

City of Regina



City of Regina 2019 Pre-Budget Survey Report

September 2018

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Executive Summary

Photos courtesy Regina.ca

City of Regina 2019 Pre-Budget Survey Highlights

In the fall of 2018, the City of Regina sought input from residents to help inform budget planning and ensure the City is making decisions that support resident priorities. The online survey was live on the Regina.ca website from September 10th to 24th.

4 out of 10 Satisfied with Quality of City Services & Programs

- › Four out of ten (35%) survey respondents say they are satisfied with the quality of services and programs provided by the City of Regina. Approximately 38% appear ambivalent (a score of 5 or 6 on the 0-10 scale), while 28% are dissatisfied.

3 out of 10 Think Regina Is On Track to Being a Better City

- › Approximately a third (32%) of respondents agree that Regina is on the right track to becoming a better city 10 years from now. A quarter (25%) are neutral and 43% disagree.

2 out of 10 Perceive Good Value for Tax Dollars

- › Two out of ten (23%) respondents rate the value they receive from their municipal tax dollars as good to very good. Nearly a third (32%) are ambivalent and 45% rate value for their tax dollars as poor.

8 out of 10 Are Knowledgeable About How Tax Dollars Are Spent

- › The large majority (79%) of respondents say they are somewhat to very knowledgeable about how City tax dollars are spent.

9 out of 10 Agree Tax Dollars Should Be Allocated to Future Infrastructure

- › The large majority of respondents (86%) agree that a portion of today's property tax dollars should be allocated to help fund the cost of rebuilding infrastructure (overpasses, roads, etc.) in the future. More than half (54%) strongly agree.

8 out of 10 Agree Civic Recreation Facilities Are Important

- › The large majority (83%) agree that civic recreation facilities are an important part of what makes cities like Regina good places to live.

4 out of 10 Agree the City Balances Community Needs and Affordable Taxes

- › Four out of ten (36%) respondents agree the City does a good job of balancing meeting community needs with keeping property taxes affordable, compared to close to a half (48%) who disagree.

3 out of 10 Agree the City Makes Good Choices About Spending Tax Dollars

- › Three out of ten (31%) respondents agree the City understands what's important to residents and makes good choices about where to spend tax dollars, while 56% disagree.

Opinions Differ on Preferred Approach to Balancing Budget

- › Approximately a quarter (23%) of respondents would prefer the City use a combination of property tax and user fee increases to balance its operating budget. Another 17% prefer the City stop providing a particular service, 15% prefer new user or service fees, 11% prefer increasing existing user fees or reducing service levels. An increase in property taxes is last on the list (4%).

Opinions Differ on Single Most Important Issue Facing City

- › Respondents have differing opinions on the single most important issue facing the City. Infrastructure is the most frequently mentioned at 18%, followed by road conditions/road repairs at 13%.
- › Rounding out the top five are fiscal responsibility (12%), taxation levels (11%) and public safety/crime/policing (8%).

Top 5 Spending Priorities

- › When respondents are asked what they think the City's top spending priority should be, their responses reflect their perception of important issues facing the City. Infrastructure renewal is again the most frequently mentioned at 23%, followed by roadways and transportation at 21%.
- › Rounding out the top five are police services (15%), planning/development/growth (9%), public safety/crime/policing (8%) and a tie between community programs/services and recreation facilities (7%).

Opinion Divided on Dedicated Tax Increase

- › Respondents appear divided on the issue of a dedicated property tax increase to pay for a specific program or services, (e.g. roads, facilities)—39% agree, 44% disagree and 13% are neutral.

Methodology

The Survey

This public engagement survey was available on the City of Regina website between September 10th and 24th, 2018. The survey questionnaire, developed in collaboration with the City of Regina, contains questions to help inform budget planning for the 2019 Budget and future direction. It consisted of an introduction explaining the purpose of the survey, followed by seventeen questions, three of which were open-end.

Fast Consulting reviewed and compiled survey feedback into a summary report. A total of 3,112 respondents came to the survey link and completed questions; 2,701 completed all of the questions. The results also included 2,545 open end comments to three questions. Fast Consulting reviewed these open-end responses and categorized them into high level themes to encapsulate primary aspects of public feedback.

The online survey is a public engagement tool designed to provide Regina residents with an opportunity to share opinions with the City; it is not a statistically valid survey conducted with a random selection of respondents. Because respondents self-selected to contribute their opinions, survey results technically constitute a non-probability sample and a margin of sampling error is not calculated or quoted.

The objective is to provide Regina residents with an access point to share their opinions around some high-level budget related priorities, and to capture quantifiable insights into perceptions of what's important to Regina residents going forward.



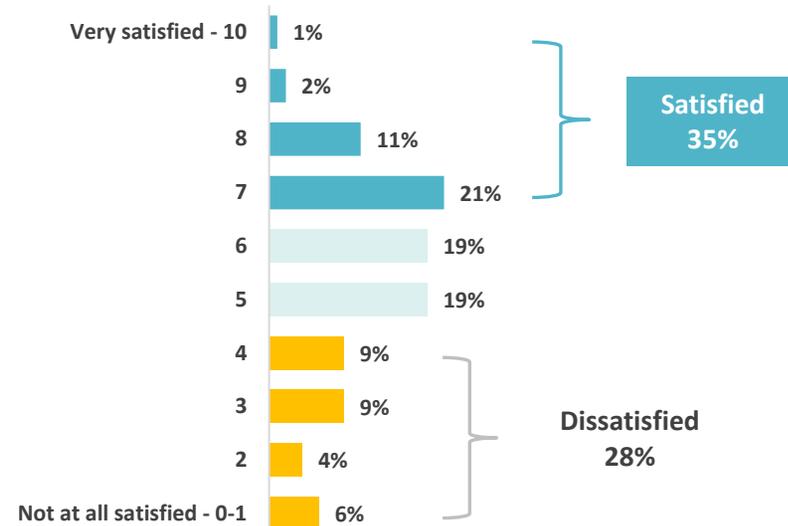
Survey Results



Quality of Services & Programs

Q. How satisfied are you with the quality of services and programs provided by the City of Regina?

- Four out of ten (35%) respondents are satisfied with the quality of services and programs provided by the City of Regina. Approximately 38% appear ambivalent (a score of 5 or 6 on the 0-10 scale), while 28% are dissatisfied.

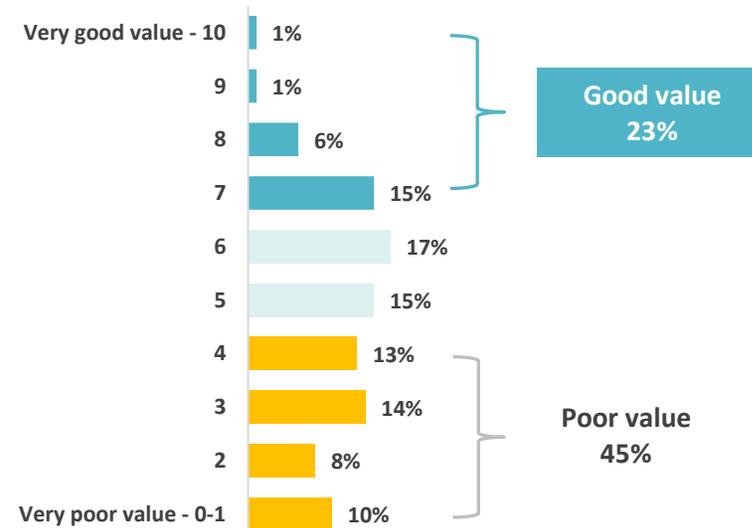


* Chart may not total 100% due to rounding

Value for Tax Dollars

Q. Please rate the value you think you receive from your municipal tax dollars.

- Two out of ten (23%) respondents rate the value they receive from their municipal tax dollars as good to very good. Nearly a third (32%) are ambivalent and 45% rate value for their tax dollars as poor.

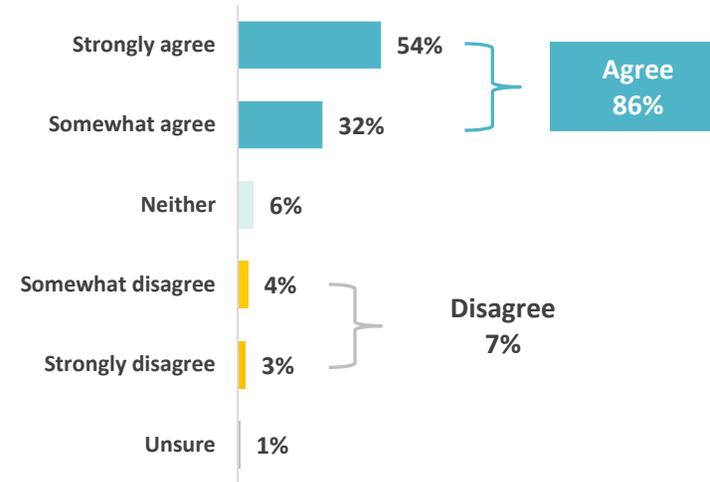


Allocating Future Tax Dollars

Q. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement:

A portion of today’s property tax dollars should be allocated to help fund the cost of rebuilding infrastructure (e.g. roads, overpasses, city facilities) in the future.

- The large majority of respondents (86%) agree that a portion of today’s property tax dollars should be allocated to help fund the cost of rebuilding infrastructure (overpasses, roads, etc.) in the future. More than half (54%) strongly agree.

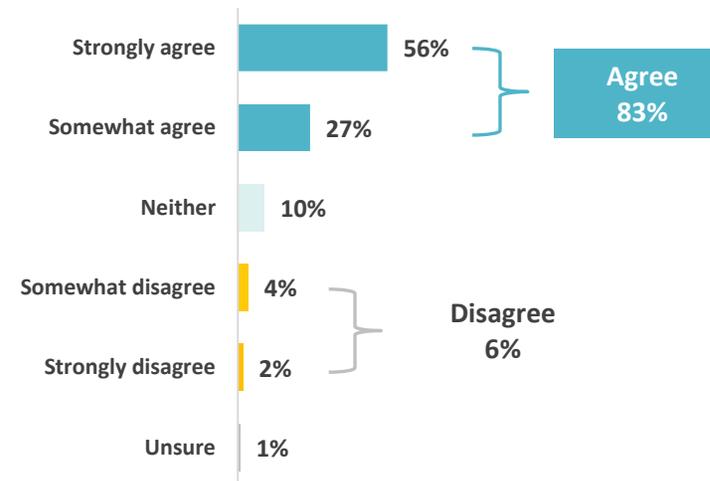


Importance of Recreation Facilities

Q. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement:

Civic recreation facilities are an important part of what makes cities like Regina good places to live.

- The large majority (83%) agree that civic recreation facilities are an important part of what makes cities like Regina good places to live. More than half (56%) strongly agree.

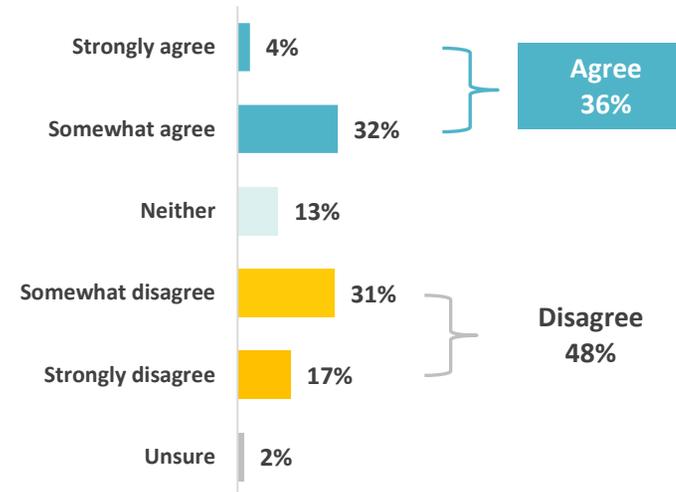


Balancing Community Needs & Taxes

Q. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement:

The City does a good job of balancing meeting the community’s needs with affordability for property tax payers.

- Just over a third (36%) of respondents agree the City does a good job of balancing meeting community needs with keeping property taxes affordable. Nearly half (48%) do not agree.

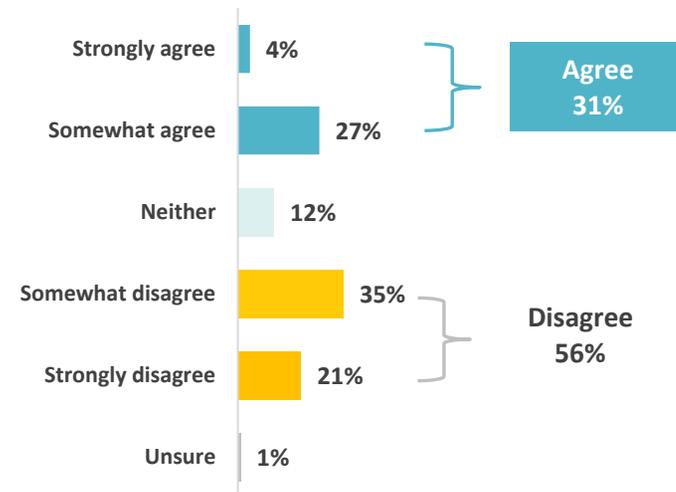


Making Good Choices

Q. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement:

The City does a good job of informing citizens of how property tax dollars are spent on various City services.

- Three out of ten (31%) respondents agree the City understands what’s important to residents and makes good choices about where to spend tax dollars. Over half (56%) do not agree.

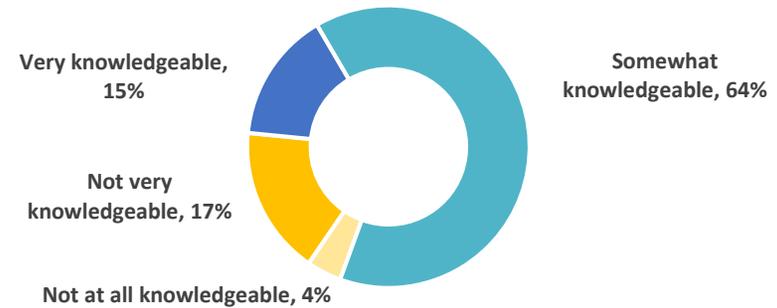


* Chart may not total 100% due to rounding

How Tax Dollars Are Spent

Q. Would you say you are very, somewhat, not very or not at all knowledgeable about how City tax dollars are spent?

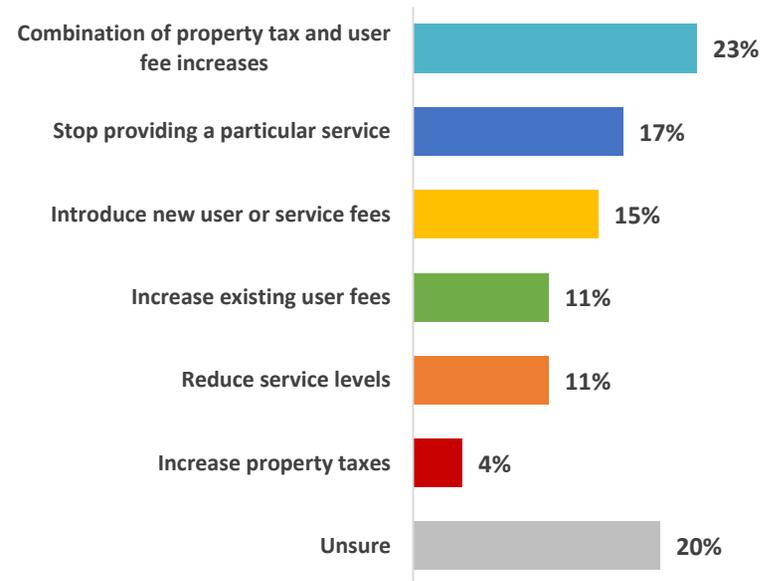
- The large majority (79%) of respondents say they are somewhat to very knowledgeable about how City tax dollars are spent.



Ways to Balance the Budget

Q. Occasionally, the City needs to make choices on how to balance its operating budget. Which of the following approaches, if any, would you most prefer?

- Approximately a quarter (23%) of respondents would prefer the City use a combination of property tax and user fee increases to balance its operating budget.
- This is followed by 17% who would prefer the City stop providing a particular service and 15% who would prefer the City introduce new user or service fees.
- One out of ten would prefer the City increase existing user fees (11%) or reduce service levels (11%). Last on the list of options is an increase in property taxes, at just 4% of respondents.
- One-fifth (20%) are unsure which approach they prefer.

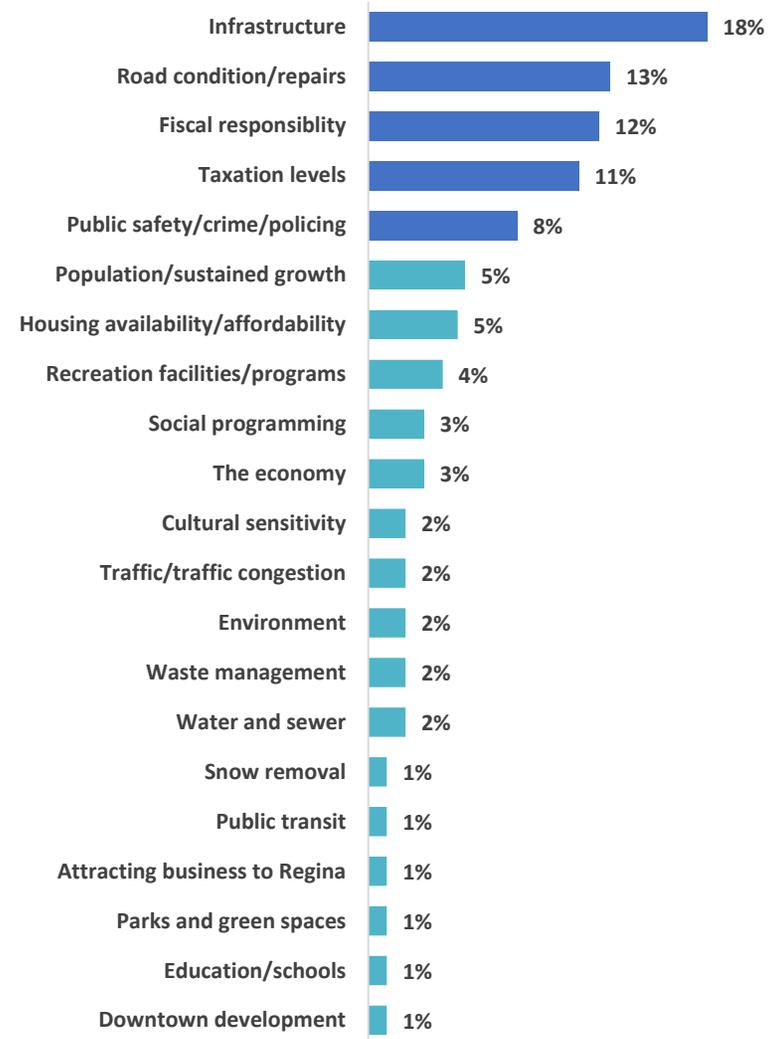


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Single Most Important Issue

Q. In your opinion, what is the single most important issue facing the City of Regina?

- Respondents have differing opinions on the single most important issue facing the City. The top five mentions are:
 - Infrastructure at 18% of respondents
 - Road conditions/road repairs – 13%
 - Fiscal responsibility – 12%
 - Taxation levels – 11%
 - Public safety/crime/policing – 8%
- Approximately 5%, respectively, think the single most important issue is population/sustained growth or housing availability/ affordability.
- Another 4% cite recreation facilities/programs, 3% social programming and 3% the economy.



Top Spending Priority

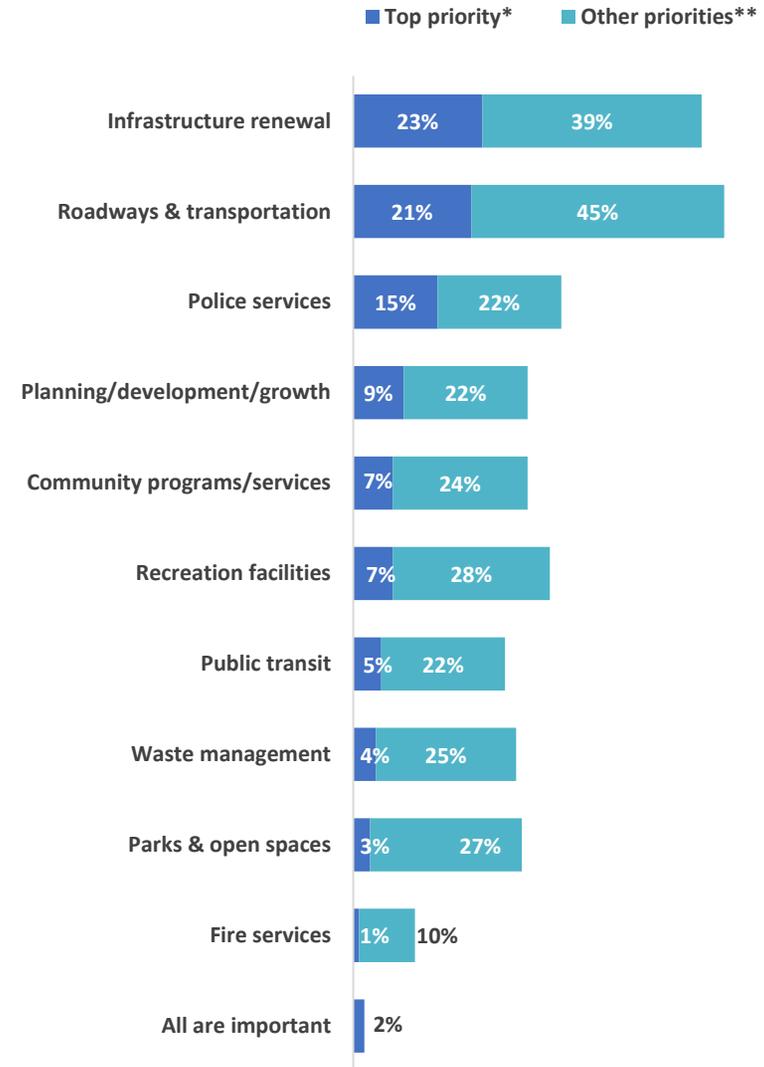
Q. What do you think should be the top spending or investment priorities of the City of Regina?

- Respondents’ spending priorities reflect their perceptions of important issues facing the City. The top five spending priorities are:
 - Infrastructure renewal – 23%
 - Roadways and transportation – 21%
 - Police services – 15%
 - Planning, development and growth – 9%
 - Community programs and services / recreation facilities – 7%

Other Spending Priorities

Q. Are there any other things you think the City should be spending more on?

- Respondents also identify a number of other things they think the City should be spending more on. The top five other spending priorities are:
 - Roadways and transportation – 45%
 - Infrastructure renewal – 39%
 - Recreation facilities – 28%
 - Parks and open spaces – 27%
 - Waste management – 25%

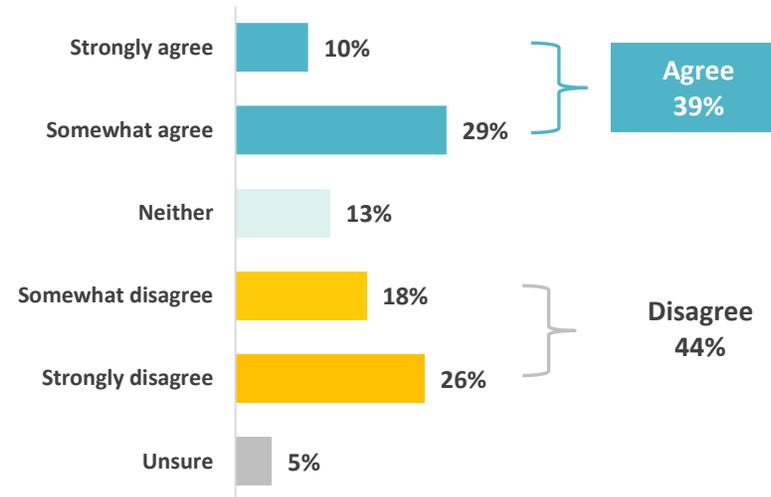


* Top priority responses – select only one ** Other priorities – select as many as apply

Dedicated Tax Increase

Q. Do you agree with the idea of a dedicated property tax increase that is spent only on a specific program or service, such as roads or recreation facilities?

- Respondents appear somewhat divided on the issue of a dedicated property tax increase to pay for a specific program or services, such as roads or facilities—39% agree, 44% disagree and 13% are neutral.

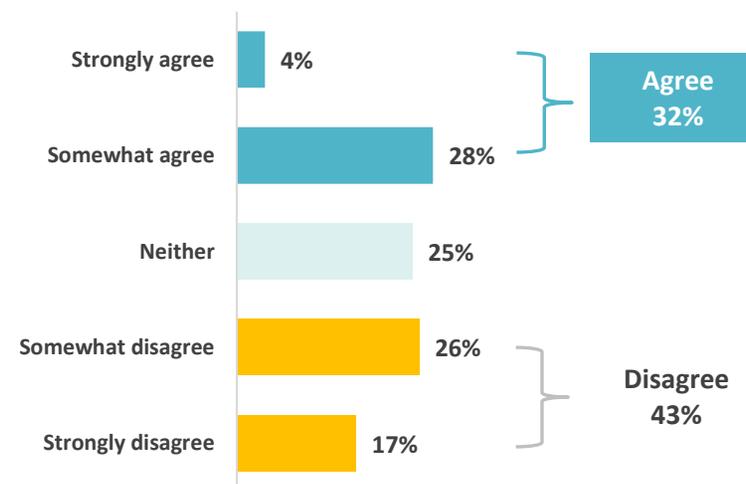


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On the Right Track?

Q. Do you agree or disagree that Regina is on the right track to be a better city 10 years from now?

- Approximately a third (32%) of respondents agree that Regina is on the right track to becoming a better city 10 years from now. A quarter (25%) are neutral and 43% disagree.

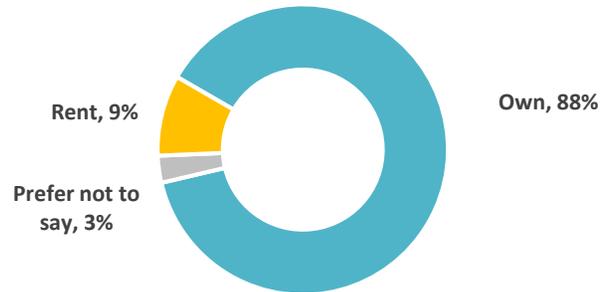


Respondent Profile

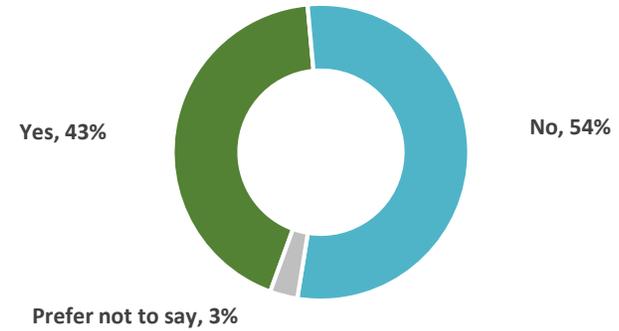


Demographics

OWN OR RENT HOME



CHILDREN LIVING AT HOME



- Respondents are predominantly homeowners (88%). Close to half (43%) have children under 18 living at home, while just over half (54%) do not.