
HALDIMAND COUNTY

Report CEC-05-2023 Resident Satisfaction Survey Results - 2022

For Consideration by Council in Committee on April 11, 2023



OBJECTIVE:

To share the 2022 Haldimand County Resident Satisfaction Survey results and to make recommendations to continue to measure resident satisfaction through bi-annual satisfaction surveys.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Report CEC-05-2023 Resident Satisfaction Survey Results - 2022 be received;
2. AND THAT Haldimand County continue to implement a Resident Satisfaction Survey every two years to measure future satisfaction against established benchmarks, subject to budget approval.

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Reviewed by: Cathy Case, General Manager of Corporate & Social Services

Respectfully submitted: Cathy Case, General Manager of Corporate & Social Services

Approved: Craig Manley, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In order to better understand customer needs and expectations, the Customer Experience and Communications division has been soliciting stakeholder feedback on services and programs provided by Haldimand County. Stakeholder input enables staff to make customer-focused operational recommendations to improve service delivery and foster a positive customer experience for residents accessing services.

As part of the stakeholder engagement process, it is key that respondents feel heard. Once survey data collected is reviewed and summarized, that information should be shared back to the key stakeholders. This report will share some key findings from customer engagement initiatives conducted in 2022. The full report results can be found in Attachment 2.

Staff are able to use the information gathered from these engagements to inform internal collaborative continuous improvement efforts that will iteratively improve the customer experience.

BACKGROUND:

Although resident satisfaction surveys are common in many municipalities, it is only recently that the County's new Customer Experience and Communications Division launched its first survey to all residents. These types of surveys are most meaningful when done on a routine basis (annually or bi-annually) and gather important, high level data to inform longer-term recommendations to improve service delivery and communications to the public.

In the fall of 2022, a comprehensive Resident Satisfaction Survey was conducted across all areas of Haldimand County. This survey offered an opportunity for the public to provide input on their

perceptions relating to quality of life in the County, as well as their customer experience with County programs and services. It is important to provide residents an opportunity to share their feedback in order to identify and prioritise areas for improvement. Additionally, results from the survey conducted in 2022 will serve as a baseline benchmark for comparative analysis in future resident satisfaction surveys.

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the results of the Resident Satisfaction Survey. 369 residents took the time to respond to the survey. Although this number may appear low, it is still statistically valid to obtain meaningful results.

To date, engagement activities conducted by Customer Experience and Communications team have been conducted in-house by staff, whereas the majority of municipalities outsource their annual survey.

ANALYSIS:

The Resident Satisfaction Survey Questions and Results are included in this report as Attachments 1 and 2, respectively. The intent of the questions asked was to gauge, at a general level, satisfaction with various municipal functions and services. Most questions were asking respondents to rate the service and allowed for comments to help the County better understand why services received a particular rating. It should be noted that in some areas, more work will be required to delve into the reasons for low ratings to minimize any misinterpretation of results. For example, aquatics scored fairly low in satisfaction however it is estimated that this is primarily related to the lack of indoor swimming facilities and not specific to the quality of aquatics programs that the County currently offers.

In addition to the attached Results report, staff will be presenting its findings to Council at the April 11th Council in Committee meeting. Below are a few high level observations as a result of staff's analysis.

The 2022 Resident Satisfaction Survey Report revealed that 83% of residents in Haldimand County feel that their overall quality of life is positive. Additionally, 64% of residents agreed that their quality of life has improved or stayed the same over the past five years.

The Resident Satisfaction Survey results also indicated that 64% of residents feel that Haldimand County provides efficient and cost-effective services, and that they feel they get good service value for their tax dollars.

Residents were generally satisfied when contacting the customer service team through all communication channels (in person, email, or telephone). However, some common factors negatively affecting overall satisfaction scores related to response time, such as:

- no or slow acknowledgement of receipt of customer inquiries or requests,
- long and complicated processes affecting timeliness of response,
- unclear and/or untimely communications around service and program notifications.

As next steps, staff will use the data collected in the Haldimand County Resident Satisfaction Survey and other customer feedback collected to prioritize areas identified for improvement. Staff from the Customer Experience and Communications division will collaborate with affected divisions to develop solutions and future recommendations to improve service delivery. In some cases, Divisions are proactively taking steps in response to the feedback received. Recurring surveys will reveal whether customer satisfaction with specific lower scoring functions is increasing, or higher scoring services are being maintained adequately. Ultimately this information better assists staff in knowing which areas should be the focus of further investigation over time.

Staff are currently developing Customer Service Standards for the municipality which will also address some of the concerns received and will help manage response time expectations. These standards will

apply to all staff, will be developed in consultation with them and will be brought forward to a future Council in Committee meeting for consideration, once the internal consultation process is complete.

It is important to recognize that the survey results will form a baseline for staff and Council. Future surveys will be very similar in structure, with minor amendments to meet any changes that occur over time in services provided, etc. Staff recommend that Haldimand County continue to solicit customer feedback and conduct a Resident Satisfaction Survey on the customer experience every two years. Staff also recommends that the survey be outsourced to an external consultant to collect and analyze this data in future years. Most municipalities that conduct regular recurring surveys use the expertise of an external party. This allows for many benefits including quality benchmarking data; comparing information to other similar municipalities; expertise with a wider variety of technical tools; analytical techniques which will assist in translating survey results into meaningful, actionable continuous improvement plans; and higher participation rates. If Council supports a bi-annual survey, staff will bring forward the proposed initiative at future budget deliberations to consider approval of outsourcing.

FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

The survey was conducted and analyzed by staff so there was not a specific budget allotment for the initiative, however, it did add a considerable amount of time and effort in addition to the current workload. Communications and customer service are two areas that have been identified by Council as priorities for the organization. Staff will be proposing outsourcing this survey on a bi-annual basis at future budget deliberations. This is anticipated to increase participation, create efficiencies and enhance the overall quality of analysis including comparative analysis with other municipalities. Outsourcing will have a small financial impact and this will be provided to Council during the budget process for consideration.

STAKEHOLDER IMPACTS:

REPORT IMPACTS:

Agreement: No

By-law: No

Budget Amendment: No

Policy: No

REFERENCES:

1. None

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 2022 Resident Satisfaction Survey Questions
2. 2022 Haldimand County Resident Satisfaction Survey Report