

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE OCTOBER 9, 2007

STRATEGIC PLANNING CITIZEN SURVEY

Recommendation

The City Manager and the Senior Manager of Strategic Planning in consultation with the Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee and Senior Management Team recommends:

1. That Attachment 1 – Advise Committee members that the 2007 Strategic Planning “Have Your Say” citizen survey results will be published on the City’s web site;
2. That Attachment 2 –Participation in the Ipsos Reid “Municipal Quality of Life and Financial Planning” be approved

Economic Impact

Funds were approved in the 2007 operating budget. The cost of proceeding with the recommended survey in late 2007 would be up to \$10,000 depending on the degree of survey customization.

Communications Plan

Advertisement listed in the City page informing residents that citizen survey will be administered.

Purpose

Advise the Strategic Planning Committee members that 2007 Strategic Planning “Have Your Say” Citizen Survey will be published on the City’s web site. Also, that the committee approve the City’s participation in the Ipsos Reid “Municipal Quality of Life and Financial Planning” survey.

Background - Analysis and Options

The Council meeting on March 29, 2007 approved that the Corporation proceed with implementing a 500 household random telephone survey and mail-in survey distributed to all households not to exceed \$30,000. Funds were provided in the 2007 operating budget and the purpose of the “Have Your Say” surveys was to incorporate feedback from the public in the Vaughan Vision 2007 review. This information was utilized in the development of the Vaughan Vision 2020 strategic plan.

Specifically, the survey indicated that the top strategic issues for citizens are safety, access to health care, quality of municipal services, environment and roads and transportation. Additionally, citizens value the quality of life in their neighbourhoods, and good infrastructure and amenities and are satisfied with the services provided by the City. Thus, it is recommended that the survey results be posted on the City’s website as it is presented in Attachment 1.

When the strategic planning citizen survey was approved by the Strategic Planning Committee in March 2007 there was no direction set at the time as to whether the survey would be completed on an annual basis. Presently, there is an opportunity to participate in the Ipsos Reid “Municipal Quality of Life and Financial Planning” survey which would allow the Corporation to continue to gather information from citizens through a citizen satisfaction survey the results of which could be utilized in the strategic planning process.

The Ipsos Reid survey is a national Canadian municipal government survey of participating municipalities covering key issues such as value for municipal tax dollars, satisfaction with services, and important issues facing the community. The survey is being conducted November

1-10th 2007, and participation has to be confirmed by October 26th. Further, it is annual survey is a cost effective option for consideration to continue to gather value added citizen feedback on municipal service delivery and incorporate this information into the strategic planning process. The information gathered from this survey can be incorporated into the yearly review of the Vaughan Vision 2020 strategic goals, objectives and initiatives at the Council/SMT strategic planning workshop and help inform these discussions.

As can be seen in Attachment 2 the survey is a random telephone survey of 300 citizens with a margin of error of +/- 5.7% (19 times out of 20). The survey explores key issues such as value for municipal tax dollars, views about alternative forms of revenue generation, satisfaction with services, quality of life, important issues facing the community, information needs and website visitation. The information gathered through this survey would build off of the survey administered in April 2007 and provide valuable information to the strategic planning process. Thus, it is recommended that the City consider participation in this survey.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2007

The citizen survey information contributes to the development of the Vaughan Vision 2020 strategic plan.

Regional Implications

There are no regional implications.

Conclusion

The results of the "Have Your Say" random telephone and mail-out survey will be posted on the City's website. Additionally, it is recommended that the City participate in the Ipsos Reid "Municipal Quality of Life and Financial Planning" survey.

Attachments

1. Attachment 1 - 2007 Strategic Planning "Have Your Say" citizen survey results
2. Attachment 2 - Ipsos Reid "Municipal Quality of Life and Financial Planning" survey

Report prepared by:

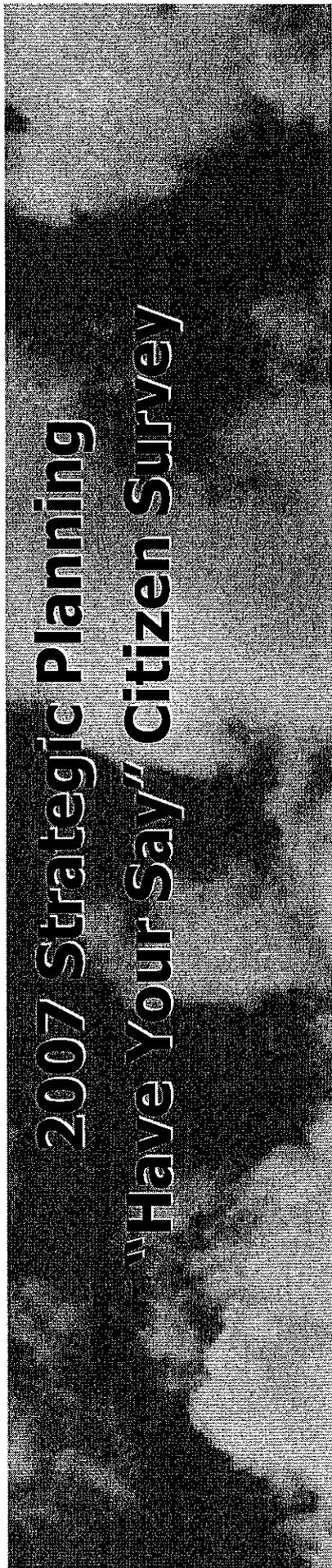
Thomas Plant MBA, MPA
Senior Manager of Strategic Planning

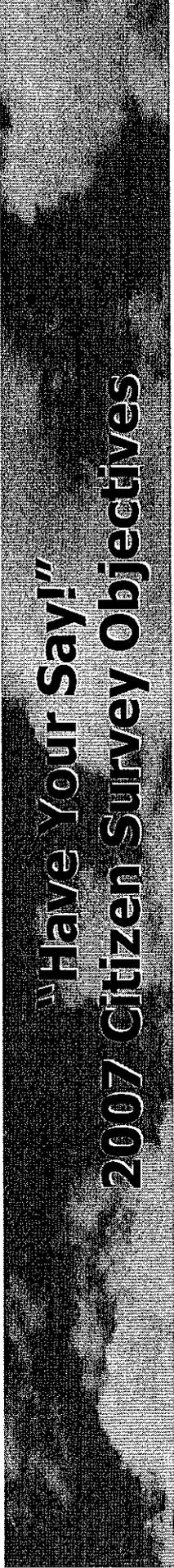
Respectfully submitted,

Michael DeAngelis
City Manager

Thomas Plant MBA, MPA
Senior Manager of Strategic Planning

Attachment 1

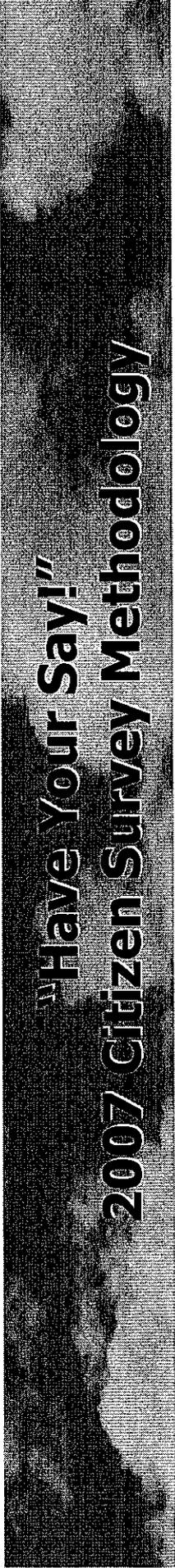




"Have Your Say!"
2007 Citizen Survey Objectives

The objectives of the Citizen Survey were to:

- Assist Council and Senior Management in setting budget priorities, evaluating programs and improving and enhancing services to the public
- Provide resident feedback on City services, what they consider to be key issues facing the City and their expectations for the future
- Help in developing the new Vaughan Vision 2020



"Have Your Say!"
2007 Citizen Survey Methodology

Mail-in Survey Methodology

- Surveys were distributed to 68,832 households in Vaughan
- Received 1454 responses (2% response rate)
- Completed surveys could be returned to any City facility or completed online at www.vaughan.ca
- 47.7% of surveys were received via the online option
- Each mail-in survey was provided with an identification number in order to improve the validity of the results
- The survey was conducted between April 9th and April 30th, 2007



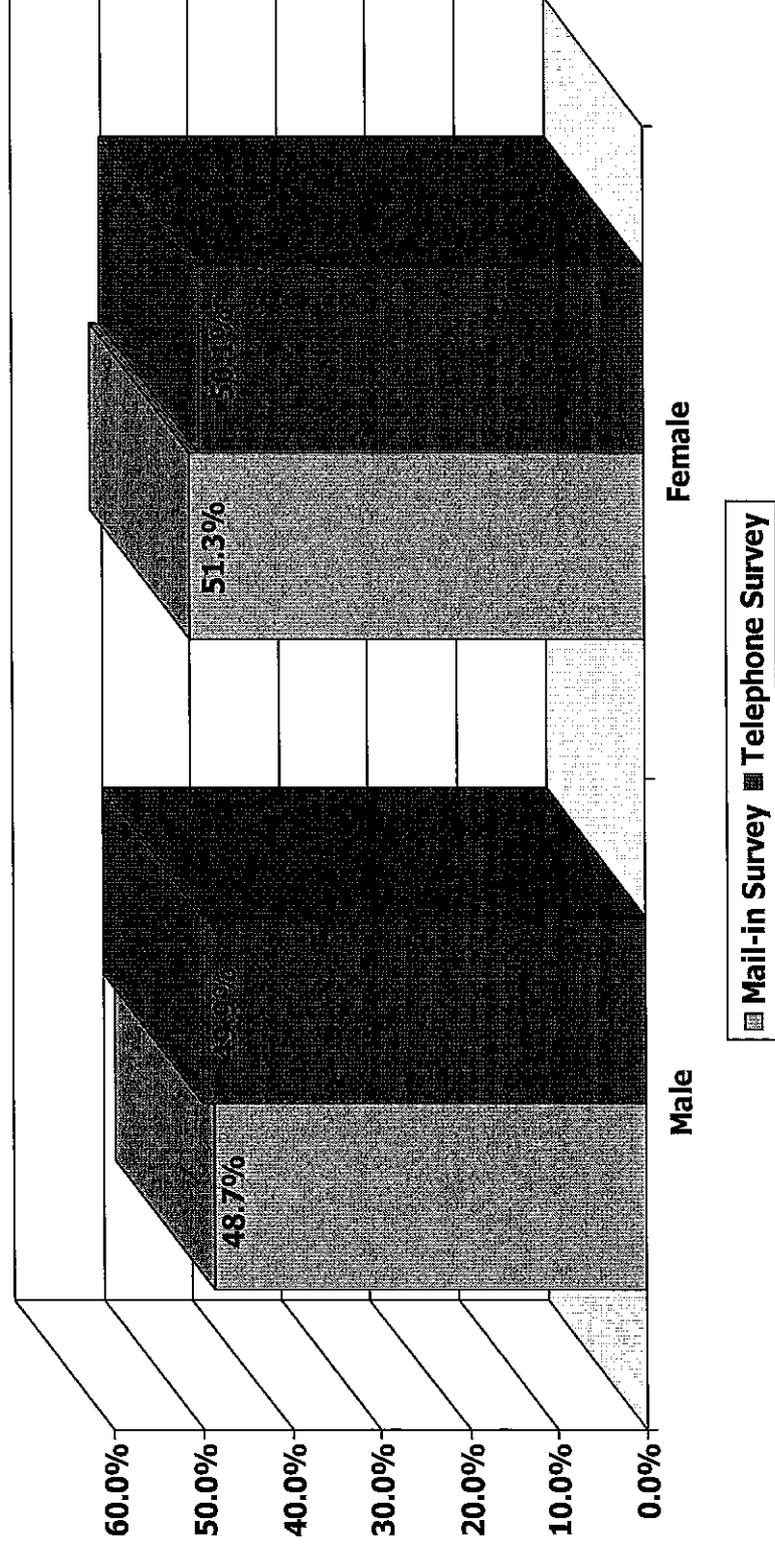
**"Have Your Say!"
2007 Citizen Survey Methodology**

Random Telephone Survey Methodology

- 501 telephone interviews were conducted with residents, 18 years of age or older (0.7% of Vaughan's population)
- Results are accurate 5% (plus or minus), 19 times out of 20
- A proportionately representative sampling technique was employed to determine the sample sizes of the five Wards in Vaughan
- Response rate for the survey was approximately 20%
- The survey was conducted between April 12th and April 19th, 2007

"Have Your Say!" 2007 Citizen Survey Background Information

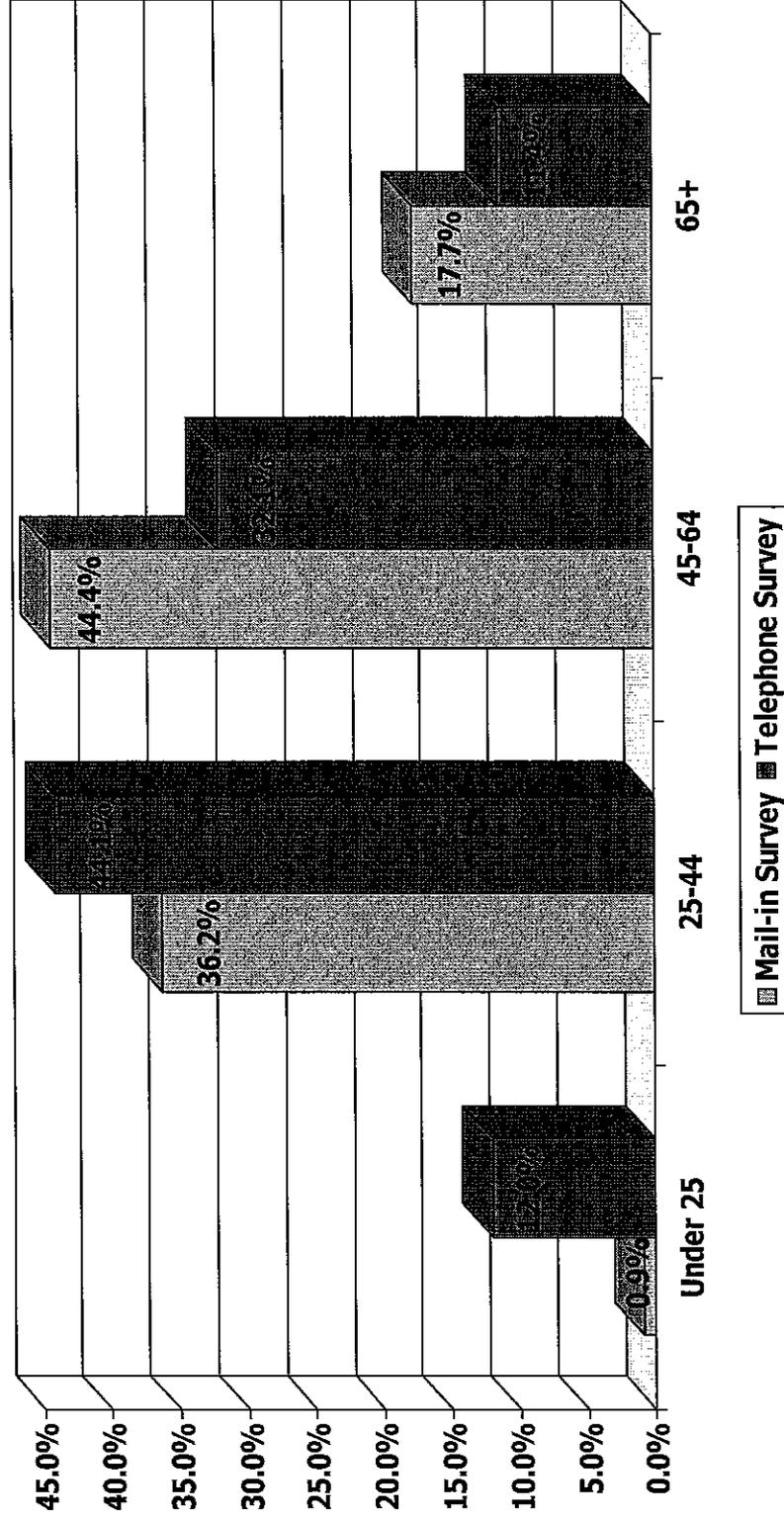
Gender Distribution:



Gender breakdown in both the mail-in and telephone survey is evenly split

"Have Your Say!" 2007 Citizen Survey Background Information

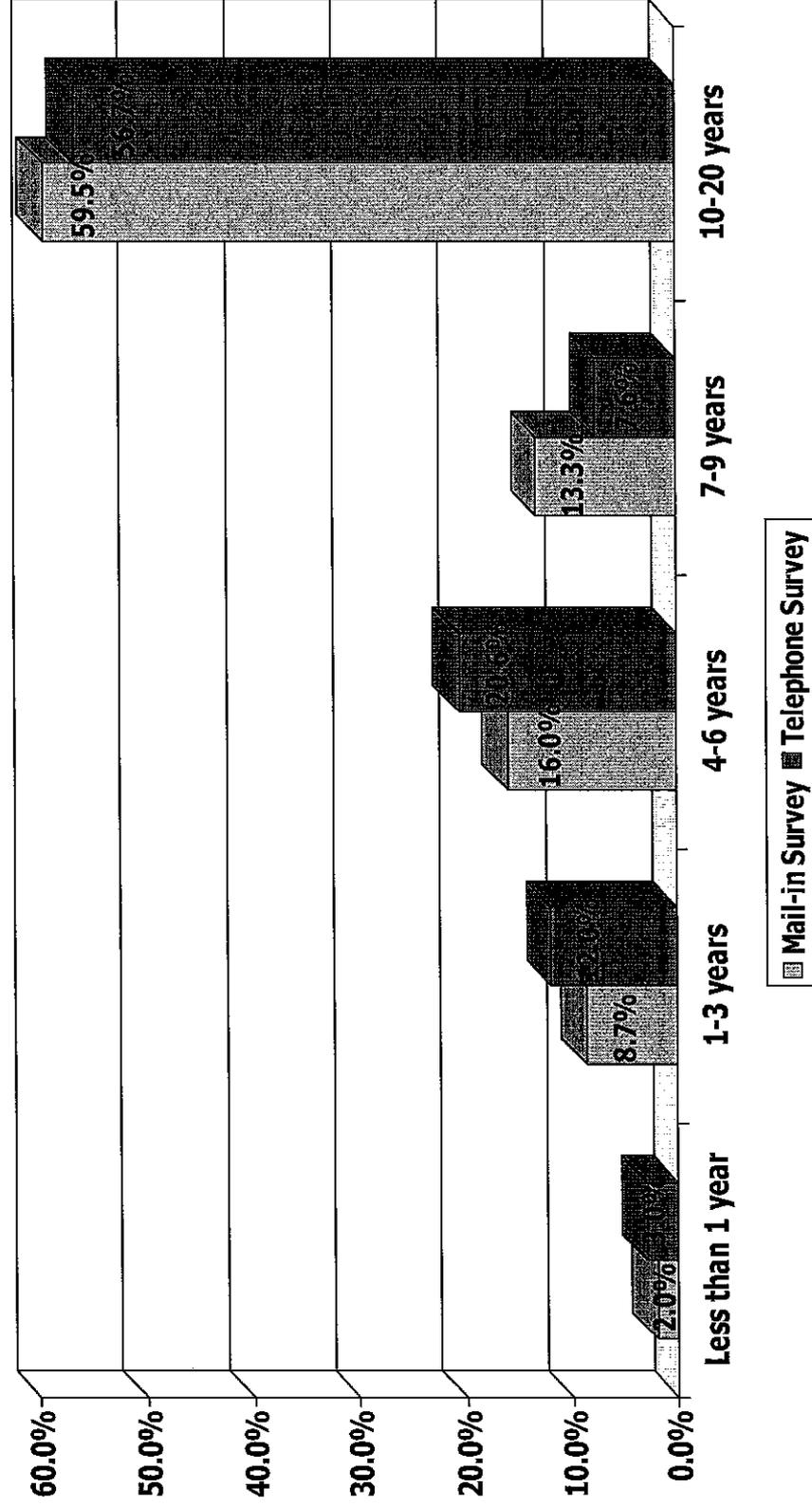
Age Distribution:



Approximately three-quarters of the population is between the ages of 25 and 64

"Have Your Say!" 2007 Citizen Survey Background Information

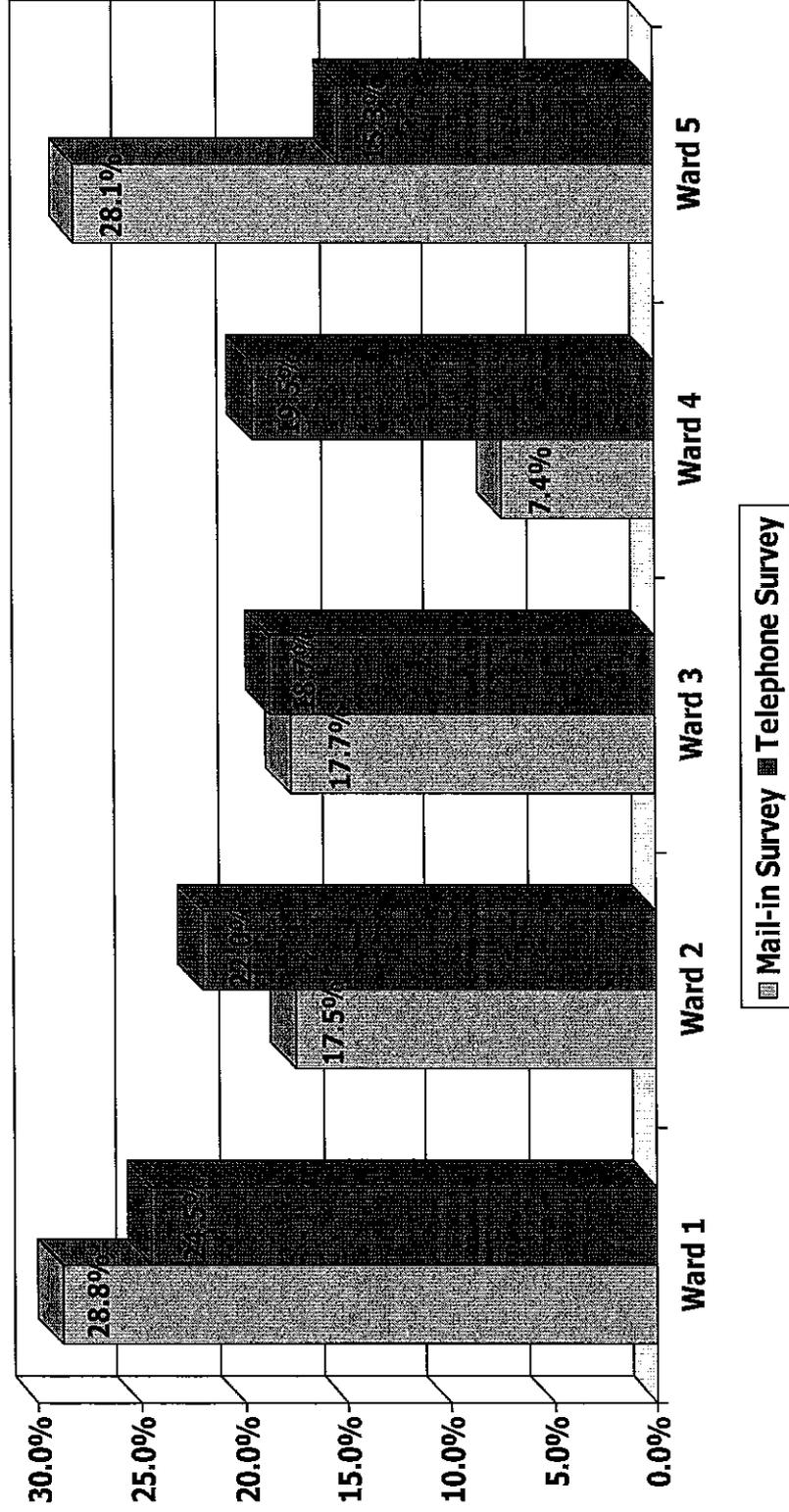
Length of Residency in Vaughan:



Over half of respondents in both surveys have lived in Vaughan for over 10 years

"Have Your Say!" 2007 Citizen Survey Background Information

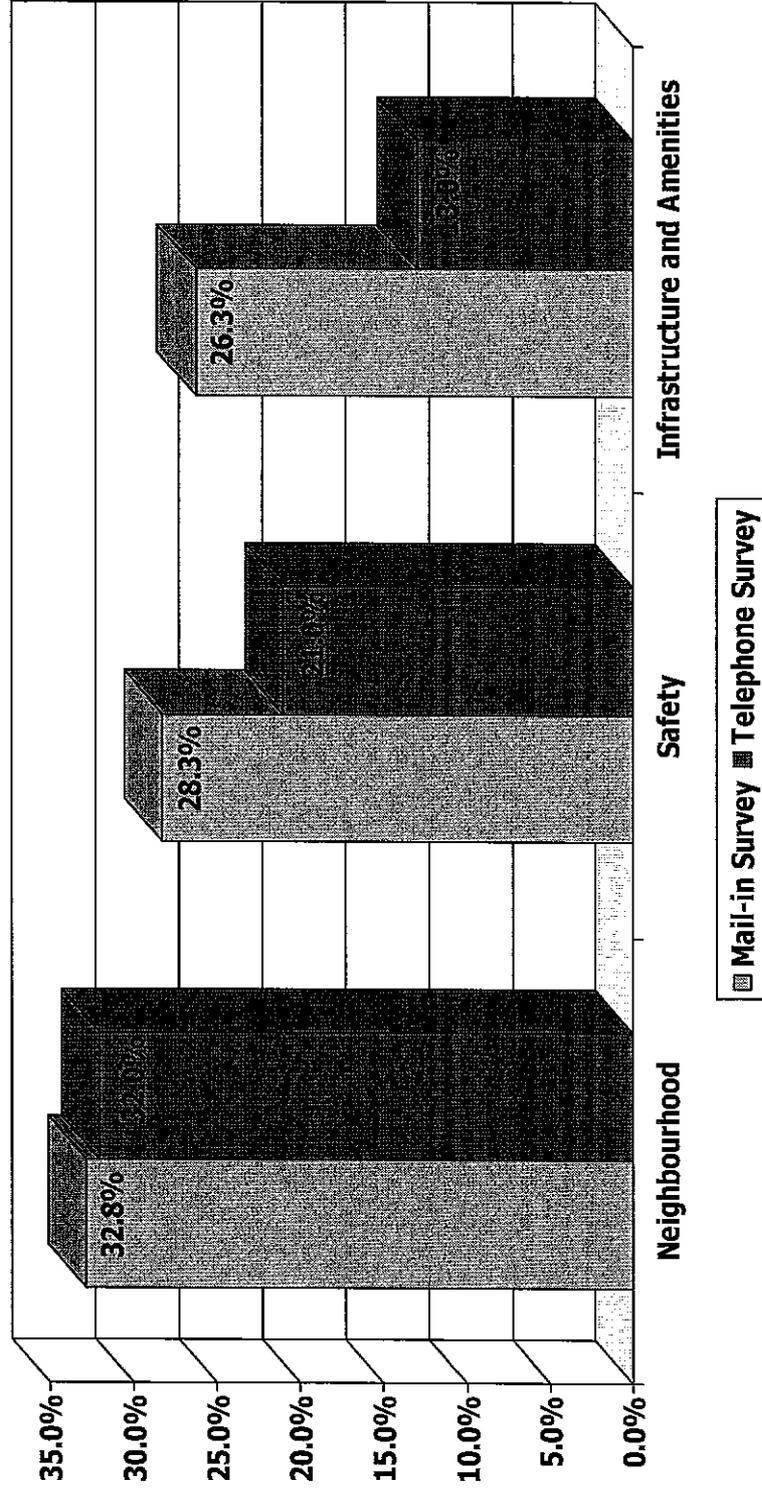
Ward Distribution:



The telephone survey used a proportionate sampling technique based on the population demographics of Vaughan to determine the sample size from each ward

"Have Your Say!" Draft 2007 Citizen Survey Report of Findings

Question 1:
What do you value the most about living in your community?



Respondents identified their neighbourhood, safety and City infrastructure and amenities as the top three things they value about living in the City of Vaughan

**"Have Your Say!"
Draft 2007 Citizen Survey Report of Findings**

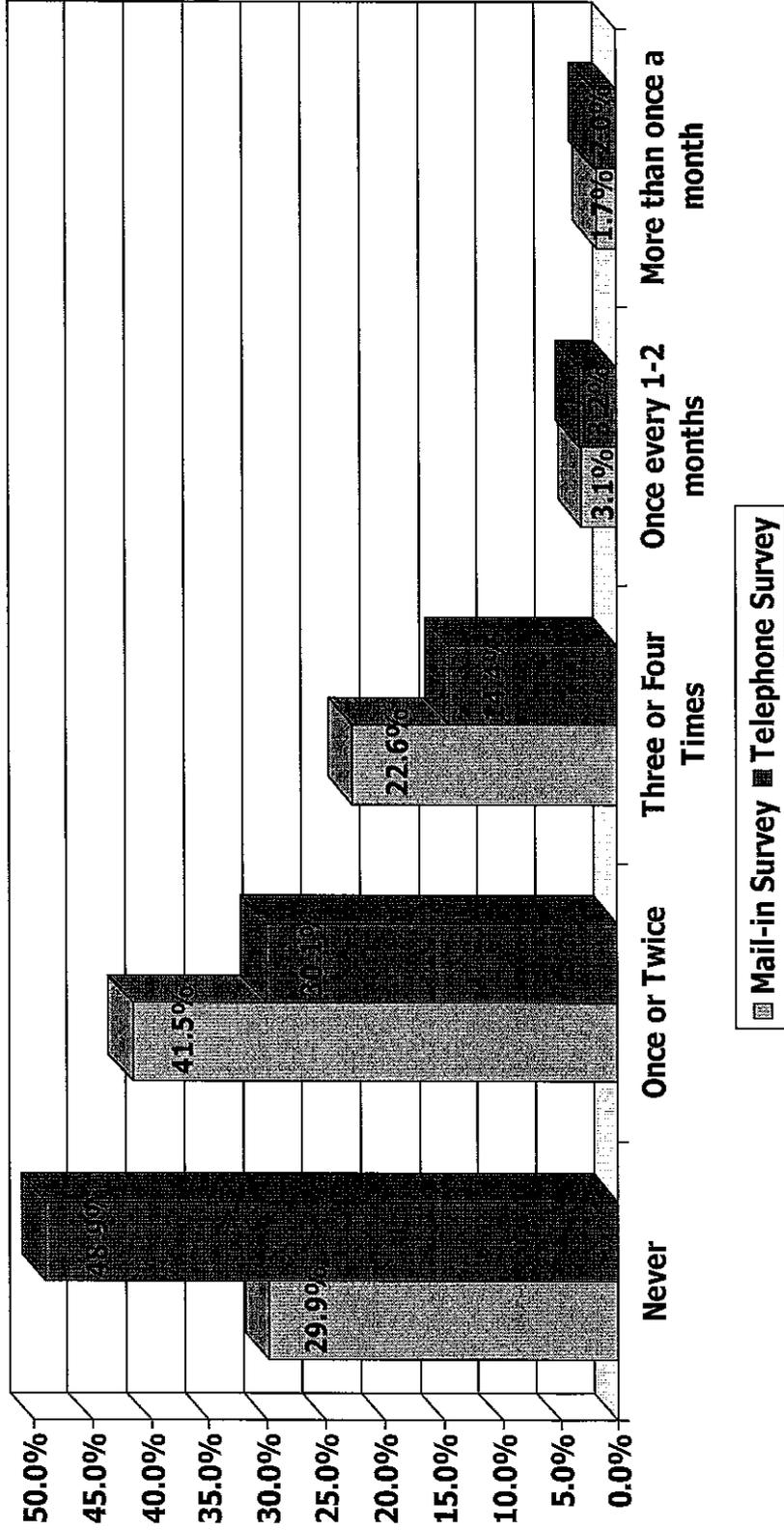
Question 2:
Indicate how important the following community issues are to you

	Mail-In Survey 'Very Important' Percentage	Telephone Survey 'Very Important' Percentage
Safety in our Community	90.9%	92.0%
Access to health facilities	85.8%	85.2%
Quality of municipal services	80.5%	81.6%
Environment	73.7%	79.8%
Garbage, Recycling, Green Bin	69.4%	75.0%
Quality of the roads	72.8%	70.7%
Traffic congestion	82.0%	66.9%
The City having strong relationships with other levels of government	52.0%	61.9%
Parks and Recreation	50.5%	57.3%
The City communicating with residents regularly	53.0%	55.5%
Public transit	43.9%	45.1%
Issues related to growth	57.9%	44.1%

"Have Your Say!" Draft 2007 Citizen Survey Report of Findings

Question 3:

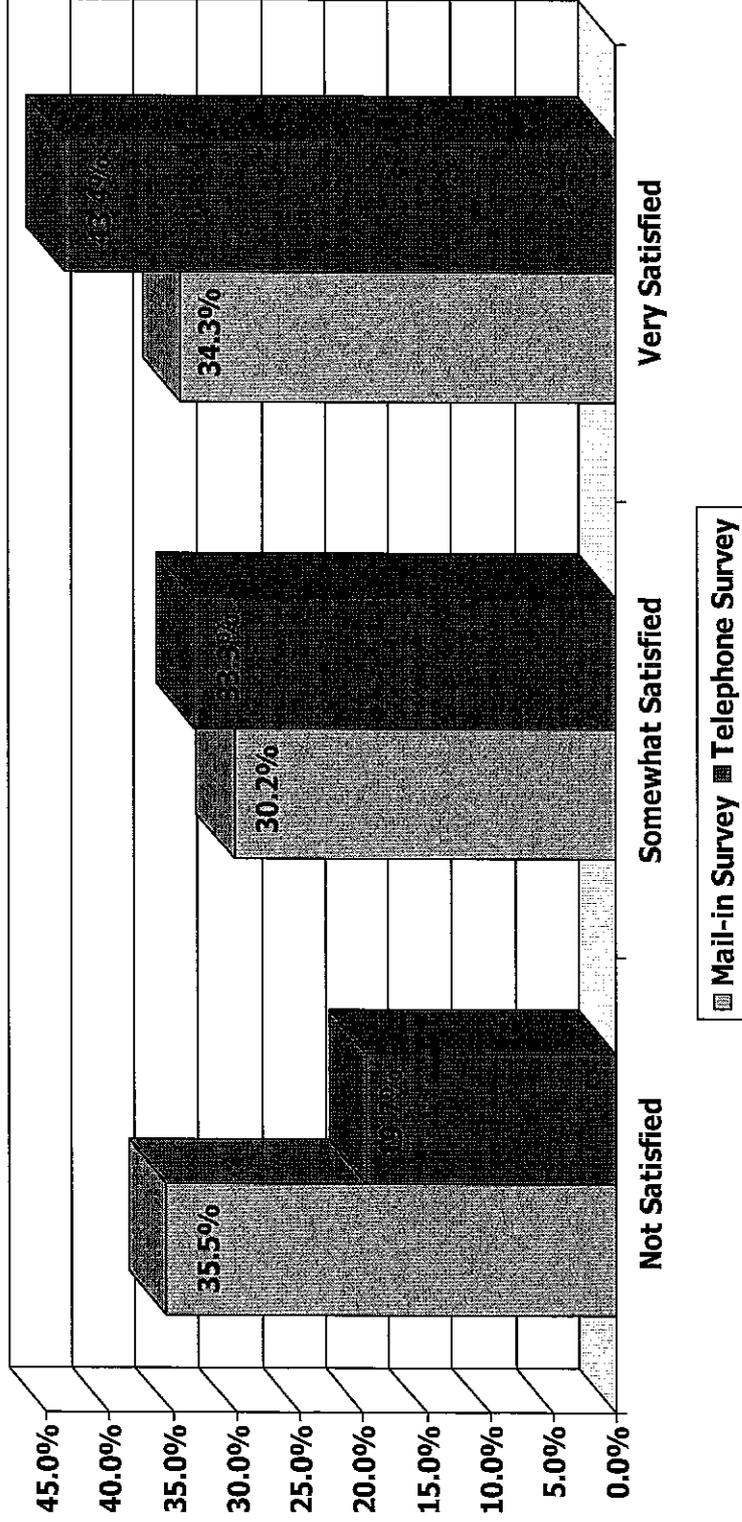
In the past 12 months, approximately how many times did you contact the City of Vaughan?



Over 70% of Vaughan's population report contacting the City less than three times in the past 12 months

"Have Your Say!" Draft 2007 Citizen Survey Report of Findings

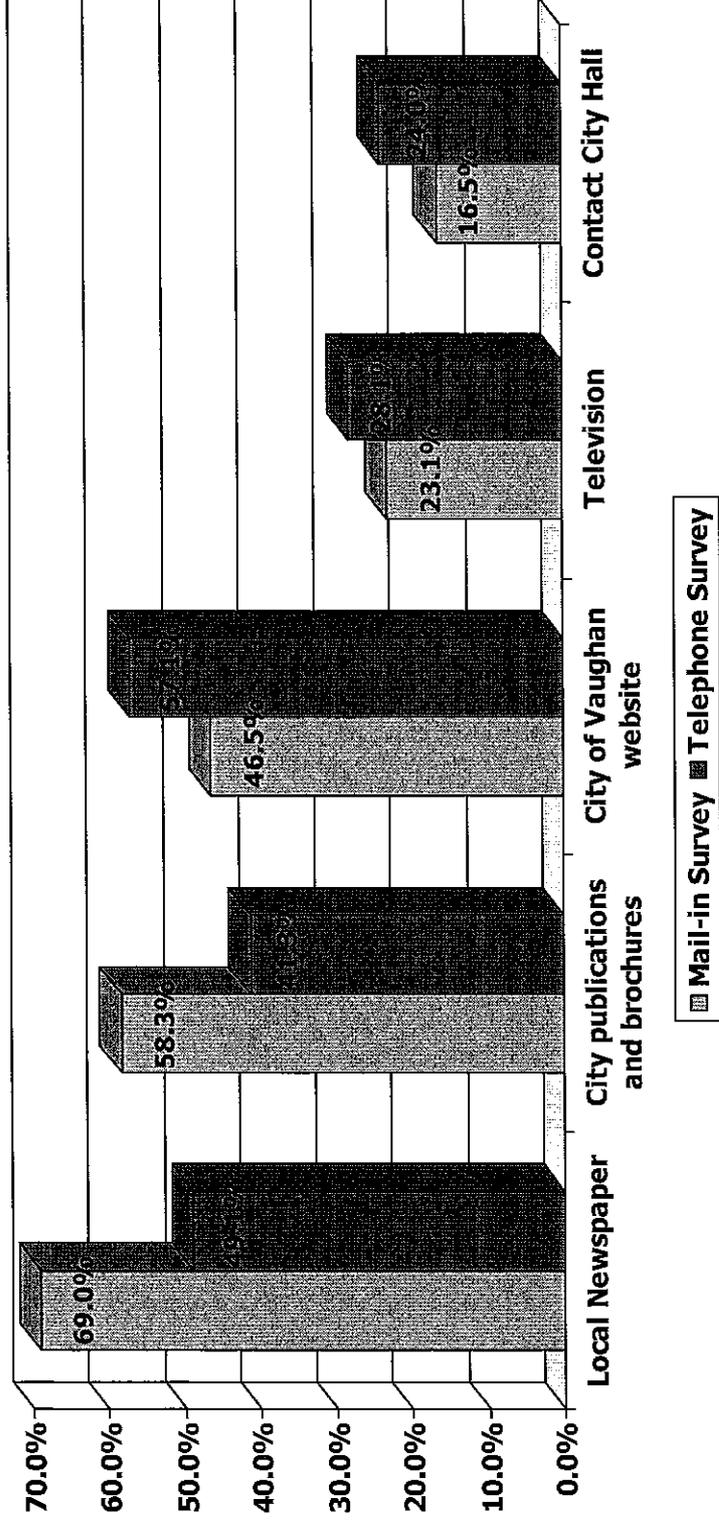
Question 4:
If you have contacted the City of Vaughan in the last 12 months, please list the nature of your call and how satisfied you were



The majority of residents in the telephone survey that had contacted the City were very satisfied with the results (43.4%) while 35.5% of respondents to the mail-in survey were not satisfied

"Have Your Say!" Draft 2007 Citizen Survey Report of Findings

Question 5:
Identify the best way for you to learn about municipal issues and services (select top three)

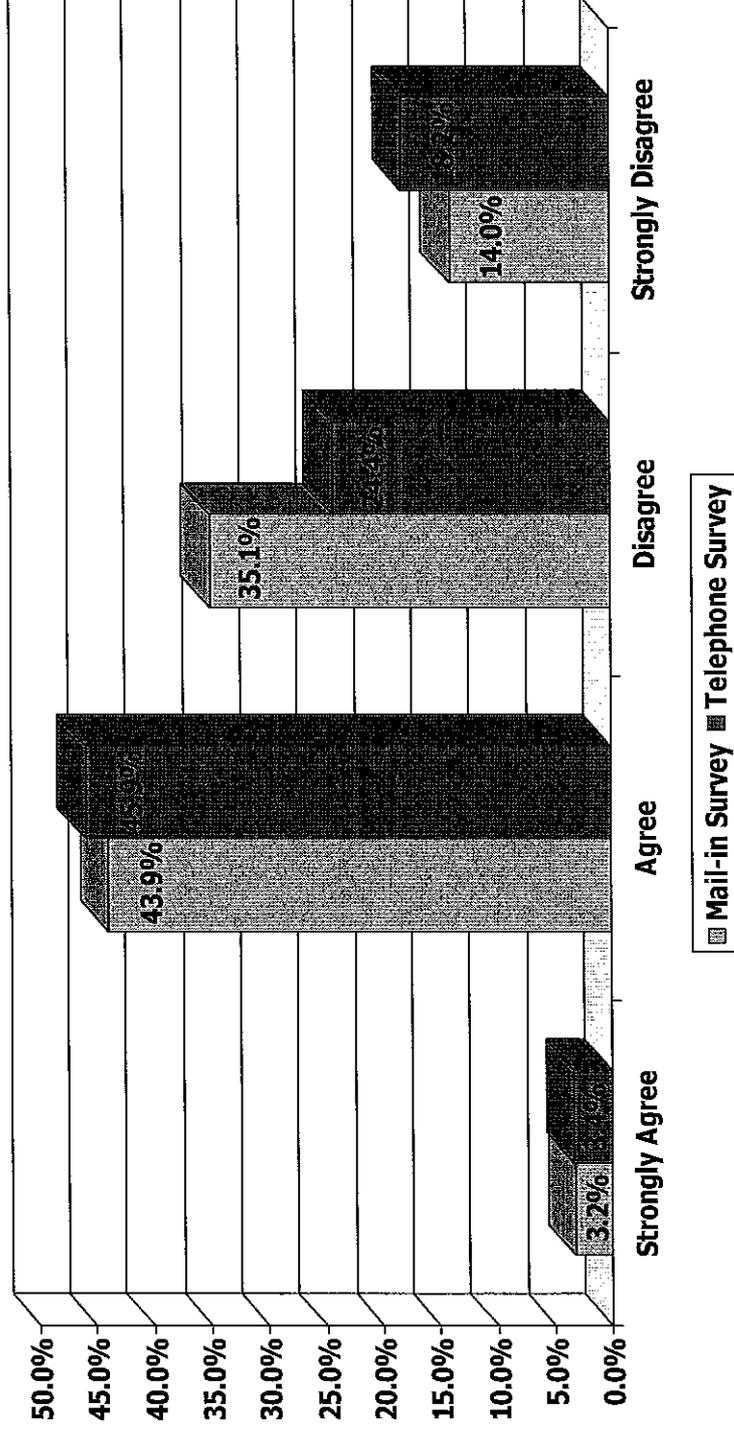


Telephone survey respondents identified the City website as the best way to learn about municipal issues and services while mail-in survey respondents identified local newspapers as the best method

"Have Your Say!" Draft 2007 Citizen Survey Report of Findings

Question 6:

How much do you agree with the following statement: "I believe I am getting value for my local property taxes"

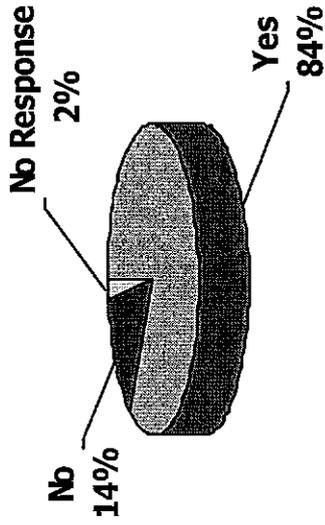


Almost half of respondents agreed that they are getting value for their property taxes

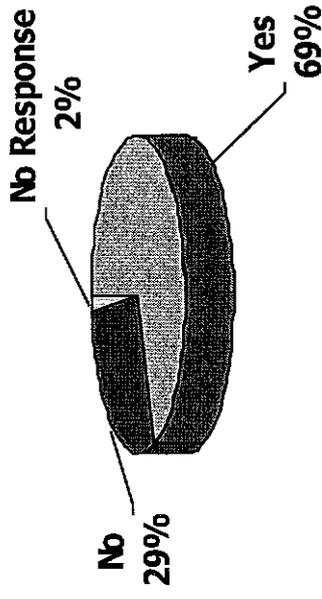
"Have Your Say!" Draft 2007 Citizen Survey Report of Findings

Question 7:
Did you vote in the 2006 municipal election?

Mail-in Survey Results



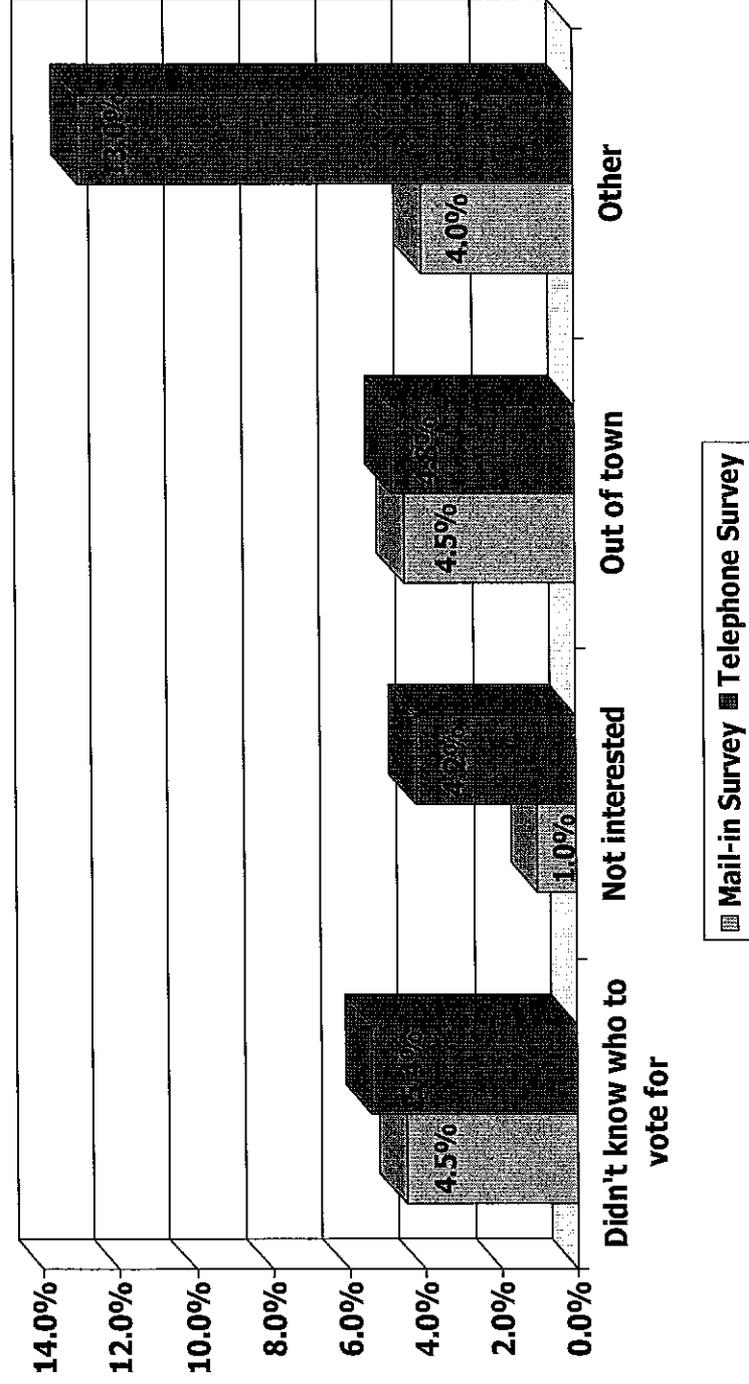
Telephone Survey Results



The number of respondents who reported that they voted in the November 2006 municipal election is surprisingly high. This is especially true for the mail-in survey.

"Have Your Say!" Draft 2007 Citizen Survey Report of Findings

Question 7:
If you did not vote in the municipal election, why not?



Responses in the 'other' category include not being on the voters list, illness, not a Canadian citizen or did not like the tone of the election

**"Have Your Say!"
Draft 2007 Citizen Survey Report of Findings**

Question 8:

Please indicate how important the following services are to your household

	Mail-In Survey 'Very Important' and 'Somewhat Important' Percentage	Telephone Survey 'Very Important' and 'Somewhat Important' Percentage
Fire Services	97.6%	99.2%
Garbage, recycling and green bin	96.6%	98.2%
Street repair, sidewalk and street lighting	97.8%	97.4%
Sidewalk and end of driveway snow removal	91.5%	93.8%
Fitness, parks, recreation, arts and culture	91.5%	92.8%
Bylaw Enforcement	90.7%	91.6%

**"Have Your Say!"
Draft 2007 Citizen Survey Report of Findings**

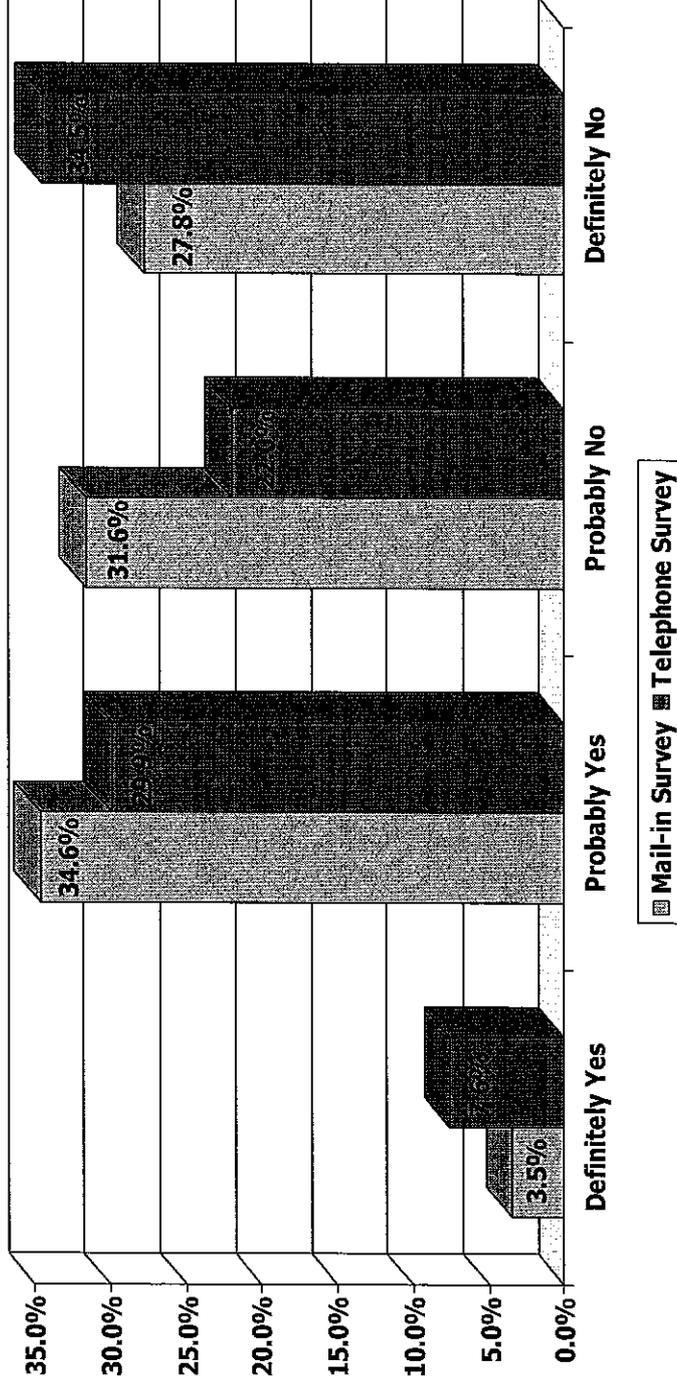
Question 9:
Please indicate your satisfaction with each of the following services

	Mail-In Survey 'Very Satisfied' and 'Somewhat Satisfied' Percentage	Telephone Survey 'Very Satisfied' and 'Somewhat Satisfied' Percentage
Fire Services	92.8%	84.1%
Garbage, recycling and green bin	88.7%	91.6%
Street repair, sidewalk and street lighting	79.3%	84.6%
Sidewalk and end of driveway snow removal	82.2%	80.8%
Fitness, parks, recreation, arts and culture	86.8%	89.2%
Bylaw Enforcement	68.9%	80.6%

"Have Your Say!" Draft 2007 Citizen Survey Report of Findings

Question 10:

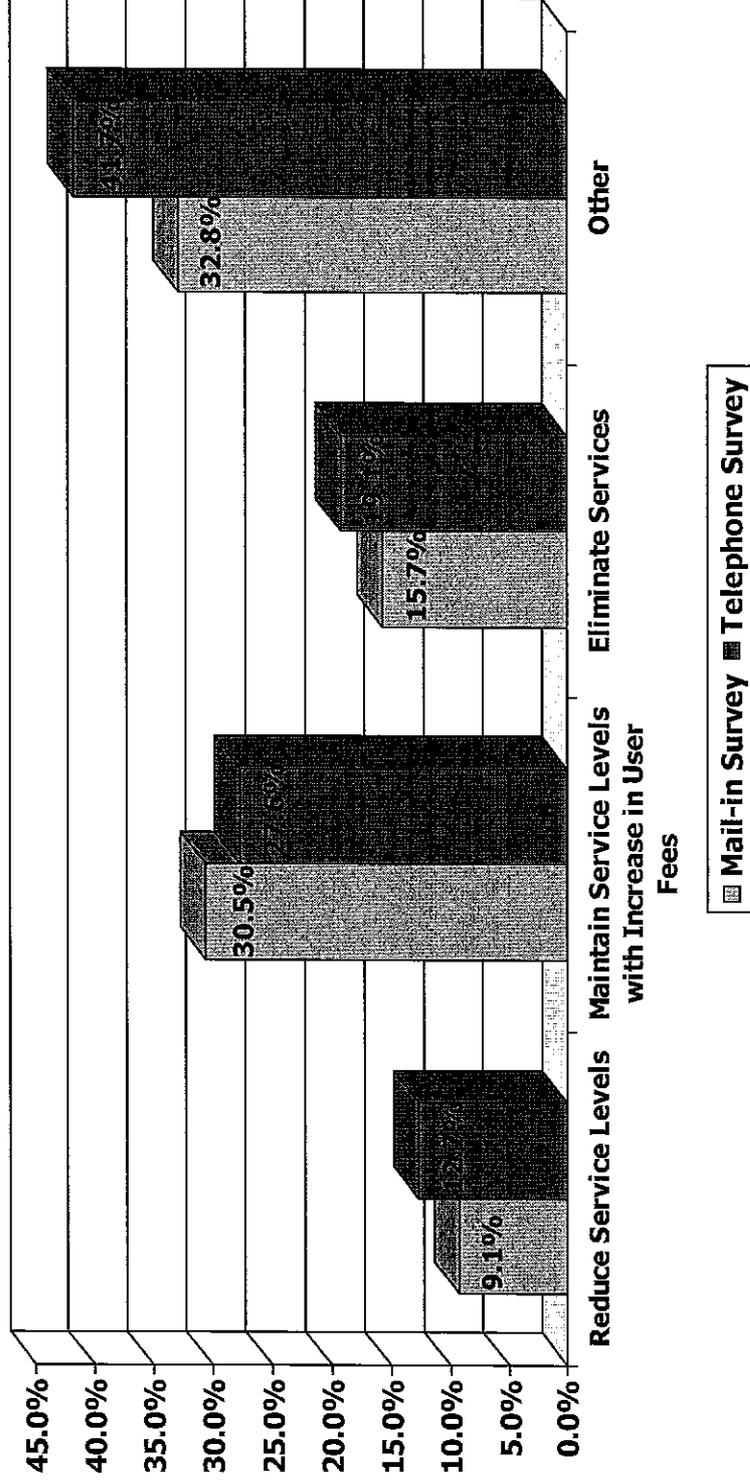
In the future, the City faces increased costs to maintain current services (due to inflation) as well as infrastructure replacement including recreation facilities, community centres, libraries, fire halls, roads and bridges. Would you support an increase in taxes to meet these future needs?



Approximately 37% of respondents said they would support a future tax increase to fund infrastructure replacement and maintain current services

"Have Your Say!" Draft 2007 Citizen Survey Report of Findings

Question 11:
If you do not support increased taxes, what option would you advise Council to do in order to minimize or eliminate tax increases?



Over one-quarter of respondents indicated that they would prefer the City maintain services levels and increase user fees than increase property taxes

**"Have Your Say!"
Draft 2007 Citizen Survey Report of Findings**

Question 11:

If you do not support increased taxes, what option would you advise Council to do in order to minimize or eliminate tax increases?

Reduce Service Levels:		
Garbage Pickup	11 responses	0.76%
Recycling Pickup	10 responses	0.69%
Arts and Culture	9 responses	0.62%

Eliminate Services:		
Street Beautification	14 responses	0.96%
End of Driveway Snow Removal	12 responses	0.83%
Community Centres	11 responses	0.76%

**"Have Your Say!"
Draft 2007 Citizen Survey Report of Findings**

Question 11:

If you do not support increased taxes, what option would you advise Council to do in order to minimize or eliminate tax increases?

Other:		
Manage Money Better (reduce waste, be more efficient)	139 responses	9.28%
Reduce salaries	87 responses	5.98%
Review operations costs and services	40 responses	2.75%
Reduce staff	30 responses	2.06%
Increase business tax	22 responses	1.51%

"Have Your Say!" Draft 2007 Citizen Survey Report of Findings

Question 12:

Below are some strategic initiatives that the City of Vaughan is focusing its efforts on that will shape the future of the City over the next ten years. How important are these initiatives to you as a resident?

	Mail-In Survey "Very Important" Percentage	Telephone Survey "Very Important" Percentage
Protecting the environment	71.5%	77.4%
Maintaining current levels of services	74.3%	70.9%
Delivering good customer service to residents	70.2%	70.1%
Infrastructure and replacement	60.0%	56.3%
Managing growth	71.4%	51.1%

IPSOS REID “MUNICIPAL QUALITY OF LIFE AND FINANCIAL PLANNING” SURVEY

How is the Survey Conducted?

- Random telephone survey of 300 citizens aged 18 years and older with a margin of error of +/- 5.7% (19 times out of 20)

Key Issues Covered in Survey

- Do citizens feel they get good value or poor value for their municipal tax dollars?
- What are citizen’s views about alternative forms of revenue generation?
- Are citizens satisfied with the overall level and quality of service they receive and how do they feel about some specific services?
- How do citizens rate the quality of life in the municipality?
- What are the most important issues facing the community?
- What information are citizens looking for the municipality to provide?
- What is the incident of visiting a municipality's website?

What do You Get?

- Detailed survey data table results
- Powerpoint presentation of results
- Comparison of results with other participating municipalities
- Presentation of results at March Council/SMT Strategic Planning Workshop

How Much Will It Cost?

- Participation in survey- \$5,000 + GST
- Custom questions additional cost of \$800 per closed-end question and \$1,400 per open-ended question
- Increase in sample size \$20 per additional interview
- Additional cost of approximately \$200 to cover travel costs for presentation of results

**Quality of Life and Financial Planning
Municipal Survey**

**Questionnaire
(November 2007)**

Quality of Life and Services

1. 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 local leaders?
2. How would you rate the overall quality of life in the City of Vaughan today?
3. Why do you say the overall quality of life in the City of Vaughan today is good?
4. Why do you say the overall quality of life in the City of Vaughan today is poor?
5. Please tell me how satisfied you are with each of the following services provided by the City of Vaughan.
 - Fire Services
 - Garbage, Recycling and Green Bins
 - Street repairs, sidewalk and street lighting
 - Sidewalk and end of driveway snow removal
 - Fitness, parks, recreation and culture
 - Bylaw Enforcement

Financial Planning

6. 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? Is that very or fairly good/poor value?
7. Municipal property taxes are the primary way to pay for services provided by the City of Vaughan. Due to the increased cost of maintaining current service levels and infrastructure, the City of Vaughan must balance taxation and service delivery levels. To deal with this situation, which of the following four options would you **most** like the City of Vaughan to pursue?
 - Increase taxes – to enhance or expand services
 - Increase taxes – to maintain services at current levels
 - Cut services- to maintain current tax level
 - Cut services- to reduce taxes
8. In addition to adjusting the property tax/service delivery balance, the City of Vaughan has the option to generate other forms of revenue. Please tell me whether you would support or oppose using each of the following to pay for municipal services and programs.
 - Increased or new user fees on programs and services
 - Gambling revenues from casinos or slot machines
 - Expanded or increased pay parking
 - Corporate sponsorship for municipal programs and facilities

Communication

9. Thinking about your information needs, what kinds of information do you want the City of Vaughan to provide you with? Any others?
10. Have you been to the City of Vaughan's website in the last twelve months?

Demographics

11. In what year were you born?
12. Are you either primarily or jointly responsible for paying property taxes or rent in your household?
13. Do you have any children under the age of 18 living in your household?
14. Do you own or rent your current place of residence?
15. How many years have you lived in the City of Vaughan?