed and able to share their thoughts, but fewer felt their input would inform decision-making.

When asked if they had participated in an engagement activity in the past 12 months, more than a quarter (26 per cent) said they completed an online survey, and one in 10 (11 per cent) attended an event hosted by the City, such as an in-person open house, focus group, pop-up or virtual meeting. Other ways residents say they have provided feedback to the City are by email (two per cent) or by phone (one per cent). Almost two-thirds (65 per cent) said they hadn't participated in a City-run civic engagement activity.

Of those who participated, the majority said they were given the information they needed to participate meaningfully (80 per cent), had the opportunity to share their thoughts, ideas and perspectives (77 per cent) and felt participating was a good use of their time (75 per cent). Fewer felt their input would be used to inform decision-making (61 per cent) or felt listened to (57 per cent).

2024 BUSINESS SURVEY

Vaughan is the largest economy in York Region and a top destination for investment in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Businesses view the local business environment positively, with 85 per cent rating the city's business environment as good or very good.

Vaughan remains the largest economy in York Region – accounting for more than 35 per cent of all employment and economic output in York Region in 2023, totaling more than \$25.5 billion in real gross domestic product (GDP). Vaughan's economic growth outpaced provincial and national growth rates in 2023.

The city remains a top destination for business investment and is the fourth-largest industrial market in the GTA. At the end of the fourth quarter of 2024, Vaughan had an inventory of more than 104 million square feet of industrial space with nearly an additional 750,000 square feet under construction, according to the latest industrial market report by Colliers.

When asked to rate the City's business environment, more than eight in 10 (85 per cent) respondents rated the business environment as either "very good" (19 per cent) or "good" (66 per cent).

Vaughan's location continues to be a major draw for businesses. Vaughan's proximity to major transportation assets, supply chains and talent provides a strong value proposition.

When asked what the major advantages of being located in Vaughan were, respondents said "location" (59 per cent), "customers are here" (22 per cent), "growing area" (16 per cent), "we live here/live near here" (15 per cent) and "community demographics" (13 per cent).

Awareness of City services by the business community was highest for by-law enforcement (100 per cent), fire and emergency services (74 per cent) and building permitting services (69 per cent).

Businesses were asked to indicate their familiarity with specific City services. Services identified as "most aware" of by businesses included by-law enforcement (100 per cent), fire and emergency services (74 per cent) and buildings, permits and standards (69 per cent). Awareness of additional City services available to businesses included waste management (62 per cent), library services (58 per cent), winter maintenance (58 per cent), recreation sport and wellness services (55 per cent), zoning support (49 per cent), planning and development services (44 per cent) and small business services (28 per cent).

When asked about awareness of services specifically for businesses, 40 per cent of respondents indicated they were "very aware" or "somewhat aware" of local business services. When asked about specific services, respondents noted awareness of business licensing support (47 per cent), business-to-business networking (34 per cent), seminars, training and workshops (31 per cent), information available on funding programs, local and regional support organizations and business development opportunities (28 per cent), and business advisory services (25 per cent).

Vaughan businesses overwhelmingly indicated a positive outlook on the current state of business, with approximately eight in 10 businesses growing or staying about the same. Over the next three years, the outlook was positive but moderate, with 65 per cent of respondents expecting their business to grow.

The economic landscape in Canada continues to change. Vaughan businesses overwhelmingly indicated a positive outlook on the current state of business, with 82 per cent of businesses expecting to grow or stay about the same.

When asked about their business' outlook over the next three years, nine in 10 businesses had either a positive or neutral view – 65 per cent indicated they expected to grow, and 27 per cent indicated they expected to stay about the same.

Businesses expect to continue to make investments into their business that could enhance productivity or business growth. Six in 10 businesses noted that in the next five years, they expect to make a “significant investment” or “some investment” into new or innovative technologies for their business.

While business outlook and investment in technology remain positive, several challenges continue to place pressure on local companies, with top concerns cited as costs of doing business, staffing and traffic congestion.

The biggest challenges identified by businesses included costs (34 per cent), staffing (24 per cent), cost of real estate (18 per cent), traffic congestion (16 per cent), competition (14 per cent) and municipal property taxes (11 per cent).

On staffing, when asked to expand on the challenges, more than half (51 per cent) responded that the largest challenge with staffing is hiring new employees, while one in four (25 per cent) cited the high cost of labour as the biggest staffing issue.

These findings are in line with national research reports such as the Canadian Chamber of Commerce's Business Insights Tracker, which identified rising inflation, input costs and the recruitment of skilled employees as major obstacles currently facing businesses across Canada and were expected to be key issues into 2025¹.

Vaughan's businesses are transformative, ambitious and purpose driven. Businesses continue to make investment into transformative and purpose-driven initiatives. Four in 10 businesses are embracing digital transformation, and more than five in 10 businesses have implemented or are in the process of implementing purpose-driven initiatives.

Vaughan businesses continue to reflect the ever-changing digital landscape we live in. Through the survey, four in 10 businesses identified they've undertaken digital transformation. Specifically, businesses indicated they've undertaken online marketing (35 per cent), E-commerce (22 per cent), digital inventory management technologies (16 per cent), mobile applications (14 per cent) and artificial intelligence (12 per cent).

Businesses that provided insight into ongoing digital resilience and adoption also highlighted they would welcome increased City support to understand and implement online marketing practices (27 per cent), use of artificial intelligence (eight per cent) and E-commerce (seven per cent). The adoption of digital transformation initiatives provides

¹ Canadian Chamber of Commerce, [Business Insights Tracker](#), Q4 2024

businesses with the ability to remain competitive and adapt to an increasingly digital world.

More than half of the survey respondents had implemented or are in the process of implementing a purpose-driven initiative, which includes corporate social responsibility (CSR), diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), or environmental, social and governance (ESG) reporting. Businesses also noted they are actively adapting or have already made changes to meet accessibility standards (84 per cent).

Of Vaughan residents who are currently employed, 35 per cent work in the office five or more days a week, 27 per cent work in the office two to three days a week and 10 per cent never work in the office.

Through the Citizen Survey, Vaughan residents provided important demographic information on their employment status and location. More than half (57 per cent) are employed full-time, one in 10 (11 per cent) are self-employed, four per cent are employed part-time and four per cent are unemployed. Of those who are employed, 35 per cent work in the office five or more days a week, 27 per cent work in the office two to three days a week and 10 per cent never work in-office. Respondents were also asked where their workplace is located, with 73 per cent of residents working outside of Vaughan and 23 per cent working within the city.

Businesses that used Economic Development's website found the information they needed and found the content useful.

Accessing services and information related to the City's business services on vaughanbusiness.ca was viewed favourably, with nine out of 10 businesses saying they found exactly what they needed or part of what they needed when they visited the website. The usefulness of content on vaughanbusiness.ca was also rated highly, with 88 per cent finding the online content very useful or somewhat useful.

Digital methods remain the preferred communication channel for the Vaughan business community, with seven in 10 businesses preferring communication methods such as digital newsletters and email.

Vaughan's businesses identified that the City should focus its economic development efforts on supporting businesses, improving road infrastructure and lowering taxes.

Over the next five years, Vaughan businesses identified the following as the top five areas where the City should prioritize support:

- economic development and business services (e.g. financial help, encourage investment, community economic development) – 34 per cent
- improve road infrastructure (e.g. roads, highways and traffic) – 30 per cent

- taxes/lower taxes – 20 per cent
- improve public transit – 14 per cent
- other development (e.g. buildings, land or other) – 11 per cent

Additional areas for business support identified included improving technology infrastructure (nine per cent), government services (nine per cent), commercial development (six per cent), residential services (four per cent), affordable housing (three per cent), workforce development (two per cent) and strategic planning or training/education (one per cent respectively).

Financial Impact

There are no new financial implications related to this report. Costs related to the Citizen and Business Surveys are budgeted for through the Communications, Marketing and Engagement and the Economic Development departments' budgets.

Operational Impact

The results of these surveys will be shared across all City departments to guide the implementation of the 2022-2026 Term of Council Strategic Plan by informing Vaughan's strategic priorities through data-driven decision-making. The data will continue to be used to measure the impact of City services, guide service delivery improvements and direct future planning initiatives. Findings of these surveys will also inform the development of future strategic plans.

Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations

A copy of this report will be uploaded to vaughan.ca and vaughanbusiness.ca and be distributed to key local/regional partners and stakeholders, such as York Region Economic Development, the Vaughan Chamber of Commerce, other Chambers of Commerce, ministries and other local and regional stakeholders.

Conclusion

The results of the 2024 Citizen Survey continue to be positive, with 91 per cent of residents stating that quality of life is "good" or "very good" and almost nine in 10 residents expressing satisfaction with City services. To keep satisfaction high, the results point to maintaining Vaughan's primary strengths – including Service Vaughan, business support services, online services, maintenance of parks and greenspaces, recreation and fitness facilities, and sidewalks and street lighting – and investing in areas of primary improvement, including value for tax dollars, by-law and compliance, financial services, general road condition and maintenance, land use and community planning, and building permits and inspection services. Additionally, the survey results

confirm the issues that matter most to Vaughan residents – transportation and community safety – and underline the importance of many City programs and Council directives currently underway, including the Mayor’s Nine Point Action Plan to Fight Traffic Gridlock, implementation of the MoveSmart Mobility Management Strategy and strengthened partnerships with York Regional Police.

The Business Survey continues to act as an important tool to assess business satisfaction, awareness of City services and readiness for change. Vaughan’s Economic Development department uses the insights gathered to improve services and inform future projects and initiatives such as the Economic Development Action Plan. As Vaughan’s economy continues to grow, these findings will continue to inform the City’s efforts and investments to deliver a community and business destination of choice.

As staff continue to deliver on the 2022-2026 Term of Council strategic priorities, the information gathered through the 2024 Citizen and Business Surveys will contribute to measuring the impact of City services and inform data-driven decision-making.

Both the Citizen and Business Surveys will be repeated every other year to continue tracking satisfaction and issues of importance among residents and the business community, with the next surveys targeted for 2026.

For more information, please contact:

Jennifer Ormston, Chief Communications Officer, ext. 8039

Raphael Costa, Director, Economic Development, ext. 8891

Attachments

1. City of Vaughan 2024 Citizen Survey Results Report, Ipsos, February 2025
2. City of Vaughan 2024 Business Survey Results Report, Ipsos, February 2025

Prepared by

Jessica Stronghill, Manager, Strategic Engagement, ext. 3777

Christian Zavarella, Economic Development Officer, ext. 8095

Lindsay Davidson, Manager, Economic Development, ext. 8892

CITY OF VAUGHAN 2024 CITIZEN SURVEY

Final Report



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01 INTRODUCTION



Objectives & Methodology



BACKGROUND & OBJECTIVES

The City of Vaughan commissioned the 2024 Citizen Survey to gather input from residents on service delivery and operations, quality of life, financial sustainability and public information and engagement.

The City conducts citizen surveys to understand the evolving needs and desires of the community to continue improving and delivering services.

Conducting citizen surveys is also an effective way to examine the City's performance in comparison to other municipalities and see how Vaughan's service offerings and delivery measures up to similar cities.



METHODOLOGY

A random sample of residents who reside in the City of Vaughan were selected through address-based sampling provided by Canada Post. The sample was stratified to be proportionate to the population by postal code. Residents were invited via letter to take part in an online survey. One resident per household could complete the online survey. A total of 1102 residents aged 18+ took part.



FIELDING DATES

Data was collected from October 16 to November 19, 2024.



MARGIN OF ERROR

Margin of error is +/-3.6%, nineteen times out of twenty on overall sample.



WEIGHTING

Weighting was used to ensure the sample was representative of the surveyed population by:

- Age
- Gender
- Area

Sampling weights were designed to match the latest Statistics Canada Census figures (2021).



REPORTING CONVENTIONS

Percentages may not always add up to 100% due to rounding.

Subgroup comparisons are presented only where relevant and statistically significant.

When comparing findings to municipal norms, caution should be used as mode and coverage bias may exist as most normative data was collected via telephone methodology.


Invitation Letters

Invitation letters were sent to residents inviting them to take part in an online study. The letter provided more information about the study, briefly outlined the purpose and content of the survey and provided the survey website and a unique access code for residents to complete the survey online.

Responses to frequently asked questions such as “who is conducting this research,” “why should I participate in the survey” and “why was my household selected” were printed at the back of the letter.

Contact information for the Ipsos helpline was printed on the front so residents could ask further questions via email or by telephone.

Residents could also call to complete the survey via telephone.

Wednesday, Oct. 16, 2024 

Dear Resident,

Participate in Vaughan's 2024 Citizen Survey to help shape and improve the City's programs and services.

The City of Vaughan is surveying local residents to gather input on the quality of life in Vaughan, delivery of City services, value for tax dollars, public information and engagement and much more.

Your household has been randomly selected to participate in this survey.

Any Vaughan resident **aged 18 years or older** living at this address can take part. We want to hear from a wide range of people – whether or not you use the City's services.

It only takes approximately 15 minutes to complete – in three easy steps:

1. Go to vaughansurvey.ca
2. Enter your unique access code <XXXXXXXX>
3. Complete the survey by **Tuesday, Nov. 19, 2024**


This survey is confidential and voluntary. The results from this survey will help ensure the City continues to offer a range of programs and services to meet the needs of our growing community. Your responses will help the City maintain the quality of life and standard of living in Vaughan, and will inform how the City shares information and updates with you.

The survey is being administered by Ipsos, an independent research organization, on behalf of the City.


If you have any questions or would like to complete the survey over the phone, you can contact surveyqueries@ipsos.com or call the toll-free helpline number at **1-833-488-1668** and leave a message requesting assistance.

Thank you in advance for your time and contribution.


The City of Vaughan


Please turn over 


Have questions about this survey?
Email: surveyqueries@ipsos.com
Phone: 1-833-488-1668





Additional Information


 **Who is conducting this research?**
The City of Vaughan commissioned this research. Ipsos, an independent research organization, is administering the survey on behalf of the City. By leveraging a market research company, the City can collect data with a high degree of statistical confidence, meaning the results are an accurate representation of the Vaughan population. You can find further information about Ipsos at ipsos.com/en-ca.

 **Why should I participate in the survey?**
The Citizen Survey is used to gather input from residents on quality of life, delivery of City services, value for tax dollars, and public information and engagement, among other topics.
The results from the survey will help ensure the City continues to offer a range of programs and services to meet the needs of the growing community and empower Vaughan Council and the administration to prioritize solutions that improve municipal service delivery.
Your responses will help the City maintain the quality of life and standard of living in Vaughan, and will inform how the City shares information and updates with you.

 **Why was my household selected?**
Your household was selected at random from a list of all households in the city of Vaughan.

 **What do I have to do to participate?**
If you're 18 years of age or older, go to the website at the front of this letter and complete the survey using the unique access code provided to you. Only one member of your household should participate in the survey. You can complete the survey on a desktop computer, tablet or mobile phone. If you have any questions or would like to complete the survey over the phone, call the toll-free helpline number at 1-833-488-1668 and leave a message requesting assistance.

 **How long does the survey take? When will the survey close?**
The survey should take about 15 minutes to complete. Please complete the survey as soon as possible. **The survey closes on Tuesday, Nov. 19.**

 **Are my answers confidential and private?**
Any information you provide will be kept confidential as required by law. All collected data will be used for research purposes only and reported at aggregate level.

02 KEY FINDINGS & EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

KEY FINDINGS

1

Overall, nine in ten (91%) Vaughan residents rate their quality of life as 'good' or 'very good.' Less than one in ten (9%) rate their life as "poor" or "very poor," in line with other municipalities across the country.

2

Almost nine in ten (87%) are satisfied with the delivery of services provided by the City of Vaughan.

3

Transportation is the most important issue facing their community. Satisfaction is lowest for traffic management (including traffic calming and improving the flow of traffic), compared to other services, with seven in ten (71%) dissatisfied.

4

Over eight in ten (83%) of residents would describe community safety in the city of Vaughan as safe, but over half (54%) said community safety has worsened in the past three years.

5

Three-quarters (73%) say overall they get "very good" or "fairly good" value for their tax dollars. Over half of residents (55%) think the City should maintain taxes at current levels, even if it means cut to services.

Executive Summary (1)

Quality of Life

Overall, nine in ten (91%) residents rate their quality of life in the city of Vaughan as “very good” or “good,” with the majority (71%) rating their quality of life as “good.”

Less than one in ten (9%) rate their quality of life as “poor” or “very poor,” in line with other municipalities.

The most important issue facing Vaughan in the eyes of residents is transportation (39%), followed by public safety issues (31%).

Service Delivery & Operations

Overall, almost nine in ten (87%) are satisfied with the delivery of services provided by the City of Vaughan, with just over one in ten (12%) saying they are dissatisfied.

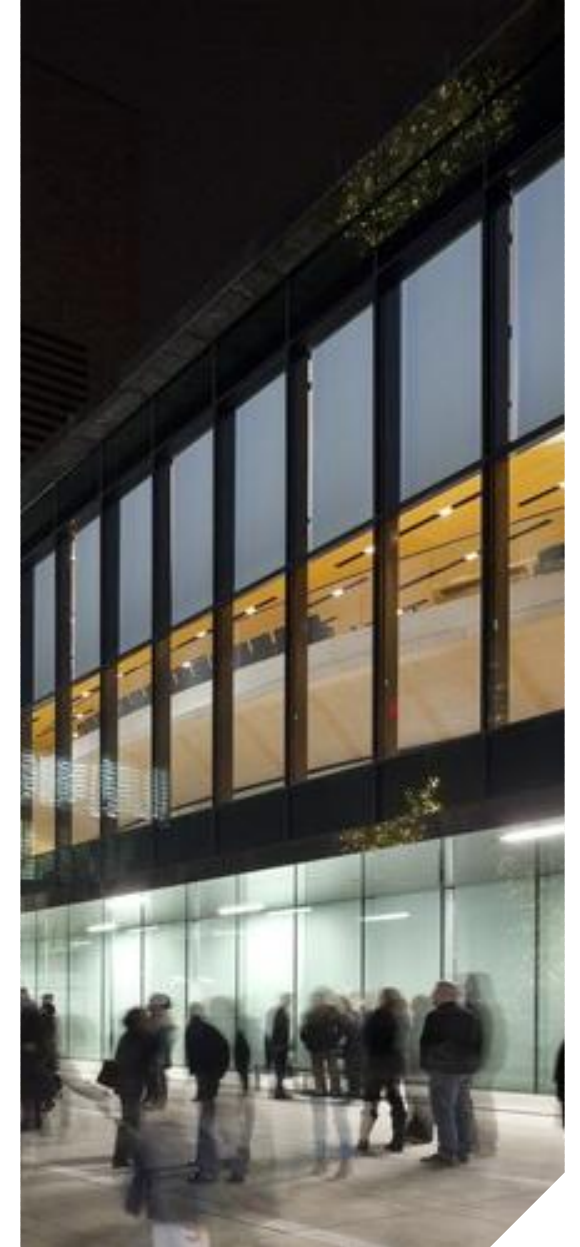
Satisfaction with services varies by program or service and is highest for fire services (97%) and local public libraries (94%), and lowest for traffic management (including traffic calming and improving the flow of traffic), with only 29% satisfied with this service.

Contact with the City of Vaughan

Almost half (48%) of residents say they have communicated with the City of Vaughan or one of its employees in the past 12 months. The most popular method of contact is telephone (65%) followed by email (32%).

The most common reason for contacting the City was to report issues (59%).

Over three-quarters (77%) of those who contacted the City in the past 12 months say they are satisfied with the overall service they received.



Executive Summary (2)

Financial Sustainability

Thinking about all the programs and services they receive from the City of Vaughan, almost three-quarters (73%) of residents say overall they get “very good” or “fairly good” value for their tax dollars.

Over half of residents (55%) think the City should maintain taxes at current levels even if it means cuts to services, but over four in ten (45%) think taxes should be increased to maintain existing service levels (34%) or add new services and facilities (11%).

To ensure the City has enough revenue to pay for expected service levels and programs, almost half (48%) would prefer to increase user fees.

Growth & Development Planning

Almost three-quarters (74%) think it is possible for Vaughan to grow while maintaining the quality of life they have come to enjoy in the city.

Six in ten (61%) think the City of Vaughan does a good job of managing the level of development and growth in the city, and a similar proportion think the City keeps residents informed about how it plans to deal with growth, although four in ten (40%) disagree with this.

Transportation & Road Safety

When asked which are the top transportation and road safety issues in their community, seven in ten (72%) say road congestion and traffic.

This is followed by speeding (38%), disobeying the rules of the road (36%) and distracted driving (31%). The state of the roads is a top issue for almost a quarter of residents (23%).



Executive Summary (3)

Community Safety

Overall, over eight in ten (83%) residents would describe Vaughan as safe, with almost two in ten (19%) saying it is “very safe” and almost two-thirds saying it is “somewhat safe.”

That being said, over half of residents (54%) said community safety has worsened in the past three years, while four in ten (41%) say it has stayed the same and only 5% think it has improved.

Almost one in five (18%) would describe their community as unsafe, with 15% saying “not very safe” and 3% saying it is “not at all safe.”

Public Information & Communication

Six in ten (62%) residents say they prefer to receive communication from the City of Vaughan via notices, newsletters and brochures sent through mail.

In terms of contacting the City, six in ten residents prefer to use telephone (61%) or email (61%).

Over three-quarters (76%) say the City’s communication with residents about its services, programs, policies and plans is “good” or “very good.”

Citizen Engagement Activities

One-third (35%) of residents have participated in an engagement activity in the past 12 months.

Among those who took part, the majority say they were given the information they needed to participate meaningfully (80%) and had the opportunity to share their thoughts, ideas and perspectives (77%). However, fewer feel their input would be used to inform decision-making (61%) or say they felt listened to (57%).



03 DETAILED FINDINGS



3.1 QUALITY OF LIFE

Quality of Life in Vaughan

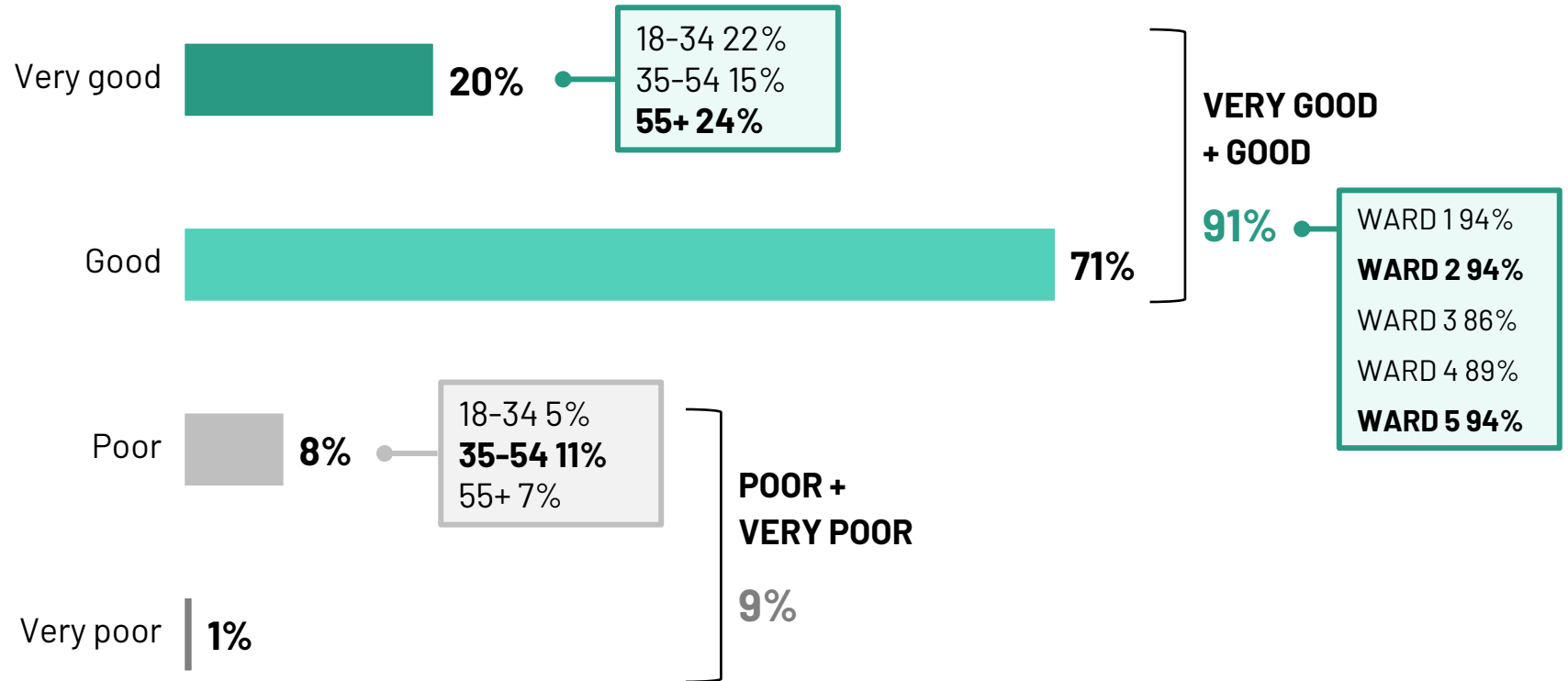
Overall, nine in ten (91%) rate their quality of life in the city of Vaughan as “very good” or “good.” Among them, seven in ten (71%) rate their quality of life as “good.”

Less than one in ten (9%) rate their quality of life as “poor” or “very poor.”

Residents in Vaughan rate their quality of life similarly to residents in other communities across the country (on average, 90% rate this as ‘very good’ or ‘good’ and 9% rate this as ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’).

Residents aged 55+ are more likely to rate their quality of life as “very good” compared to those aged 35-54 who are more likely to rate their quality of life as “poor.”

OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE CITY OF VAUGHAN TODAY



Base: All respondents (n=1102)

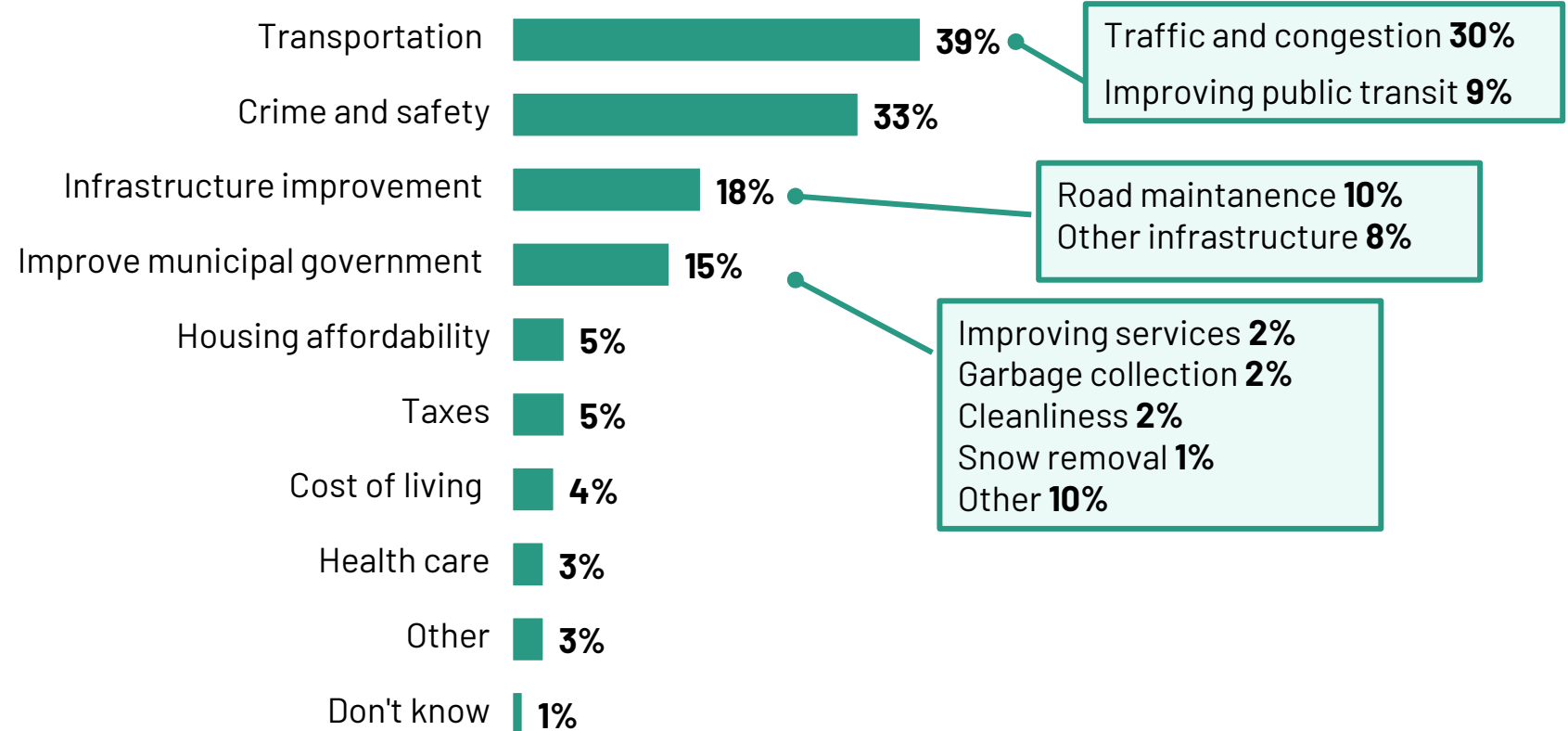
Q2. How would you rate the overall quality of life in the city of Vaughan today?

Important Local Issues in Vaughan

When asked to write what the most important issue facing their community and which issue should receive the greatest attention from the Mayor and Members of Council, almost four in ten (39%) said transportation, consisting mainly of traffic congestion (30%) and the need to improve public transit (9%). Crime and safety is the second most important issue (33%).

Other issues further down the list include infrastructure improvement (18%), improving municipal government (15%), housing affordability (5%), taxes (5%), and the cost of living (4%).

MOST IMPORTANT LOCAL ISSUES



Responses under 3% not shown.

Base: All respondents (n=1102)

Q1. In your view, as a resident of the city of Vaughan, what is the most important issue facing your community? That is the one issue you feel should receive the greatest attention from your Mayor and Members of Council.

3.2 SERVICE DELIVERY & OPERATIONS

Satisfaction with City Services

Overall, almost nine in ten (87%) are satisfied with the delivery of services provided by the City of Vaughan, with almost a quarter (24%) saying they are “very satisfied.”

Just over one in ten (12%) are dissatisfied with the delivery of the services provided by the City.

Residents aged 55+ are more likely to say they are “very satisfied” with the delivery of services, compared to those aged 35-54.

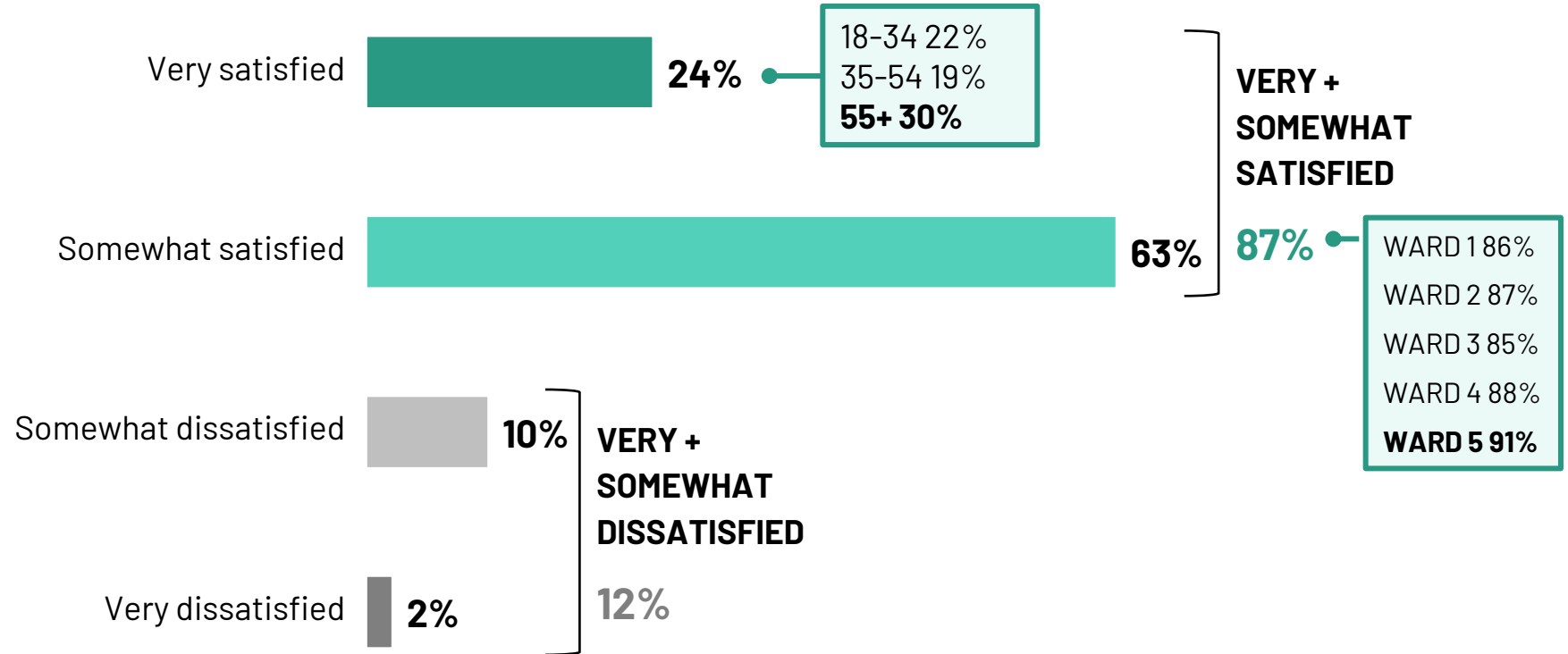
Satisfaction with the delivery of services is linked to the quality-of-life rating, as nine in ten (92%) of those who rate their quality of life as “good” or “very good” say they are satisfied with the delivery of services compared to four in ten (44%) of those who rate their quality of life as “poor” or “very poor.”

Figures are in line with other municipalities:

very + somewhat satisfied = 85%

very + somewhat dissatisfied =13%

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH DELIVERY OF THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE CITY OF VAUGHAN



Base: All respondents (n=1102)

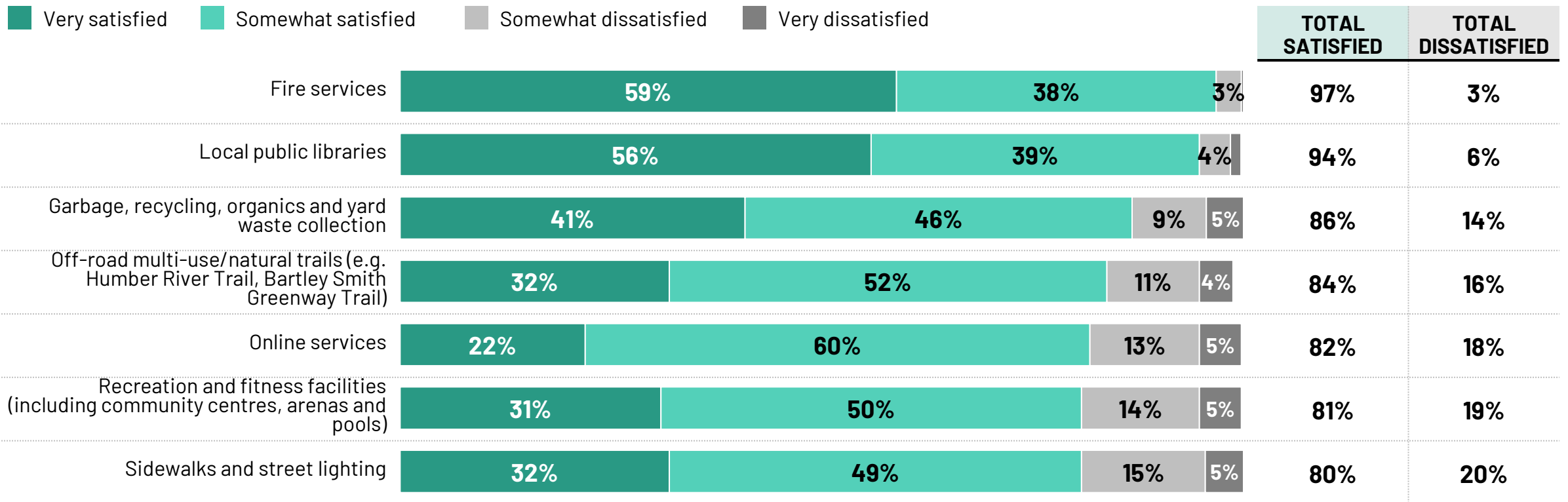
Q3. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the delivery of the services provided by the City of Vaughan?

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Satisfaction with the City's Performance (1/4)

Overall satisfaction with services varies, with highest satisfaction for fire services (97%), local public libraries (94%), garbage, recycling, organics and yard waste collection (86%) and off-road multi-use/natural trails (84%).

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH THE PERFORMANCE OF THE CITY OF VAUGHAN FOR DIFFERENT SERVICES



Note: Data labels 1% or less were removed.

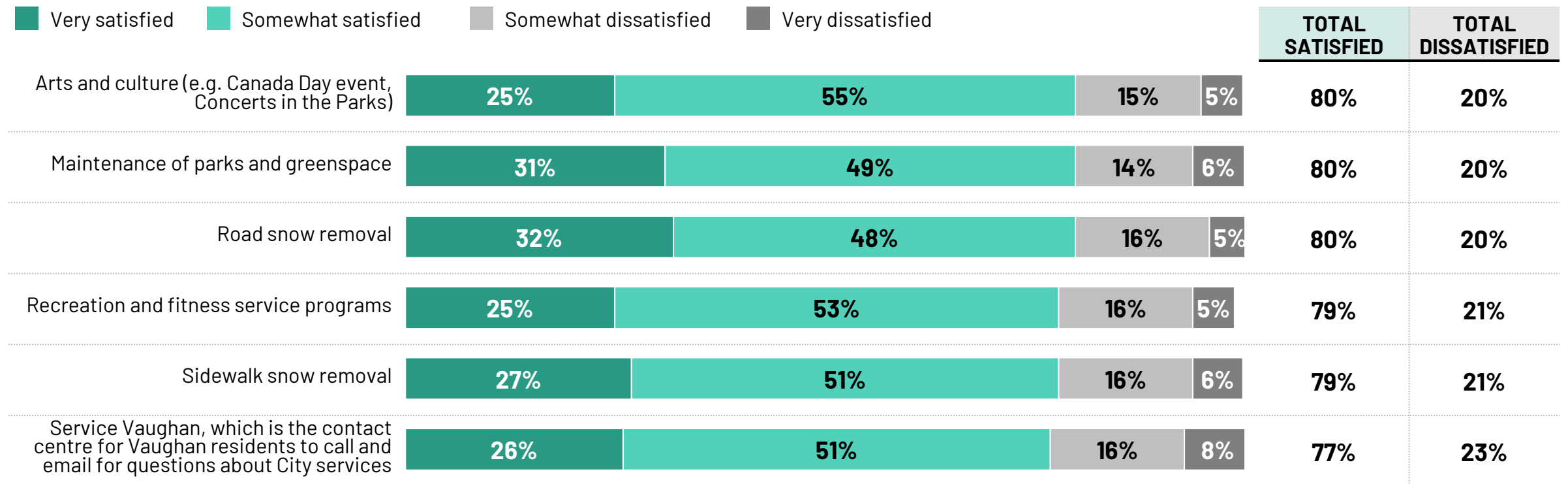
Base: All respondents excluding don't know. n=varies

Q4. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the performance of the City of Vaughan on each of the following services?

Satisfaction with the City's Performance (2/4)

Eight in ten are satisfied with arts and culture, such as Canada Day and Concerts in the Park (80%). The same proportion are satisfied with maintenance of parks and greenspace (80%), with high satisfaction also for snow removal, both on roads (80%) and sidewalks (79%).

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH THE PERFORMANCE OF THE CITY OF VAUGHAN FOR DIFFERENT SERVICES



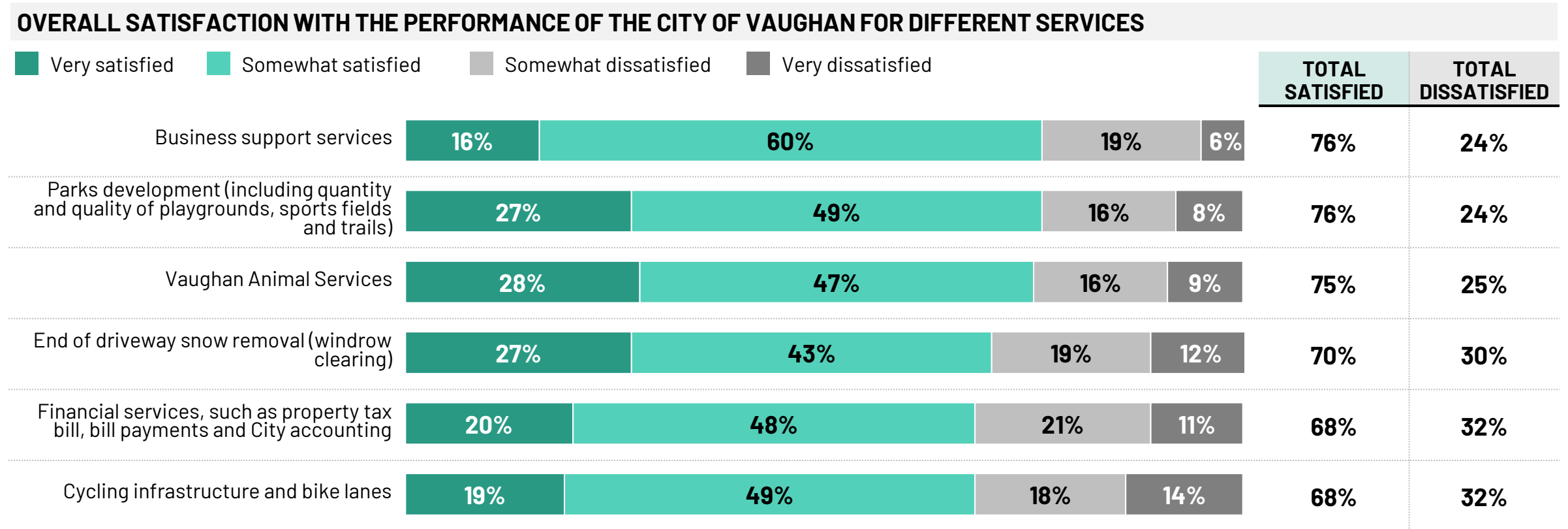
Note: Data labels 1% or less were removed.

Base: All respondents excluding don't know. n=varies

Q4. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the performance of the City of Vaughan on each of the following services?

Satisfaction with the City's Performance (3/4)

More than seven in ten are satisfied with business support services (76%), parks development (76%) and Vaughan Animal Services (75%), with fewer satisfied with financial services (68%) and cycling infrastructure (68%).



Note: Data labels 1% or less were removed.

Base: All respondents excluding don't know. n=varies

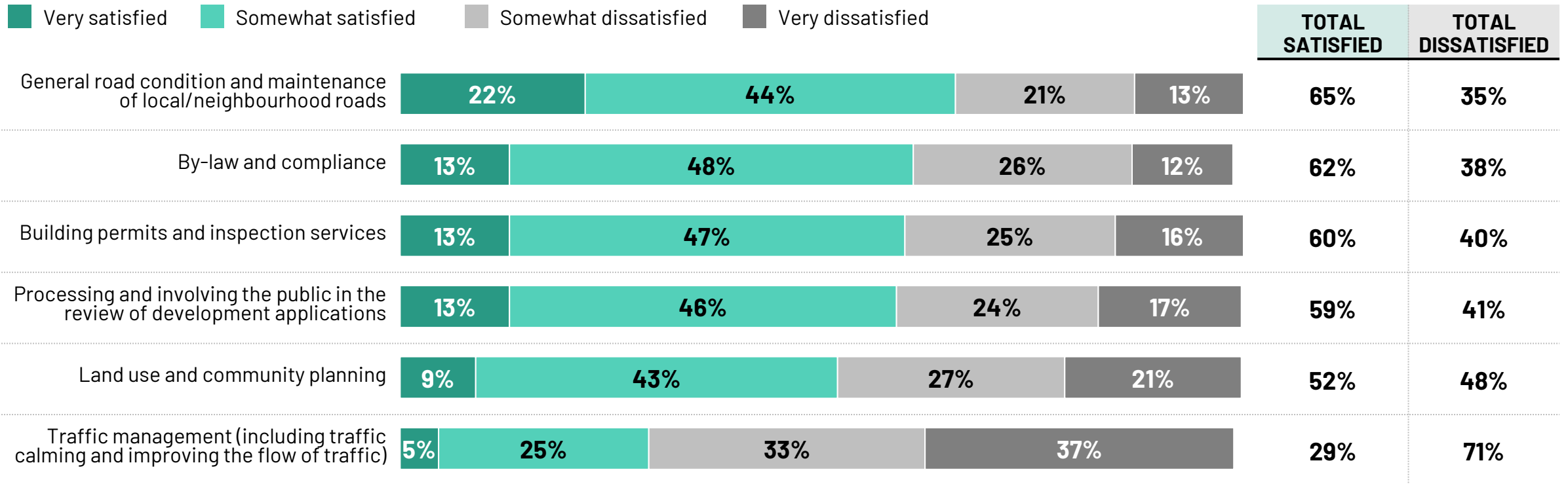
Q4. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the performance of the City of Vaughan on each of the following services?

Satisfaction with the City's Performance (4/4)

More than half of residents are satisfied with general road condition and maintenance of local/neighborhood roads (65%) and by-law and compliance (62%), with more than half satisfied with processing and involving the public in the review of development applications (59%) and land use and community planning (52%).

Seven in ten (71%) are dissatisfied with traffic management (including traffic calming and improving the flow of traffic), with only 29% satisfied with this service.

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH THE PERFORMANCE OF THE CITY OF VAUGHAN FOR DIFFERENT SERVICES



Note: Data labels 1% or less were removed.

Base: All respondents excluding don't know. n=varies

Q4. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the performance of the City of Vaughan on each of the following services?

Satisfaction with the City's Performance by Ward

	TOTAL SATISFIED (VERY + SOMEWHAT)				
	WARD 1	WARD 2	WARD 3	WARD 4	WARD 5
Arts and culture (e.g. Canada Day event, Concerts in the Parks)	87%	80%	77%	76%	82%
Building permits and inspection services	68%	56%	53%	60%	67%
Business support services	78%	86%	63%	71%	80%
By-law and compliance	72%	56%	55%	63%	71%
Cycling infrastructure and bike lanes	68%	78%	59%	64%	72%
End of driveway snow removal (windrow clearing)	67%	76%	68%	71%	65%
Financial services, such as property tax bill, bill payments and City accounting	71%	71%	61%	67%	71%
Fire services	98%	99%	93%	97%	98%
Garbage, recycling, organics and yard waste collection	89%	82%	87%	85%	88%
General road condition and maintenance of local/neighbourhood roads	63%	69%	60%	65%	68%
Land use and community planning	52%	53%	44%	52%	59%
Local public libraries	92%	94%	92%	96%	95%
Maintenance of parks and greenspace	79%	84%	79%	76%	82%
Off-road multi-use/natural trails (e.g. Humber River Trail, Bartley Smith Greenway Trail)	84%	88%	81%	78%	89%
Online services	88%	86%	80%	79%	81%
Parks development (including quantity and quality of playgrounds, sports fields and trails)	88%	79%	74%	64%	80%
Processing and involving the public in the review of development applications	56%	59%	53%	65%	63%
Recreation and fitness facilities (including community centres, arenas and pools)	90%	86%	77%	73%	86%
Recreation and fitness service programs	87%	81%	75%	75%	80%
Road snow removal	80%	83%	79%	81%	77%
Service Vaughan, which is the contact centre for Vaughan residents to call and email for questions about City services	73%	76%	78%	78%	77%
Sidewalk snow removal	77%	83%	80%	78%	75%
Sidewalks and street lighting	80%	84%	77%	82%	80%
Traffic management (including traffic calming and improving the flow of traffic)	36%	27%	20%	32%	37%
Vaughan Animal Services	81%	76%	76%	81%	67%

Base: All respondents excluding don't know (n=varies)
 Q4. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the performance of the City of Vaughan on each of the following services?

Satisfaction with the City's Performance Compared to Norms

Satisfaction with the City of Vaughan's performance is similar to other municipalities for most services. Satisfaction is higher among city of Vaughan residents for fire services (+2 points) road snow removal services (+7 points) and local public libraries (+3 points). City of Vaughan residents however show lower satisfaction for maintenance of parks and greenspace (satisfaction -10 points compared to other municipalities), by-law and compliance (-14 points), land use and community planning (-15 points), traffic management (-24 points).

**Note that the majority of municipal norms are conducted via a telephone survey methodology so caution should be used when comparing due to coverage and mode bias that may exist.*

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH THE PERFORMANCE OF THE CITY OF VAUGHAN FOR DIFFERENT SERVICES COMPARED TO NORMS

TOTAL SATISFIED (VERY + SOMEWHAT)		
	Normative Results	City of Vaughan Results
Fire services	95%	97%
Local public libraries	91%	94%
Garbage, recycling, organics and yard waste collection	89%	86%
Off-road multi-use/natural trails	89%	84%
Recreation and fitness facilities	88%	81%
Arts and culture	83%	80%
Maintenance of parks and greenspace	90%	80%
Road snow removal	73%	80%
Recreation and fitness service programs	85%	79%
Vaughan Animal Services	84%	75%
Cycling infrastructure and bike lanes	66%	68%
General road condition and maintenance of local roads	72%	65%
By-law and compliance	76%	62%
Building permits and inspection services	69%	60%
Land use and community planning	67%	52%
Traffic management	53%	29%

Base: All respondents (n=1102)

Q4. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the performance of the City of Vaughan on each of the following services?

Action Grid

A Correlation with Performance versus Satisfaction Action Grid was plotted to better understand the City of Vaughan's perceived strengths and areas for improvement. This analysis simultaneously displays the correlation between overall satisfaction with the City's services and how well the City is seen to be performing (e.g. satisfaction) in each area.

Action Grids are a relative type of analysis, meaning that services are scored relative to one another. As such, there will always be areas of strength and areas for improvement.

Individual services would fall into one of four categories:

- **Primary Strengths** are services with high perceived performance and higher impact on overall satisfaction. Efforts should be made to maintain high levels of satisfaction with these key services.
- **Primary Areas for Improvement** are services with lower perceived performance and higher impact on overall satisfaction. Efforts should be made to improve satisfaction in these areas to increase overall satisfaction scores.
- **Secondary Strengths** are services with relatively high satisfaction ratings but lower impact on overall satisfaction. These services can be considered as 'low maintenance.' While maintaining positive perceptions would be beneficial, they are of lower priority than other areas.
- **Secondary Areas for Improvement** are services relatively low in both satisfaction and impact on overall satisfaction. Depending on available resources and priorities, the City may or may not decide to make a targeted effort to improve performance in these lower priority areas. These could also be considered longer-term action items to be addressed when resources permit.

Action Grid Summary

Analyzing service performance versus overall satisfaction shows that the City has six primary strengths and eleven secondary strengths. Primary strengths include:

- *Service Vaughan*
- *Business support services*
- *Online services*
- *Maintenance of parks and greenspace*
- *Recreation and fitness facilities*
- *Sidewalks and street lighting*

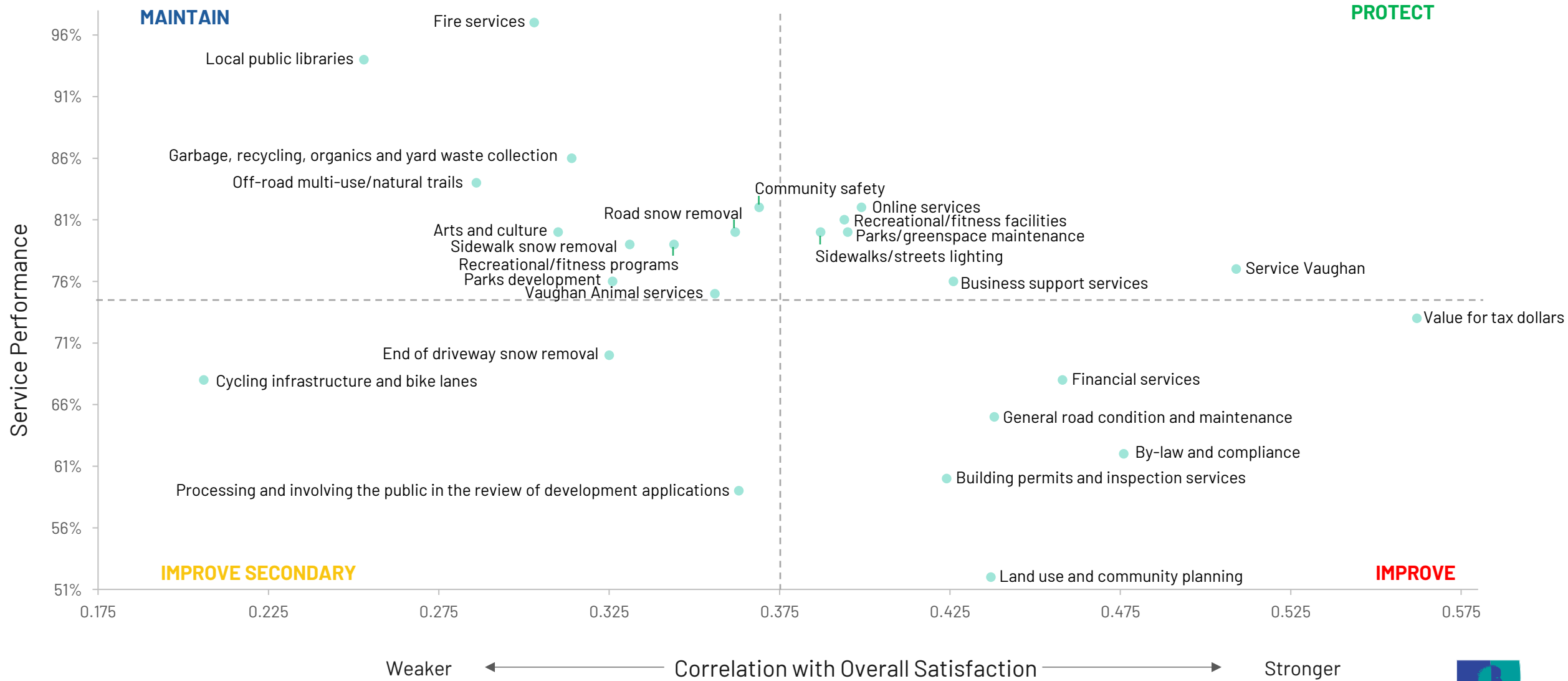
The City's secondary strengths include community safety, road snow removal, Vaughan Animal Services, recreation and fitness service programs, sidewalk snow removal, parks development, garbage, recycling, organics and yard waste collection, arts and culture, fire services, off-road multi-use/natural trails and local public libraries.

There are six opportunities for improvement. These are:

- *Value for tax dollars*
- *By-law and compliance*
- *Financial services*
- *General road condition and maintenance*
- *Land use and community planning*
- *Building permits and inspection services*

Processing and involving the public in the review of development applications, end of driveway snow removal, traffic management and cycling infrastructure and bike lanes are secondary areas of improvement.

Key Drivers for Satisfaction with City Services



3.3 CONTACT WITH CITY OF VAUGHAN AND ITS EMPLOYEES

Contact with the City of Vaughan

Almost half (48%) of residents say they have communicated with the City of Vaughan or one of its employees in the past 12 months, similar to other municipalities (44%).

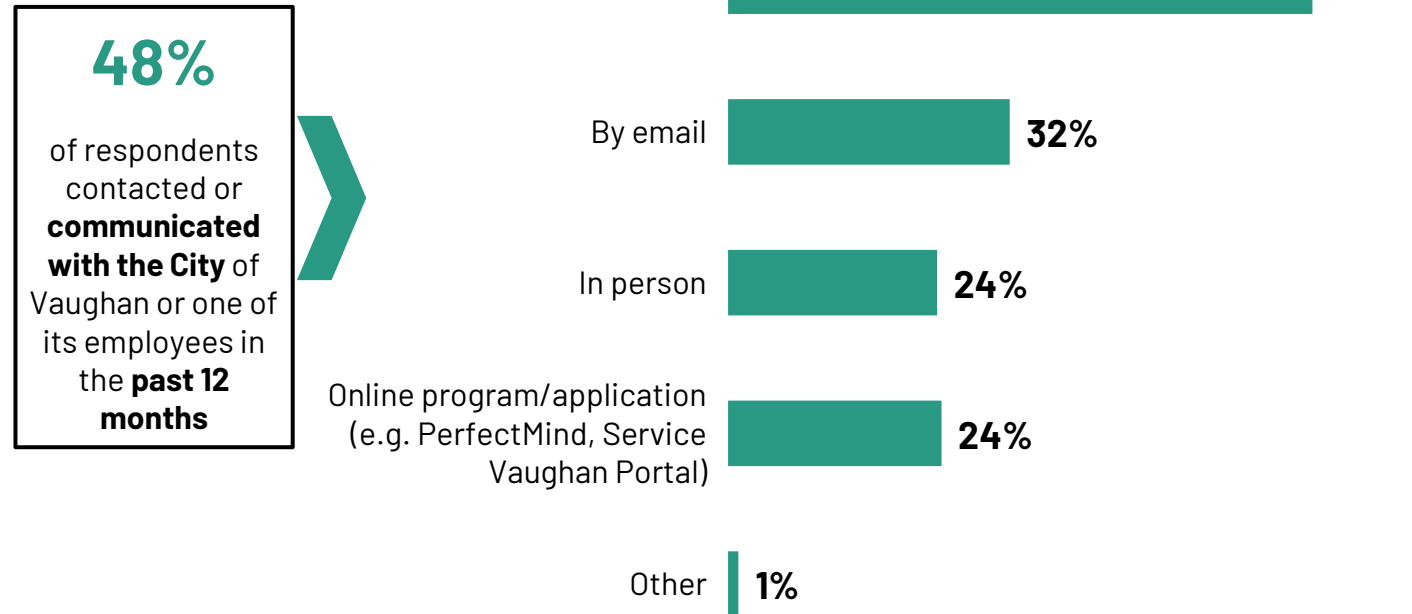
Just under two-thirds (65%) of those who have contacted the City in the past 12 months have done so by phone, followed by under one-third (32%) who chose email.

Just under a quarter (24%) contacted the City in person, or via an online program/application.

Those with children under 18 in their household (59%) are more likely to have contacted the City in the past 12 months than those without children under 18 (44%).

Residents aged 35-54 (57%), are more likely to have contacted the City than those aged 18-34 (41%) or 55+ (45%).

CONTACTED CITY OF VAUGHAN IN PAST 12 MONTHS AND METHOD OF CONTACT



Base: All respondents (n=1102)

Q5. In the last 12 months, have you contacted or communicated with the City of Vaughan or one of its employees?

Base: Had contact in past 12 months (n=533)

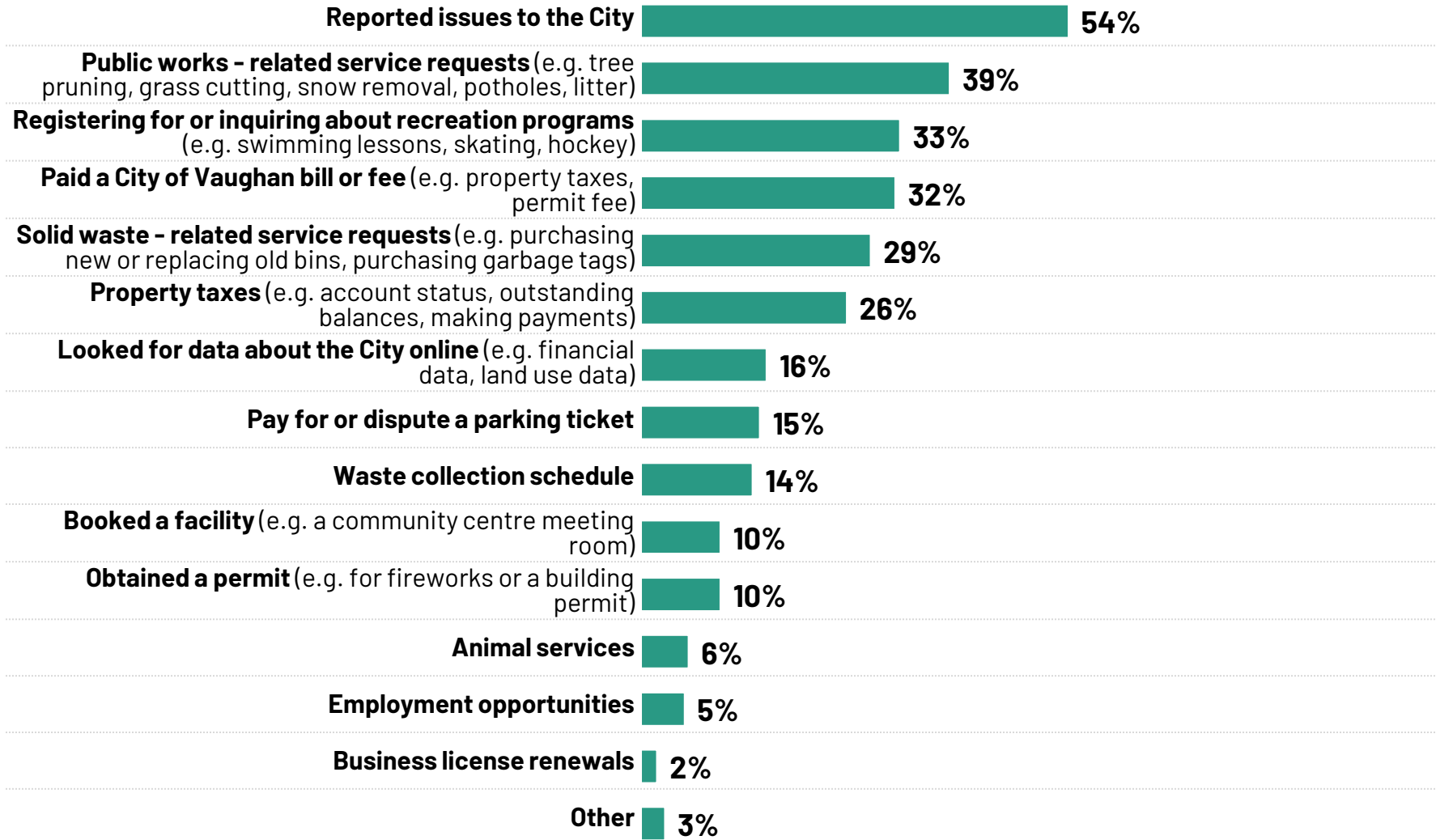
Q6. How did you contact or communicate with the City of Vaughan or one of its employees?

Reasons for Contact

Among those who have contacted the City of Vaughan in the past 12 months, the main reason was to report issues to the City (54%), followed by public works –related service requests (39%), registering or inquiring about recreation programs (33%) or paying of a City of Vaughan bill or fee (32%).

Lower on the list of reasons for contacting the City are to book a facility (10%), obtain a permit (10%) and for employment opportunities (5%).

REASONS FOR CONTACTING THE CITY OF VAUGHAN OR ONE OF ITS EMPLOYEES IN PAST 12 MONTHS



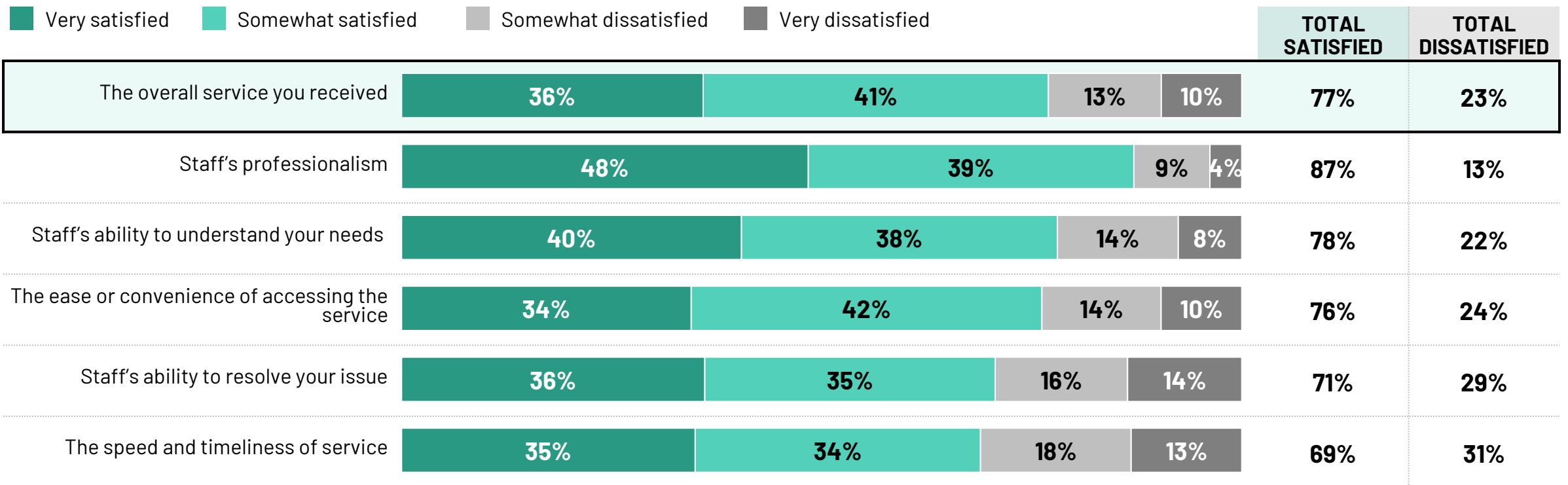
Base: Has contacted or communicated with the City of Vaughan or one of its employees in the past 12 months (n=533)
 Q7. In the last 12 months, for which of the following reasons have you contacted the City of Vaughan or one of its employees?
 Q7a. Have you contacted the City for any other reason?

Satisfaction with Contact Experience

Over three-quarters (77%) of those who contacted the City in the past 12 months say they are satisfied with the overall service they received. This is slightly lower than other municipalities, which report eight in ten (82%) overall satisfaction with the service received (17% dissatisfied).

Satisfaction is high for all measures; particularly staff’s professionalism (87%), staff’s ability to understand their needs (78%) and the ease or convenience of accessing the service (76%). Fewer were satisfied with staff’s ability to resolve their issue (71%) and the timeliness of service (69%).

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH THE PERFORMANCE THE CITY OF VAUGHAN DOES FOR EACH SERVICE



Base: Respondents answering (n=varies 497-515)
 Q8. When thinking about your experience contacting the City, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with each of the following?

3.4 FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Value For Tax Dollars

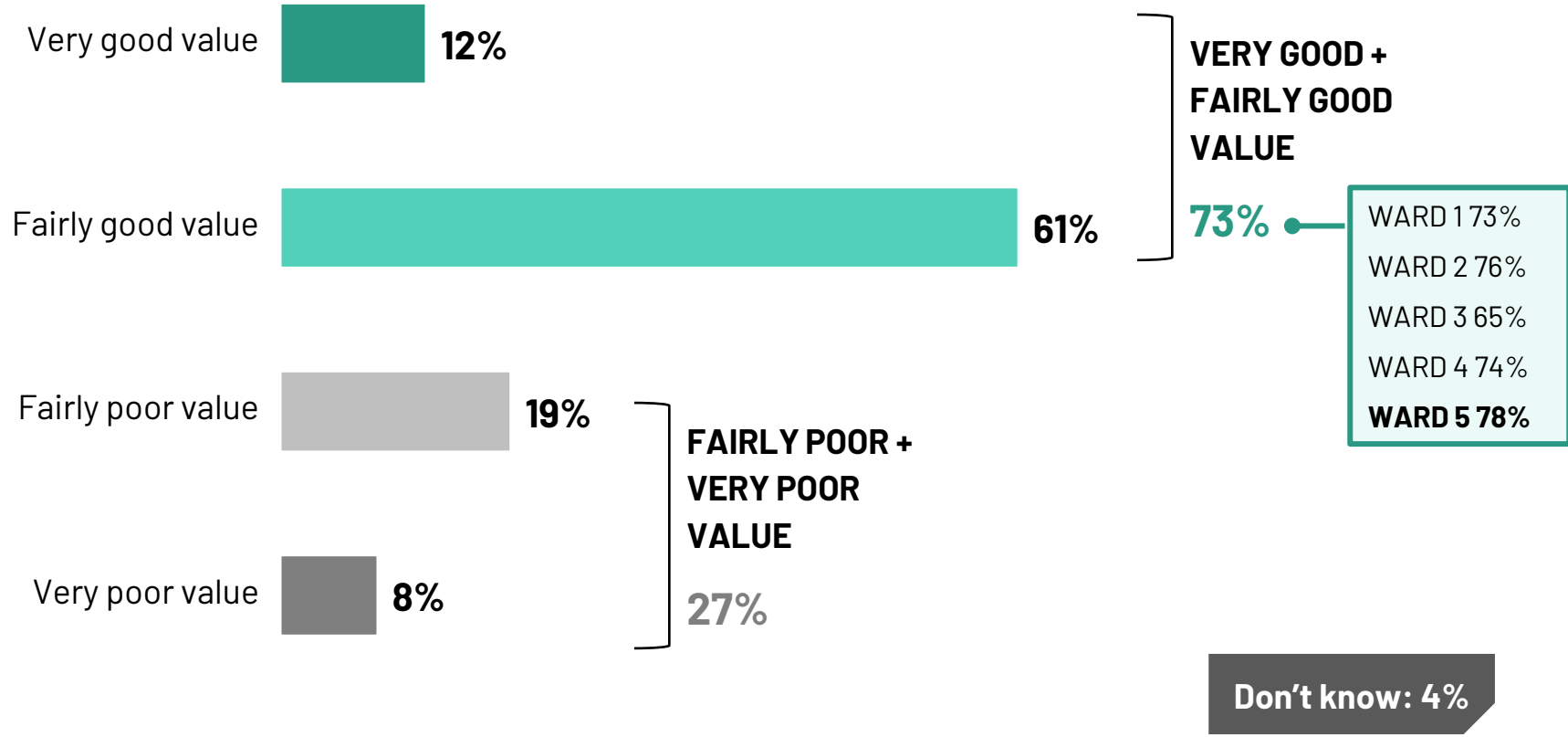
Thinking about all the programs and services they receive from the City of Vaughan, almost three-quarters (73%) say overall they get “very good” or “fairly good” value for their tax dollars, with 12% saying “very good value.”

Over a quarter (27%) say they get “poor” value for their tax dollars, with 8% saying “very poor” value.

This is slightly lower than other municipalities, where 76% say they get “good” or “very good” value for their tax dollars (“very good” value 17%, “fairly good” value 59%) and 22% say they get “poor” or “very poor” value (“fairly poor” value 16%, “very poor” value 6%).

4% say they do not know whether the overall value for their tax dollars is good or poor.

OVERALL VALUE FOR CITY OF VAUGHAN TAX DOLLARS



Base: All respondents (n=1102)

Q9. Thinking about all the programs and services you receive from the City of Vaughan, would you say that overall you get good value or poor value for your tax dollars?

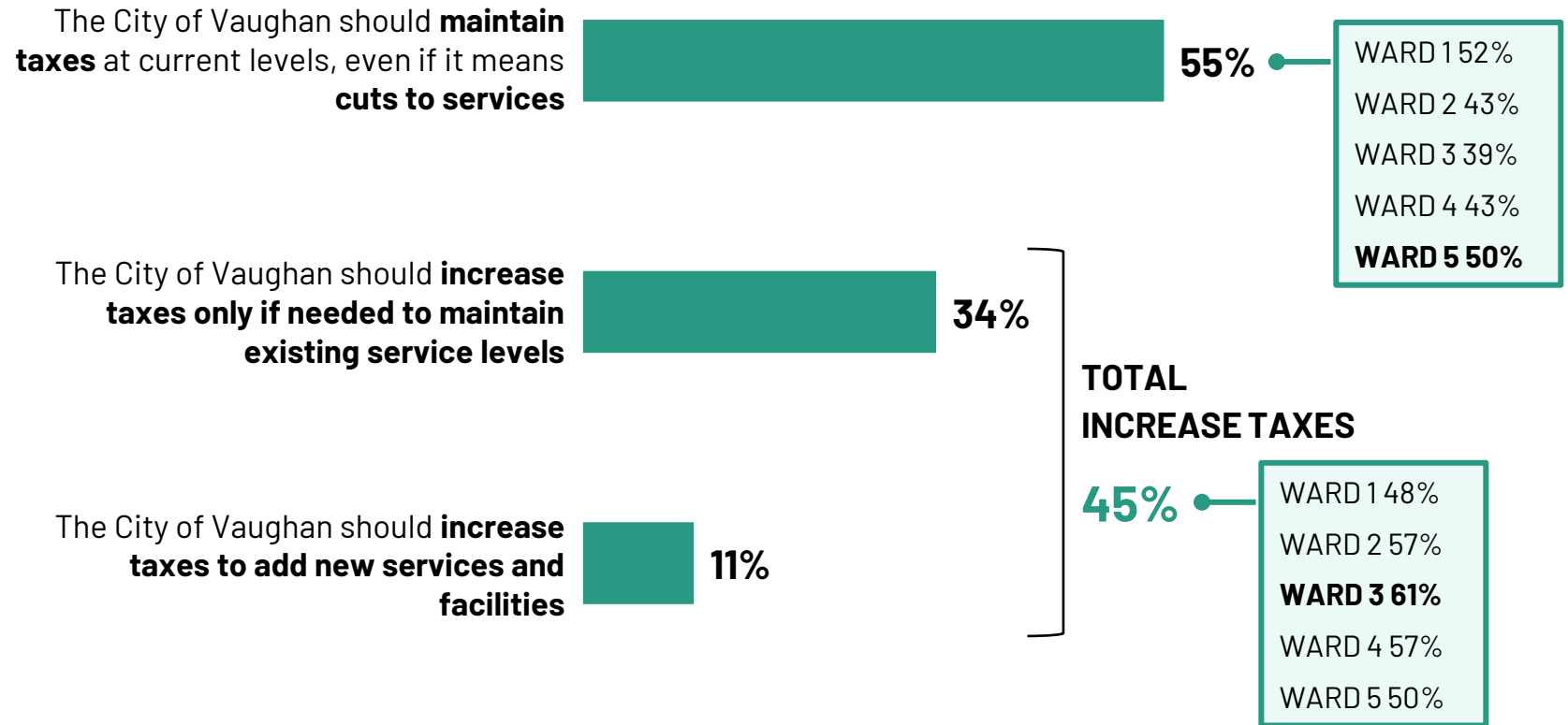
Perspective on Increasing or Decreasing Municipal Taxes

Over half of residents (55)% think the City of Vaughan should maintain taxes at current levels even if it means cut to services.

Overall, over four in ten (45%) think taxes should be increased:

- Over a third (34%) think the City of Vaughan should increase taxes only if needed to maintain existing service levels.
- Just over one in ten (11%) – the least popular opinion among residents – think the City of Vaughan should increase taxes to add new services and facilities.

MUNICIPAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FUNDED THROUGH PROPERTY TAXES. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING PERSPECTIVES IS CLOSEST TO YOUR VIEW?



Base: All respondents (n=1102)
 Q10. Municipal programs and services are primarily funded through municipal property taxes. Which of the following perspectives is closest to your view?

Funding City Services

To ensure the City has enough revenue to pay for expected service levels and programs, almost half (48%) would prefer to increase user fees, while only 2% would prefer to increase property taxes.

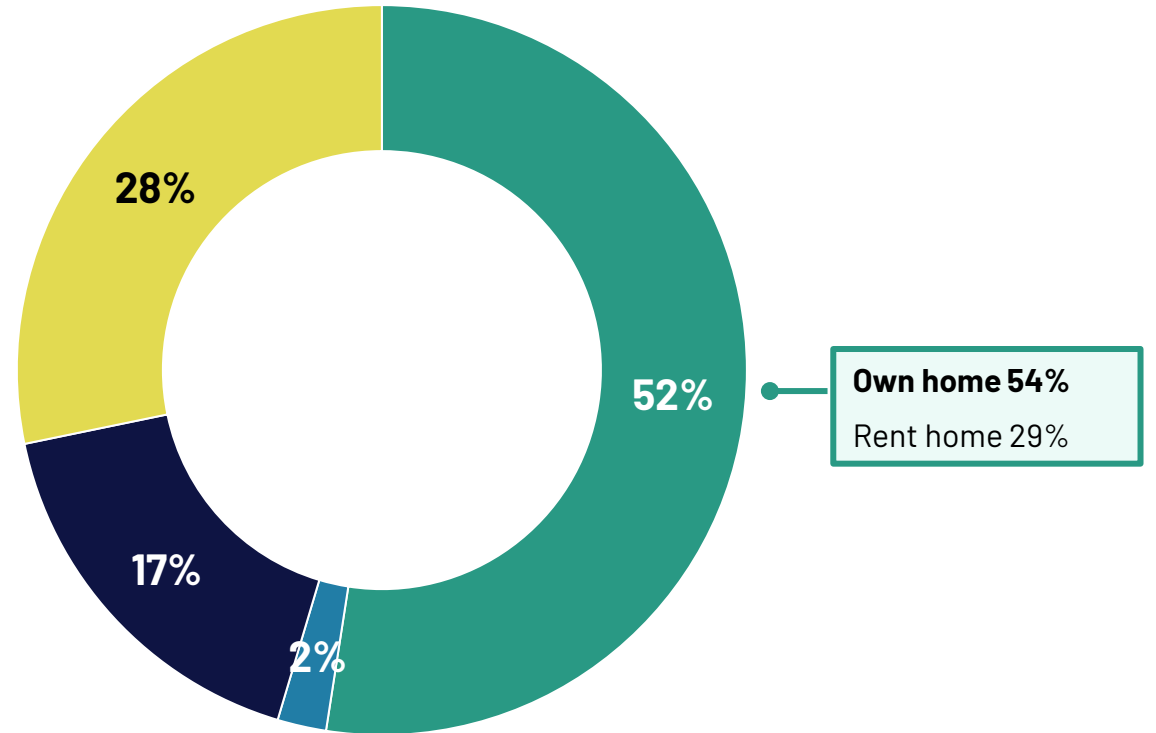
Over a quarter (26%) would prefer no increase to user fees nor property taxes but would rather maintain user fees and property taxes at their current levels even if it means cuts to services.

16% prefer a combination of both increased user fees and property taxes, while 8% don't know.

Residents who own their home (54%) prefer to increase user fees compared to those who rent (29%).

INCREASE USER FEES OR INCREASE PROPERTY TAXES ...

- Increased user fees
- Increased property taxes
- A combination of both
- Neither – maintain user fees and property taxes at current levels, even if it means cuts to services



Base: All respondents (n=1014) Excluding don't know.

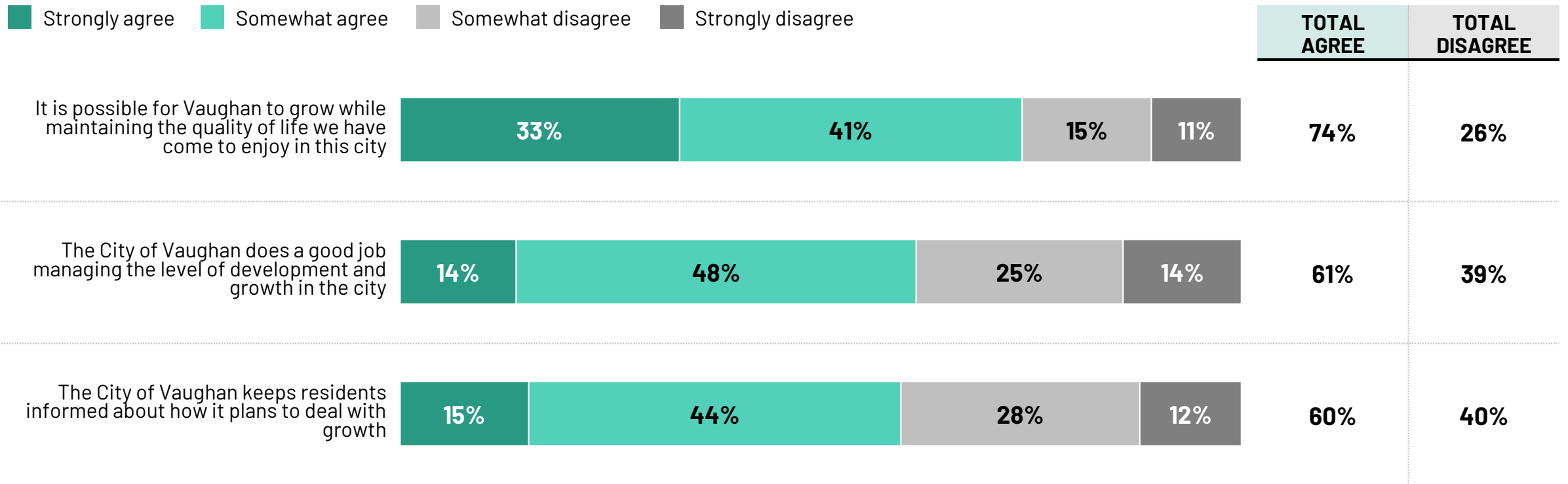
Q11. To ensure the City has enough revenue to pay for expected service levels and programs, would your preference be to increase property taxes or increase user fees?

3.5 PLANNING GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Perceptions of Growth and Development Management

Almost three-quarters (74%) think it is possible for Vaughan to grow while maintaining the quality of life they have come to enjoy in the city, with a third (33%) strongly agreeing with this. Six ten (61%) think the City does a good job of managing the level of development and growth in Vaughan, and a similar proportion think the City keeps residents informed about how it plans to deal with growth, although four in ten (40%) disagree with this.

LEVEL OF AGREEMENT WITH GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT STATEMENTS FOR THE CITY OF VAUGHAN



Base: All respondents (n=1102)
 Q12. The statements below are about growth and development in the city of Vaughan. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each statement?

3.6 TRANSPORTATION & ROAD SAFETY

Transportation and Road Safety Issues

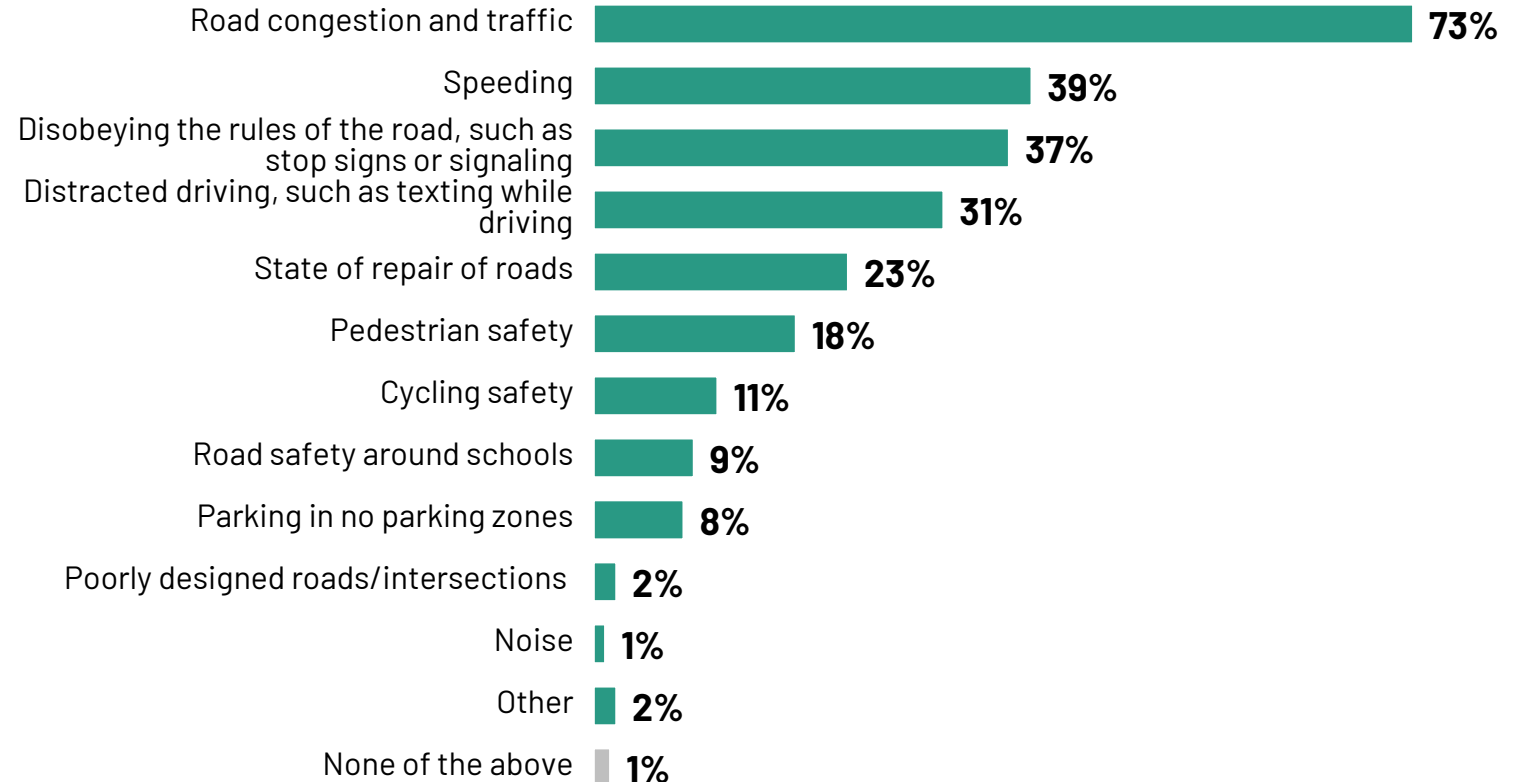
When asked which of the following are the top transportation and road safety issues in their community, seven in ten (72%) say road congestion and traffic.

This is followed by speeding (38%), disobeying the rules of the road (36%) and distracted driving (31%). The state of the roads is a top issue for almost a quarter of residents (23%).

Safety is further down the list, with a smaller proportion saying the top issues are pedestrian safety (17%), cycling safety (10%) and road safety around schools (9%).

Those in Ward 3 are more likely to cite road congestion and traffic as the top transportation and road safety issue (82%), compared to those in Ward 5 (65%).

TOP TRANSPORTATION AND ROAD SAFETY ISSUES IN VAUGHAN



Base: All respondents (n=1102)

Q13. Which of the following would you say are the top transportation and road safety issues in your community? Please select up to three options.

3.7 COMMUNITY SAFETY

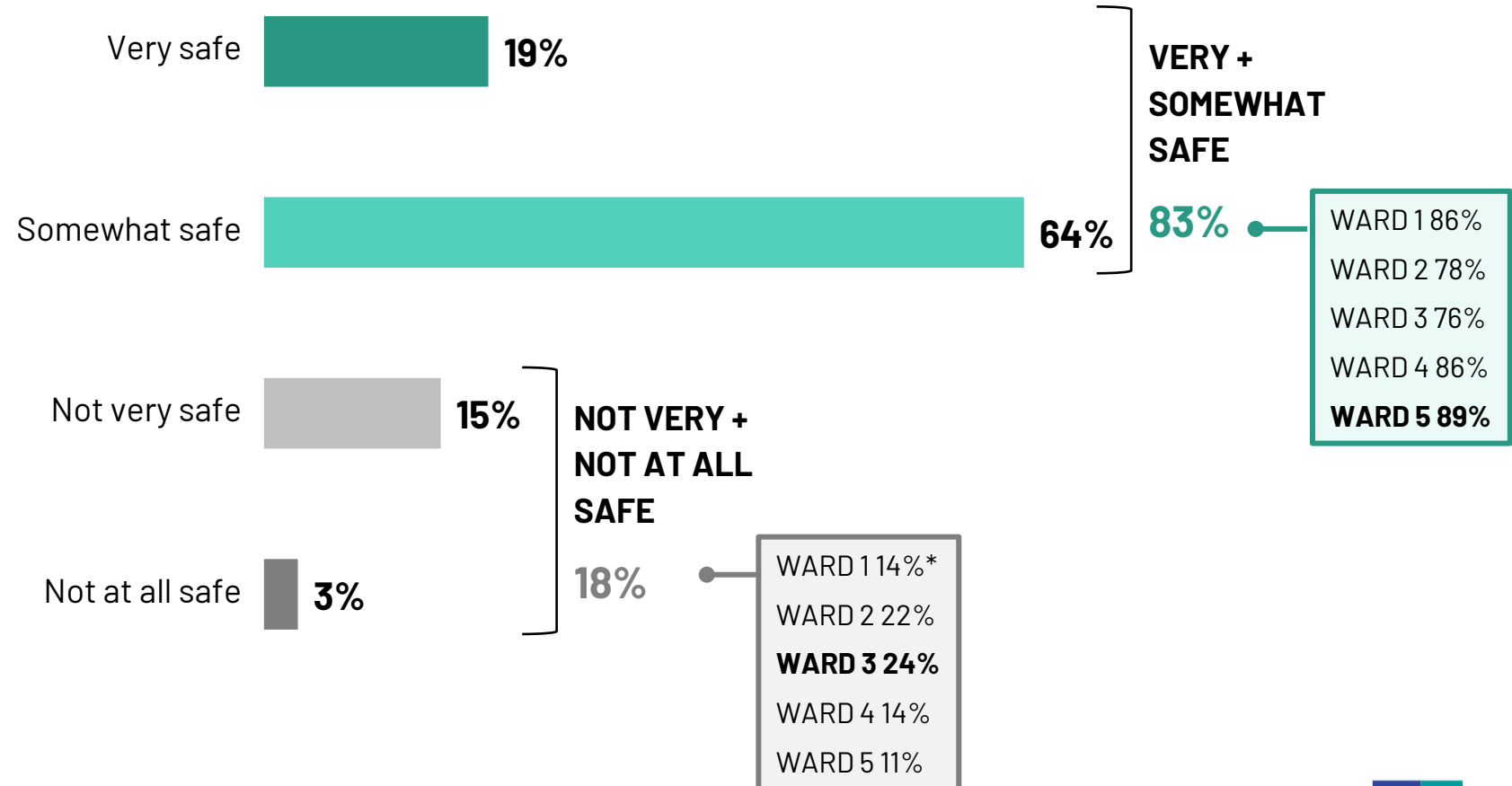
Community Safety

Overall, over eight in ten (83%) of residents would describe the city of Vaughan as safe, with almost two in ten (19%) saying it is “very safe” and almost two-thirds saying it is “somewhat safe.”

Almost two in ten (18%) would describe Vaughan as unsafe, with 15% saying “not very safe” and 3% saying it is “not at all safe.”

This is slightly lower than other municipalities, where 38% say they feel “very safe,” 52% say they feel “somewhat safe,” 8% say they feel “not very safe” and 1% “not at all safe.”

COMMUNITY SAFETY IN THE CITY OF VAUGHAN



Base: All respondents (n=1102)
 Q14. Overall, how would you describe community safety in the city of Vaughan?
 *Low base size - interpret with caution

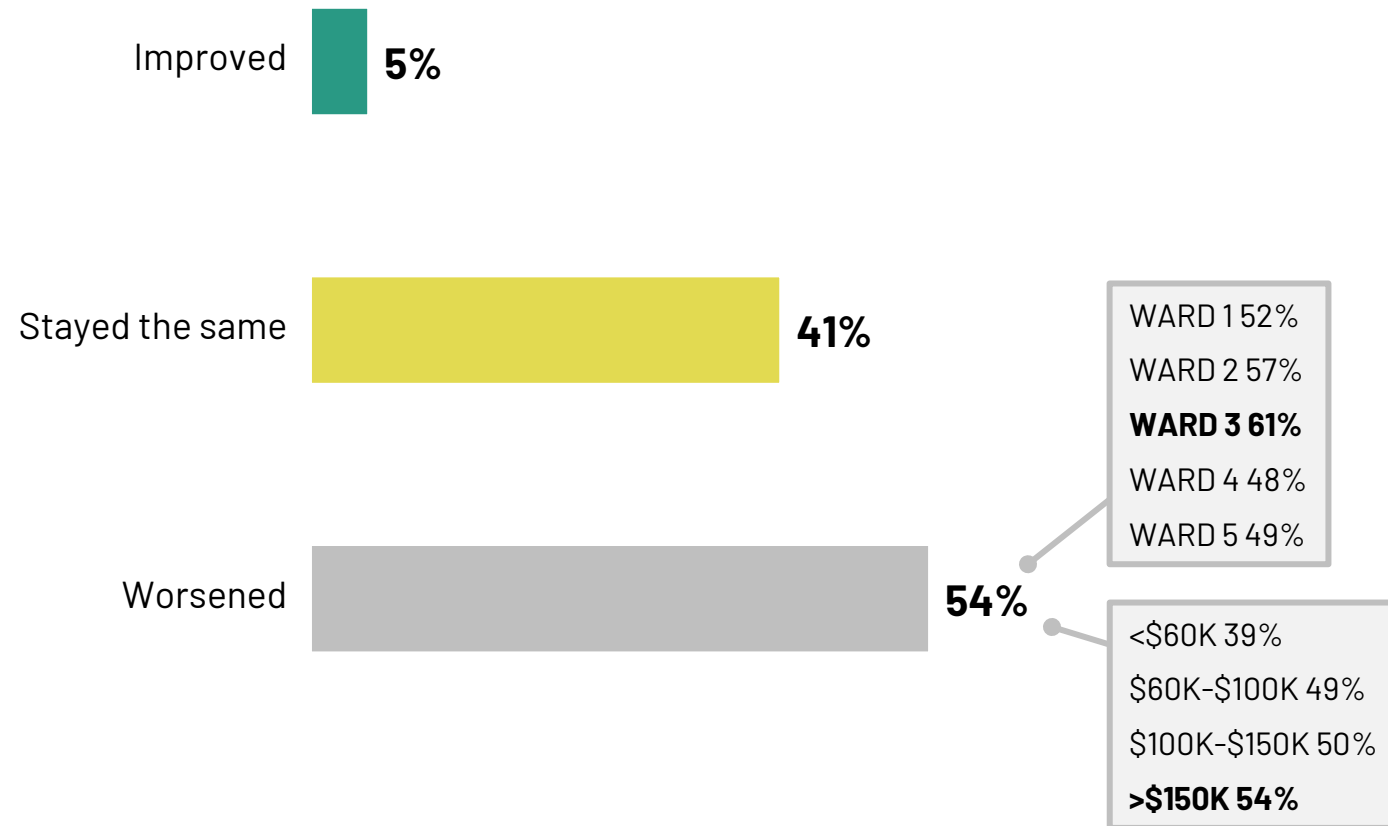
Community Safety Trends

When asked if they feel community safety in city of Vaughan has changed over the past three years, over half of residents (54%) said community safety has worsened, while four in ten (41%) say it has stayed the same and only 5% think it has improved.

Residents who are more likely to say community safety has worsened over the past three years:

- have a higher household income (over \$150,000) compared to those with less than \$60,000.
- own (55%) rather than rent (33%) their home.
- live in Ward 3 compared to Wards 4 or 5.

COMMUNITY SAFETY TRENDS IN VAUGHAN OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS



Base: All respondents (n=1102)
 Q15. Do you feel community safety in city of Vaughan has improved, stayed the same or worsened over the past three years?

3.8

PUBLIC INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

Receiving City Information

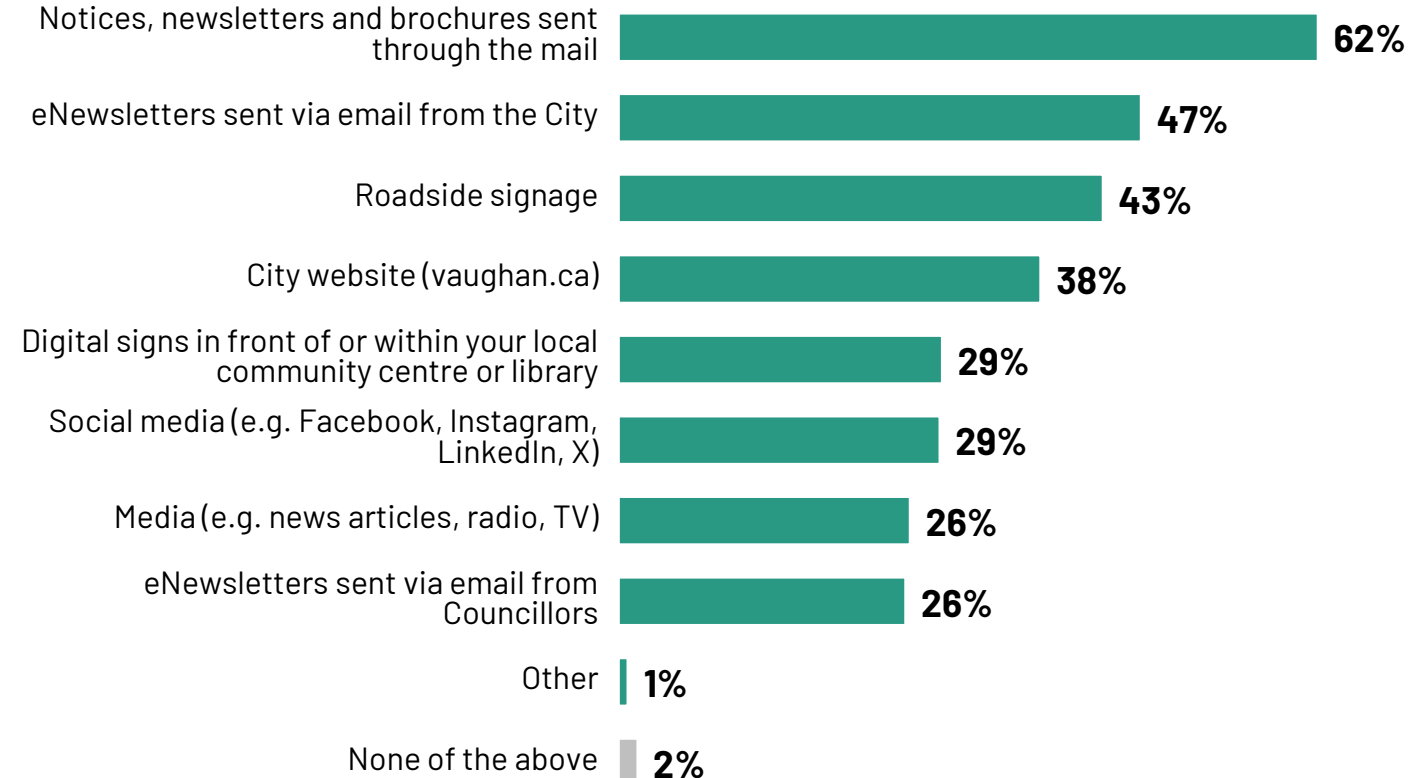
Over six in ten (62%) residents say they prefer to receive communication in from the City of Vaughan via notices, newsletters and brochures sent through mail.

Almost half (47%) prefer eNewsletters sent via email from the City, while over four in ten (43%) prefer roadside signage. Just under four in ten (38%) prefer to receive information from the City's website (vaughan.ca).

Less popular methods are via digital signs in front or within their local community centre or library (29%) and social media (29%).

Residents in Ward 1 are most likely to prefer the road signage (54%), while Ward 5 residents are most likely to prefer eNewsletters. Residents in all wards are mostly likely to prefer information sent via mail.

PREFERRED METHODS FOR RECEIVING INFORMATION FROM THE CITY OF VAUGHAN



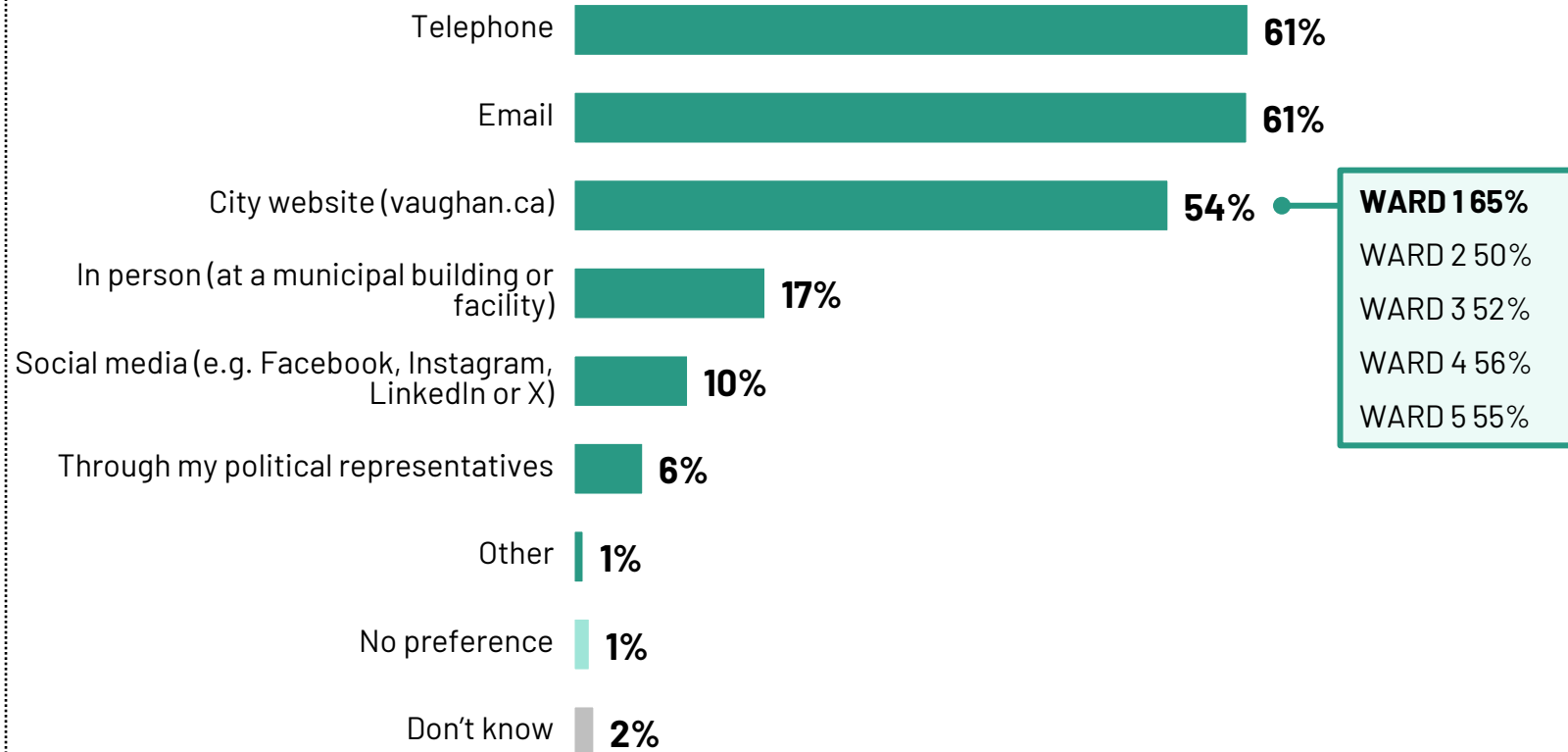
Contacting the City of Vaughan

When asked their preferred method to contact the City, over six in ten said via telephone (61%) or email (61%).

Over half prefer to contact the City using the City's website vaughan.ca (54%).

Less preferred methods to contact the City are in person (17%), via social media (10%) and through their Councillor (6%).

PREFERRED METHODS OF CONTACTING THE CITY OF VAUGHAN



Base: All respondents (n=1102)
 Q17. What is your preferred method to contact the City of Vaughan for advice, information or to inquire about a service?

Communication Effectiveness

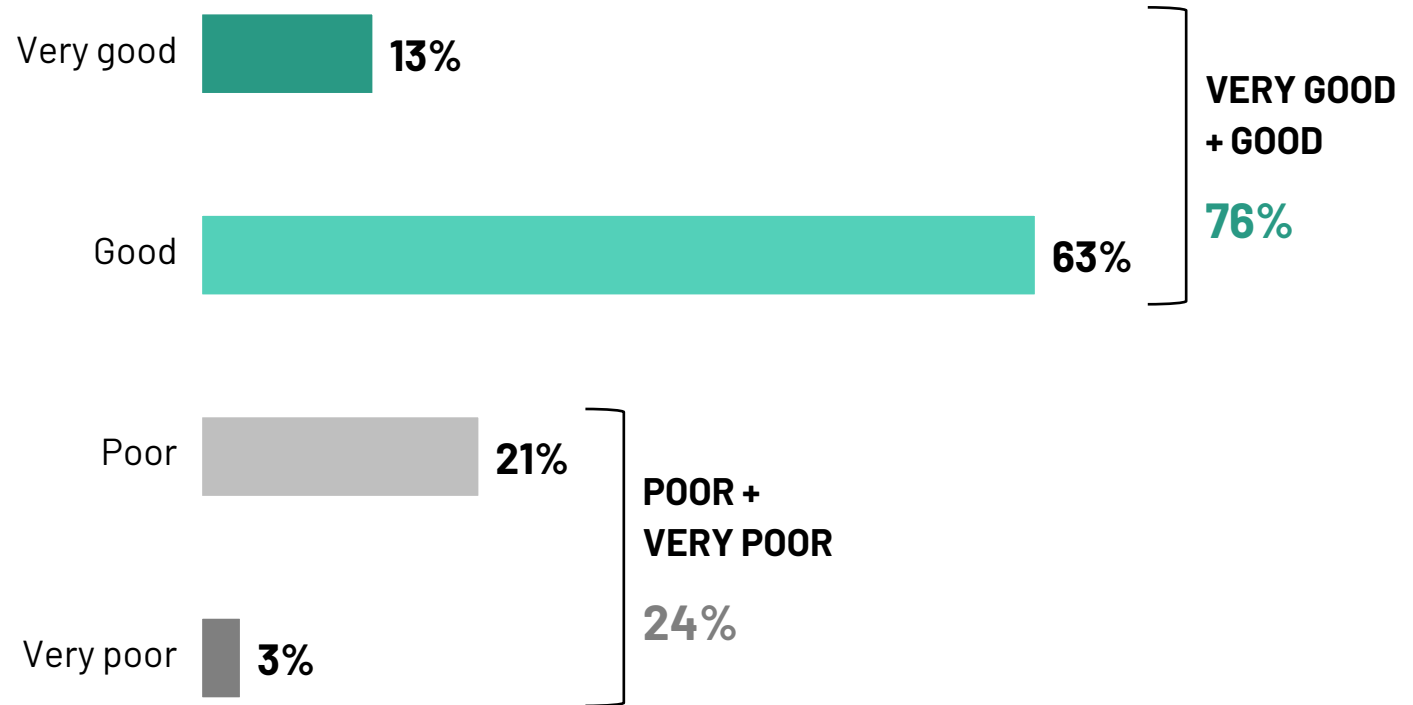
When asked how well the City of Vaughan communicates with residents about its services, programs, policies and plans, over three-quarters (76%) rate this as “good” or “very good.” With over six in ten saying “good” (63%).

Almost a quarter (24%) said communication from the City is “poor” or “very poor.”

Residents in Vaughan are slightly more likely to provide a higher rating for communications, compared to residents in other communities across the country:

- Very good + Good 70%
- Very poor + Poor 30%

RESIDENT PERCEPTIONS OF CITY OF Vaughan COMMUNICATION EFFECTIVENESS



Base: All respondents (n=1102)

Q18. Overall, how would you rate the City of Vaughan in terms of how well it communicates with residents about its services, programs, policies and plans?

3.9 CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

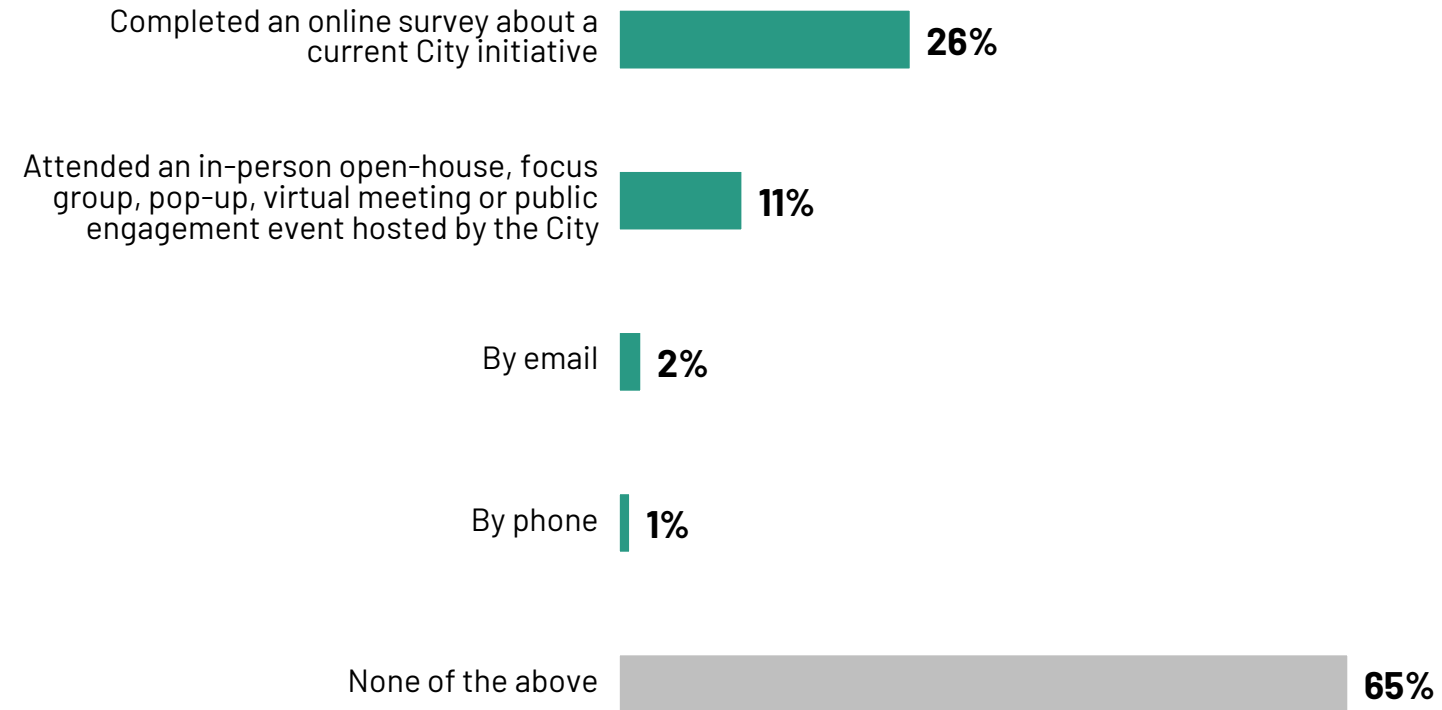
Participation in Citizen Engagement Activities

When asked if they have participated in an engagement activity in the past 12 months, over a quarter (26%) said they have completed an online survey about a City initiative, and one in ten (11%) attended an in-person open-house, focus group, pop-up, virtual meeting or public engagement event hosted by the City.

Other ways residents say they have provided feedback to the City are by email (2%) or by phone (1%).

Almost two-thirds (65%) say they have not participated in an engagement activity in the past 12 months in these ways.

PARTICIPATION IN A CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS

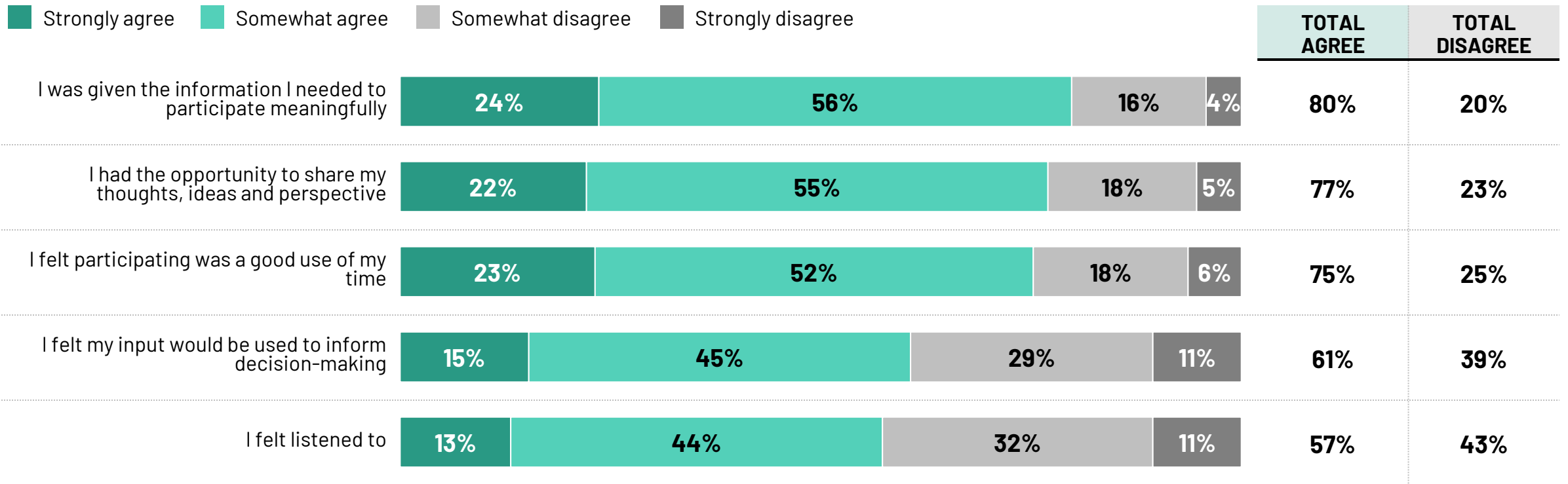


Base: All respondents (n=1100)
Q19. In the past 12 months, have you participated in one of the following engagement activities?

Perceptions of Citizen Engagement Activities Among Participants

Among those who took part in an engagement activity in the past 12 months, the majority say they were given the information they needed to participate meaningfully (80%), had the opportunity to share their thoughts, ideas and perspectives (77%) and felt participating was a good use of their time (75%). Slightly lower proportions feel their input would be used to inform decision-making (61%) and say they felt listened to (57%), although this is still felt among the majority of residents.

LEVEL OF AGREEMENT WITH CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

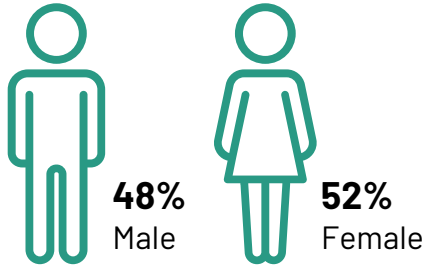


Base: If participated in engagement activity in past 12 months (n=391)
Q20. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

04 DEMOGRAPHICS

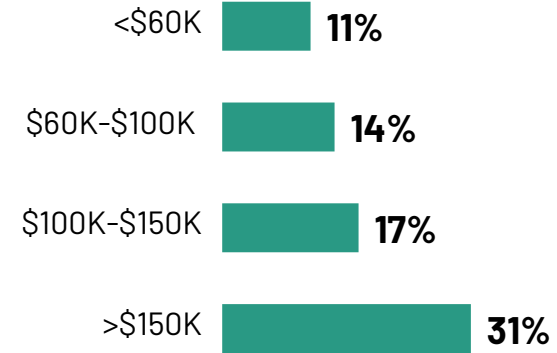
Demographics (1/4)

GENDER (n=1102)

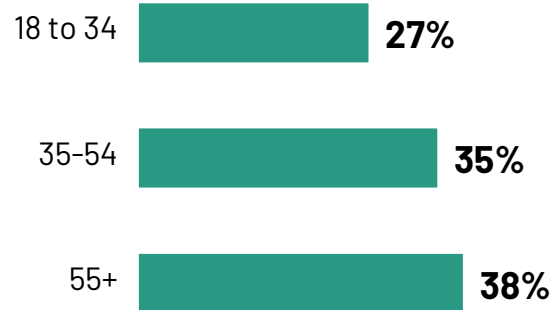


Another gender	<1%
Prefer not to say	3%

HOUSEHOLD INCOME (n=1102)



AGE (n=1102)



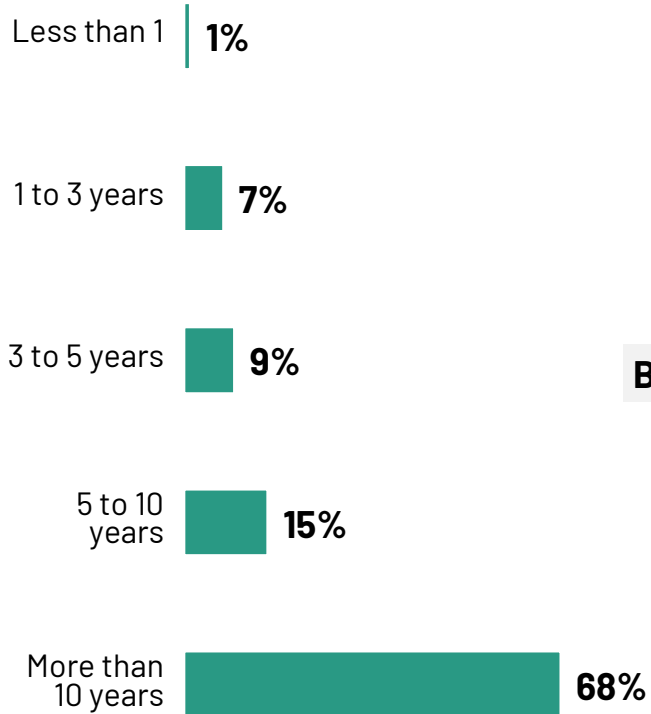
DISABILITY (n=757)



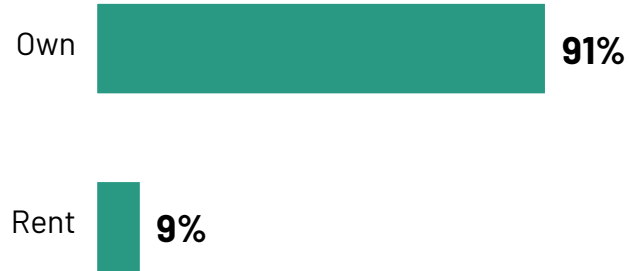
Base: Total answering

Demographics (2/4)

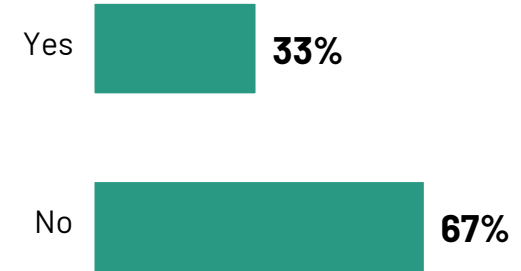
TIME LIVING IN VAUGHAN (n=1056)



HOME OWNERSHIP OR RENT (n=1048)



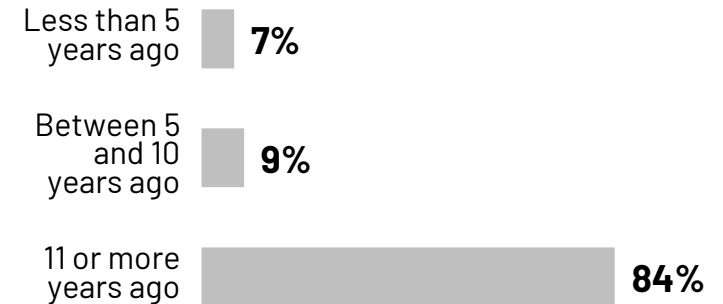
CHILDREN UNDER 18 IN HOUSEHOLD (n=1060)



BORN IN CANADA (n=891)



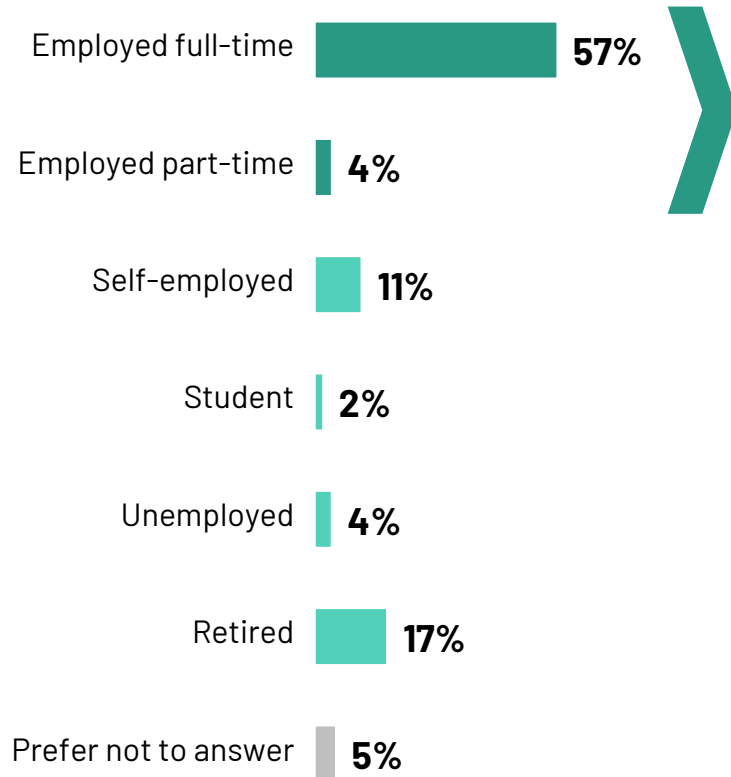
WHEN ARRIVED IN CANADA (n=429)



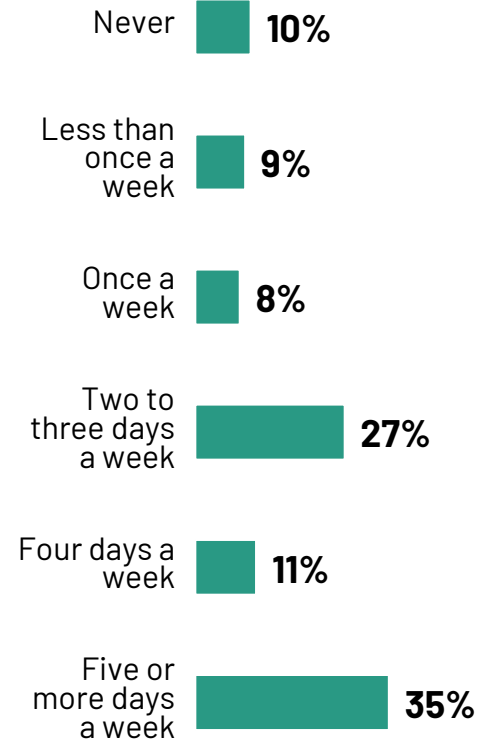
Base: Total answering

Demographics (3/4)

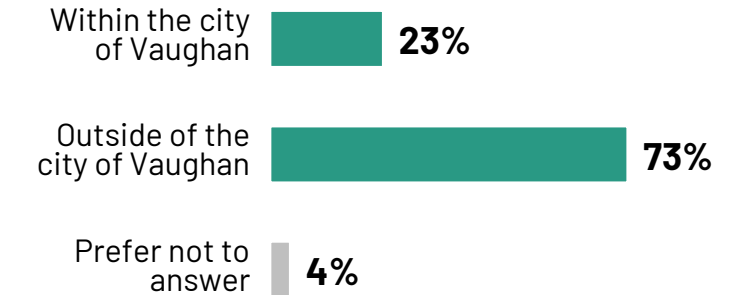
EMPLOYMENT (n=1102)



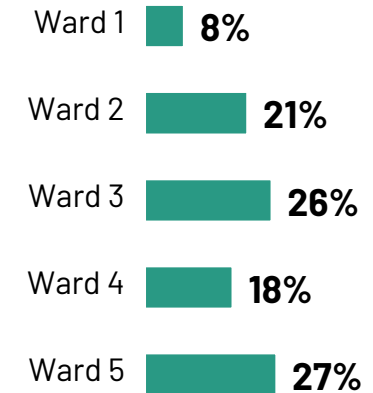
DAYS WORKED IN-OFFICE PER WEEK (n=791)



COMPANY LOCATION (n=791)



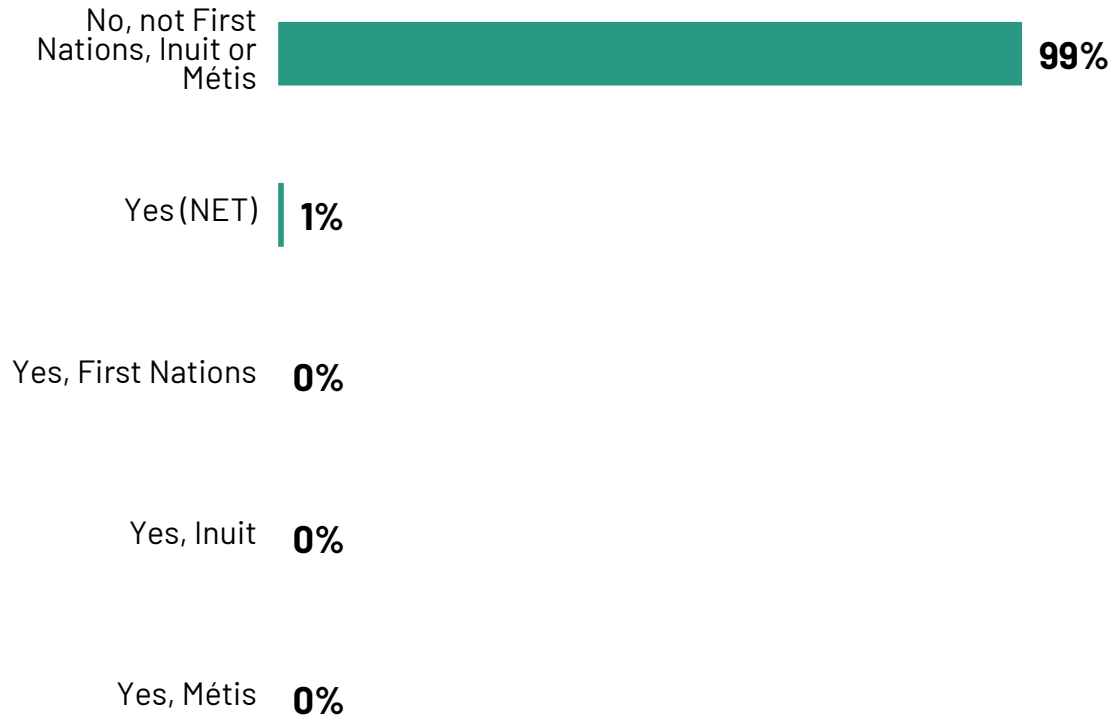
WARD (n=1102)



Base: Total answering

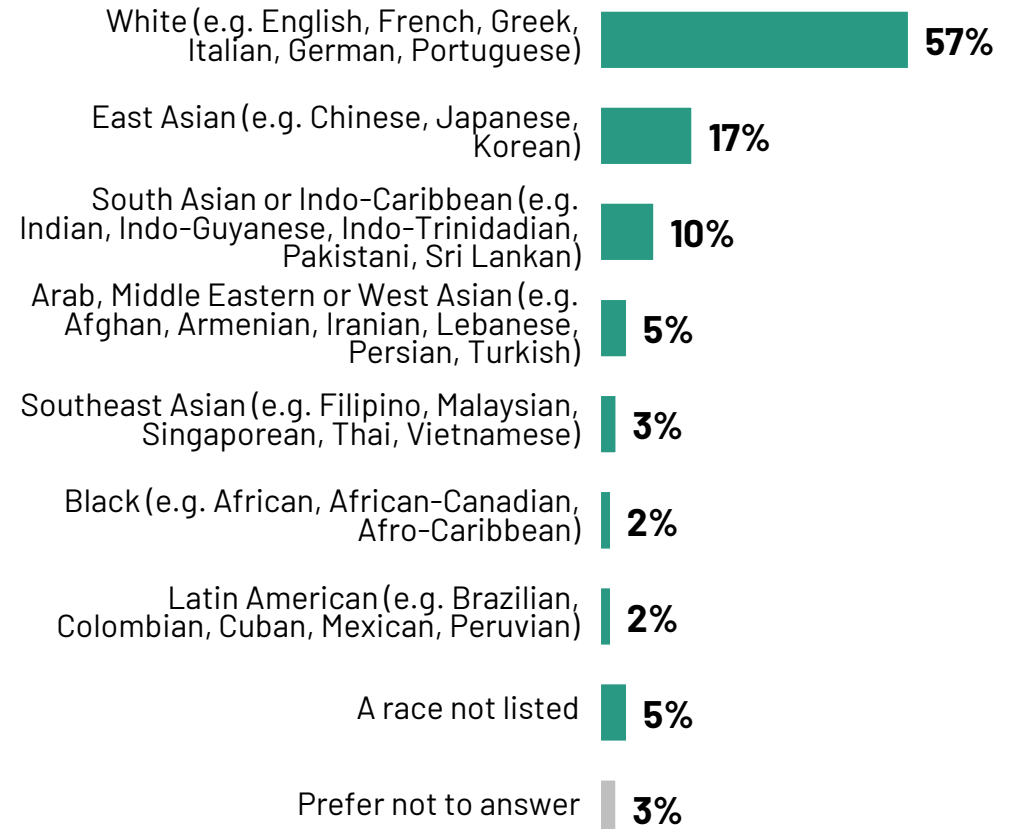
Demographics (4/4)

INDIGENOUS ANCESTRY (n=879)



Base: Total answering

RACIAL IDENTITY (n=852)



CITY OF VAUGHAN 2024 BUSINESS SURVEY

Final Report



Contents

01	Introduction		03	Detailed Findings		04	Profile of Businesses
	Objectives & Methodology	04		Experiences, Satisfaction & Awareness of Services	11		
	Invitation Letter	05		Digital Transformation & Purpose Driven Initiatives	22		
				Communication & Website Use	30		
				Accessibility	33		
02	Key Findings & Executive Summary						
	Key Findings	07					
	Executive Summary	08					

01 INTRODUCTION



Objectives & Methodology



BACKGROUND

The City of Vaughan commissioned the 2024 Business survey among business owners or decision-makers in local businesses. The purpose was to gather input from local businesses on their perception and use of municipal business services, and factors influencing business operations and growth, among other topics



OBJECTIVES

The Business Survey gathers input to help the City better understand the values and perceptions of local businesses on the economic climate, challenges and opportunities, as well as their overall satisfaction with the delivery of programs and services to support Vaughan's economic growth and development. The data collected will help determine how the City can improve its services for businesses.

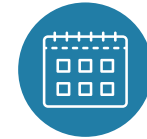


METHODOLOGY

Local businesses took part in the study in different ways:

1. 1,000 letters were sent to randomly selected local businesses asking them to take part in the survey. The letter provided additional information on the back page and included a unique access code.
2. Telephone interviews were also conducted among local businesses.
3. Emails were sent to local business email addresses with an open link to take part in the survey.
4. The City of Vaughan website included an open link for businesses to use to take part in the survey.

352 respondents took part in the study (n=276 via telephone and n=77 online).



FIELDING DATES

October 18 to December 10, 2024.



MARGIN OF ERROR

Margin of error is +/-5.2%, nineteen times out of twenty on overall sample.

Invitation Letter

Wednesday, Oct. 16, 2024



Dear business owner/decision maker,

Participate in Vaughan's 2024 Business Survey to help shape how the City of Vaughan can improve its services for businesses like yours.

The City of Vaughan is surveying local businesses to better understand the values, perceptions and challenges you face.

If you are a **decision-maker** for your business, we want to hear from you!

It only takes approximately 10 minutes to complete – in three easy steps:

1. Go to businessvaughan.ca

2. Enter your unique access code <XXXXXXXX>

3. Complete the survey by **Tuesday, Nov. 19, 2024**

This survey is confidential and voluntary. The Business Survey gathers input to help the City better understand the values and perceptions of local businesses on the economic climate, challenges and opportunities, as well as your overall satisfaction with the delivery of programs and services to support Vaughan's economic growth and development. The data collected will help determine how the City can continue to improve its services for businesses.

The survey is being administered by Ipsos, an independent research organization, on behalf of the City.

If you have any questions about the survey, you can contact surveyqueries@ipsos.com.

Thank you in advance for your time and contribution.

The City of Vaughan

Please turn over 

Have questions about this survey?
Email: surveyqueries@ipsos.com
Phone: 1-833-488-1668



Additional Information



Who is conducting this research?

The City of Vaughan commissioned this research. Ipsos, an independent research organization, is administering the survey on behalf of the City. You can find further information about Ipsos at ipsos.com/en-ca.



Why should I participate in the survey?

The Business Survey is used to gather input from local businesses on their perception and use of municipal business services, and factors influencing business operations and growth, among other topics.

The City values the feedback and opinions of local businesses and the data collected helps determine how the City can continue to improve its services for businesses like yours.



Why was my business selected?

Your business was selected at random from a list of business addresses in Vaughan.



What do I have to do to participate?

If you are the business owner or decision-maker for this business, go to the website at the front of this letter and complete the survey using the unique access code provided to you. Only one decision-maker from your business should participate in the survey. You can complete the survey on a desktop computer, tablet or mobile phone. If you have any questions or would like to complete the survey over the phone, contact surveyqueries@ipsos.com or call the toll-free helpline number at 1-833-488-1668 and leave a message requesting assistance.



How long does the survey take? When will the survey close?

The survey should take about 10 minutes to complete. Please complete the survey as soon as possible. **The survey closes on Tuesday, Nov. 19.**



Are my answers confidential and private?

Any information you provide will be kept confidential as required by law. All collected data will be used for research purposes only and reported at aggregate level.



02 KEY FINDINGS & EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

KEY FINDINGS

1

Vaughan businesses are largely positive about the current environment, with 85% rating it as good or very good. While current business performance is strong, future expectations are more tempered, with most businesses anticipating stability over the next three years.

2

Top business challenges include rising costs, staffing shortages, and real estate. Other roadblocks include limited retail space and traffic congestion.

3

A majority (60%) of businesses plan to invest in new technologies over the next five years. Purpose-driven initiatives (such as DEI or ESG) are also gaining traction, with 56% of businesses having already or in the process of implementing such programs.

4

Nearly a quarter of businesses contacted the City of Vaughan for business-related reasons in the past year, and of those, a strong majority (74%) had their issues resolved.

5

While only 11% of businesses visited the Vaughan Economic Development website in the past year, the vast majority (88%) of those who did find it useful and were able to find the information they needed.

Executive Summary (1/2)

EXPERIENCE, SATISFACTION & AWARENESS OF SERVICES

Vaughan businesses view the current business environment favorably (85% rate it as "good" or "very good"). Key business challenges include staffing difficulties, rent/location costs, and traffic congestion. Rising costs pose the most impactful challenge (33%), alongside staffing (13%) and limited resources/information (8%).

BUSINESS CHALLENGES AND ROADBLOCKS

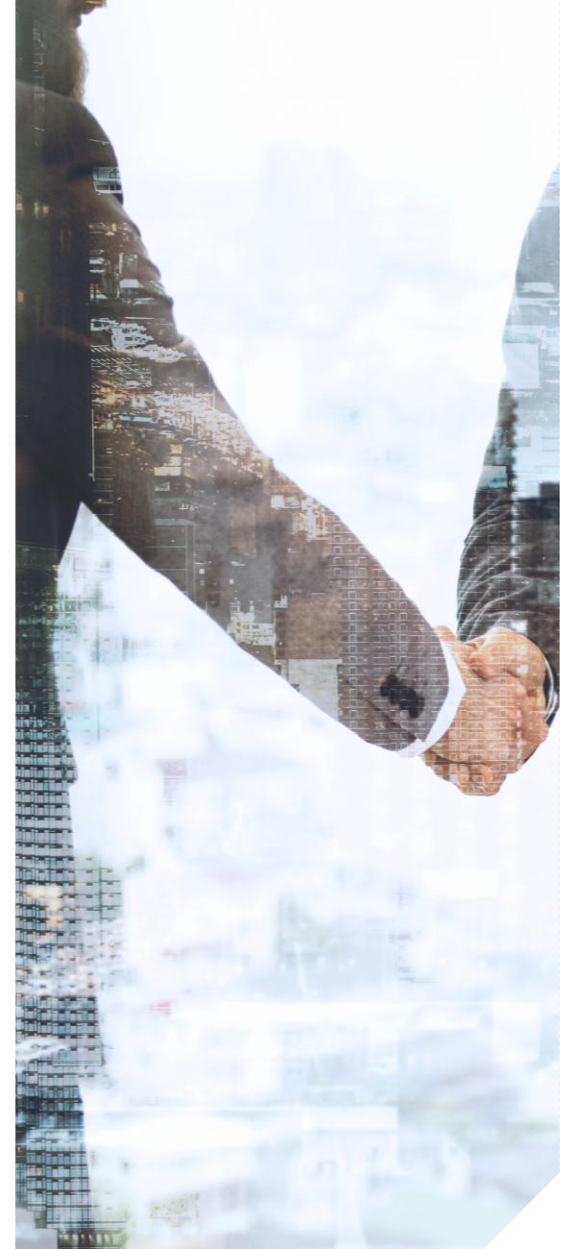
Staffing (30%), rent/location (23%), and traffic (19%) are the top challenges for Vaughan businesses. Other roadblocks include bureaucracy (17%), taxes (13%), and lack of support for small/local businesses (13%). Rising costs (11%), slow market conditions (11%), and construction (9%) also impact business operations.

INVESTING IN NEW OR INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES AND ADOPTION OF PURPOSE-DRIVEN INITIATIVES

Many Vaughan businesses (40%) are embracing digital tools. Six in ten (60%) plan to invest in new technologies over the next five years. A significant number of businesses (56%) have adopted or are implementing purpose-driven initiatives. These include corporate social responsibility (CSR), social enterprise, diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), and ESG reporting.

CONTACT WITH THE CITY

One-quarter of Vaughan businesses (24%) contacted the City in the past year for business-related reasons. The majority (74%) of those who contacted the City had their reason for contact resolved successfully



Executive Summary (2/2)

COMMUNICATION & WEBSITE USE

Vaughan businesses prefer e-newsletters (44%) and email (29%) for communication from Economic Development. While website usage is currently low (11%), those who visited the Vaughan Economic Development website found it useful (88%) and were able to find the information they needed (49%). This highlights the importance of improving website visibility and user experience to better serve the business community.

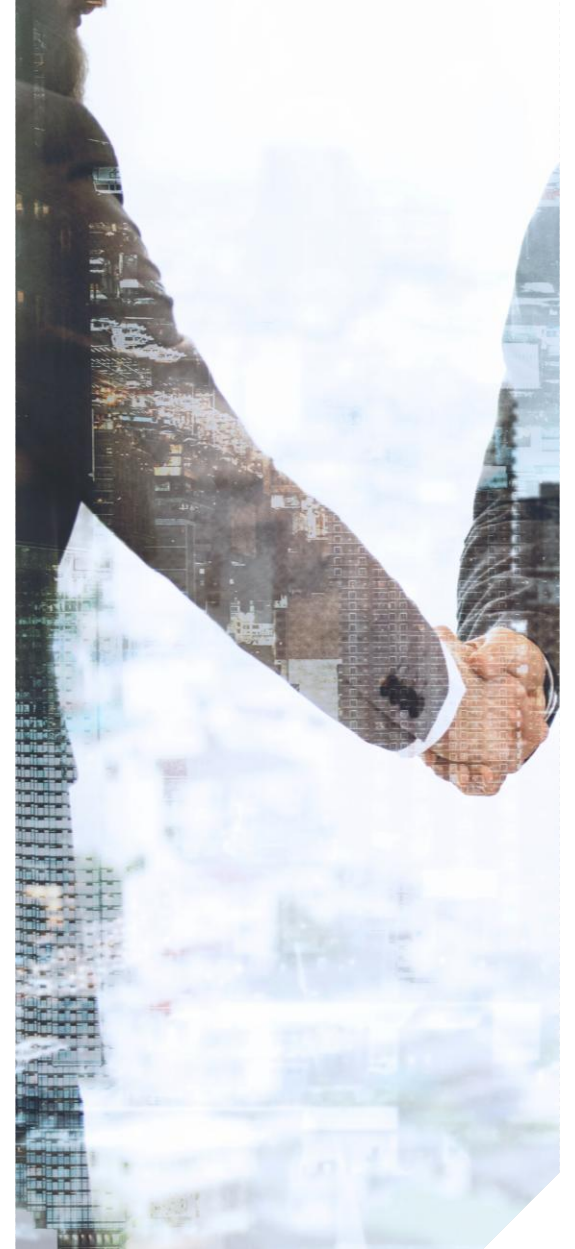
The Vaughan Economic Development website provides valuable content, with a high user satisfaction rate (88%). Those who visited the site found it useful, with nearly half (49%) finding exactly what they needed. However, low overall traffic (11%) suggests a need to increase awareness and promote the website more effectively.

ACCESSIBILITY

The vast majority (92%) of Vaughan businesses agree that the city is physically accessible, with 30% strongly agreeing and 62% somewhat agreeing.

Furthermore, 84% of businesses are actively adapting or have already adapted to meet accessibility standards, including 26% strongly agreeing and 58% somewhat agreeing they've made changes.

Only a small minority (8%) of businesses disagree that Vaughan is a physically accessible community.



03 DETAILED FINDINGS



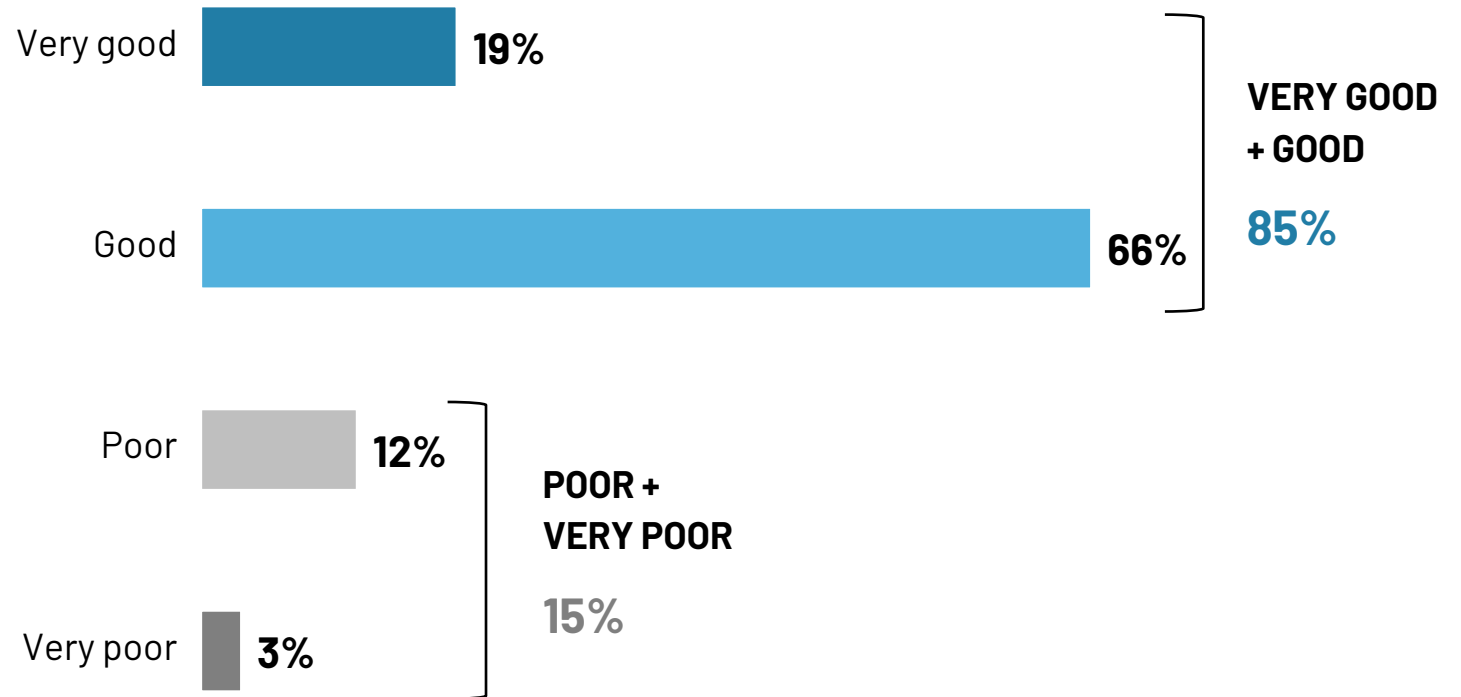
3.1 EXPERIENCE, SATISFACTION & AWARENESS OF SERVICES

City of Vaughan business environment

When asked how they would rate the overall business environment for their business in the city of Vaughan today, a strong majority of businesses said they view Vaughan's current business environment positively.

Over eight in ten (85%) respondents rated the environment as either "Very Good" (19%) or "Good" (66%), while only 15% offered a negative assessment: 12% "poor" and 3% "very poor".

RATING FOR TODAY'S OVERALL BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT FOR YOUR BUSINESS IN THE CITY OF VAUGHAN



Base: All respondents (n=336)

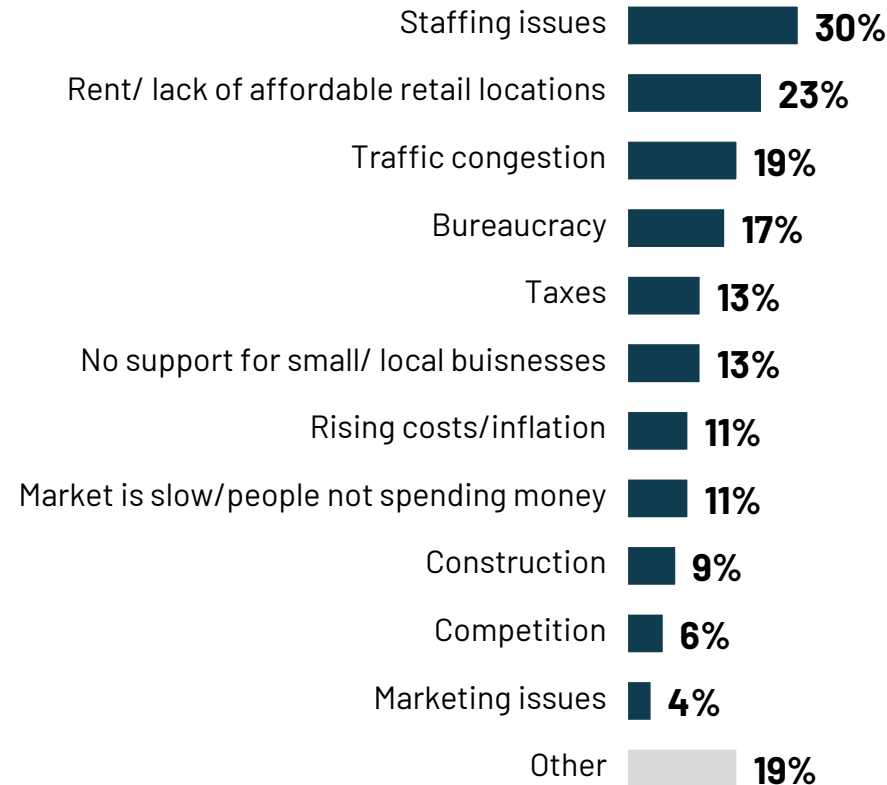
Q1a. How would you rate the overall business environment for your business in the city of Vaughan today? For example, setting up the business, growing the business or finding suitable staff.

Roadblocks or challenges

Staffing issues (30%), rent/lack of affordable retail locations (23%), and traffic congestion (19%) are the top three roadblocks or challenges businesses face in the City of Vaughan.

Other challenges include bureaucracy (17%), taxes (13%), lack of support for small/local businesses (13%), rising costs/inflation (11%), a slow market/low consumer spending (11%), construction (9%), competition (6%), and marketing issues (4%).

BIGGEST ROADBLOCKS OR CHALLENGES TO DOING BUSINESS IN THE CITY



Economy, staffing, congestion, rising crime, occupancy costs.



Rent too high, unskilled work force, utilities too high, Internet down often



There is not enough publicity for the business to grow as there is no option to showcase your business or promote your business. Hence, business is struggling to meet expenses and is not profitable.



High Taxes, very low collaboration a the small business from the city of Vaughan

Base: Rated business environment as poor/very poor (n=47)
Q1b. What are the biggest roadblocks or challenges to doing business in the city?

Business advantages

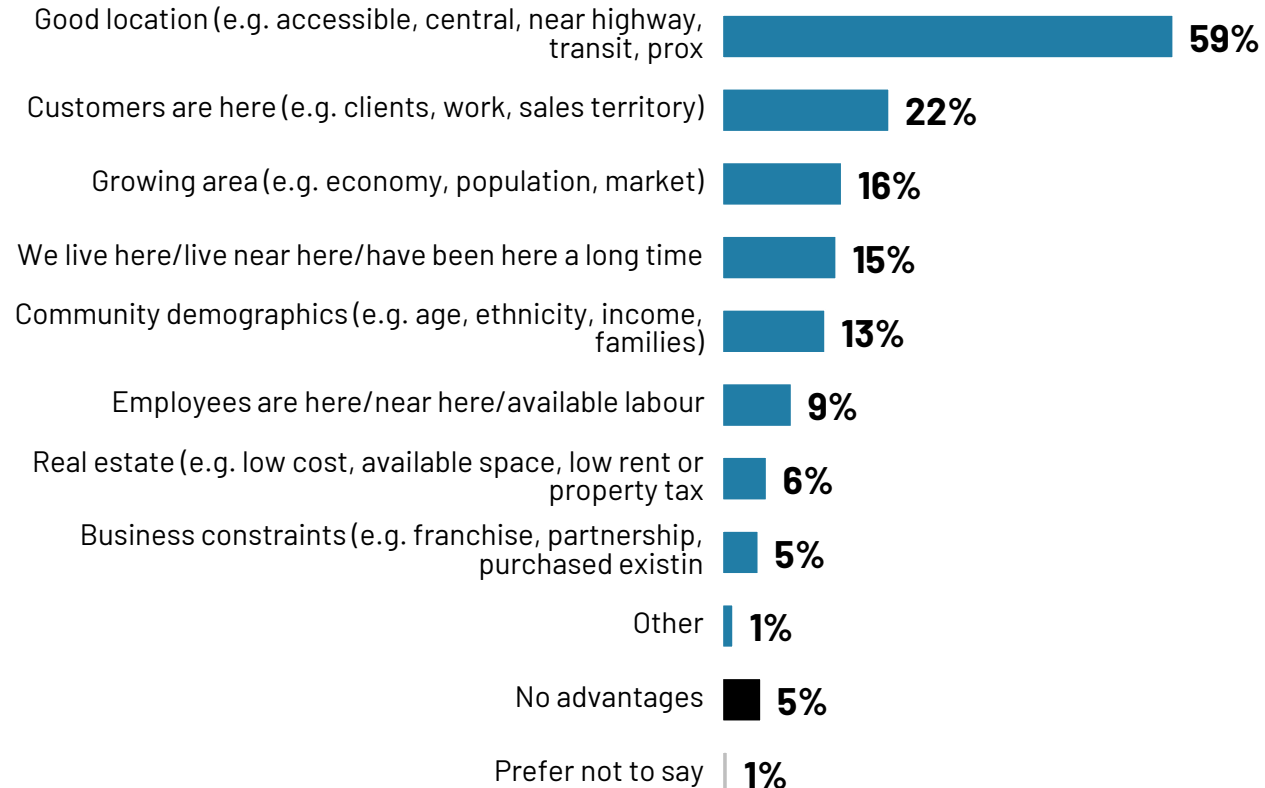
The primary advantages of doing business in Vaughan are its strategic location (59%), strong customer base (22%), and growth potential (16%).

Businesses appreciate Vaughan's accessibility, central location within the Greater Toronto Area, proximity to highways and transit, and established client networks.

Other advantages include community demographics (13%), employee availability (9%), real estate factors (6%), and business continuity considerations (5%).

These factors combine to create a favorable environment for businesses seeking to establish, operate, and expand their operations.

BUSINESS ADVANTAGES BY BEING IN VAUGHAN



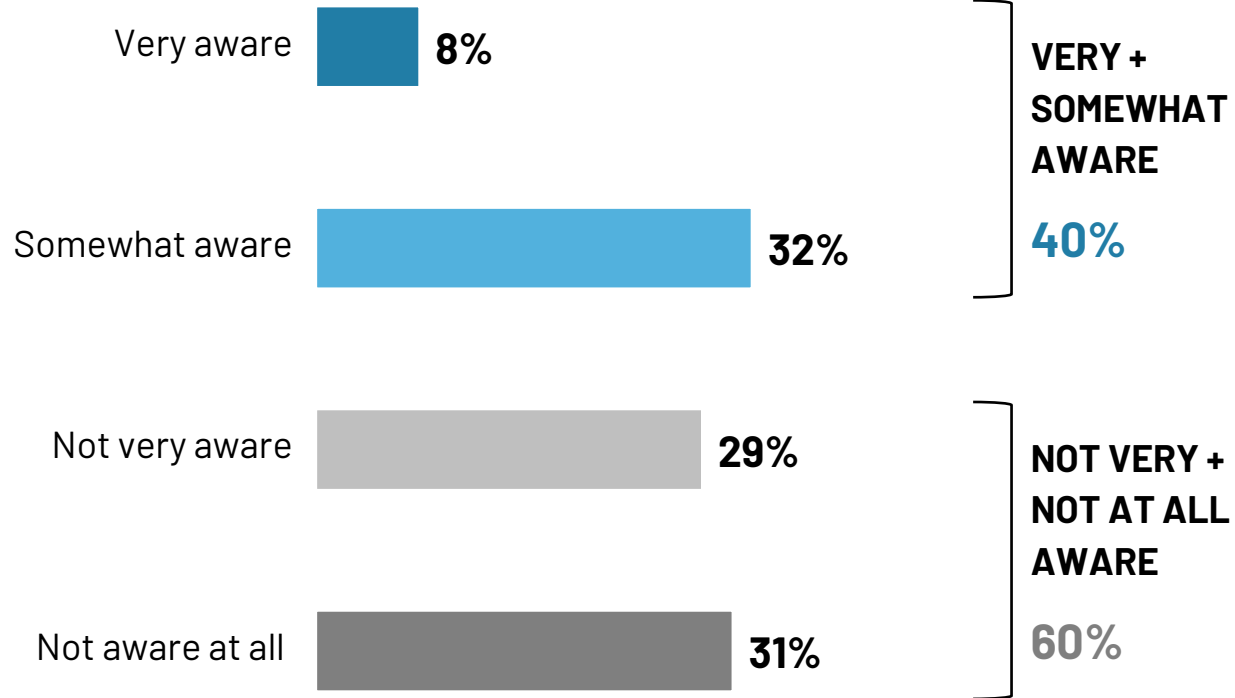
Base: All respondents (n=275)
Q2. In your experience, what are the advantages your business has by being in Vaughan?

Awareness of services for local businesses

Four in ten (40%) businesses in Vaughan are “very aware” or “somewhat aware” of the services the City of Vaughan provides to local businesses, while 60% are “not very aware or not aware at all”.

This suggests an opportunity for the City of Vaughan to increase awareness and utilization of its business support services.

AWARENESS OF THE SERVICES CITY OF VAUGHAN PROVIDES SPECIFICALLY TO LOCAL BUSINESSES



Base: All respondents (n=351)

Q3. Generally, how aware are you of the services that the City of Vaughan provides specifically to local businesses?

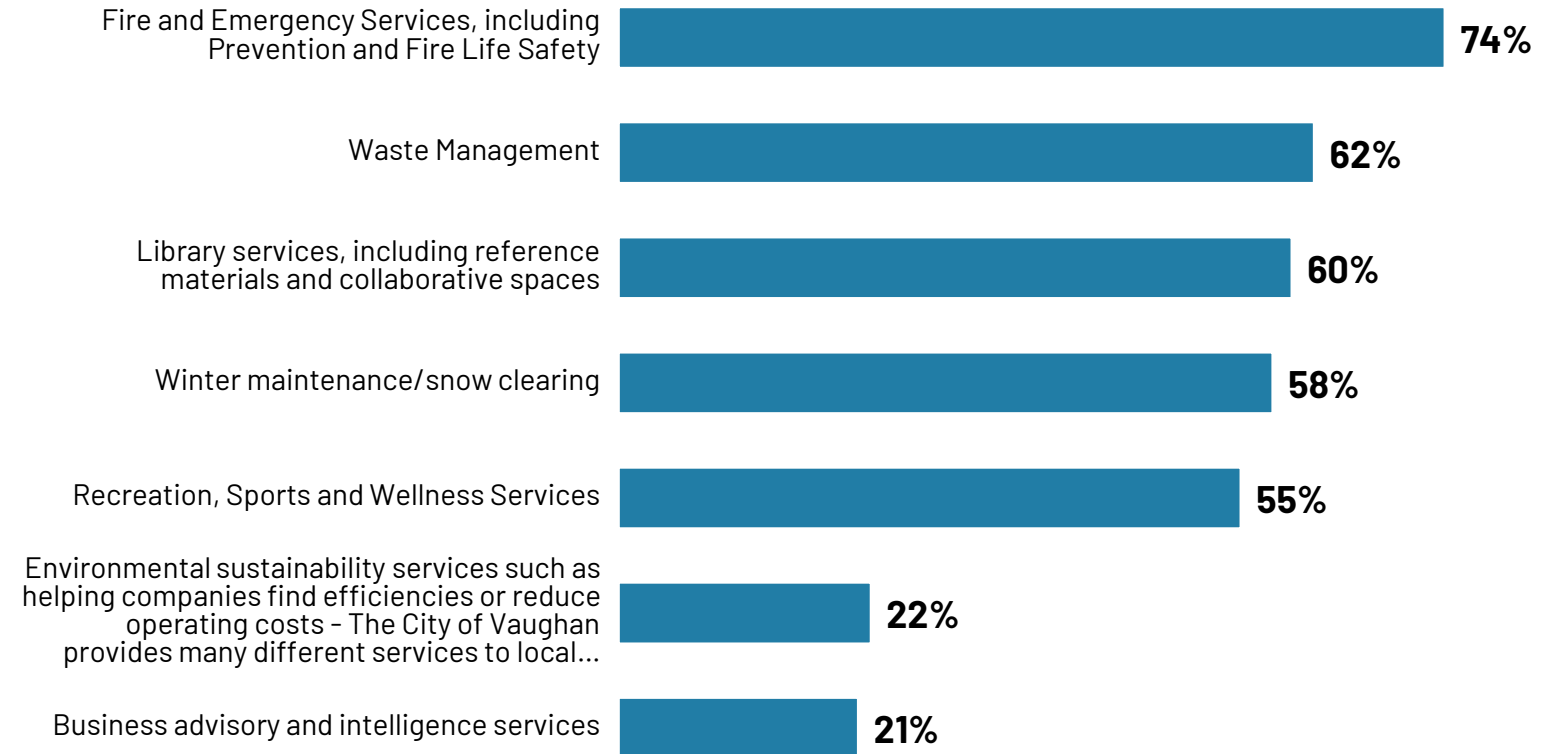
Business services heard of

The most known services offered by the City of Vaughan to local businesses are fire and emergency services (74%), waste management (62%), library services (60%), winter maintenance/snow clearing (58%), and recreation, sports and wellness services (55%).

One in five (22%) are aware of environmental sustainability services and business advisory and intelligence services (21%).

There is a potential need for the City of Vaughan to better communicate the full range of services available to local businesses, particularly those focused on business development and support.

CITY OF VAUGHAN'S DIFFERENT SERVICES FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES HEARD OF



Base: All respondents (n=352)

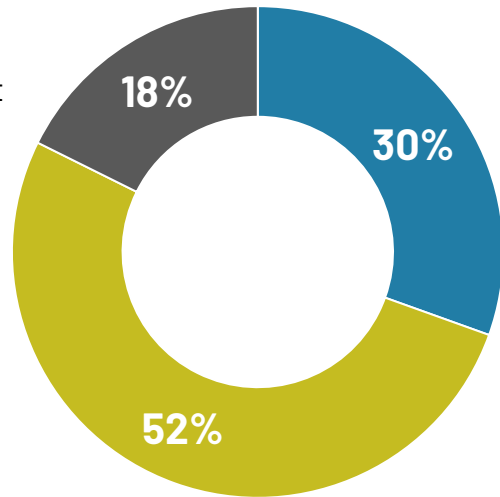
Q4. The City of Vaughan provides many different services to local businesses. Please indicate whether or not you have heard about the following.

Business outlook

Currently, Vaughan's businesses demonstrate a positive outlook, with 30% experiencing growth and 52% maintaining stability. However, future projections are more conservative. Over the next three years, almost two thirds (65%) of businesses anticipate growth, while around three in ten (27%) predict stable conditions. Employment forecasts for the next two years align with this cautious optimism: 41% of businesses expect to maintain staffing levels and 52% foresee growth.

CURRENT STATE OF BUSINESS

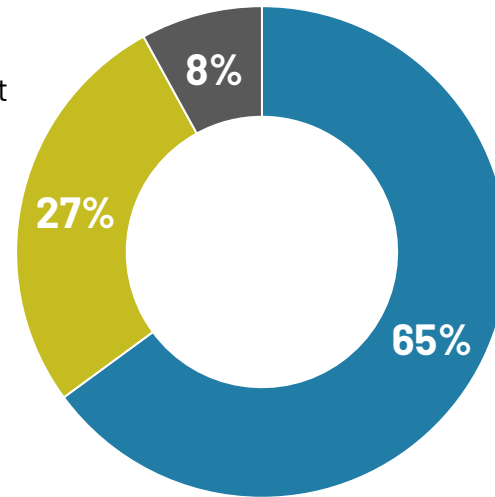
- Growing
- Staying about the same
- Declining
- Prefer not to say



Base: All respondents (n=351)
Q5. Right now, would you say your business is growing, declining or staying about the same?

OUTLOOK OVER THE NEXT 3 YEARS

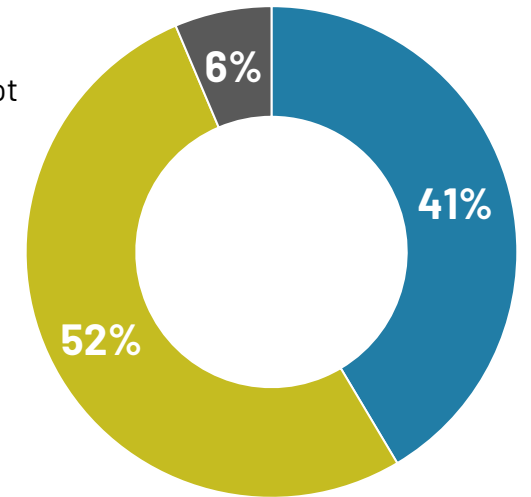
- Grow
- Stay about the same
- Decline
- Prefer not to say



Base: All respondents (n=325)
Q6. Thinking about your business outlook over the next three years, do you expect business to...

EMPLOYMENT NEEDS OVER NEXT 2 YEARS

- Grow
- Stay about the same
- Decline
- Prefer not to say



Base: All respondents (n=345)
Q7. Are the projected employment needs for your company's facility expected to grow, stay about the same or decline over the next two years?

Business challenges

General costs (34%), are the biggest challenge facing businesses in Vaughan, followed by staffing issues (24%) and the cost of real estate (18%).

Other significant challenges include traffic congestion (16%), competition (14%), municipal/property taxes (11%), lack of capital/resources (9%), marketing (9%), government red tape/restrictions (9%), and slow market conditions/economic issues (9%),

While the overall business environment rating is positive, the wide range of challenges underscores the complexity of the current business environment in Vaughan.

BIGGEST CHALLENGES FACED BY YOUR BUSINESS



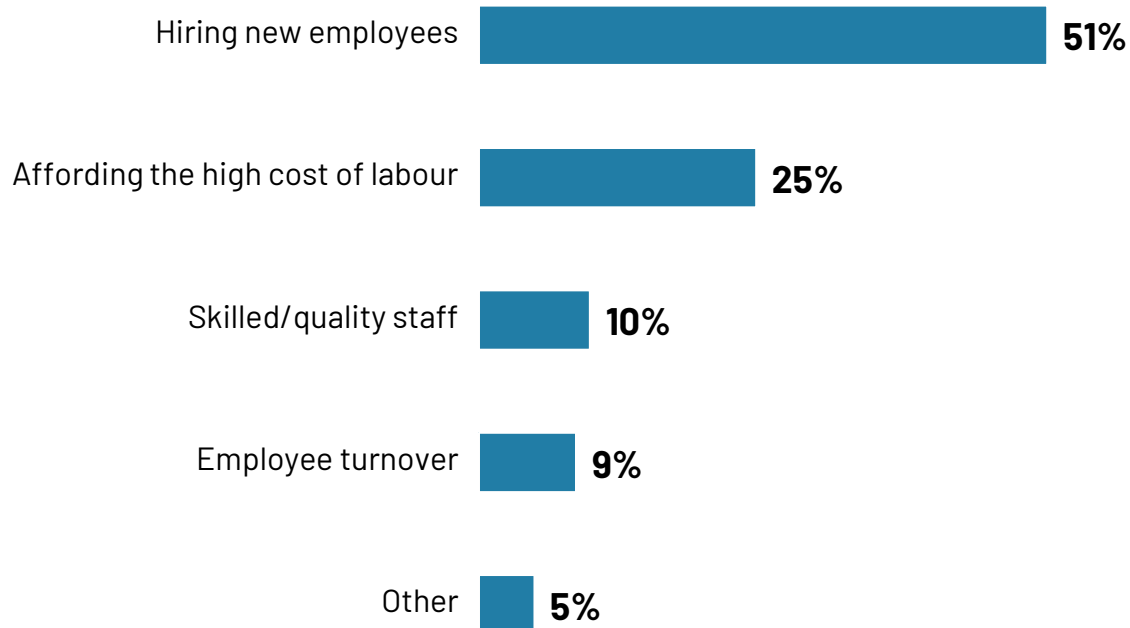
Base: All respondents (n=352)

Q8. What would you say are the biggest challenges your business faces, if any?

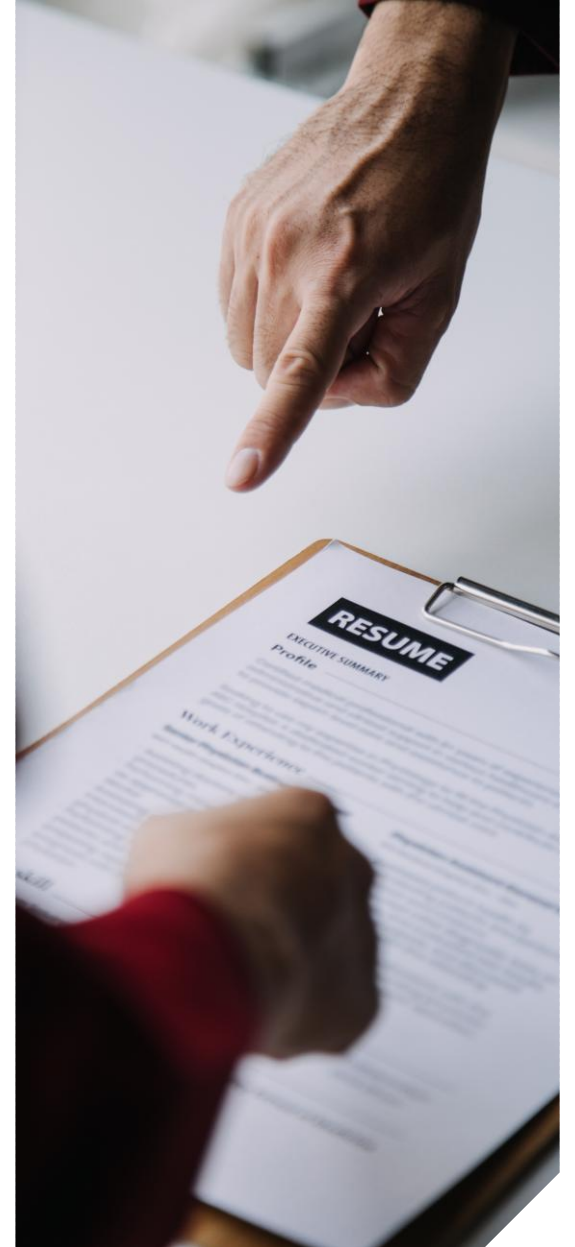
Staffing issues

Among those who mentioned “staffing” as a big challenge business faces, hiring new employees (51%) is the biggest staffing challenge, followed by affording the high cost of labor (25%) and finding skilled/quality staff (10%). Employee turnover (9%) and other staffing issues (5%) are also mentioned as challenges.

TYPE OF STAFFING ISSUE THAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE IN YOUR BUSINESS



Base: Mentioned staffing as a big challenge business faces (n=80)
Q9. You mentioned staffing is a big challenge your business faces. What type of staffing issue is the biggest challenge for your business?

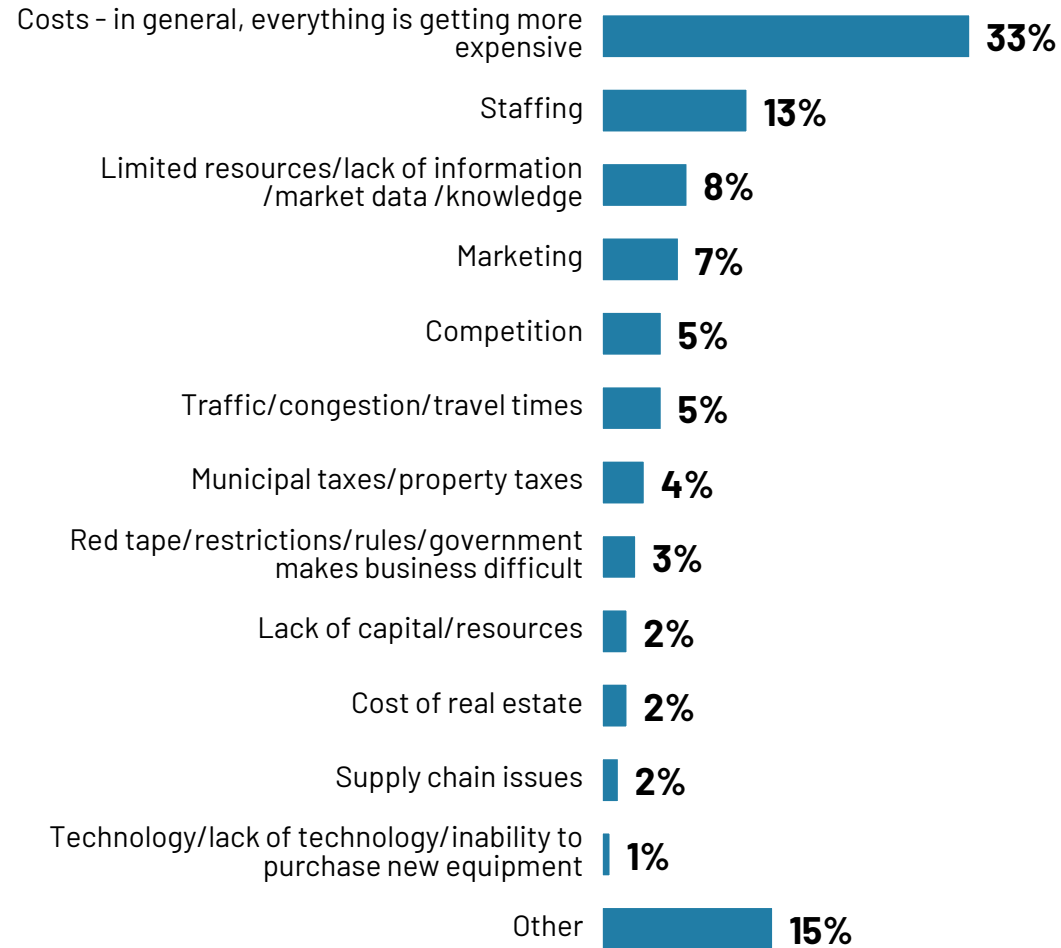


Most impactful business challenge

Rising costs (33%) are the single most impactful challenge for businesses in Vaughan, followed by staffing issues (13%) and limited resources/lack of information/market data/knowledge (8%).

Marketing (7%), competition (5%), traffic congestion (5%), and municipal/property taxes (4%) also present notable challenges.

OF THE CHALLENGES YOU SELECTED, WHICH ONE WOULD YOU SAY IMPACTS YOUR BUSINESS THE MOST?



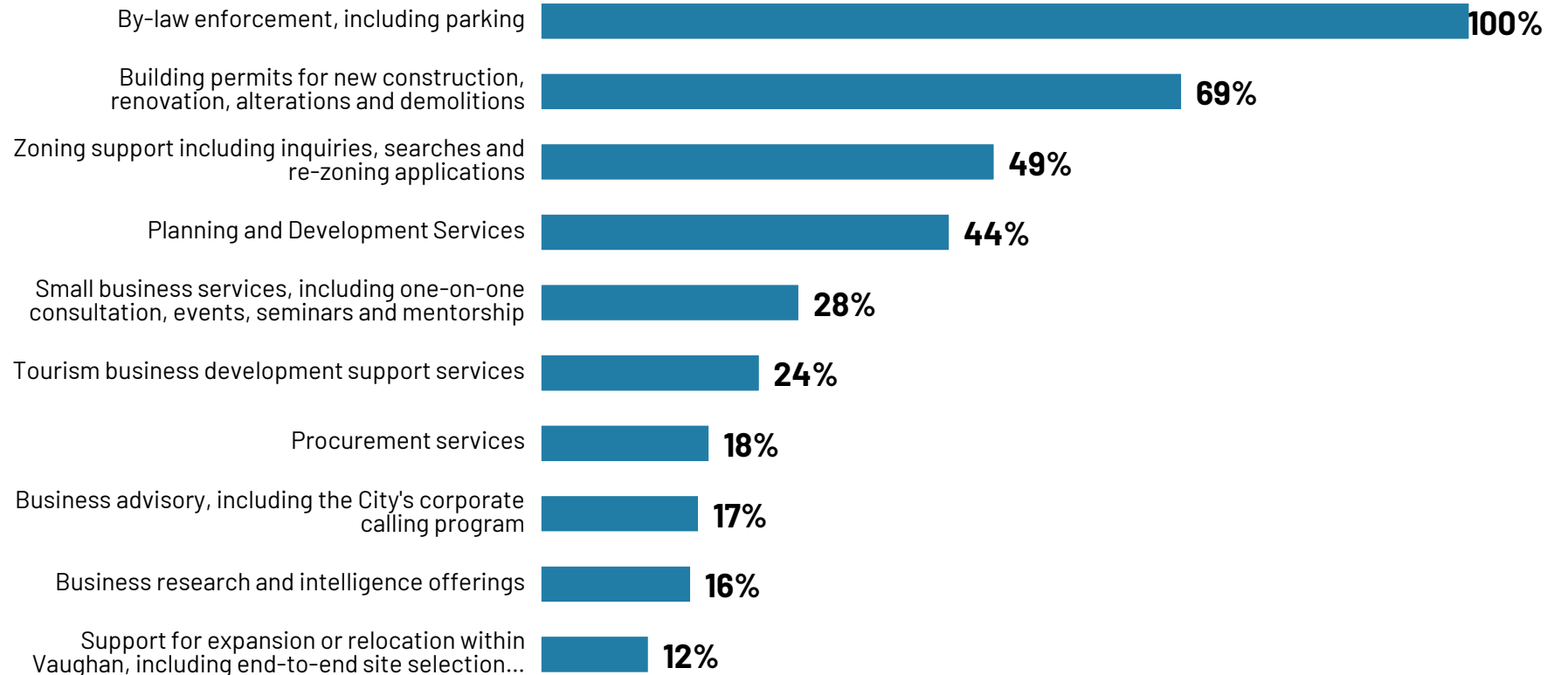
Base: Of the challenges, who impacts your business the most (n=131)
 Q10. Of the challenges you selected, which one would you say impacts your business the most?

Additional business services are aware of

All businesses are aware of by-law enforcement (100%). Building permits (69%) and zoning support (49%) are the recognized additional services offered by the City of Vaughan to local businesses. Planning and Development Services (44%) and small business services (28%) are also relatively well-known.

However, awareness drops for other services such as tourism business development support (24%), procurement services (18%), business advisory services (17%), business research and intelligence offerings (16%), and support for business expansion or relocation (12%).

AWARE OF CITY OF VAUGHAN'S ADDITIONAL SERVICES FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES



Base: All respondents (n=352)
Q11. Please select whether or not you have heard of the following services.

3.2 DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION & PURPOSE DRIVEN INITIATIVES



Digital resiliency or innovation initiatives

Four in ten (40%) Vaughan businesses are embracing digital tools and strategies. Among those who have undertaken digital resiliency or innovation initiatives, these initiatives primarily focus on online marketing tactics such as social media adoption, SEO, Google My Business or e-mail marketing (35%), as well as e-commerce (22%), and digital inventory management (16%).

DIGITAL RESILIENCY OR INNOVATION INITIATIVES BUSINESS HAS UNDERTAKEN

40%
of respondents state their business **has undertaken** digital resiliency or innovation initiatives



Base: All respondents (n=350)
Q12. Has your business undertaken any digital resiliency or innovation initiatives?

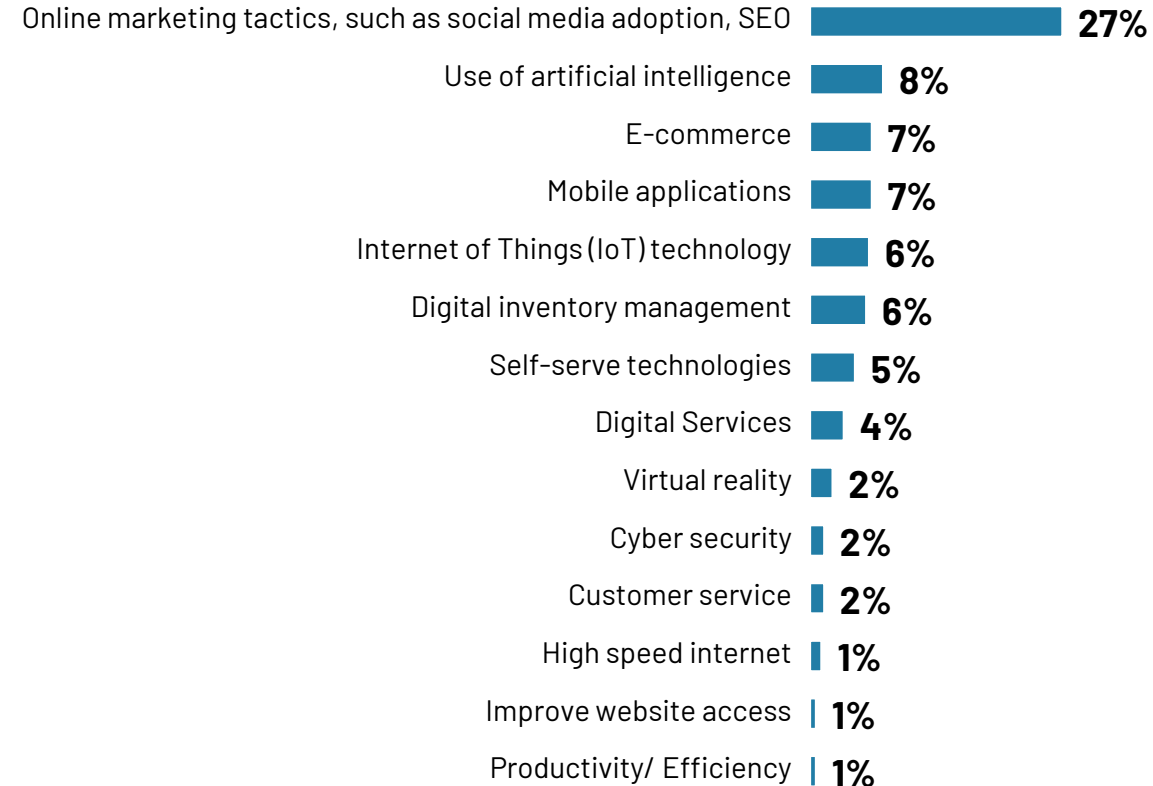
Base: Business has undertaken digital resiliency or innovation initiatives (n=139)
Q13. And what types of digital resiliency or innovation initiatives has your business undertaken?

Digital resiliency or innovation initiatives needing support

When asked which type of digital resiliency or innovation initiatives their business would need increased support with, Vaughan businesses would welcome more support for online marketing tactics (27%), using AI (8%), and e-commerce (7%).

Mobile applications, Internet of Things technology, and digital inventory management are other areas where businesses seek additional support.

DIGITAL RESILIENCY OR INNOVATION INITIATIVES BUSINESS WOULD NEED INCREASED SUPPORT WITH



Base: All respondents (n=328)

Q14. Which type of digital resiliency or innovation initiatives would your business need increased support with, if any?

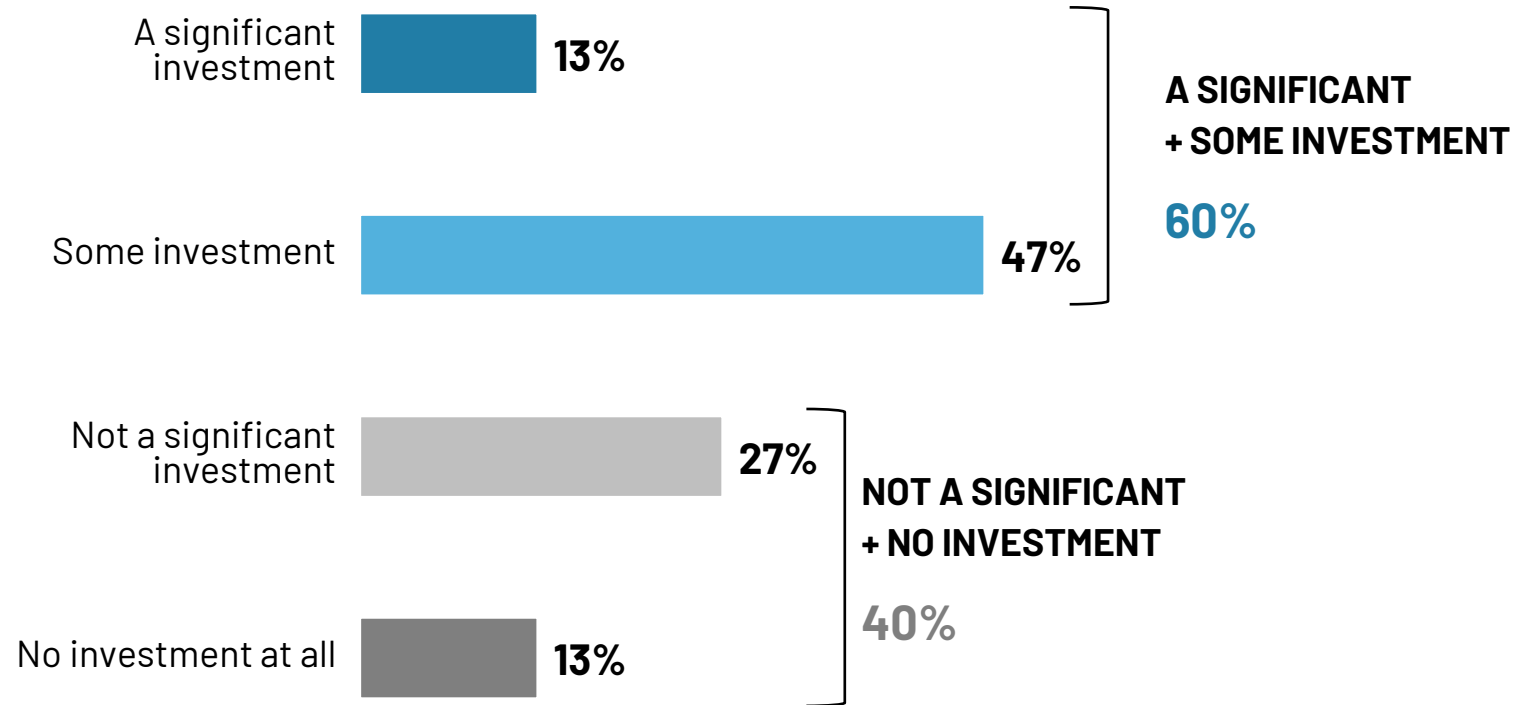
Investing in new or innovative technology

60% of Vaughan businesses anticipate making at least some investment in new or innovative technologies over the next five years, with 13% planning significant investments and 47% expecting to make more moderate investments.

However, four in ten (40%) do not foresee significant technology investments, with 27% anticipating only minor investments and 13% planning no investment at all.

This suggests a divide in the business community, with some embracing technological advancement while others remain hesitant.

LEVEL OF INVESTMENT EXPECTED IN NEW OR INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY FOR BUSINESS IN NEXT 5 YEARS



Base: All respondents (n=348)
Q15. In the next five years, how much of an investment do you expect you will you make in new or innovative technology for your business?

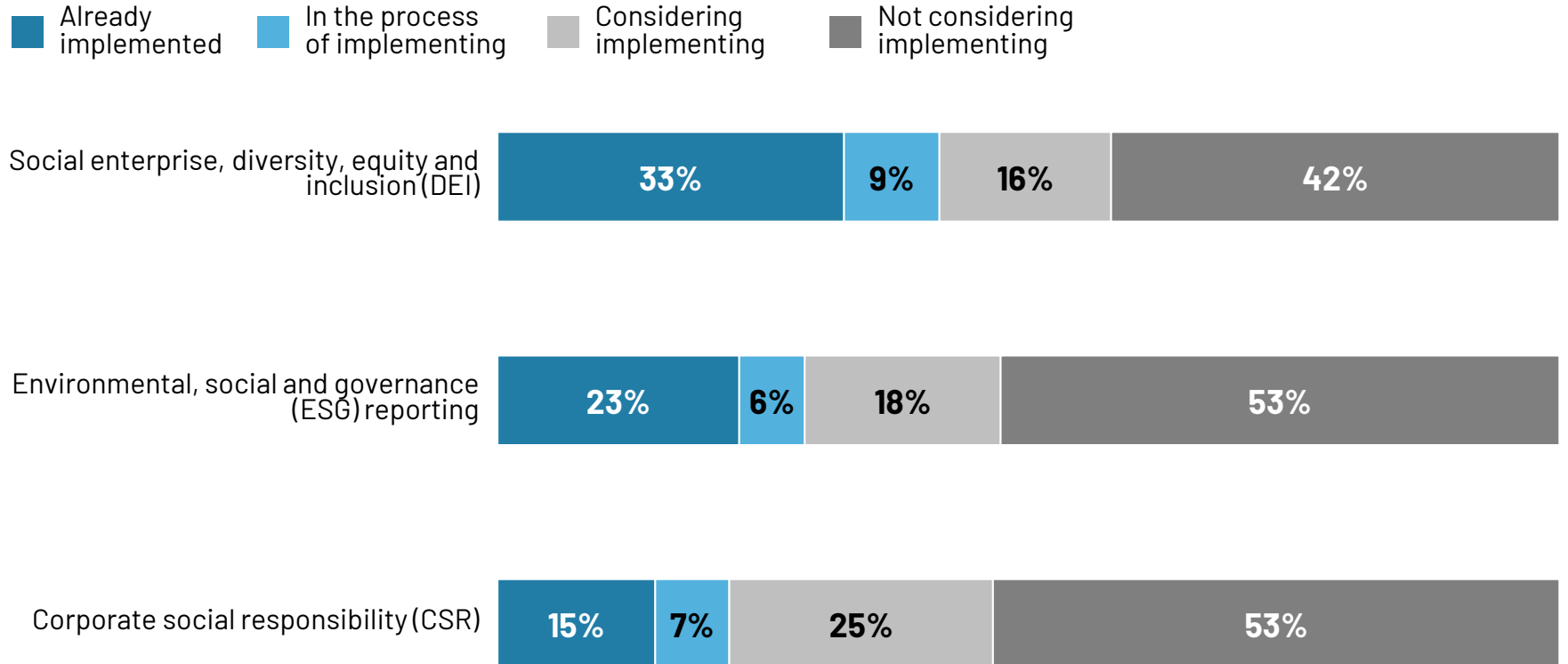
Purpose-driven initiatives

A combined 56% of Vaughan businesses have already implemented (33%) or are in the process of implementing (23%) purpose-driven initiatives related to social enterprise, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), environmental, social, and governance (ESG) reporting, and corporate social responsibility (CSR).

Another 15% are considering implementing such initiatives, while 29% are not currently considering them.

This highlights an opportunity to further encourage and support businesses in adopting these initiatives.

STAGE OF IMPLEMENTATING PURPOSE-DRIVE INITIATIVES



Base: All respondents (n=Varies)

Q16. Have you implemented or is your business considering implementing purpose-driven initiatives related to - Corporate social responsibility (CSR), Social enterprise, diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), Environmental, social and governance (ESG) reporting.

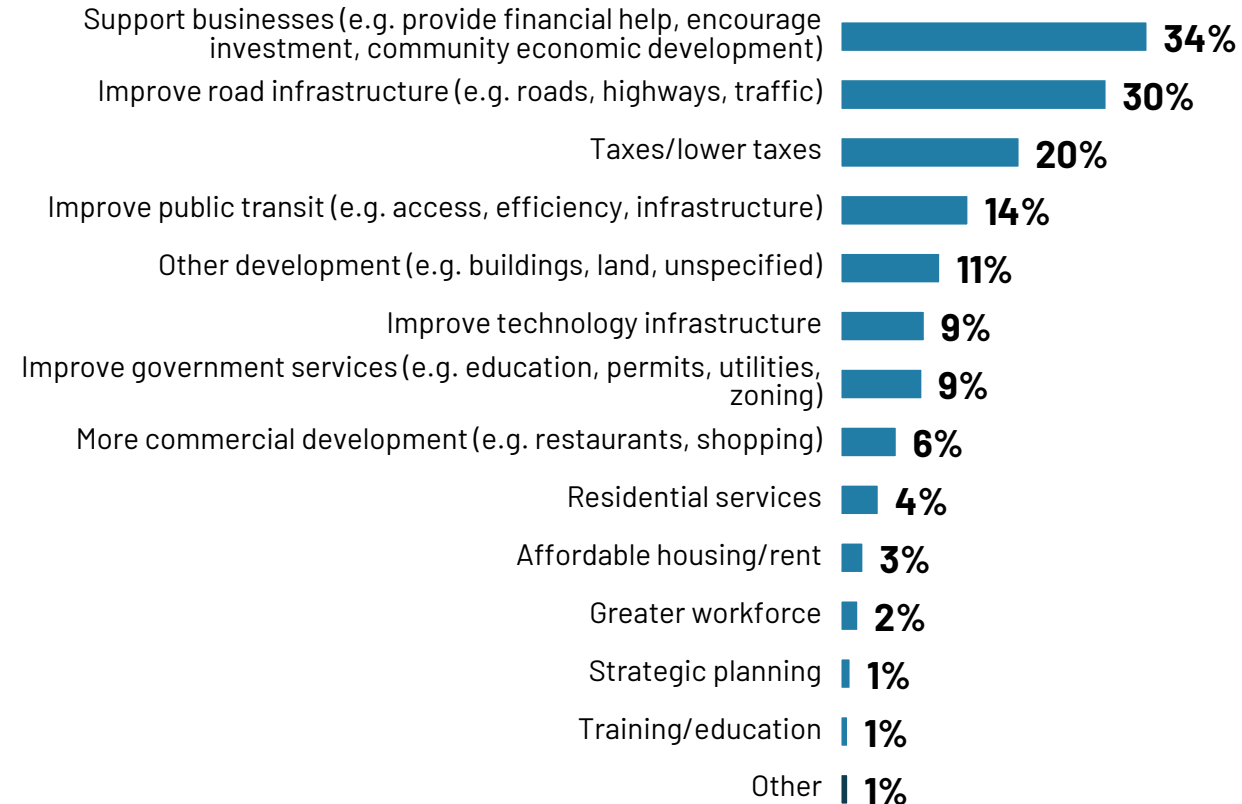
...

Digital resiliency or innovation initiatives needing support

Businesses in Vaughan prioritize support in several key areas over the next five years. These include supporting businesses through financial aid and community economic development (34%), improving road infrastructure (30%), lowering taxes (20%), enhancing public transit (14%), and other development projects (11%).

Improving technology infrastructure (9%), government services (9%), commercial development (6%), residential services (4%), affordable housing (3%), workforce development (2%), strategic planning (1%), and training/education (1%) are also areas where businesses would like to see increased focus.

OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, SPECIFICALLY WHERE SHOULD THE CITY OF VAUGHAN BE FOCUSING ITS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS?

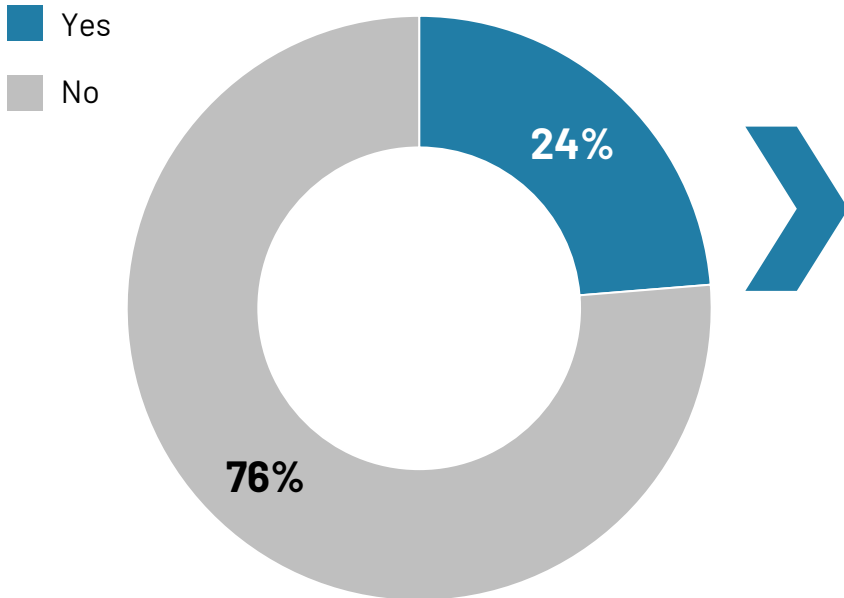


Base: All respondents (n=352)
 Q17. Over the next five years, specifically where should the City of Vaughan be focusing its economic development efforts?

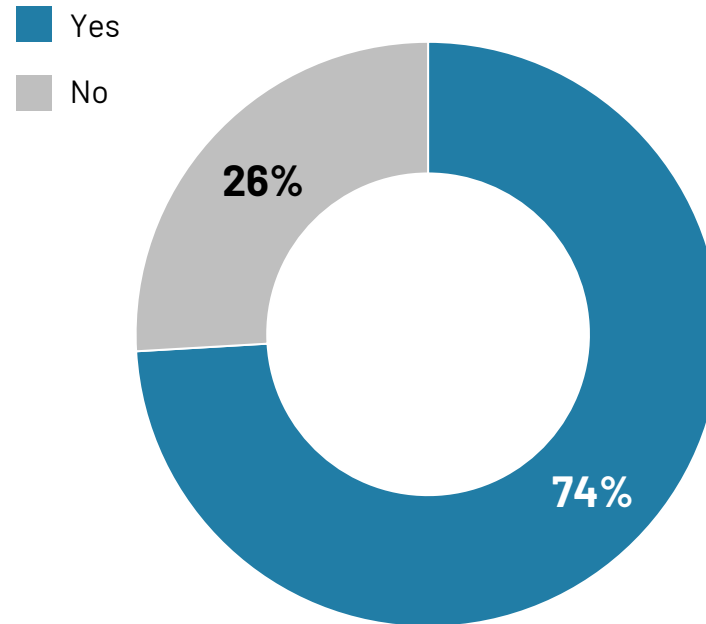
Contacting the City of Vaughan

In the past 12 months, a quarter of Vaughan business (24%) contacted the City for business-related reasons. Of those who contacted the City, three quarters (74%) had their issue resolved, while 26% did not.

CONTACTED CITY FOR A BUSINESS-RELATED REASON IN PAST 12 MONTHS



REASON FOR CONTACT WAS RESOLVED



Base: All respondents (n=350)
Q18. In the last 12 months have you contacted the City of Vaughan for a reason related to your business? By business related, we mean an inquiry, question, application related to a municipal process, or request related to your business.

Base: Contacted city of Vaughan for business-related reason (n=81)
Q19. Thinking of your most recent contact, would you say that the reason for your contact with the City was resolved?



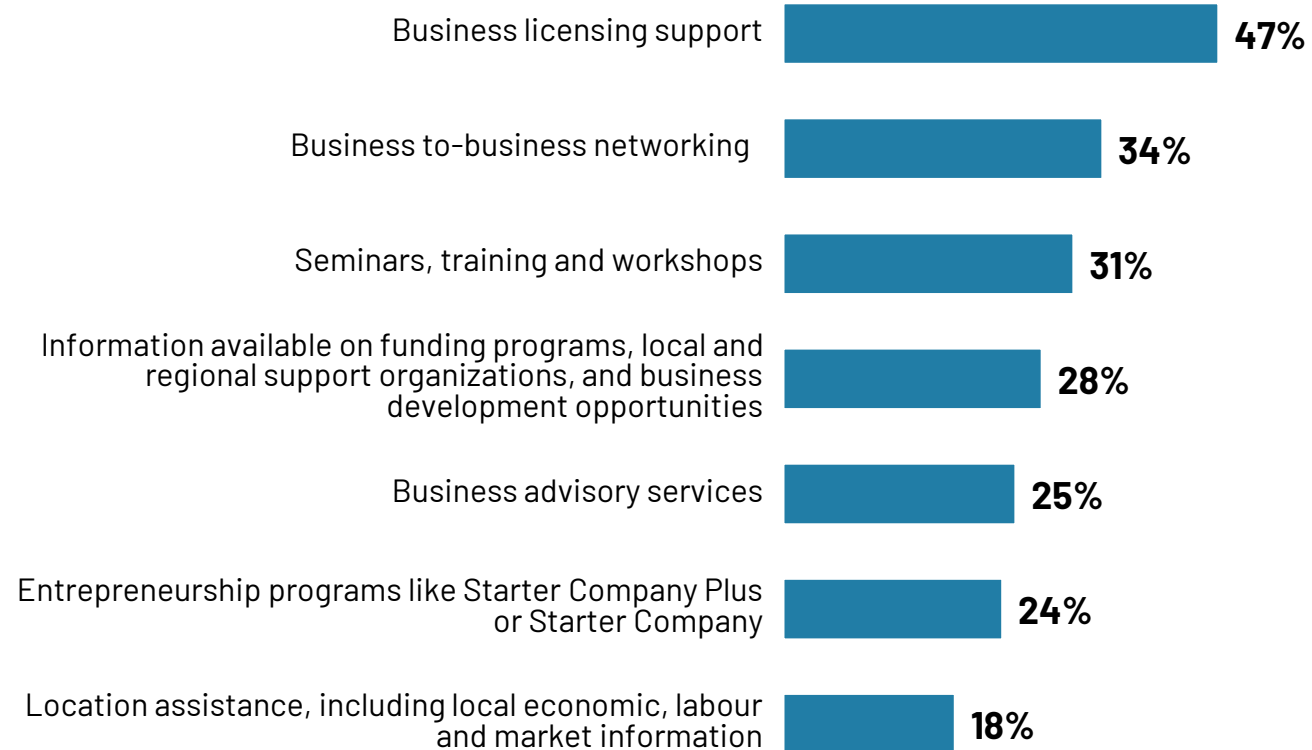
Aware of services

Business licensing support (47%), business-to-business networking (34%), and seminars, training, and workshops (31%) are the most recognized services provided by the City of Vaughan.

Information on funding programs and business development opportunities (28%), business advisory services (25%), and entrepreneurship programs (24%) are also relatively well-known. While location assistance services are known by 18% of respondents.

These findings suggest opportunities to increase awareness of certain City of Vaughan services, particularly those related to funding, advisory support, and entrepreneurship.

AWARE OF SERVICE PROVIDED BY THE CITY OF VAUGHAN



Base: All respondents (n=352)
Q20. I'm going to read you a list of services provided by the City of Vaughan; please indicate whether or not you are aware of them.

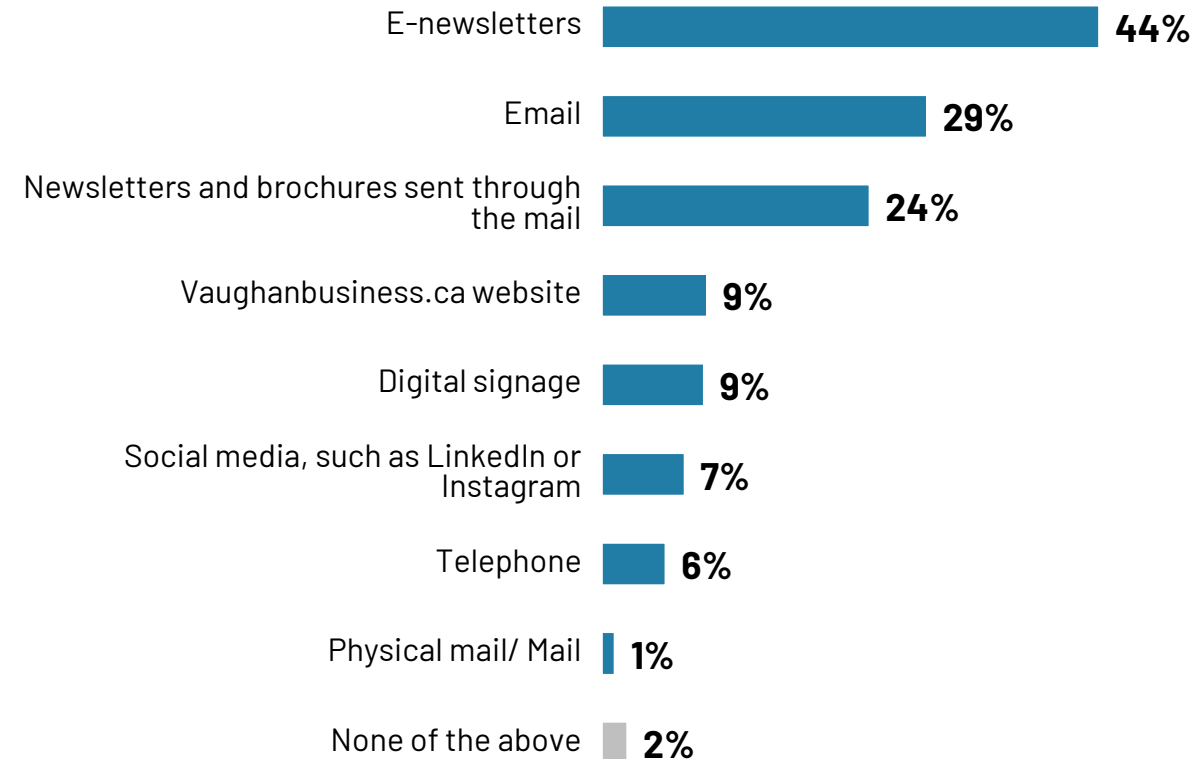
3.3 COMMUNICATION & WEBSITE USE

Receiving communications

When asked what their preferred methods to receive communications from Vaughan Economic Development were, over four in ten (44%) said E-newsletters, followed by email (29%), mail (24%).

Lowest on the list are website updates (9%), digital signage (9%), and social media (7%).

PREFERRED METHODS FOR RECEIVING COMMUNICATIONS FROM VAUGHAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Base: All respondents (n=352)
Q21. What are your preferred methods to receive communications from Vaughan Economic Development?

Vaughan Economic Development's website

Only one in ten (11%) of businesses reported having visited Vaughan Economic Development's website in the past year.

Of those who did visit the site, 88% found it very or somewhat useful with nearly half (49%) finding exactly what they needed and 41% finding at least part of what they were looking for.

This suggests that while the website's content is generally considered valuable by those who use it, there's an opportunity to increase awareness and drive more traffic to the site.

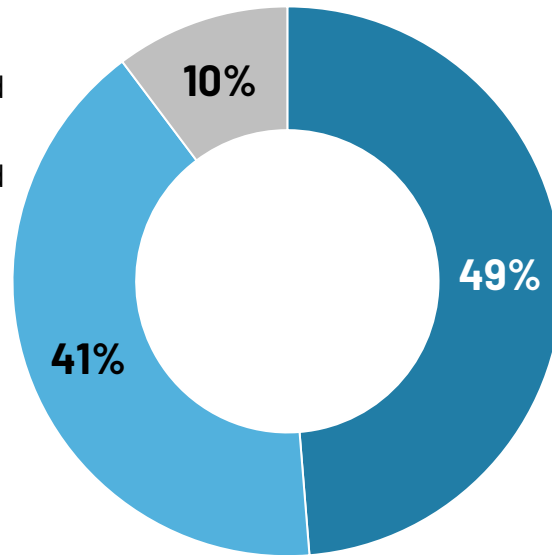


11%

of business owners **have visited** Vaughan Economic Development's website in the past 12 months

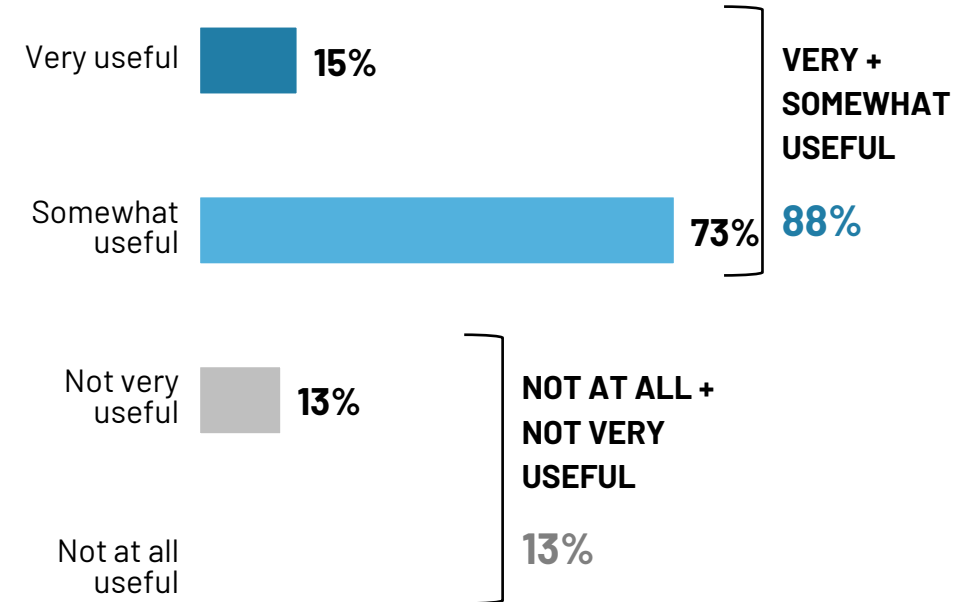
FOUND DESIRED INFO AT VAUGHANBUSINESSS.CA

- Found what I needed
- Found part of what I needed
- Did not find what I needed



Base: Visited website in past 12 months (n=39)
Q22B. In searching for the desired information on vaughanbusiness.ca, did you find what you were looking for?

USEFULNESS OF CONTENT AVAILABLE ONLINE



Base: Visited website in past 12 months (n=40)
Q22C. Overall, how useful was the content available on vaughanbusiness.ca?

Base: All respondents (n=351)
Q22A. Have you been to Vaughan Economic Development's website (vaughanbusiness.ca) in the past 12 months?

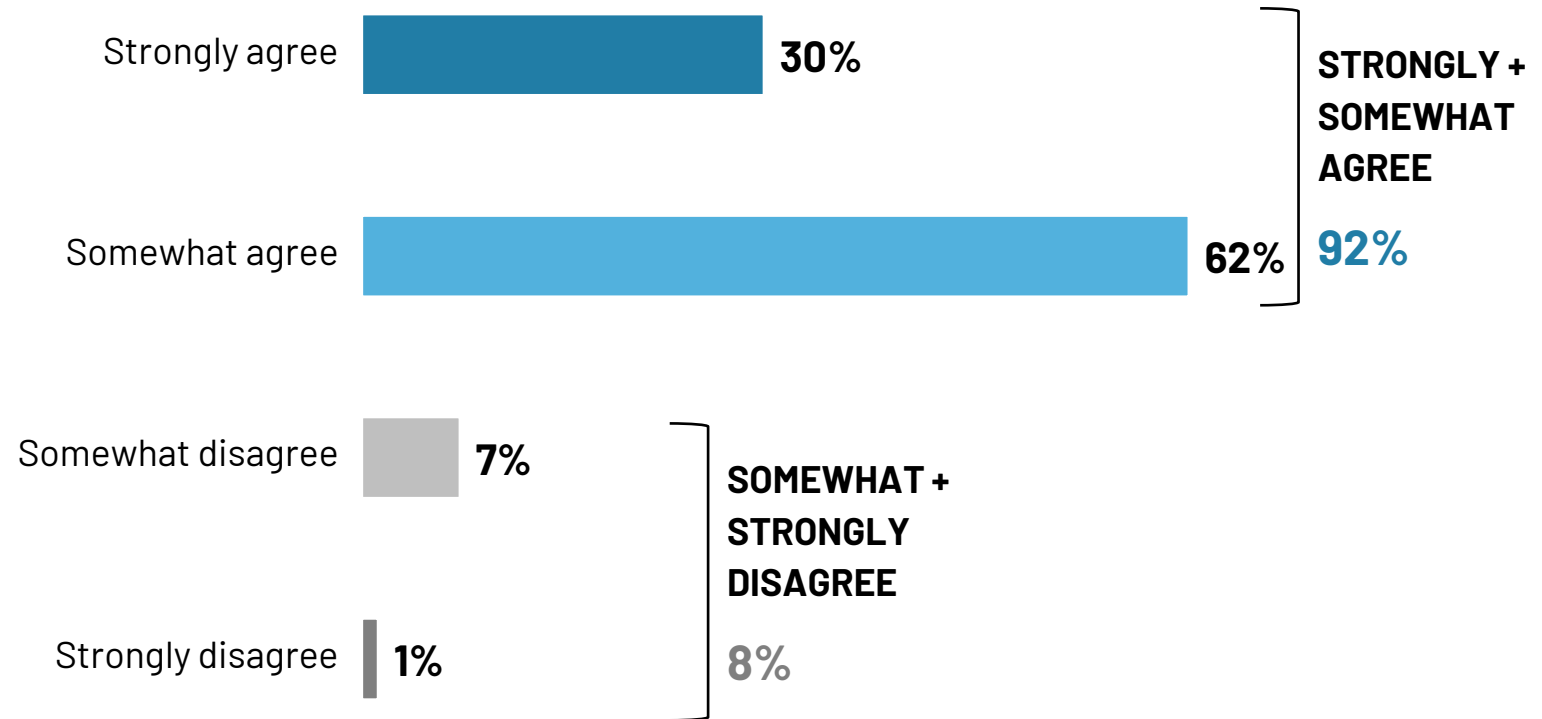
3.4 ACCESSIBILITY

Agreement with accessibility statement

A strong majority (92%) of Vaughan businesses agree that the city is a physically accessible community, with 30% strongly agreeing and 62% somewhat agreeing.

A small minority (8%) disagree with this statement.

STATEMENT: GENERALLY SPEAKING, THE CITY OF VAUGHAN IS A PHYSICALLY ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITY



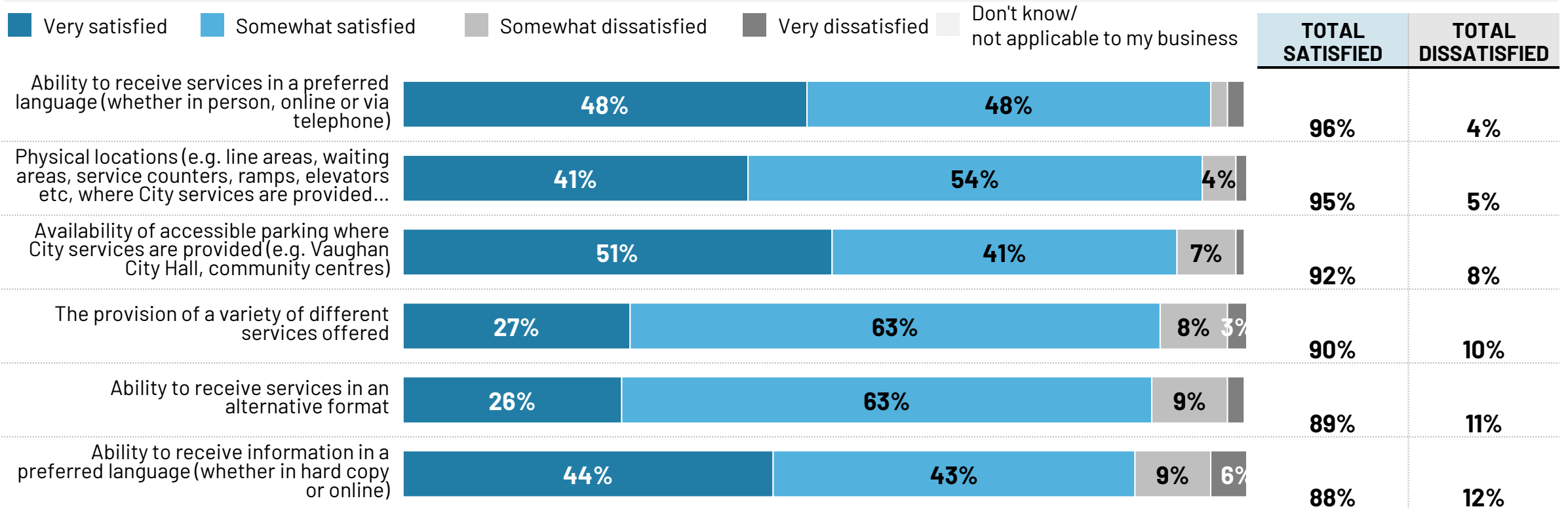
Base: All respondents (n=344)

Q23. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Generally speaking, the city of Vaughan is a physically accessible community.

Satisfaction with accessibility (1/2)

Excluding those who say they don't know or that this service is not applicable to their business, almost all (96%) Vaughan businesses report high satisfaction levels with the accessibility of receiving services in a preferred language (in person, online or via telephone) and physical locations where with city services are provided (95%). Local businesses are also highly satisfied with the availability of parking where City services are offered (92%) and the provision of a variety of different services (90%).

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE CITY OF VAUGHAN



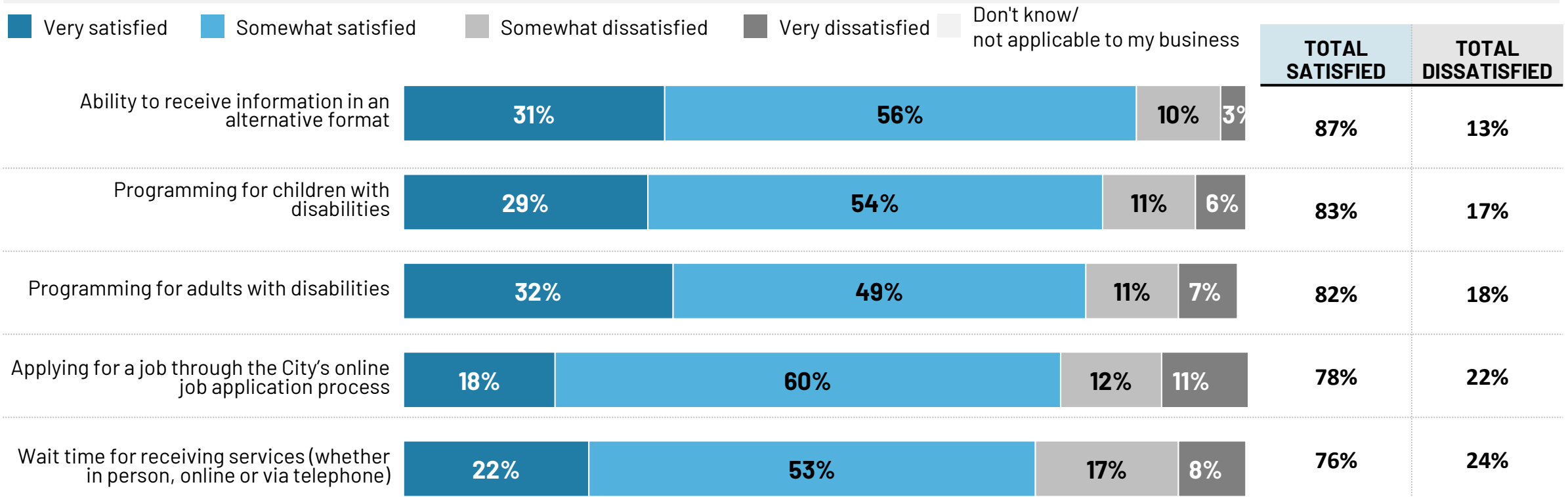
Figures <3% not shown

Base: All respondents, excluding don't know/not applicable to my business (n=Base Varies*)
 Q24. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the accessibility of the following areas of services provided by the City of Vaughan?

Satisfaction with accessibility (1/2)

Excluding those who say they don't know or that this service is not applicable to their business, slightly lower satisfaction levels are reported for the accessibility of applying for a job through the City's online job application process (78%) and wait time for receiving services (whether in person, online or via telephone) but still over three quarters are satisfied with these services (76%).

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH THE ACCESSIBILITY OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE CITY OF VAUGHAN



Figures <3% not shown

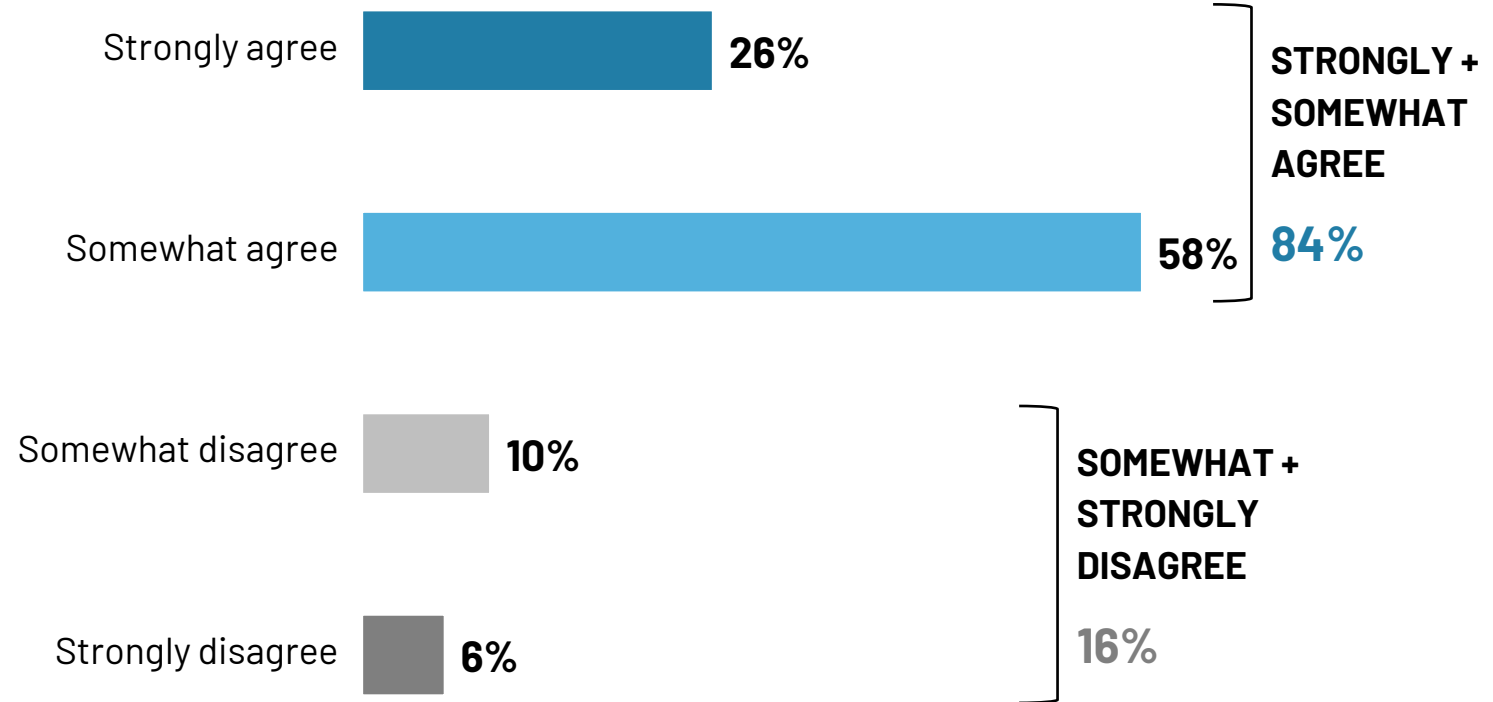
Base: All respondents, excluding don't know/not applicable to my business (n=Base Varies*)
Q24. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the accessibility of the following areas of services provided by the City of Vaughan?

Agreement with business accessibility statement

A substantial majority (84%) of Vaughan businesses affirm they are either actively adapting or have already made changes to meet accessibility standards. This includes physical modifications, adjustments to services, or changes to information formats.

Of those businesses, 26% strongly agree and 58% somewhat agree with the statement about making changes to meet accessibility standards.

STATEMENT: GENERALLY SPEAKING, OUR BUSINESS IS MAKING/HAS MADE CHANGES TO MEET ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS



Base: All respondents (n=325)

Q25. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Generally speaking, our business is making/has made changes to meet accessibility standards (e.g., physical changes for accessibility, services or information in an alternative format).

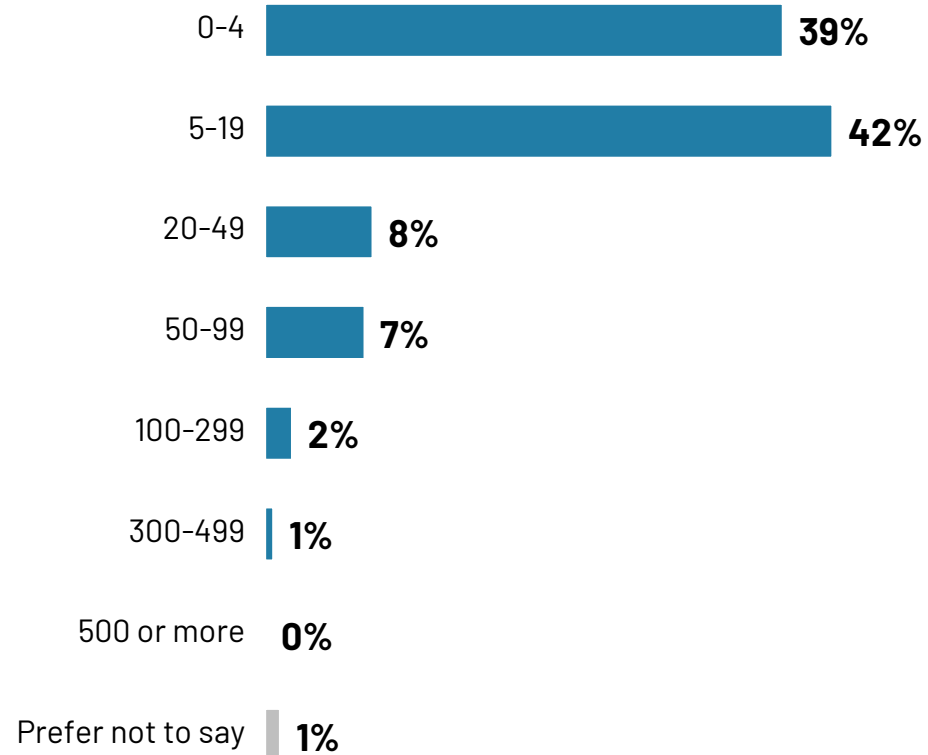
4. PROFILE OF BUSINESSES

Number of employees

Almost half of the business surveys (42%) have 5-19 employees, and 39% have 4 or less employees, indicating a prevalence of small businesses in Vaughan. 15% of businesses have 20-49 employees

A smaller percentage of businesses have 100-499 employees (3%), and none of the businesses surveyed reported having 500+ employees.

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES THE BUSINESS HAS



Base: All respondents (n=352)
D1. How many employees does your business have? Your best guess is okay.

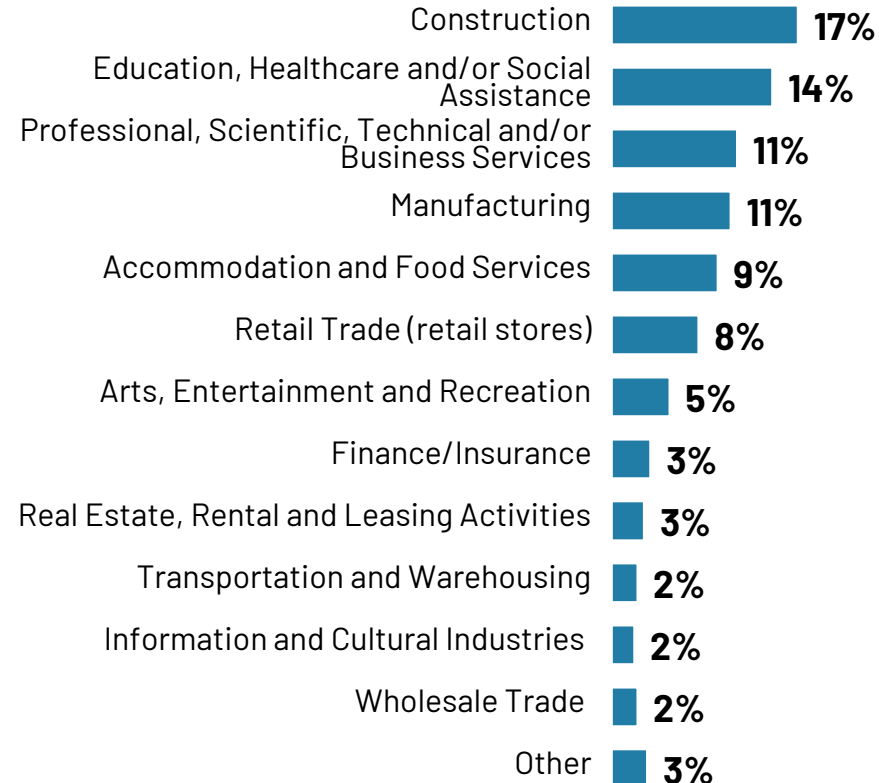
Primary sector

The most common primary sectors for businesses in Vaughan are Construction (17%), Education, Healthcare and/or Social Assistance (14%), and Professional, Scientific, Technical and/or Business Services (11%).

Manufacturing (11%), Accommodation and Food Services (9%), and Retail Trade (8%) also represent significant portions of the Vaughan business landscape.

Other sectors include Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (5%), Finance/Insurance (3%), Real Estate (3%), Transportation and Warehousing (2%), Information and Cultural Industries (2%), and Wholesale Trade (2%).

PRIMARY SECTOR THE BUSINESS OPERATE



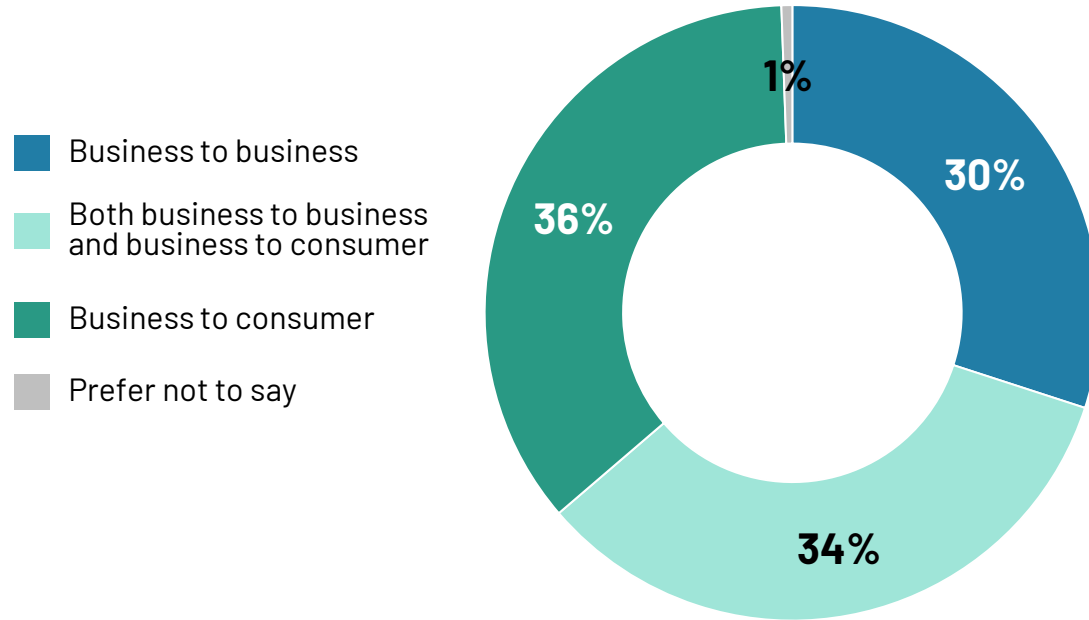
Base: All respondents (n=350)
D2. In what sector does your business primarily operate?

Business model

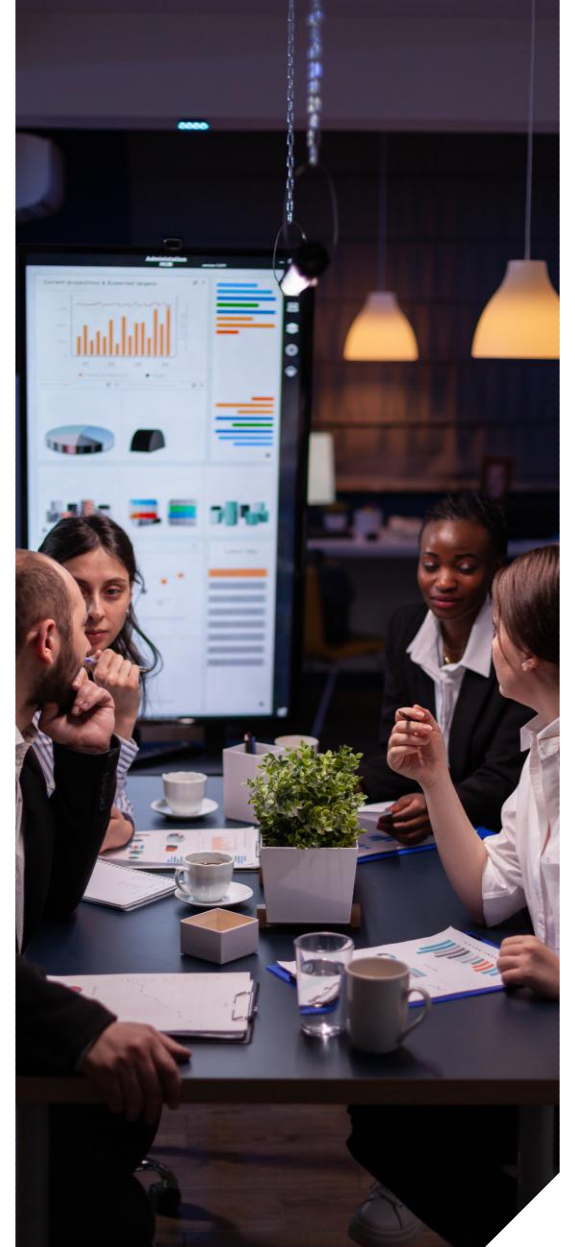
Business-to-business (36%), business-to-consumer (34%), and a near equal split of both (30%) are the primary business models in Vaughan.

This diverse mix reflects the varied nature of businesses operating within the city, catering to both other businesses and individual consumers.

PRIMARY BUSINESS MODEL



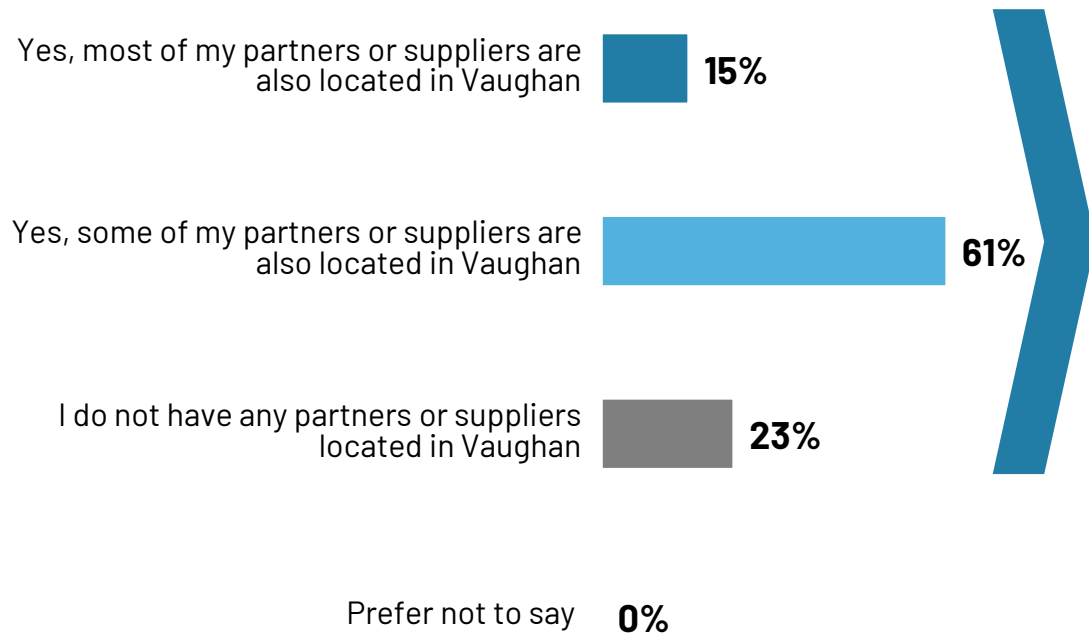
Base: All respondents (n=350)
D3. Would you say that your business model is primarily business to business, business to consumer or close to equal parts of both?



Partners or suppliers location

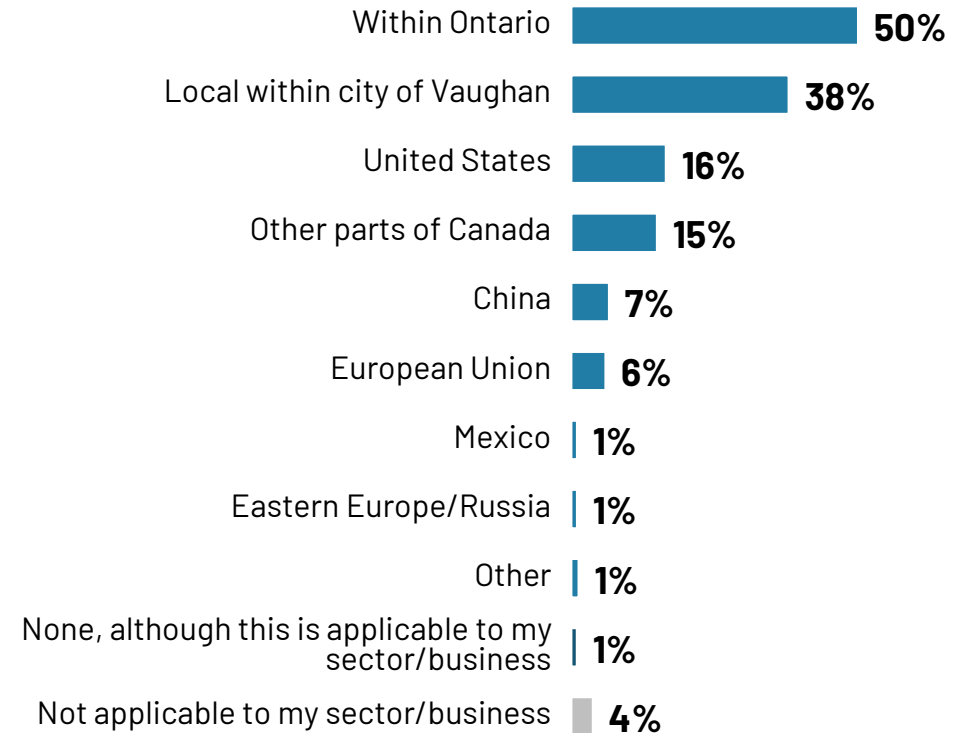
61% of businesses source some or most of their partners/suppliers from within Vaughan, while 23% do not source any locally. Looking at the broader supply chain, the majority (50%) of principal suppliers are located within Ontario, with 38% being local to Vaughan. The United States (16%) and other parts of Canada (15%) are also significant sources of suppliers.

SOURCING PARTNERS OR SUPPLIERS FROM WITHIN VAUGHAN



Base: All respondents (n=325)
D4. Are you sourcing partners or suppliers from within Vaughan?

LOCATION OF COMPANY'S PRINCIPAL SUPPLIERS TODAY



Base: All respondents (n=323)
D5. Where are your company's principal suppliers located today?

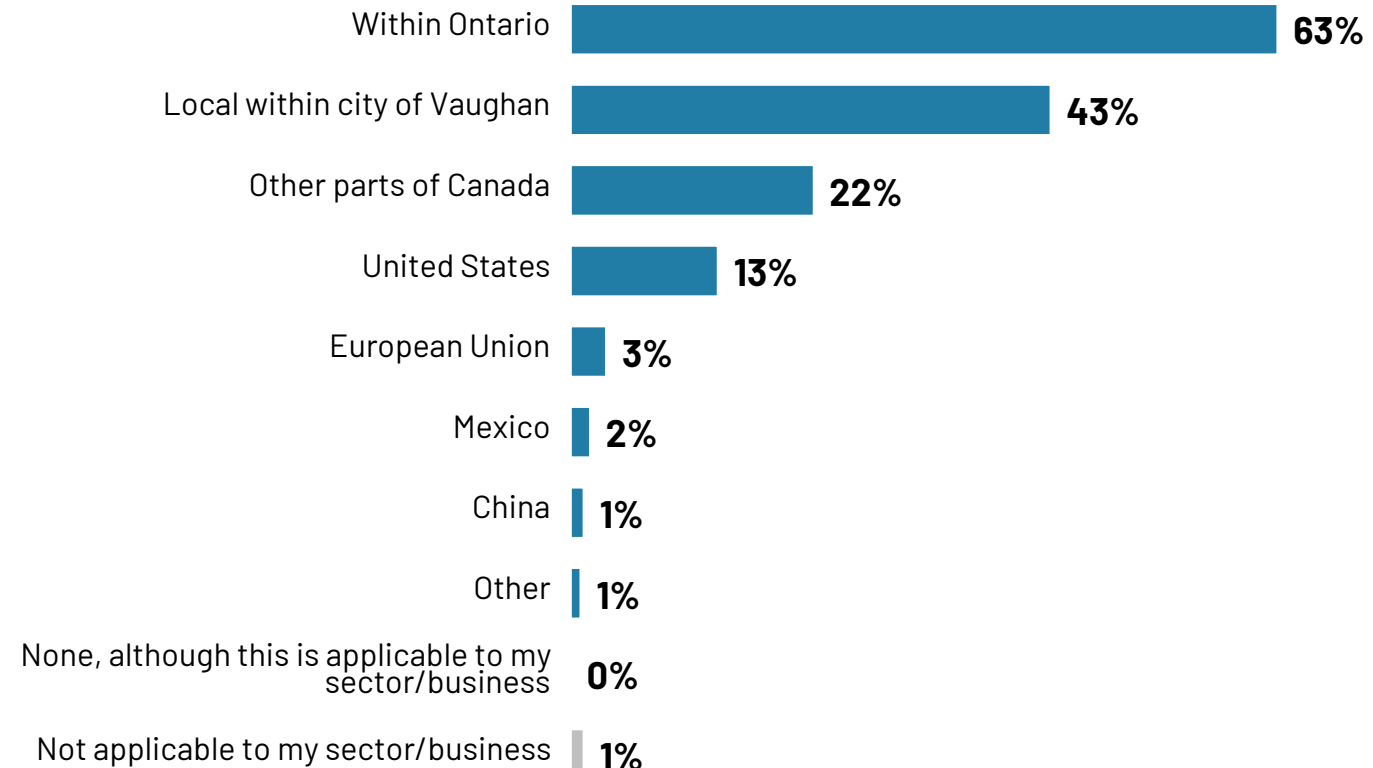
Primary market and customers

The primary market for Vaughan businesses is within Ontario (63%), with a significant portion (43%) being local within the city itself.

Other parts of Canada (22%) and the United States (13%) also represent important markets.

This suggests that Vaughan businesses primarily serve a regional customer base, but also have a presence in national and international markets.

WHERE COMPANY'S PRIMARY MARKETS AND CUSTOMERS LOCATED TODAY



Base: All respondents (n=351)
D6. Where are your company's primary markets and customers located today?

THANK YOU

NAME:

Martin Hrobsky
Senior Vice President

DETAILS:

Martin.Hrobsky@Ipsos.com

NAME:

Galini Pantelidou
Senior Account Manager

DETAILS:

Galini.Pantelidou@Ipsos.com

NAME:

Pilar Canavesi
Senior Account Manager

DETAILS:

Pilar.Canavesi@Ipsos.com

Committee of the Whole (Working Session) Report

DATE: Wednesday, March 5, 2025

WARD(S): ALL

TITLE: PUBLIC FACING ACTIVE INFRASTRUCTURE CONSTRUCTION
MAP VIEWER

FROM:

Vince Musacchio, Deputy City Manager, Infrastructure Development

ACTION: DECISION

Purpose

To request Council's endorsement for the implementation of a public-facing active infrastructure construction map viewer. This innovative tool is designed to enhance transparency by offering residents real-time updates on ongoing construction projects throughout the City of Vaughan, fostering greater community engagement and improving the overall service experience.

Report Highlights

- The public-facing active construction map offers a user-friendly platform that provides real-time access to information on active construction projects across the City. It effectively addresses issues such as limited project visibility and coordination gaps, ensuring residents and stakeholders are well-informed. public-facing active construction map provides a user-friendly platform for real-time access to information about active construction projects across the City, addressing challenges like limited visibility and coordination gaps.
- The map increases transparency, boosts communication, and facilitates meaningful engagement with residents and stakeholders.

Recommendation

1. That the public facing active infrastructure construction map be endorsed.

Background

The City of Vaughan remains dedicated to achieving the goals and initiatives outlined in the 2022-2026 Term of Council Service Excellence Strategic Plan. In alignment with the strategic priorities of Citizen Experience and Operational Performance, the City continues to advance business transformation efforts focused on enhancing service delivery through improved community engagement, effective communication, digital innovation, and streamlined processes.

As part of these initiatives, the public-facing active construction projects map has been developed to provide residents and stakeholders with a centralized, user-friendly platform to access real-time updates on construction activities across the City. This tool addresses challenges such as limited visibility into neighborhood projects and the need for improved coordination with external stakeholders.

The map offers advanced features, including filters to sort projects by ward, asset type, or construction year, along with detailed project information such as timelines and contact details. With daily updates, the platform ensures users have access to the most accurate and current information, empowering residents to stay informed and strengthening the City's connection with its communities.

Previous Reports/Authority

N/A

Analysis and Options

The introduction of a public-facing active infrastructure construction map provides significant benefits, including greater transparency, more efficient communication, and stronger engagement with stakeholders.

Financial Impact

N/A

Operational Impact

N/A

Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations

The implementation of the public-facing active infrastructure construction map would provide substantial benefits to other governments and organizations, such as contractors, utility providers, and regional authorities. By offering real-time visibility into

Vaughan's infrastructure projects, the platform facilitates enhanced cross-boundary coordination with neighboring municipalities and regional governments. This increased transparency fosters more effective collaboration on interconnected initiatives, such as transportation and utility systems, while supporting improved regional planning and reducing disruptions.

Conclusion

The implementation of a public-facing active infrastructure construction map viewer marks a significant advancement in the City of Vaughan's efforts to promote transparency, enhance citizen engagement, and improve service delivery. By offering residents and stakeholders real-time, easy-to-access updates on construction projects, this platform effectively addresses communication and coordination challenges while fostering stronger collaboration between the City and its communities.

This initiative directly supports the strategic priorities outlined in the 2022-2026 Term of Council Service Excellence Strategic Plan, highlighting the City's commitment to innovation, operational excellence, and continuously improving the citizen experience. With Council's endorsement, this tool will not only raise public awareness of infrastructure activities but also empower informed decision-making and strengthen the City's connection with its residents.

For more information, please contact: Stefan Tzianetas, Director, Infrastructure Development, Program Management Office, ext. 8196

Attachments

N/A

Prepared by

Sylvia Cardenas, Spatial Data and Technology Specialist, 8458