

Town of Tecumseh Citizen Satisfaction Survey Final Report



Prepared for

Town of Tecumseh

April 29st, 2016



RESEARCH INC.

...for what you need to know.

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- Questionnaire
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KEY FINDINGS

The following is an overview of the key findings to emerge from this random and representative telephone survey of 405 adults living in Tecumseh, Ontario:

Overall Citizen Impressions

- Taxes continue to be the most important “top-of-mind” issue among residents. Fifteen percent of respondents consider taxes the most important issue facing Tecumseh. The town’s infrastructure ranks second (10%).
- This year, the number of Tecumseh residents who rated the town’s quality of life as *excellent* surged from 47 per cent to 58 per cent. Overall, a remarkable majority of Tecumseh residents agree that they enjoy a high quality of life.
- More than four-in-five citizens (82%) continue to believe that the Town of Tecumseh is heading in the right direction.

Municipal Service Assessment

- Three-quarters of Tecumseh residents (77%) believe they receive satisfactory value for the taxes they pay to the Town in exchange for municipal services (27% say they receive *excellent value* and an additional 50% feel they obtain *good value* for their taxes). These numbers are unchanged from 2014.
- Virtually all Tecumseh residents (a remarkable 99%) are pleased with the overall level of service they receive from the Town. This year, more residents (70%) were *very satisfied* with the services, a 12 percentage point increase since 2014.
- “Core” services, such as safe drinking water, fire and police protection, waste management and snow removal continued to be the most important services in the eyes of residents. Citizens are *very satisfied* with the town’s handling of core services such as waste management (87%), drinking water (87%), fire protection (85%) and snow removal (81%). Citizens tend to be less satisfied with the Town’s ability to offer “soft” services such as quality recreation facilities (57%) and recreation programs (51%), and libraries (52%).
 - A quadrant analysis comparing citizens’ assessment of the importance and satisfaction of Town services reveals that there is generally a great deal of contentment with the job the Town does when it comes to core municipal services.
 - These findings suggest that even though citizens have identified two areas for the Town of Tecumseh to improve (street maintenance and stormwater drainage), generally speaking, citizens are most satisfied with the services provided by the Town.
- Citizens include core infrastructure such as roads and sewers (25%) and recreation and leisure (15%) as areas of potential improvement for the town.
- Half of Tecumseh citizens could not point to specific recreation programs or facilities they would like to see in the future. But, among those who would like more access to recreation, pools and swimming programs topped their wish list (44%).

Communications Issues

- More than one-half (55%) of those polled have contacted the Town in order to resolve a specific complaint, a 12 percentage point increase since 2014. Tecumseh residents are still most likely to deal directly with a member of Town Council to resolve an issue. Most citizens (78%) were *satisfied* with the manner in which a Town official/department dealt with their problem.
- More adults living in Tecumseh (74% in 2016) are visiting the Town's website, and a quarter of residents said this website is their preferred way to receive important town information. Nearly as many residents said they would prefer to be reached through email. That is a shift from 2014, when direct mail was the top communication method preferred by citizens.

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1.0 RESEARCH BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

Probe Research was commissioned by the Town of Tecumseh to conduct a random and representative telephone survey of adult residents of the Town. This survey is intended to measure citizens' satisfaction with civic services, as well as pinpoint attitudes regarding other Town initiatives.

This report represents the findings of a survey conducted by telephone between and April 1 and April 10, 2016 among a random and representative sampling of 405 adults aged 18 years and over. With a sample of 405, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the results are within +/- 4.9 percentage points of what they would have been if all adult residents of Tecumseh had been interviewed. The margin-of-error is higher within each of the survey's population sub-groups.

The survey was designed by Probe Research Inc. in close consultation with representatives of the Town of Tecumseh. The results were collected using state-of-the-art Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) software and the data analysis was conducted in-house with SPSS and other packaged software.

A profile of the respondents who participated in this survey is presented on the following page.

2.0 PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS				
	Total (n=405)	WARD		
		Ward 1 (n=223)	Ward 2 (n=65)*	Wards 3 and 4 (n=117)
(%)				
Gender				
Men	48	48	48	48
Women	52	52	52	52
Age				
18-34 years	23	23	23	23
35-54 years	38	38	38	38
55+ years	39	38	39	38
Income				
<\$40K	7	7	12	7
\$40K-\$99K	35	37	27	34
\$100K+	57	56	61	59
Education				
High school or less	17	14	12	24
Some post-secondary	39	41	41	34
University or college graduate	44	44	47	42
Ward				
1	55	100	-	-
2	16	-	100	-
3 and 4	28	-	-	100
Dwelling Type				
Single-family detached	92	95	84	91
Duplex/Townhouse	4	2	5	8
Apartment/Condominium	3	2	11	1
*Caution: Small Base DK/NS Removed Figures may not equal 100 due to rounding.				

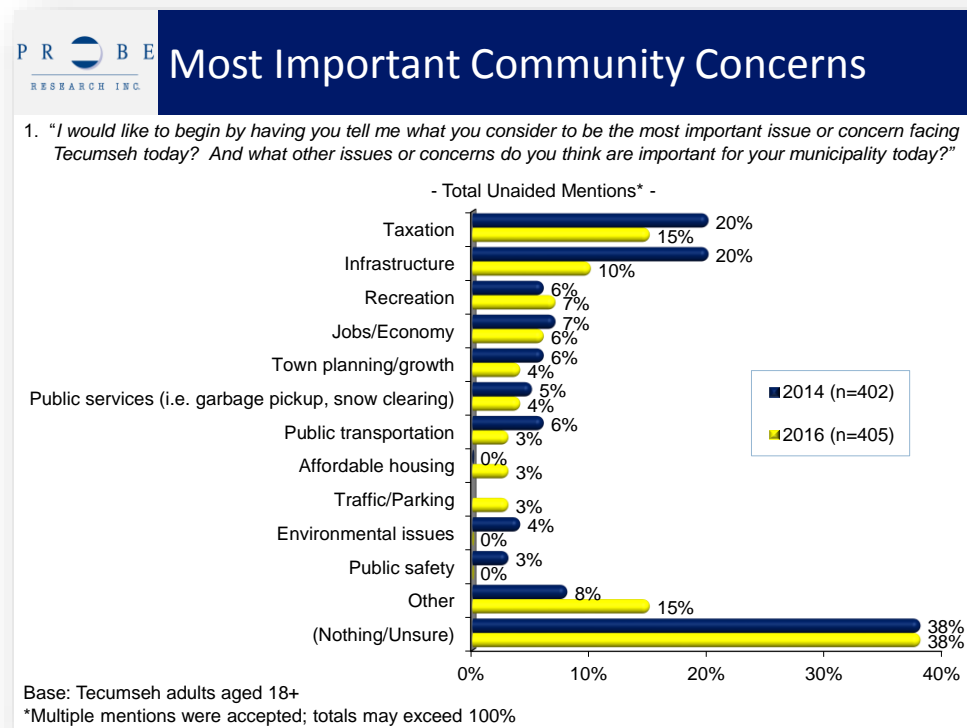
3.0 RESEARCH RESULTS

The following section provides the detailed findings from this survey of Tecumseh residents, including an overview of the total results as well as statistically significant variations across demographic sub-groups.

3.1 Overall Citizen Impressions

3.1.1 Tecumseh Public Issues Agenda

Citizens were asked to identify public concerns they feel are the “most important” issues facing the Town of Tecumseh. As the graph below illustrates, the top two issues identified by Tecumseh residents included taxation (15%) and infrastructure (10%). Fewer citizen, however, identified those issues than did in 2014. Residents cited a number of other public concerns as salient, including recreation (7%), jobs and the economy (6%) and town planning and growth (4%). Nearly four-in-ten residents could not identify any top-of-mind public concern (38%).

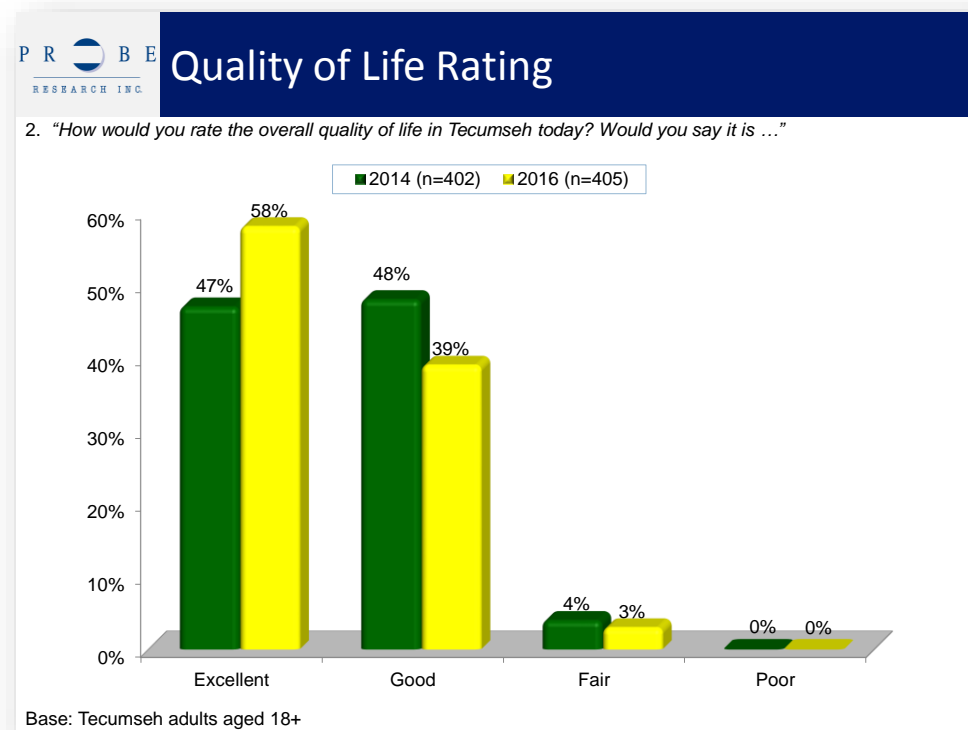


Notable variations among the surveyed sub-populations:

- Residents of Ward Two are slightly more likely to raise taxes as a significant public issue (28%, versus 10% among those living in Ward 1).
- Men are twice as likely than women to be concerned about levels of taxation in the community (20%, versus 11% respectively).

3.1.2 Perceptions of Tecumseh's Quality of Life

Tecumseh residents were asked to provide an assessment of the overall quality of life in the Town today. Overall, the vast majority of citizens agree their standard of living in the community is very high, an even higher consensus than in 2014. More than one-half (58%) said Tecumseh's quality-of-life is *excellent* and an additional 39 percent rated the Town's quality-of-life as *good*. Only a tiny four percent described the quality-of-life in Tecumseh as merely *fair*, while less than one percent rated it as *poor*.

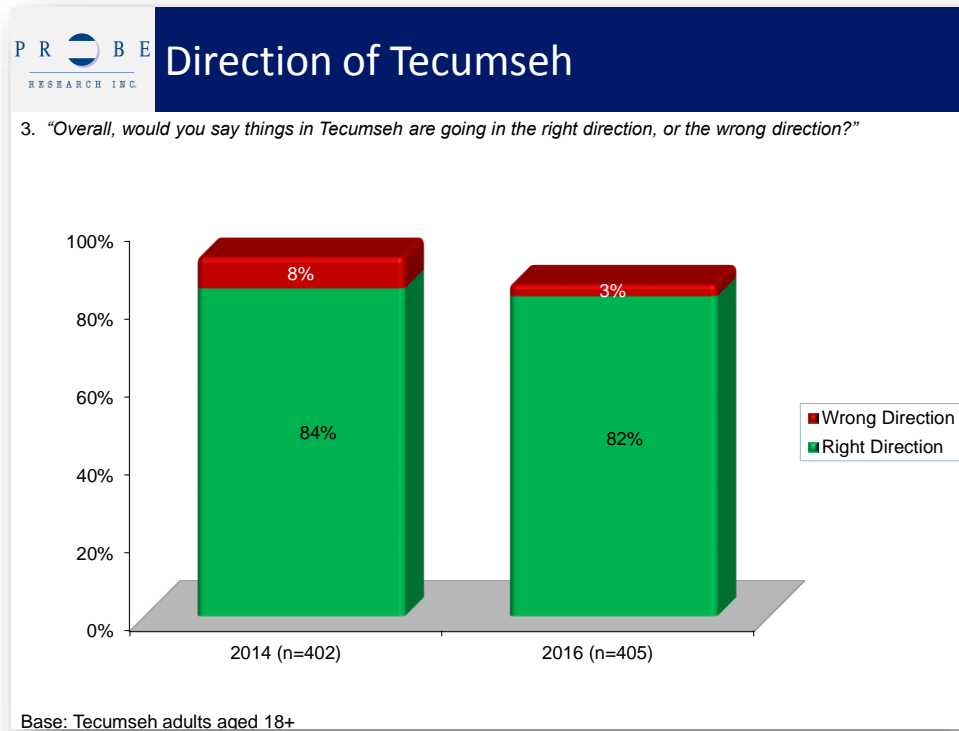


Notable variations:

- Younger adults were more likely to rate the quality of life in Tecumseh as *excellent*. Among adults under 35, 71 per cent described the quality of life in town as *excellent* compared with those over 35 (55%).
- Residents with more education (66% among those with some post-secondary education) and mid-level household incomes (62% among those in the middle-income bracket) were also more likely to describe life in Tecumseh as *excellent*.
- Residents of Wards Three and Four were less likely to rate the quality of life as *excellent* (46%) compared with resident of Wards One and Two, where more than six-in-ten residents rated life in Tecumseh as *excellent*.
- Citizens who feel they receive *excellent* value for their tax dollars are among those who are more likely to indicate that they enjoy an *excellent* quality-of-life in Tecumseh (85%, versus 55% among those who believe they receive *good* value for their taxes and plunging to 32% among those who feel they obtain *fair* or *poor* value for their tax dollars).

3.1.3 Views Regarding the Direction of the Town

Citizens were asked if they feel Tecumseh is headed in the “right direction,” or the “wrong direction.” More than four-in-five adults (82%) agree the Town is headed in the *right direction*, compared to just three percent who felt Tecumseh is headed down the wrong path. (An additional fourteen percent of those surveyed said the town is going in neither the wrong nor right direction, or were unsure/did not respond.) The findings remain virtually unchanged from 2014.



Notable variations:

- Residents with household incomes under \$40,000 a year were less likely to say Tecumseh is headed in the *right direction* (69%) compared with those in the middle income bracket (89% among those with a household income between \$40,000 and \$99,000).
- Those who are *very satisfied* with Town services (87%, versus 71% among those less satisfied with municipal services) and those who feel they receive *excellent value* for their tax dollars (92%, versus 65% among those who do not believe they receive good value for what they pay in taxes) are among those most likely to believe the Town is headed in the *right direction*.

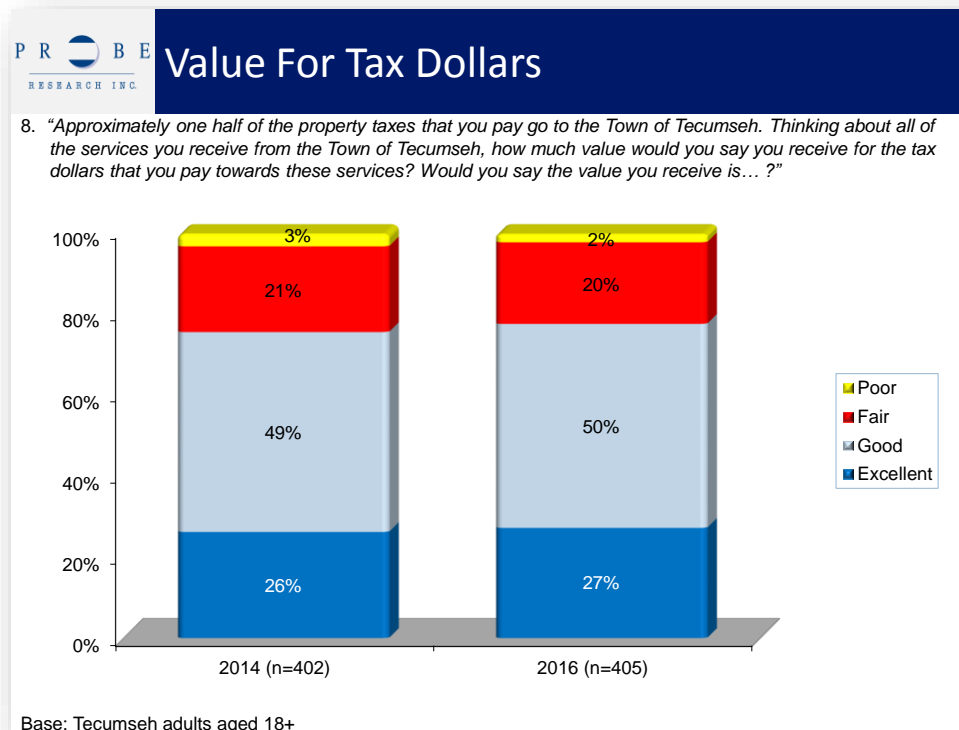
3.2 Municipal Service Assessment

The following section reveals citizens' views on the importance of, and their overall satisfaction with, civic services provided within the Town of Tecumseh. It also provides an assessment of the value that citizens feel they receive for their tax dollars, as well as areas for service improvement. An examination of the public demand for specific recreation programs and facilities is also included in this chapter.

3.2.1 Perceived Value for Tax Dollars

Tecumseh residents were asked to assess the value they feel they receive for the tax dollars they provide to their municipal government each year.

More than one-quarter of those surveyed (27%) report they receive *excellent* value for their tax dollars from the Town, with an additional one-half of citizens (50%) offering the view that they obtain *good* value for their municipal taxes. One-in-five citizens (20%), on the other hand, believe they only receive *fair* value for their local taxes, while just three percent of those surveyed indicated that they receive *poor* value from the Town of Tecumseh when it comes to municipal taxation and spending. These figures are unchanged from 2014.

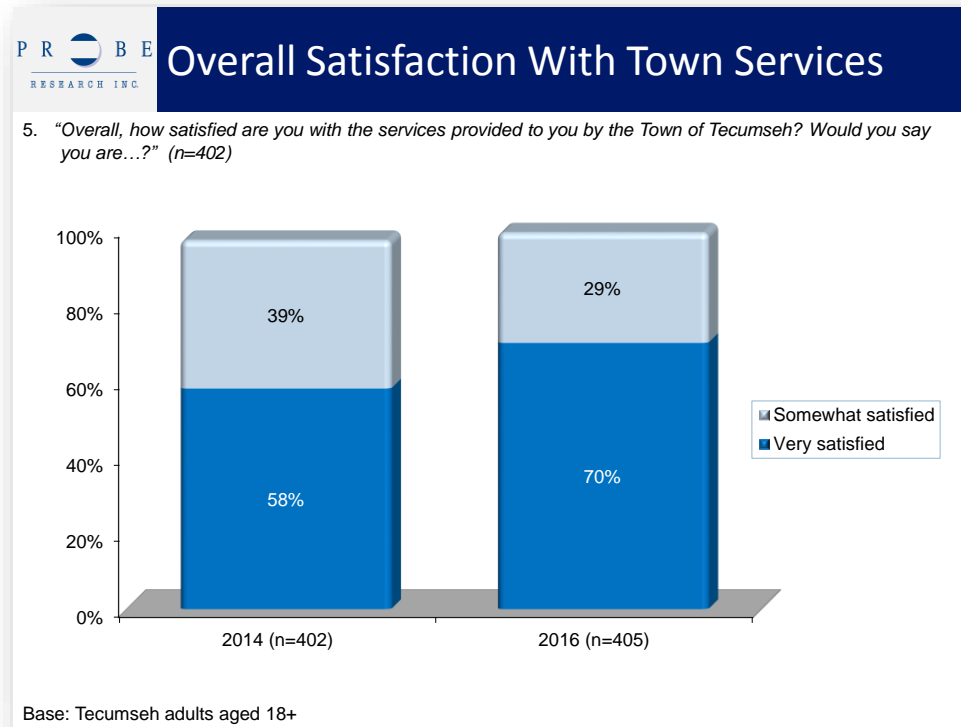


Notable variations:

- Residents of Wards Three and Four were half as likely to say they received *excellent* value for their tax dollars (15% versus 33% in Ward 1).
- As might be expected, those who are *very satisfied* with the services they receive from the Town were also more likely to believe that they receive *excellent* value for their tax dollars (36%, versus 6% among those who are less satisfied with Town services).

3.2.2 Overall Satisfaction with Town Services

Satisfaction with the services provided by the Town of Tecumseh is very high. As the following graph shows, seven-in-ten (70%) are now *very satisfied* with civic services in Tecumseh, with more than a quarter of respondents (29%) being *somewhat satisfied* with Town services. Less than one percent of those surveyed were *dissatisfied*, while one percent were *unsure* or did not respond. These figures represent marked improvement over 2014.



Notable variations:

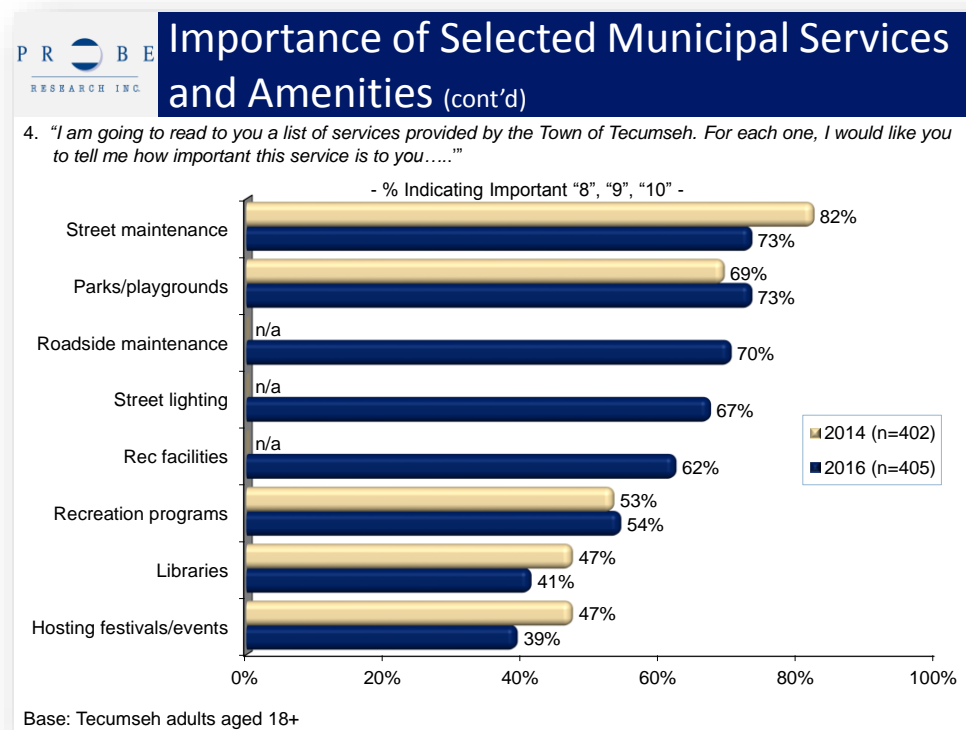
- Younger adults were slightly more likely than their older counterparts to express high levels of satisfaction with Town services (80% *very satisfied*, versus 65% among those aged 35-54 years and 72% among those aged 55 years and over).
- Those with lower levels of formal education were slightly less likely to state that they are *very satisfied* with Town services (60% among those with a high school diploma or less, compared to 76% among university and college graduates).
- Those who believe they obtain *excellent* value for their local tax dollars (94%) and those who feel they enjoy an *excellent* quality-of-life in the community (84%) were also more likely to be *very satisfied* with the services offered by the Town of Tecumseh.

3.2.3 Relative Importance of Specific Town Services

Respondents were asked to provide an assessment of the importance of a number of civic services provided in Tecumseh. This was done using a 1-10 scale where a “1” meant the service is “not at all important” to them personally and a “10” means the services is “very important.” (It is worth noting not all these services are provided directly by the Town of Tecumseh. Some are provided by - or through partnerships with - other levels of government).

Household drinking water is the most important service to Tecumseh residents (92% indicated it is important by providing a score between 8 and 10 out of 10). A slightly smaller proportion of respondents indicate that fire protection (87%), waste management (86%) and snow removal (85%) are essential services. “Soft” services were ranked among the less important town services, including recreation programs (54%), libraries (41%) and festivals and events (39%).

Residents ranked several services less important this year than they did in 2014, including street maintenance, libraries and festivals.



Notable variations:

- Women are more likely than men to indicate that policing is important to them (93%, versus 74% respectively).
- Women were also more likely to state that libraries are an important public service (47%, versus 35% among men).
- And, women are more likely to value parks, playgrounds and green space (81%, versus 65% among men).
- Younger residents are less likely to value street maintenance and upgrading (38% of those between 18 and 35 rated it important versus 82% of residents 55 and older). A similar trend was noted when it comes to roadside maintenance, snow removal and street lighting.

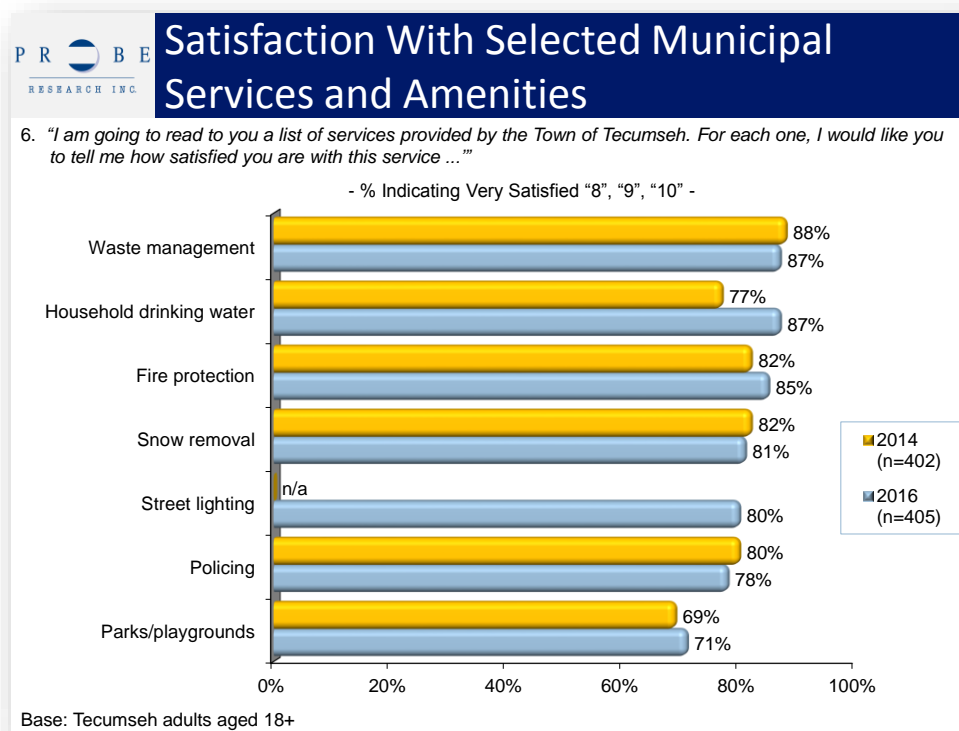
- Those who believe they enjoy excellent value for their tax dollars are among those more likely to value the importance of recreation facilities (69%, versus 51% among those who believe they aren't getting good value for their tax dollars).
- Those with relatively high household incomes were less likely to believe that libraries are an important public service (34% among those earning more than \$100,000/year, versus 50% among those earning \$40,000-\$99,999/year and among those earning less than \$40,000/year).

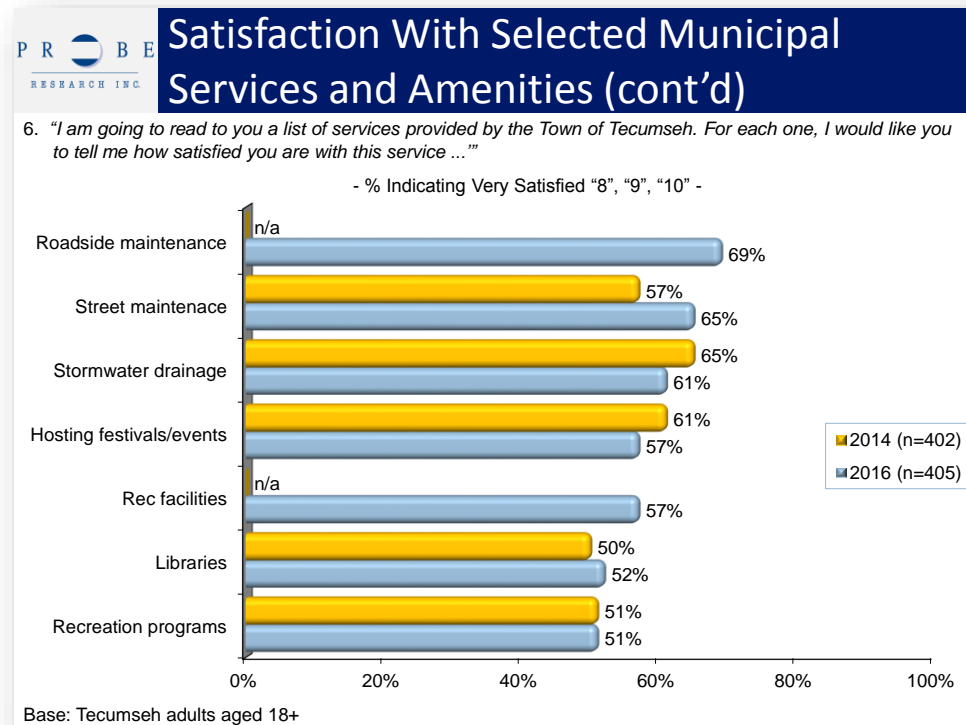
3.2.4 Satisfaction with Specific Town Services

Tecumseh residents were also asked to provide a satisfaction rating with some important civic services using a 1-10 scale where a “1” meant they are “not at all satisfied” with how this service is being delivered and a “10” meant they are “very satisfied.”

Tecumseh citizens are most likely to express their satisfaction with the Town’s waste management services (87% *satisfied*, as expressed by a score of 8, 9 or 10 on the 10-point scale). Nearly nine-in-ten residents also are *satisfied* with their household drinking water, an improvement over 2014 (77%). Residents were also pleased with the delivery of fire protection (85%), snow removal (81%) and policing (80%).

Residents are less likely to be happy with recreation facilities (57%), local libraries (52%) and recreation programs (51%).





Notable variations:

- Younger adults (82%, versus 61% among those older than 35) are more likely to be *satisfied* with street maintenance and upgrading. Similar differences are evident for roadside maintenance.
- Residents of condominiums and apartments tend to be happier with recreation programs than those living in single-family houses. Among apartment and condo dwellers, 67 per cent are *satisfied* with Tecumseh's recreation programs (50% among those living in houses).
- Older adults are more likely to be *satisfied* with the Town's provision of stormwater drainage (64% among those older than 55, versus 47% among those aged 18-34 years).
- Low-income earners were more likely to be *satisfied* with the Town's libraries (67% among those earning less than \$40,000/year, versus 45% among those earning more than \$100,000/year).

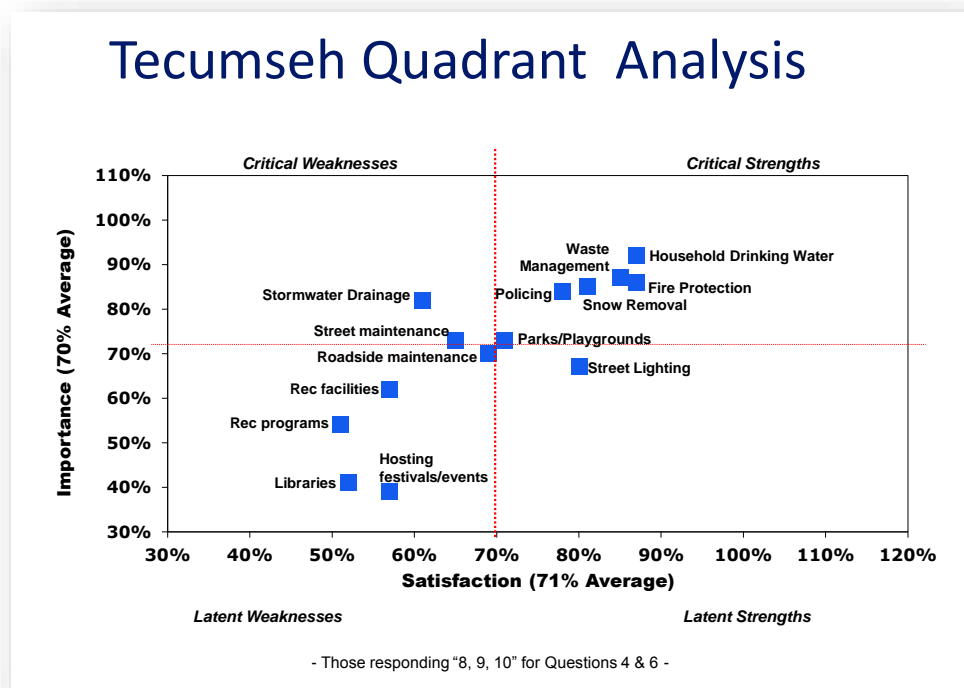
Those who are generally *very satisfied* with the Town's services – as well as those who feel they receive *excellent value* for their tax dollars - also tend to be more likely to be *satisfied* with individual services provided in Tecumseh. The following table illustrates these differences among these categories of citizens:

SERVICE	SATISFACTION WITH TOWN SERVICES		VALUE FOR TAX DOLLARS		
	Very satisfied (n=283)	Somewhat satisfied (n=122)	Excellent (n=110)	Good (202)	Fair/Poor (n=91)
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Waste management	94	70	96	85	79
Fire protection	92	69	96	82	80
Snow removal	88	63	94	77	73
Policing	84	65	91	78	61
Household drinking water	91	78	93	86	83
Parks/playgrounds	78	55	82	76	47
Stormwater drainage	66	51	77	58	53
Hosting festivals/events	63	44	62	57	53
Street maint./upgrading	77	38	82	60	57
Recreation programs	54	44	55	52	45
Libraries	58	38	64	55	30
Roadside maintenance	80	44	85	64	62
Street lighting	87	65	91	81	67
Recreation facilities	67	35	66	59	45

3.2.5 Quadrant Analysis – Importance vs. Satisfaction

The chart on the following page depicts the simultaneous high importance/performance ratings of 11 selected Tecumseh service dimensions. Overall, citizens offered an average importance rating of 74 percent for these 11 municipal attributes, and a 69 percent average “performance” rating for these same factors.

Summary: A graphic analysis of both importance and satisfaction of Tecumseh functions provides a vivid portrait of service deficits and opportunities. The vertical axis of the quadrant chart depicts how important the issue is for citizens. Thus, the higher up the function appears on the vertical axis of the chart, the greater the perceived importance. The horizontal axis reveals perceived citizen satisfaction on these same attributes. The further to the right on the chart, the higher the level of perceived performance. Observed in its entirety, quadrant analysis provides a visual depiction of areas of strategic opportunity and weakness for the Town of Tecumseh.



The four quadrants represent:

- **Critical Strengths** – These are characteristics that are seen to be relatively important and with which citizens are relatively satisfied (top right section). These represent services that the Town of Tecumseh should strive to maintain high levels of satisfaction. Items in this quadrant are highly desirable and are signs of organizational strength.

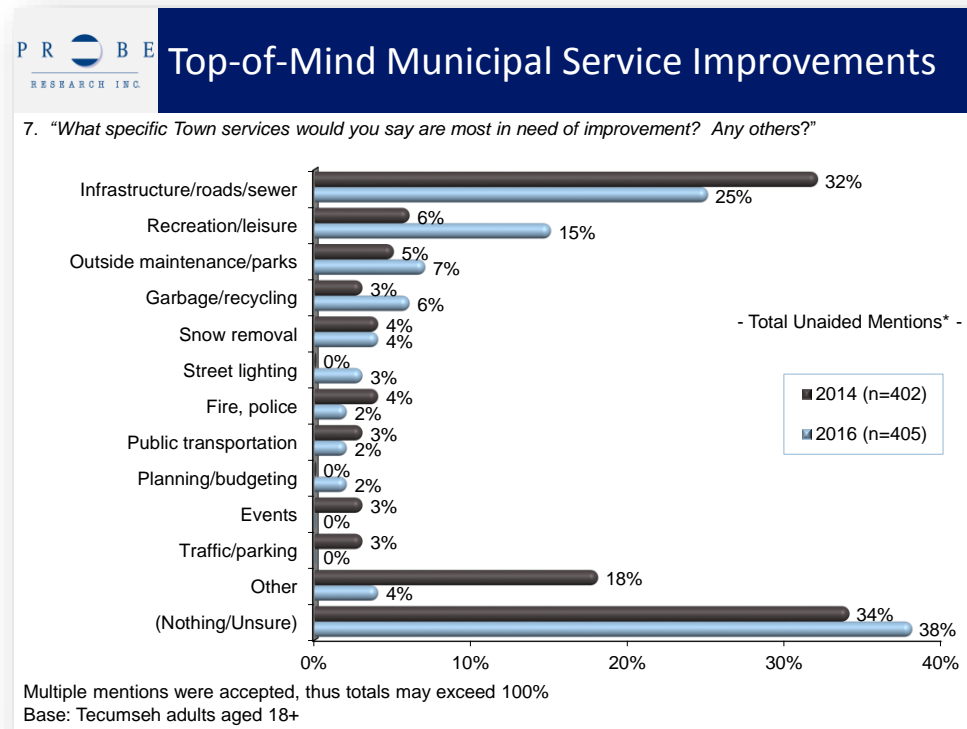
It is important to note that one third (5 out of 14) attributes can be found in this quadrant. These include waste management, snow removal and fire protection. Policing is a slightly less important attribute that a higher-than-average proportion of citizens are nonetheless satisfied with. Household drinking water is perceived as a critical strength and citizens are very satisfied with the town’s service.

- **Critical Weaknesses** – These are issues that are very important to citizens, but with which they are relatively less satisfied (top left section). These represent areas of opportunity for the Town of Tecumseh to enhance citizen satisfaction and items which the Town may want to prioritize. These services include road maintenance/upgrading and stormwater drainage.

- **Latent Strengths** – These are areas where members are satisfied with the Town’s performance, yet they are not seen as being as important as other functions (bottom right). The lone item that falls into this quadrant is street lighting.
- **Latent Weaknesses** – These are services that are not regarded as particularly important, and ones with which the Town (or its service delivery partners) are seen to be performing relatively poorly (bottom left). Service aspects in this quadrant include hosting festivals and events, recreation programs and libraries.

3.2.6 Recommended Service Improvements

When asked to identify which specific Town services are most in need of improvement, respondents are most likely to identify infrastructure improvements, such as repairs to roads and water infrastructure (25%). One-in-five Tecumseh residents (20%) mentioned improvements to parks and recreation programs and services, a larger proportion of respondents than in 2014 (11%). Smaller numbers wish to see improvements to garbage and recycling services (6%) and snow removal (4%). More than one-third of respondents (38%), meanwhile, were unable or unwilling to suggest an area where municipal services could be improved.



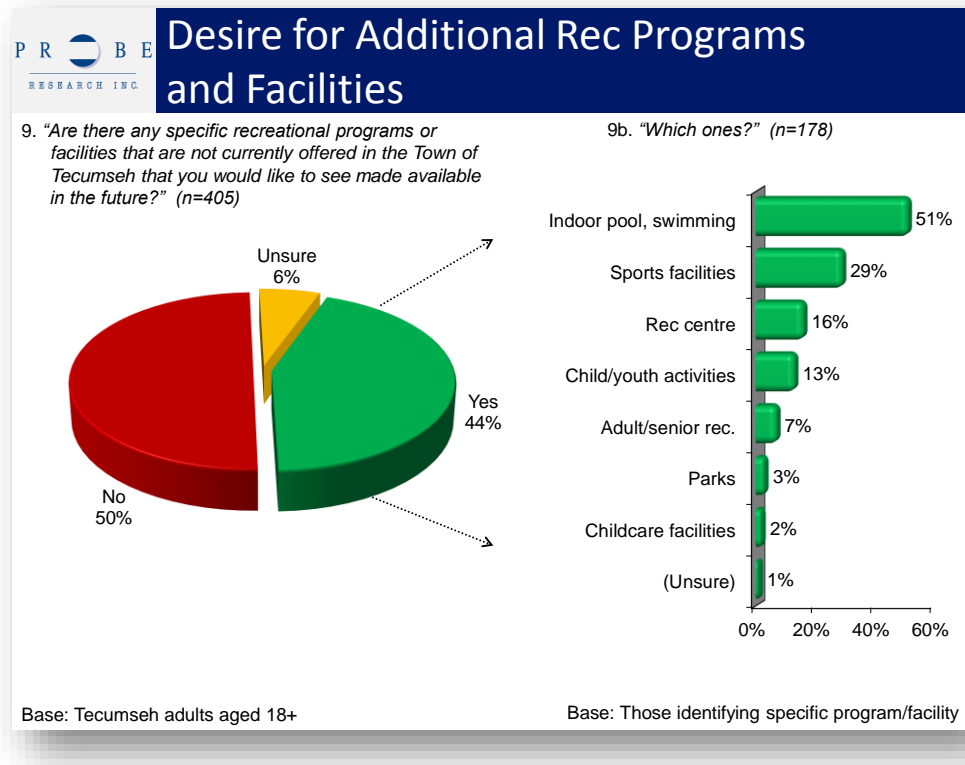
Notable variations:

- Residents under 35 were more likely to want improvements to town recreation, leisure and entertainment services (33% versus 5% among residents 55 and older).

3.2.7 Desire for Additional Recreation

This year, Tecumseh residents were asked whether they would like any specific recreational programs or facilities, and if so, what kind.

A sizeable minority (44%) of Tecumseh residents called for additional programs or facilities. Among those interested in more recreation, more than one-half were seeking an indoor pool or swimming programs (51%) while 29 per cent were seeking sports facilities. A recreation centre (16%), more children and youth activities (13%) and more recreations programs for adults and seniors (7%) rounded out the list of newly sought-out facilities or programs.

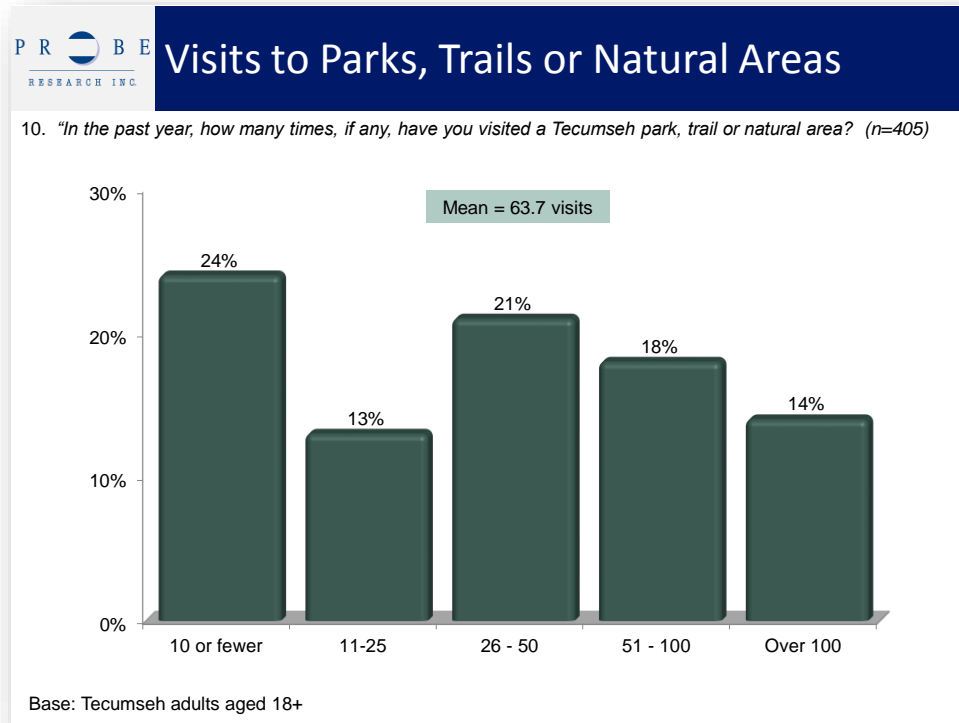


Notable variations:

- Women were more likely to demand more recreation programs and facilities (55% versus 32% among men).
- Younger adults (55%) and middle-aged adults (50%) were more likely to want increased access to recreation than older people (31% among those 55 and older).
- Among those who were seeking additional recreation options, residents of Wards Three and Four were most interested in new sports facilities (51%), while residents of Ward Two were most interested in pools and swimming (63%).

3.2.8 Visits to Greenspace

This year, residents were asked how many times in the past year they've visited town parks, trails or natural areas. Nearly one third of residents reported visiting Tecumseh's greenspace more than 51 times in the last year. Almost a quarter visited area parks, trails and natural areas ten times or less.



Notable variations:

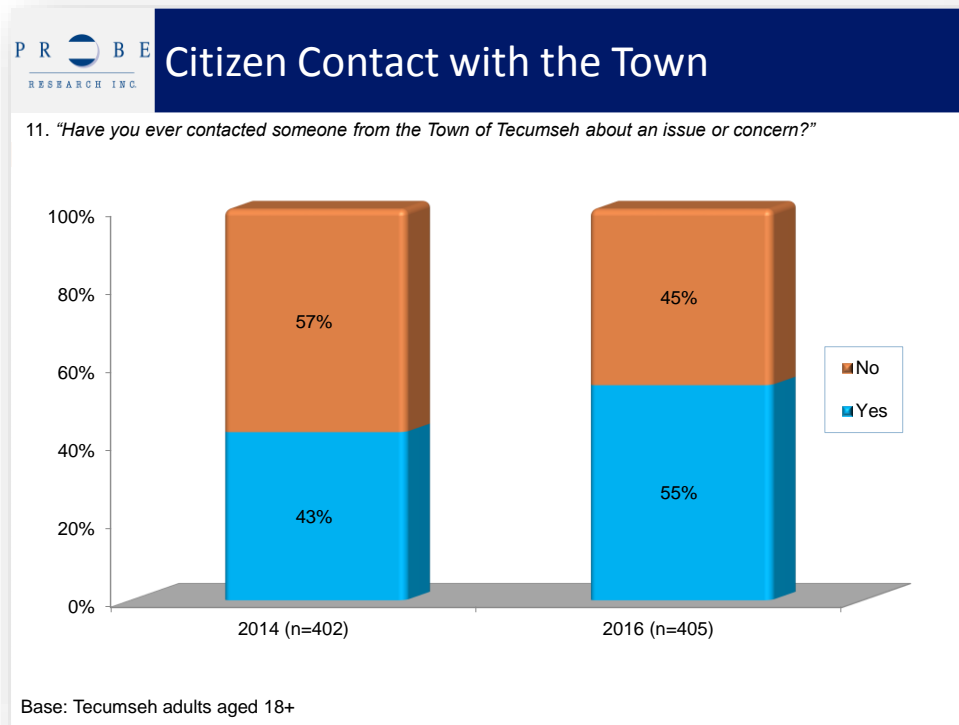
- Citizens who accessed Tecumseh's greenspace frequently (51 times or more in a year) tended to also be more satisfied with the town's recreation programs (60% were satisfied with those programs versus people who used greenspace fewer than ten times a year, only 40% of whom were satisfied with Tecumseh's recreation programs).
- Frequent users of greenspace were more likely to say Tecumseh's parks required more maintenance (13% versus 4% of those who use greenspace less than ten times per year).

3.3 Communications Issues

The following section provides information about citizens' interactions with the Town, including their experiences resolving problems and their use of the Town website and the ways in which they would prefer to receive updates about town business.

3.3.1 Citizen Contact Overview

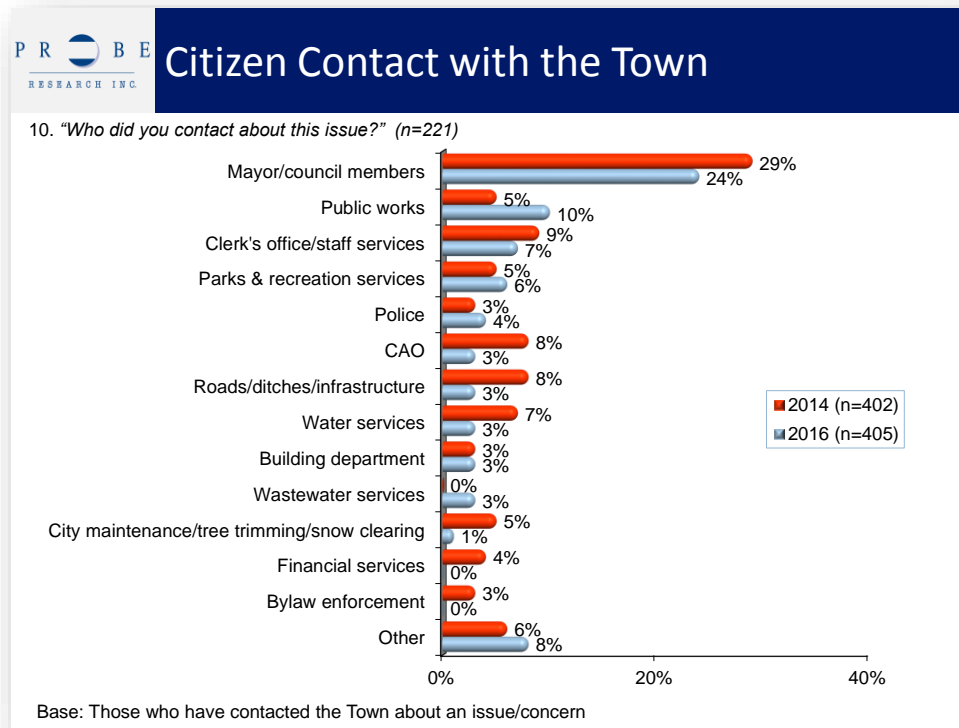
More than one-half of Tecumseh residents (55%) have contacted the Town about a specific issue or concern, a slight increase since 2014, at which time 43 per cent had reached out to the town for some reason.



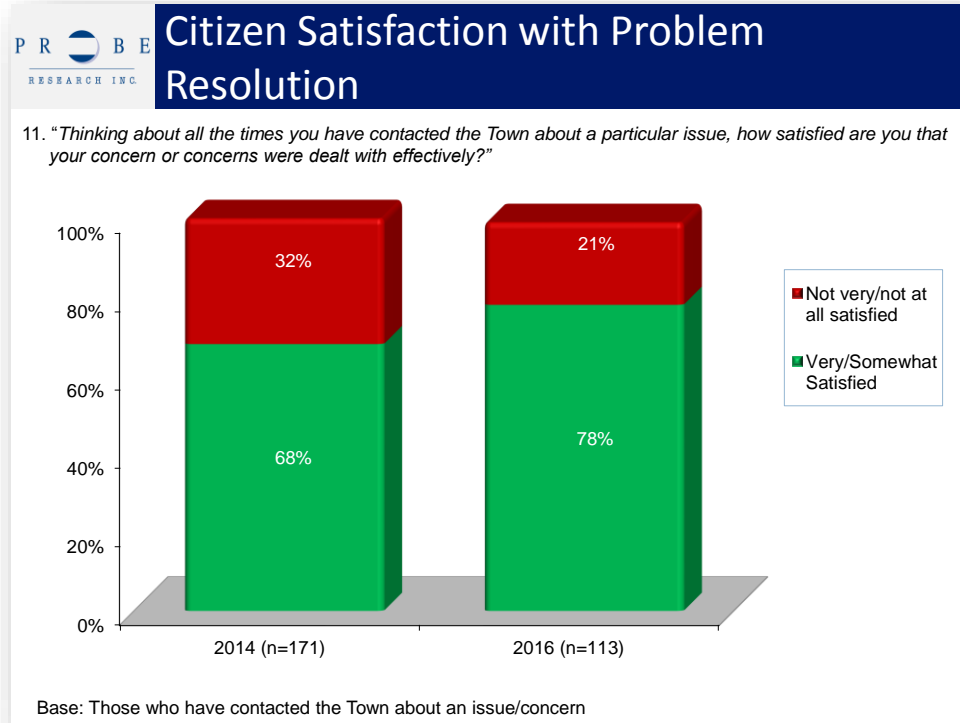
Those who were more likely to have contacted the Town about a specific issue or concern include:

- Younger adults (62% among those aged 18-34 years versus 51% among those aged 55 and up). That represents a shift since 2014, when older residents were more likely to contact the Town.
- Residents who are *very satisfied* with city services (58%). Among Tecumseh residents who are less satisfied with city services, 46 per cent contacted the town with a concern.

Citizens are most likely to have contacted the mayor or a councillor if they have a specific concern (24%). The same percentage of people contacted the Town’s infrastructure staff, including public works, garbage and recycling, wastewater services and city maintenance offices. Another seven per cent contacted the clerk’s office. More than a quarter of those surveyed were unsure or did not respond.



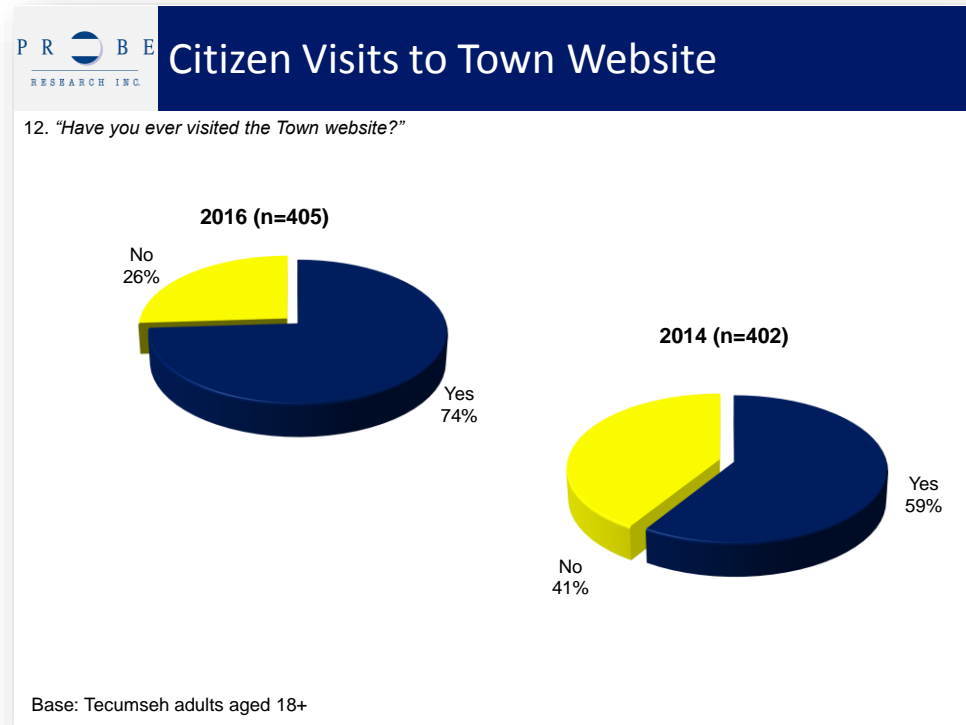
When asked to indicate how satisfied they were with how the Town official or department dealt with their issue, 78 per cent of those surveyed indicated that they were *satisfied* that their concern was handled effectively. That represents a ten point improvement over 2014 (68%). One-in-five of those who raised an issue with the Town, on the other hand, were *dissatisfied* with how the municipality dealt with their problem (21%, including 12% *not very satisfied* and 10% *not at all satisfied*).



There were no statistically significant variations among the surveyed sub-populations.

3.3.2 Website

Overall, nearly three-quarters of Tecumseh adults (74%) say they have visited the Town's website at some point. This is a significant increase since 2014 when just 59 per cent said they had clicked on the site.

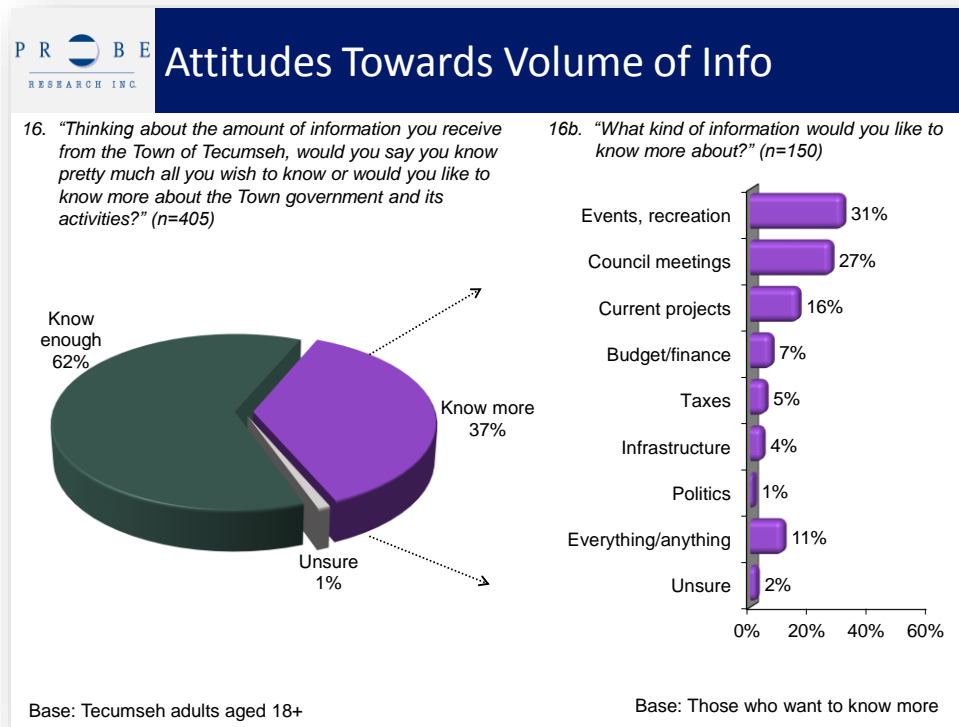


Those who were more likely to have visited the Town website included:

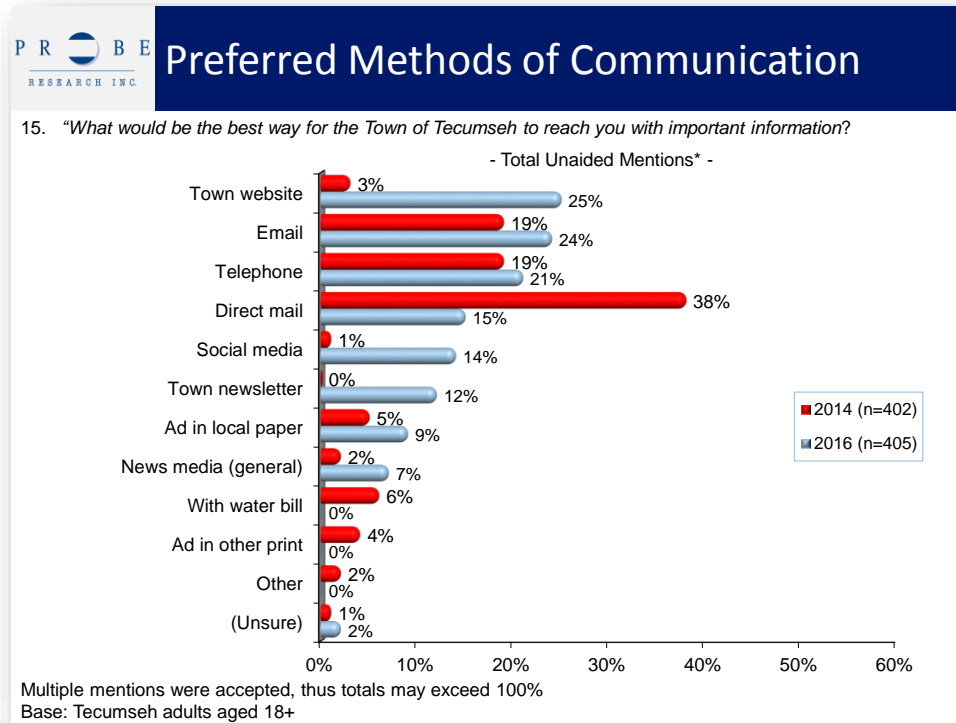
- Younger and middle-aged adults (85% among those aged 18-34 years and 89% among those aged 35-54 years, compared to 54% among those aged 55 years and over);
- Those from middle and high-income households (69% among those earning \$40,000-\$99,999/year and 89% among those earning more than \$100,000/year, versus just 38% among those earning less than \$40,000/year); and
- University and college graduates (85%).

3.3.3 Preferred Methods and Volume of Communication

When asked about the volume of information they receive from the Town of Tecumseh, most residents (62%) said they *knew enough* about town business. A little more than a third said they'd like to know more (37%). When asked what they'd *like to know more* about, nearly a third (31%) said recreation and events. Other topics of interest included council meetings (27%), current projects (16%) and the budget and city finances (7%).



Tecumseh residents are most likely to want the Town to provide them with information through online methods, including the town’s website (25%), email (24%) and social media (14%). That is in contrast to 2014 when direct mail was the preferred method of communication (38%). Nonetheless, one-in-five continue to prefer to get information about town business by telephone, and 12 per cent would like a town newsletter. Another nine per cent would like to be reached via an ad in the local paper.



Notable variations:

- Those from lower income households were less likely to prefer receiving updates via email (13% among those earning less than \$40,000/year, compared to 20% among those earning \$40,000-\$99,999/year and 31% among those earning more than \$100,000 annually).
- Older adults aged 55 years and over were also less inclined to receive news from the Town via the website (10%, versus 48% among those aged 18-34 years and 26% among those aged 35-54 years). But, older adults were more willing to get information via email than younger residents. Nearly a quarter of those over 55, and a third of those 35 to 54 years old prefer email, while only 14 per cent of those under 35 would like town information in their inbox.