

City of Ithaca 2021 Budget Input Survey

Wednesday, June 24, 2020

328

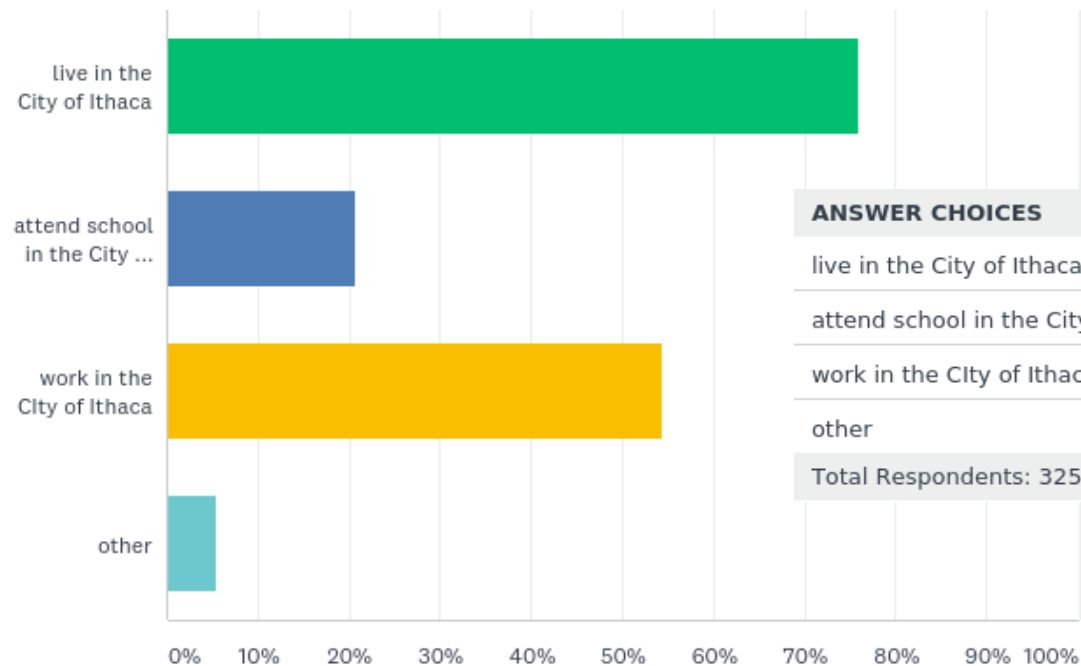
Total Responses

Date Created: Thursday, June 18, 2020

Complete Responses: 328 as of 12pm on 6/24/2020

Q1: Do you:

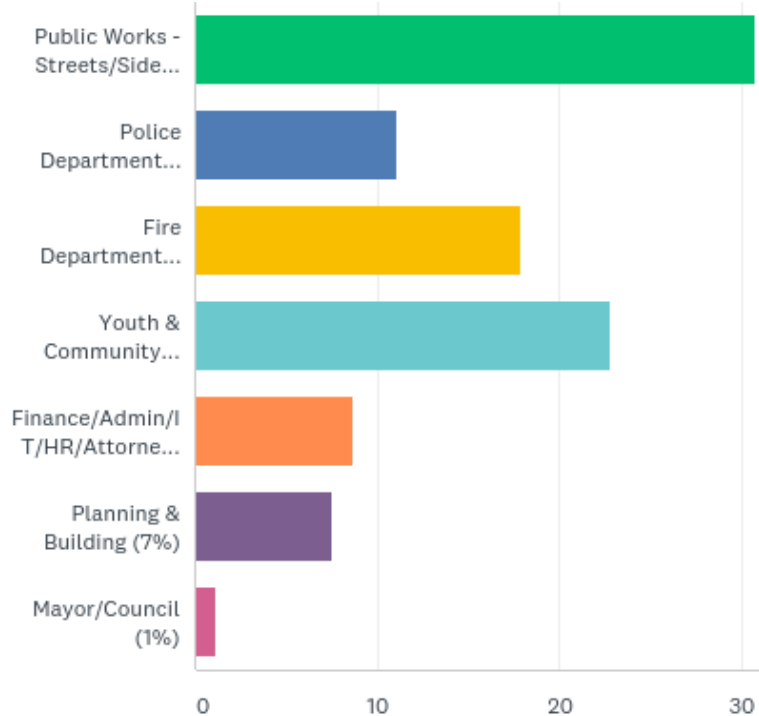
Answered: 325 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
live in the City of Ithaca	76.00% 247
attend school in the City of Ithaca	20.62% 67
work in the City of Ithaca	54.46% 177
other	5.54% 18
Total Respondents: 325	

Q2: Please tell us the percentage of the City's budget that should be allocated to each department.

Answered: 318 Skipped: 10

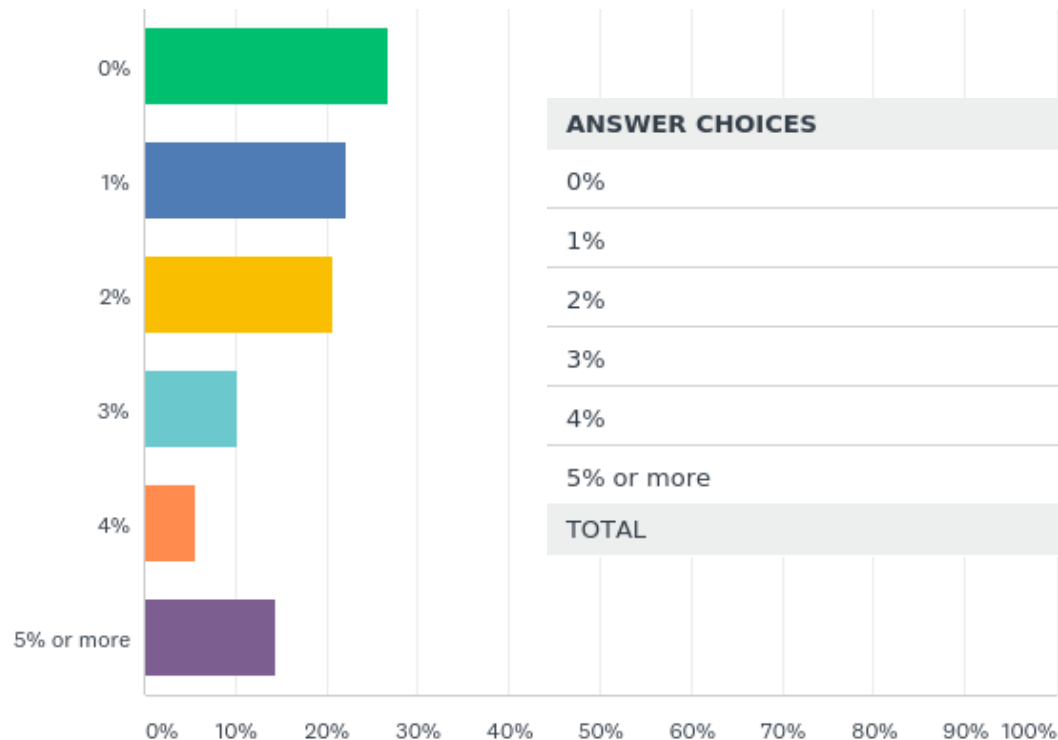


ANSWER CHOICES	AVERAGE NUMBER
↑ Public Works - Streets/Sidewalks (30%)	31
↓ Police Department (20%)	11
Fire Department (18%)	18
↑ Youth & Community Services (13%)	23
Finance/Admin/IT/HR/Attorney (9%)	9
↑ Planning & Building (7%)	8
Mayor/Council (1%)	1
Total Respondents: 318	

Q3: How much more would you be willing to pay in property taxes or rent to support the services you desire?

Answered: 320 Skipped: 8

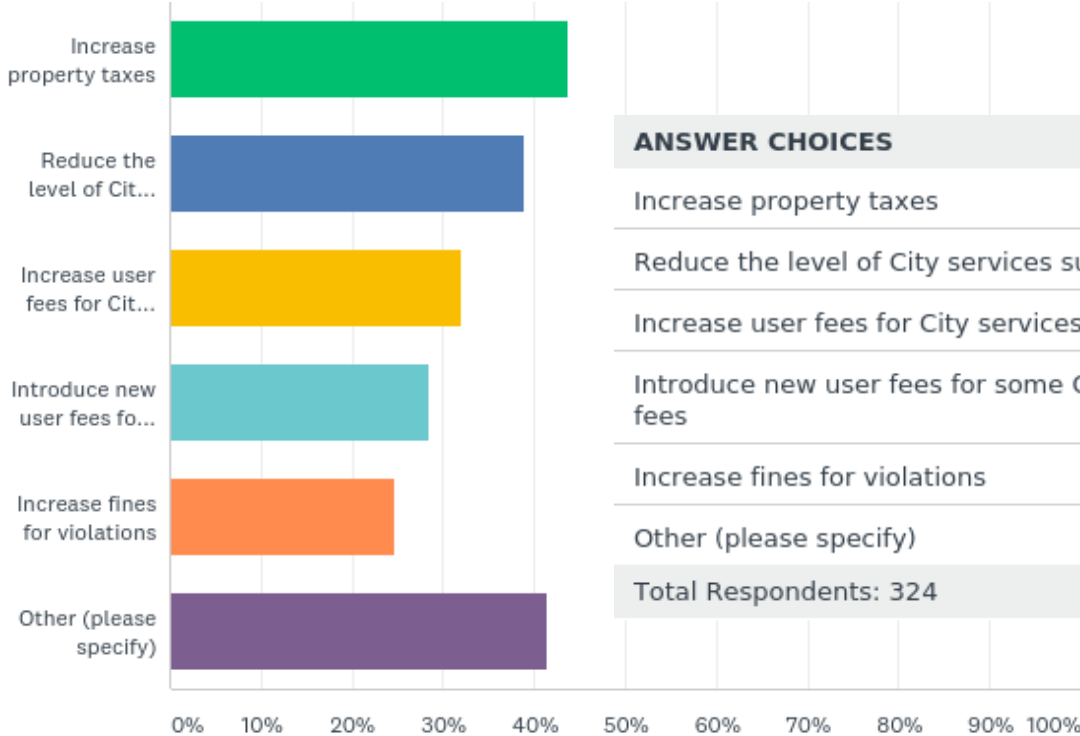
A 1% increase in taxes equates to approximately \$244,500 in revenue for the City.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
0%	26.88% 86
1%	22.19% 71
2%	20.63% 66
3%	10.31% 33
4%	5.63% 18
5% or more	14.37% 46
TOTAL	320

Q4: Which of the following options would you prefer the City use to balance its budget?

Answered: 324 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Increase property taxes	43.83% 142
Reduce the level of City services such as hours or frequency of service	38.89% 126
Increase user fees for City services that currently have fees	32.10% 104
Introduce new user fees for some City services that currently have no fees	28.40% 92
Increase fines for violations	24.69% 80
Other (please specify)	41.36% 134
Total Respondents: 324	

Q4: Which of the following options would you prefer the City use to balance its budget?

Answered: 324 Skipped: 4

OTHER – COMMON THEMES:

- Do not increase fines that would impact low-income residents or families
 - Cornell should increase the contribution to the City
 - Implement sliding scales for fees wherever possible
 - Crowdfund or solicit donors for support of valued City programs
 - Allow for people to pre-pay or overpay property taxes
 - Use volunteers for city programs
 - Reduce funding to the Police Department
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Q5: Do you have any suggestions for efficiencies, reduction in services, or cost savings?

Answered: 203 Skipped: 125

COMMON THEMES:

- Moratorium on salary increases for all staff; renegotiate union contracts
- Cut back permanently on mowing as a cost-savings and sustainability measure
- Increase parking fees and fines
- Golf course – eliminate entirely or do not subsidize or sell to private entity
- Shared Government services building with other municipalities
- Shared services with county or other municipalities, admin, IT, payroll, etc.
- Eliminate tax abatements
- Outsource trash and yard waste pick up

There were many suggestions related to police, but not necessarily budget related. The Task Force will address these concerns and can make recommendations to the Mayor for funding any corresponding services or initiatives.

Q6: Do you have any suggestions for generating revenue?

Answered: 191 Skipped: 137

COMMON THEMES:

- Fine/fees for gorge rescue
 - Parking fees increase and are all automated with kiosks and apps
 - Increase and encourage tourism through festivals, eco-adventures, sporting events, etc. that will increase sales tax revenue and help local businesses
 - Install traffic cameras that track and issues tickets
 - Charge higher fees/penalties for vacant homes and businesses
 - More Public-Private partnerships for City facilities and services
 - Charge all or only out-of-county visitors to enter City Parks
 - Add Food Trucks, Concessions, and Vendors in all City Parks with permit fees
 - Attract more brand name stores to the Commons
 - Allow for businesses and people to provide funding to specific programs like REACH, Community Outreach Worker, etc.
 - Automate City Services with online payments, virtual services – this will reduce staffing needs and allow for safer interactions during pandemics
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Suggested Slides for Part 2 of Budget Basics

- Tax Abatements – how they work; what has been funded this way, etc.
 - Better breakdown of Revenues through fees
 - Breakdown of DPW funding
 - Cornell MOU
 - Capital Projects
 - Debt Service & Interest Rates
 - Fund Balance
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- SWAT – this is not budget related but we need more information about this program (in addition to funding breakdowns)
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