

Background

The budget is one of the most important tools the City of Winnipeg has when it comes to planning its priorities. Winnipeg's 2024-2027 multi-year budget is a four-year balanced budget approved by Council. Annual updates allow for adjustments because changes may come up and flexibility is important. The preliminary 2026 update was tabled at a special meeting of the Executive Policy Committee on Friday, November 14, 2025. We gathered feedback from residents to help finalize this year's update.

Engagement

We collected feedback through the public engagement opportunities in Table 1. Input on the budget is provided to Council for their consideration during the budget process and decision making. This report outlines key findings from the focus groups, online survey and statistical survey.

Table 1: Public engagement opportunities

Date	Activity	Details
May 7 - May 18, 2025	Annual Citizen Satisfaction Survey	A representative sample of 600 Winnipeg citizens aged 18 years and over were interviewed by telephone. The sample includes both landlines and cell phone numbers. Results available on the budget webpage .
November 14, 2025 – November 30, 2025	Online survey	Open to all residents. 563 participants: 553 in English and 10 in French. Results available in Appendix B.
November 14 – 18, 2025	Statistical survey	A representative sample of 800 Winnipeg citizens aged 18 years and completed the survey online. Results available in Appendix A.
November 24 – 27, 2025	Focus groups	Four meetings were held: two for equity groups and two for the broader population. Recruitment was pulled from a telephone database representative of the general population and via the online survey. Meetings were held online in groups of 10 participants. Results available in Appendix C.
December 1 – 12, 2025	Public meetings	Ten public meetings to hear delegations and consider changes to the preliminary budget update. Meeting minutes will be available on the Decision Making Information System (DMIS) after the meetings.

Promotion

Public engagement opportunities were promoted using the following methods:

- City of Winnipeg website – launched in November 2025
- News release – circulated on November 14, 2025

- Four Facebook posts with over 46,000 followers – November 14 to November 30, 2025
- Four X posts with over 123,000 followers - November 14 to November 30, 2025
- Two LinkedIn posts with over 53,000 followers – November 14 and 28, 2025
- Four Our City newsletters (two English, two French) with over 2,700 followers – November 14 and 28, 2025
- City of Winnipeg public engagement newsletter with over 5,600 recipients – November 18, 2025
- Our City, Our Stories article with over 2,300 followers: [Engagement opportunities for Preliminary 2026 Budget Update](#) – November 14, 2025, 686 views

Key findings

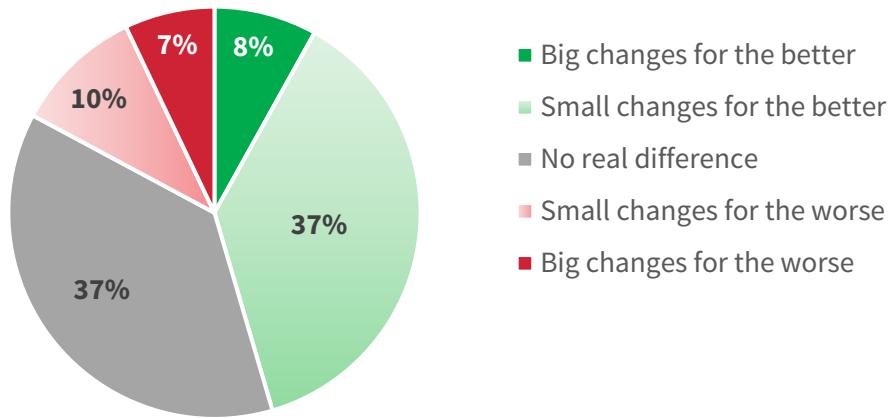
Overall impression of the budget

Fewer residents were aware of the budget this year compared to in 2025. Men and older residents were more likely to have heard of the budget (see Appendix A). Respondents who said they knew about the budget were asked if they thought the 2026 budget would make things better or worse (Figure 1).

- Residents were more likely to say it will bring change for the better (45.6%) than change for the worse (17.6%). Fewer residents said the budget will bring change for the worse in 2026 compared to 2025.
- Responses to the online survey were much more negative, with 28 percent expecting it would bring change for the better and 43 percent thinking the budget will bring change for the worse.

Figure 1: Based on what you have seen, read or heard, would you say the 2026 City budget is going to bring:

Statistically significant survey (those aware of the 2026 budget: 455 responses)



- There are different reasons why residents may feel negatively about the budget. Some common points included a need to focus on improving transit (3 percent), control or review spending (3 percent), and focus on public safety (3 percent).
 - Focus groups discussed these ideas further, sharing concerns about changes to transit and public safety.

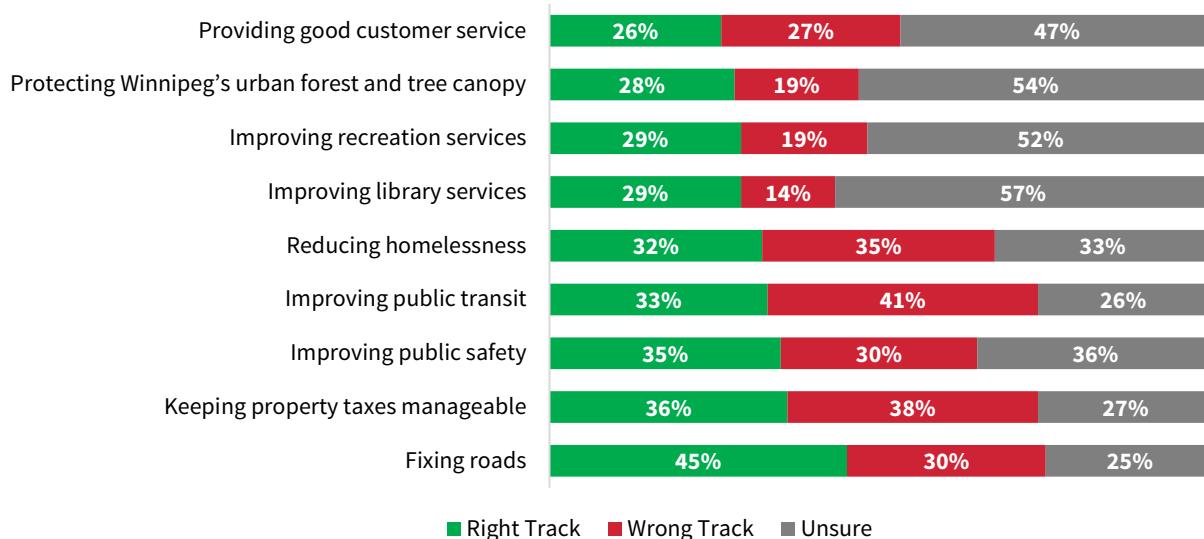
Direction of the budget

We asked respondents if they felt different areas of the budget were on the right track or wrong track. The key findings from this question were:

- The top areas were on the right track for at least one third of statistical survey respondents:
- Fixing roads
- Keeping property taxes manageable
- Improving public safety and transit
- No single area was rated 'on the right track' by more than 45 percent of residents.
- Fixing roads was the top area in the online survey with 36 percent of respondents felt were heading in the right direction. This was followed by keeping property taxes manageable and improving library services.
- The budget's ability to provide good customer service had the least confidence with only 26 percent of residents saying it's on the right track. The online survey respondents were even less confident at 22 percent.

Figure 2: Based on what you have seen, read or heard, is the City's budget on the right track or the wrong track when it comes to the following areas?

Statistically significant survey (those aware of the 2026 budget: 455 responses)



Property taxes

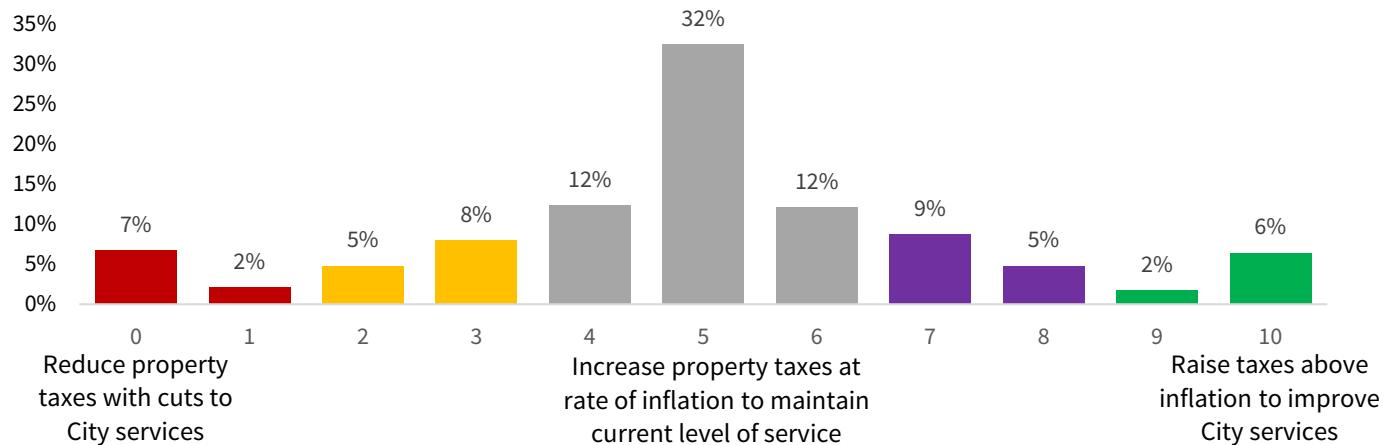
Respondents were asked to rate their views on property taxes on a scale from 0-10:

- Fifty-six percent of statistical survey respondents rated their views from four to six on the scale, with five representing raising taxes on par with inflation.
- The other respondents were evenly split between raising property taxes above inflation to improve city services (22 percent) and reducing taxes with cuts to city services (22 percent).

- The group of participants who rated their views a 7, 8, 9 or 10 was larger among online survey participants (thirty-five percent). Thirty-nine percent of online survey participants rated their views from 4 to 6 and twenty-six percent rated their views a 0, 1, 2, or 3.

Figure 3: On a scale of 0-10, which spot on the scale most closely matches your views?

Statistical survey (800 responses)



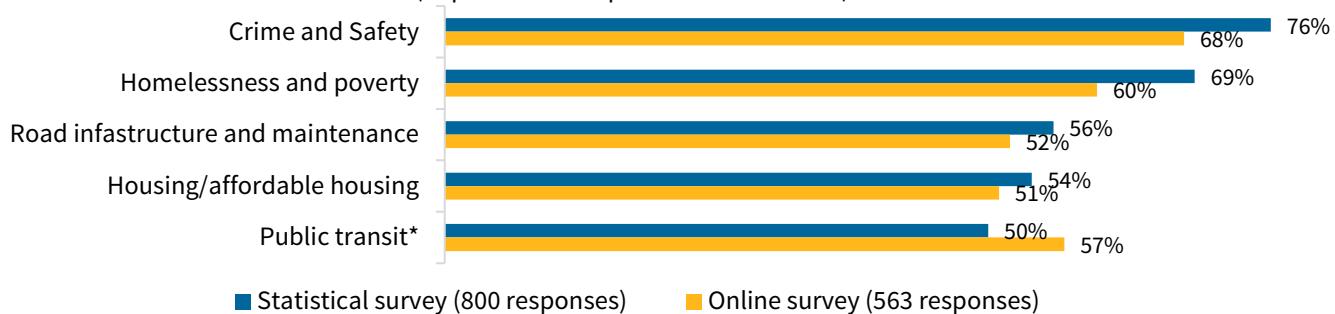
Priority service areas

Respondents were asked to share their most important priority areas for the budget (Figure 4 and Figure 5).

- Roads and social issues like crime, poverty, road maintenance, housing, and affordability were high priorities for both statistical survey and online survey respondents.
- Animal control and insect control were the lowest priorities.
- Focus group discussions also reflected that crime and safety continue to be the most important priority area.

Figure 4: What are the most important priority areas the City's budget must address?

(Top five most important service areas)

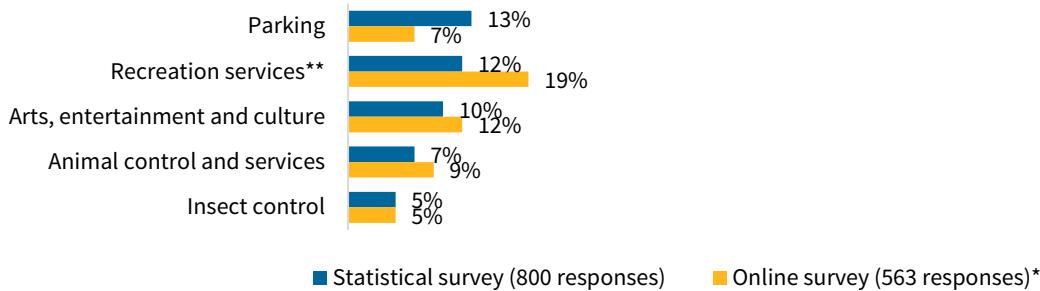


Note: Respondents could select more than one area.

*Public transit was the 5th most important service area on the statistically significant survey and 3rd most important service area on the online survey.

Figure 5: What are the most important priority areas the City's budget must address?

(Five least important service areas)



Note: Respondents could select more than one area.

**The five least important service areas for the online survey were insect control, parking, animal control and services, arts, entertainment and culture, and 311 Contact Centre.*

***Recreation services was the 7th least important service area for the online survey.*

A full list of respondents' service priorities and how many respondents selected each is available in Appendix A and Appendix B.

Methodology and limitations

The results of this report have some limits, which are explained to help understand the findings:

- **Online feedback:** All feedback outlined in this report was gathered from participants online. This made it easy for many people to join in, but it left out those who don't have good internet access or are uncomfortable using online tools. To make up for this, Winnipeggers are invited to share their thoughts in-person through submissions and presentations at [budget meetings through the appropriate committee](#).
- **Timing:** To gather feedback after budget tabling and before budget decision-making, the feedback period was two weeks. This is shorter than our typical feedback collection period. We heard from fewer residents through the online survey this year compared to last year. We relied on promotion to reach those who self-selected to participate through the online survey. To balance input from those who self-selected to participate, the statistical survey used an online panel and weighted the results by age, gender, and income. The online survey results are shared alongside results from the statistically significant survey.
- **Focus groups:** Feedback provided in a meeting format allowed for greater dialogue about the budget. The focus groups were formed through recruitment using two methods:
 - Those who agreed to take part through an online panel budget survey
 - Those who agreed to take part through an online budget survey run

Focus groups are not meant to be statistically representative. The focus groups aimed to capture a wide range of perspectives, balancing gender, age, region, and ethnicity in two sessions representing the broader population. Two sessions recruited participants from equity groups identified in the City's [Engage Winnipeg](#)

Policy. The focus groups included women, Indigenous people, racialized people, persons with disabilities, newcomers, and 2SLGTQQIA+ persons.

Next steps

Residents' feedback will be shared with Council to be considered along with feedback from delegates and written submissions on the budget. Input will help Council finalize the 2026 preliminary budget update. The 2026 preliminary budget will be considered by Council on December 17, 2025.

Appendices

[Appendix A – Statistical survey results](#)

[Appendix B – Online survey results](#)

[Appendix C – Focus groups results](#)