



REPORT

Council

Meeting Date: April 27, 2026

FROM: Corporate Strategy and Government Relations Department

DATE: April 14, 2026

SUBJECT: 2026 Community Satisfaction Survey

LOCATION: Town-wide

WARD: Town-wide

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RECOMMENDATION:

That the 2026 Community Satisfaction Survey report from the Strategy, Policy and Communications department be received.

KEY FACTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- The Town conducts a community satisfaction survey every two years to evaluate resident satisfaction with Town programs and services, to get input on strategic priorities for decision-making, and to inform value for tax dollars.
- The last community satisfaction survey was conducted in 2024.
- This report provides a summary of the 2026 community satisfaction survey results, which will also be available on the Town's website, and shared through social media, the Town's e-newsletter and digital screens at Town facilities. The full data set will be available through the Town's open data catalogue.
- Ward-specific results will be shared following the April 27, 2026, Council meeting.
- Overall, Oakville residents continue to give the Town high marks when it comes to satisfaction with livability, government, Town programs and services, and value for tax dollars.
 - 82% agree that Oakville is a better place to live than most areas in the Greater Toronto Area, an 8% increase since 2022.

- 82% continue to feel satisfied with the government of the Town of Oakville.
- 90% are satisfied with the overall quality of the services provided by the Town of Oakville.
- 91% of residents have positive experiences with Town employees that have been respectful.
- 86% of respondents remain satisfied with their sense of belonging in the community.
- The top three rated services are parks and green spaces, fire services, and public library services.
- Oakville continues to be a leader in community satisfaction, scoring higher than most comparators in overall satisfaction with the quality of services and the value for tax dollars.
- The top issue identified by respondents facing Oakville is land use planning.
- The gap analysis indicates two primary areas for improvement, Town roads and sidewalks and municipal enforcement.

BACKGROUND:

The Town-wide community satisfaction survey (formerly called the citizen survey) process began in 2001. Surveys were conducted in 2004 and 2007 before the Town moved to a biennial survey. In 2021, Forum Research Inc. was retained to conduct the Town's 2022 survey and they also conducted the most recent surveys for 2024 and 2026.

Forum Research Inc. is a well-known leader in market research and has extensive experience conducting satisfaction surveys for municipalities. The survey provides the Town with quantitative data to help Council and staff understand residents' service priorities as well as track the Town's progress in implementing Council's strategic plan. The survey also helps support the Town's budget process and decision-making by providing valuable input from residents on:

- Livability
- Satisfaction with Town services and attributes
- Priorities and planning
- Taxation, and
- Information and service usage.

Overall, results indicate that satisfaction with key Town programs and services remains very strong. Results show that Oakville residents continue to believe they receive good value for their tax dollars and this helps contribute to the high overall

satisfaction rating for the government of the Town of Oakville. The results of the survey will be presented to Council on April 27, 2026.

COMMENT/OPTIONS:

Methodology

The community satisfaction survey process included two distinct elements: a comprehensive 15-to 20-minute telephone survey of 808 randomly selected residents (73% cell and 27% landline) to gather quantitative data, and an online survey for qualitative research. Both surveys were conducted between February 2 and February 24, 2026. The rate of cell responses received improved significantly from 2024 (60%). In addition, concentrated efforts were made this year to improve the response rate from Ward 7 where participation has historically been lower than other wards. As a result, the survey responses this year were more equally balanced between wards than in previous rounds.

In the survey, staff attempt to strike a balance between the quality of information, the breadth of topics covered in the questions, and the average survey length. In 2022, the telephone survey took significantly longer, averaging approximately 27 minutes, which led to staff reducing the number of questions. To ensure the process is not onerous on respondents, the aim is for the survey to be high-level to understand overall satisfaction with the Town.

Key findings from the phone survey are outlined in this report. A summary of the phone survey and online survey is available as Appendix A. Phone survey results were statistically weighted by age to ensure that the sample reflects the target population according to 2021 Census data, rendering an overall margin of error of $\pm 3.4\%$. Results have been weighted by age and gender, as the sample closely matched other demographic variables.

Key Findings

The large majority of residents (82%) agree that Oakville is a better place to live than most areas in the GTA, an eight-percentage point increase since 2022. Residents are also more likely to say they would recommend the Town as a place to live. Overall satisfaction with the government of the Town of Oakville is at 82%, remaining stable over the last four surveys. Residents express high satisfaction with the quality of Town services (90%) and with the respectfulness of employees during their most recent interaction with them (91%). Most residents (81%) say they receive good value for their tax dollars for the programs and services provided by the Town.

A statistical “gap” analysis was done to gauge the difference between how satisfied residents are with each Town service and the impact of the service on residents’ overall service satisfaction (i.e., perceived importance). Findings highlight two primary area of improvement: Town roads and sidewalks and municipal

enforcement. Satisfaction with Town roads and sidewalks dropped by six percentage points while winter roads and sidewalk maintenance dropped by 12 percentage points. While public transit continued to be ranked lowest in terms of satisfaction with the service, it improved by four percentage points since 2024.

Livability

Oakville residents' overall perceptions of livability increased in 2026. A clear majority of residents (82%) believe livability is better in Oakville than in most other areas of the GTA.

- In terms of quality of life and changes over the last two years, 7% think the quality of life in Oakville has become better, 49% say it stayed the same, and 42% say it has become worse.
- When asked what qualities make Oakville livable and vibrant, the top three qualities identified are small town/community/family atmosphere (17%), recreation programs/facilities services (15%), and parks (15%).
- When asked about the most important issue facing the Town, residents identify land use planning (18%), traffic/congestion (11%), and crime/public safety (10%) as the top three issues.
- The survey identified affordable housing as the top issue in 2022 and 2024. To better understand this issue, housing-related mentions were re-coded to provide more detailed insight into residents' specific concerns and this was adjusted to "housing affordability" to more accurately reflect the issues that were being referenced.
- In 2026, a question from the 2022 survey was re-added to ask about several Oakville attributes. The comparison to the 2022 survey results shows that the Town has remained consistent:
 - 77% of respondents are satisfied with the efforts the Town government makes to protect the environment;
 - 76% of respondents are satisfied with the amount of information the Town provides to residents;
 - 75% of respondents are satisfied with the Town's efforts in responding to the needs of the community;
 - 66% of respondents are satisfied with the opportunities for public involvement in decision making; and
 - 63% of residents are satisfied with the road planning and mobility in the community.

Satisfaction with Town services and attributes

- Residents express high satisfaction with Town services at 90%, consistent with 2024 and 2022 survey results. This value is significantly higher than the benchmarked average (83%).
- The top three rated services are parks and green spaces (94%), fire services (90%), and public library services (89%).
- Public transit (60%) remained the lowest ranked, although it improved by four percentage points since 2024.
- Winter road and sidewalk maintenance declined by 12 percentage points, making it the second lowest-ranked service area in the survey. This may reflect two winter storms, including a declared Significant Weather Event immediately prior to the survey launch and another occurring during the survey period.
- Overall, 12 of 13 Town services scored at or over 70%, with seven of these scoring over 80%.
- A new question was asked as part of the survey to focus on a sense of belonging in the community in 2024, one of the key community indicators that is being tracked as per Council's long-term strategy and action plan. Similar to the last survey, 86% of residents report feeling satisfied with their sense of belonging.

Priorities and planning

Residents were asked to identify their top priorities within specific areas.

- In the past 12 months, 9 in 10 residents (88%) visited green spaces/parks/trails.
- There was an increase in residents visiting community centres or Town facilities by four percentage points since 2024.
- There was a nine-percentage point increase participating in recreation or cultural programs at the Town since 2024.
- As it relates to growth and land use planning, protecting the character of existing neighbourhoods (36%) was mentioned by over one third of residents reflecting a six-percentage point increase since 2024, followed by sustainable development (26%) and diverse housing options (21%).

Taxation

- Overall, 81% of respondents say they receive good value for their tax dollars for the programs and services provided by the Town. The percentage of people who agree they get very good value for their tax dollars increased by four percentage points since 2024.
- Oakville remains a leader in this metric, performing 10 percentage points above the mean.
- Compared to 2024 results, there has been a seven-percentage point increase in the proportion of residents who preferred either maintaining service levels

or adding services and facilities (65%), even if it means increasing taxes or user fees.

- The percentage of residents in the 2026 survey who prefer the Town to add new programs and services, even if it means an increase in taxes or user fees (20%) is higher than all other years of the survey since this question was added in 2019.
- Of those residents who prefer maintaining or adding new programs and services, 70% prefer an increase to user fees while 23% prefer an increase to property taxes. Those who prefer an increase to user fees increased by nine percentage points while those preferring increases to property taxes dropped by four percentage points.

Information and service usage

- Over 9 in 10 residents (91%) are satisfied with the respectfulness of Town employees.
- Resident scores for ease of finding information (82%) and finding the right person (78%) remain consistent since 2024.
- When finding information about the Town, the majority of residents (55%) say they use the Town's website most often, a six-percentage point decline since 2024, while Internet (12%) and social media (7%) increased slightly since 2024.
- The rate of satisfaction with the Town's website is still very strong at 87%.

Online survey results

While not statistically valid due to the lack of randomized sampling, the online survey produced similar results to the telephone survey:

- 72% are satisfied with the Town of Oakville government, a nine-percentage point increase since 2024 (63%).
- The top qualities making the Town livable and vibrant are parks (23%), recreation programs/facilities/services (23%) and green spaces (18%).
- 75% of residents in 2026 think Oakville is better than most areas of the GTA in terms of livability, a slight increase since 2024 (73%).
- The top issue identified is growth, land use, and planning (41%), followed by traffic congestion (23%).
- Residents' sense of belonging in 2026 (69%) increased since 2024 (66%).
- Consistent with 2024, 77% of residents are satisfied with the overall quality of services provided by the Town.
- The top services are parks and green spaces (87%), harbours and waterfront areas (78%), and recreation fields and facilities (77%).
- The lowest ranking services are public transit (35%), municipal enforcement (51%), and availability of parking (57%).
- 82% of residents are satisfied with their experience using the Town's website, a five percentage point increase since 2024 (77%).

In addition to the quantified survey results presented in Appendix A, the 2026 telephone and online surveys included an open-ended question where residents were given the opportunity to share any additional feedback they had about the Town. While these open-ended responses are not considered statistically valid, staff are analyzing the results to determine themes that will be shared with departments internally to help inform decision making.

To inform Oakville residents of the 2026 Community Satisfaction Survey results, information will be posted to the Town's website and communicated through the Town's social media and e-newsletter. A summary highlighting key findings will be displayed on digital screens at the community centres. The full data set will also be added to the Town's open data catalogue.

Councillors will receive ward-specific results through the Council Portal following the April 27, 2026, Council meeting.

CONSIDERATIONS:

(A) PUBLIC

The 2026 Community Satisfaction Survey involved two key components of public consultation. The first component was a random telephone survey of a representative sample of 808 residents from February 2 to February 24, 2026. The second component involved an online survey conducted during the same time. The phone and online surveys were promoted through the Town's website, social media, Town's e-newsletter, email distribution lists, and digital screens at community centres.

(B) FINANCIAL

The community satisfaction survey is conducted biannually. The cost of this survey is expected to be approximately \$64,200 and funding for this was included in the 2025 capital budget.

(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS

The Town's community satisfaction survey assists departments in evaluating their programs and services and provides valuable input into achieving the Town's vision and strategic priorities, budget allocation and business planning process.

(D) COUNCIL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

This report addresses Council's strategic priorities: Growth Management, Community Belonging, Environmental Sustainability and Accountable Government.

(E) CLIMATE CHANGE/ACTION

This survey asks residents about their satisfaction with the Town's efforts in protecting the environment.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – 2026 Community Satisfaction Survey Qualitative Report

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