

Halifax Regional Municipality's **2012 Citizen Survey** Key Findings

August 7, 2012



Methodology

Scope

- Randomly selected representative sample of HRM residents
- Delivered to 12,700 households

Mode

- At residents' option
- Online, telephone, mail

Date

- January 9 – February 12, 2012

Sample size

- 1241 interviews
- Margin of error ± 2.8 percentage points, 19 times out of 20

Completion

- 9.7% Completion Rate
- 89% Online; 5% Telephone; 6% Mail

What We'll Cover Today

Public Opinion on ...

- Quality of Life
- Broad Priorities
- Taxes and Service Levels
- Public Safety
- Infrastructure
- Planning/Growth

Highlights of Survey Findings

- Council direction is aligned with Citizen Priorities
 - *Transit*
 - *Maintenance vs. New (infrastructure)*
- Residents are overwhelmingly satisfied with the quality of life
- Most respondents say they receive very “good” or “somewhat good” value for taxes
- 78% of respondents are okay with the same level of taxes or a small increase in taxes / services
- 81% feel completely or very safe in their neighbourhood
- 86% feel completely or very safe where they work and shop
- Citizens have confidence that police will respond promptly in an emergency

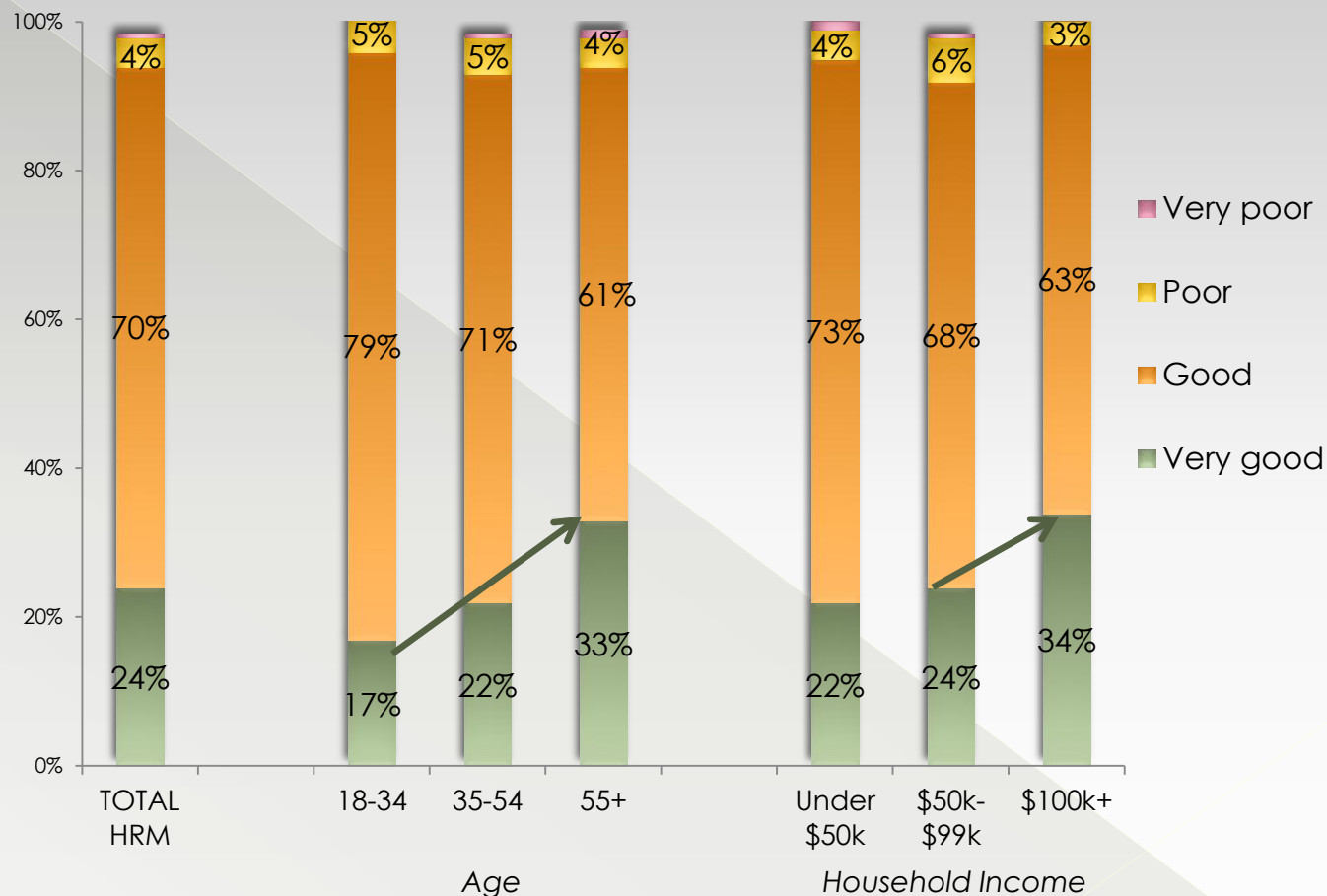
Quality of Life and Broad Priorities

- Overall Quality of Life
- Change in Perception of Quality of Life
 - Top of Mind Issues
 - Broad Priorities
- Economic Development Priorities

Key Findings

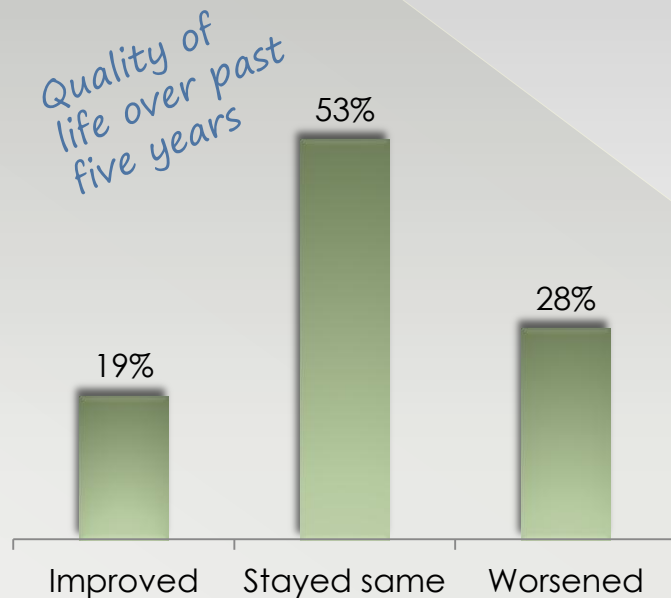
There is almost unanimity in the belief that the quality of life in HRM is “good” or “very good.”

Quality of life rating



Key Findings

72% of respondents believe the quality of life has stayed the same or improved over the past five years.



How HRM could improve Quality of Life:

- ~ Transit (38%)
- ~ Lower taxes (25%)
- ~ Social issues (22%)
- ~ Public safety (18%)

Key Findings

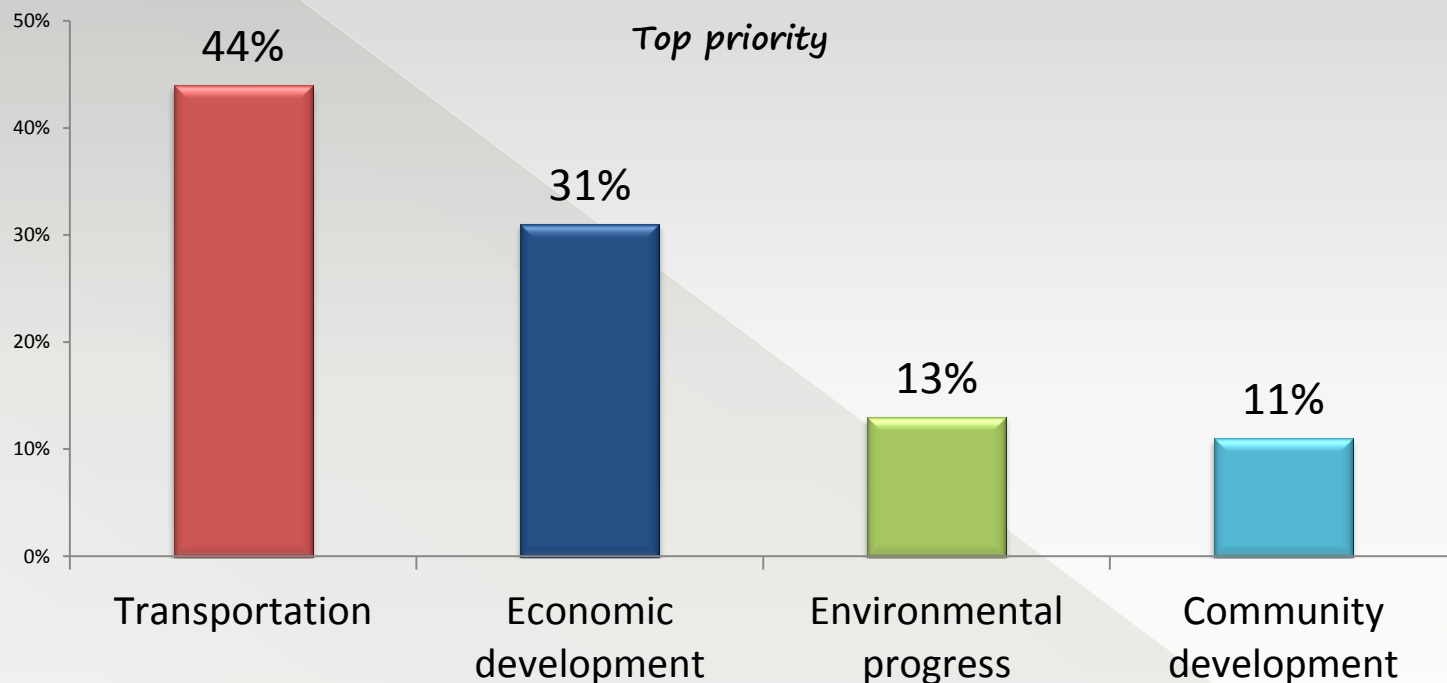
Transit service investments and expansion consistently shows up as a priority for residents.

It starts with top-of-mind issues

		AGE			
Top issues facing HRM over next 5 years	TOTAL HRM	18-34	35-54	55+	2010
Transit service	26%	34%	24%	23%	24%
Public Safety	22%	18%	23%	23%	20%
Environment	19%	27%	15%	17%	6%
Transportation issues	18%	18%	21%	16%	14%
Economy / Employment	18%	27%	17%	10%	7%
Downtown – Redevelop/Revitalize	17%	15%	18%	19%	8%
Taxation	15%	9%	18%	18%	23%
Roads and streets	12%	8%	16%	12%	15%
Infrastructure	11%	7%	13%	11%	13%

Key Findings

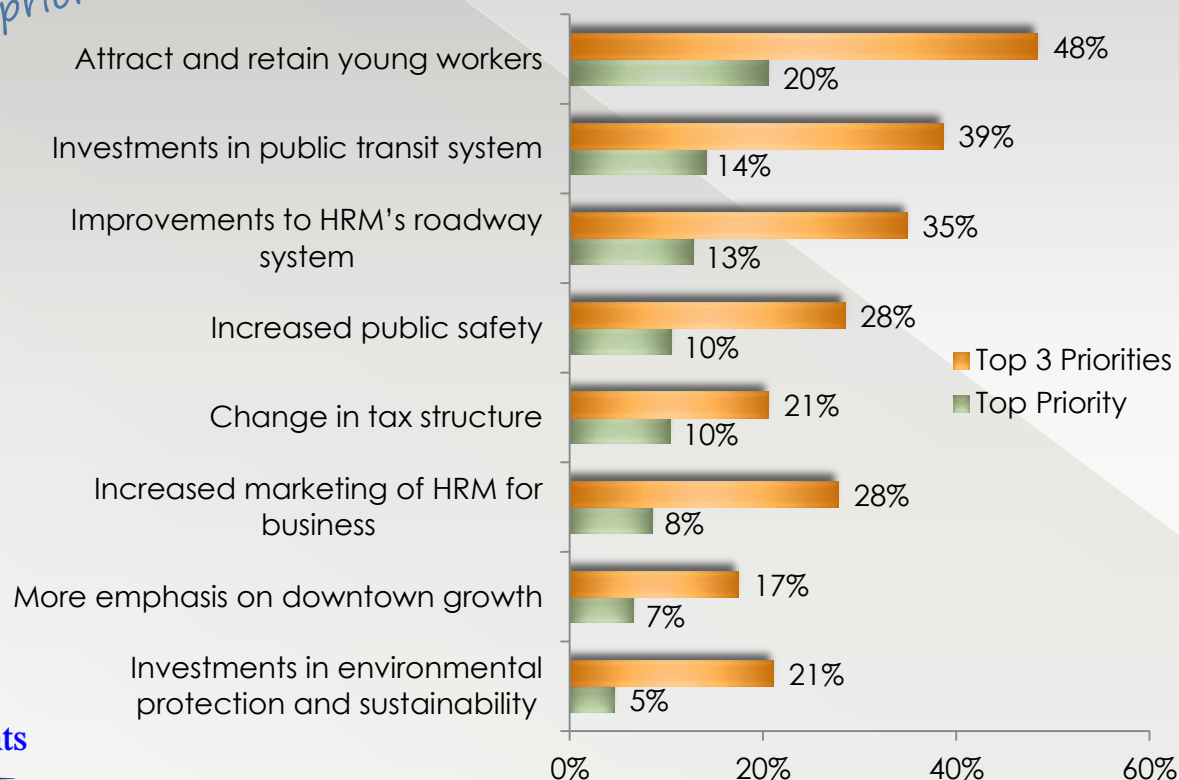
Transportation tops the broad priorities, followed by economic development, environmental progress, and community development.



Key Findings

Economic
development
spending priorities

The highest spending priorities for economic development are for increased efforts to attract and retain young workers and investments in the public transit system.



Of 'lesser' importance:

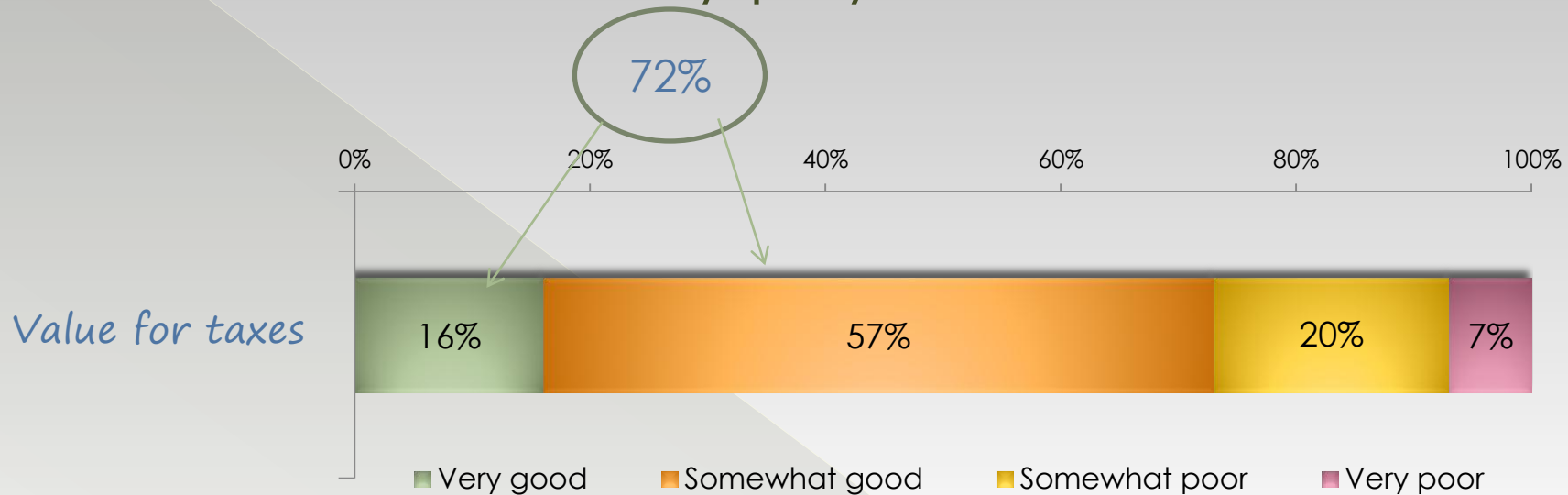
- Increased efforts to attract new residents (2%/9%)
- More emphasis on arts and culture (2%/9%)
- Beautification of the Municipality (2%/10)

Taxes and Service Levels

- Value for Taxes
- Tax and Service Levels
 - Spending on Services

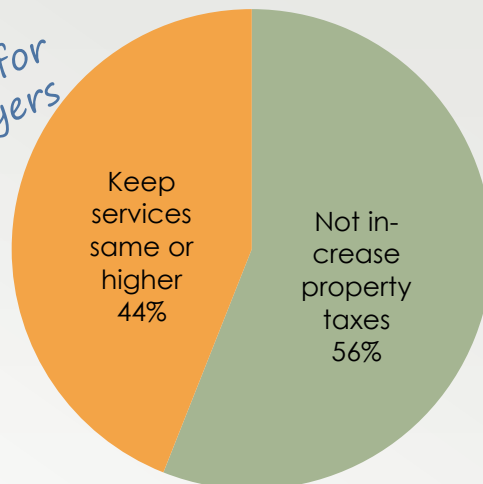
Key Findings

More than seven-in-ten perceive “somewhat” or “very” good value for the taxes they pay.



Among those with opinion who pay property taxes

Choice for taxpayers

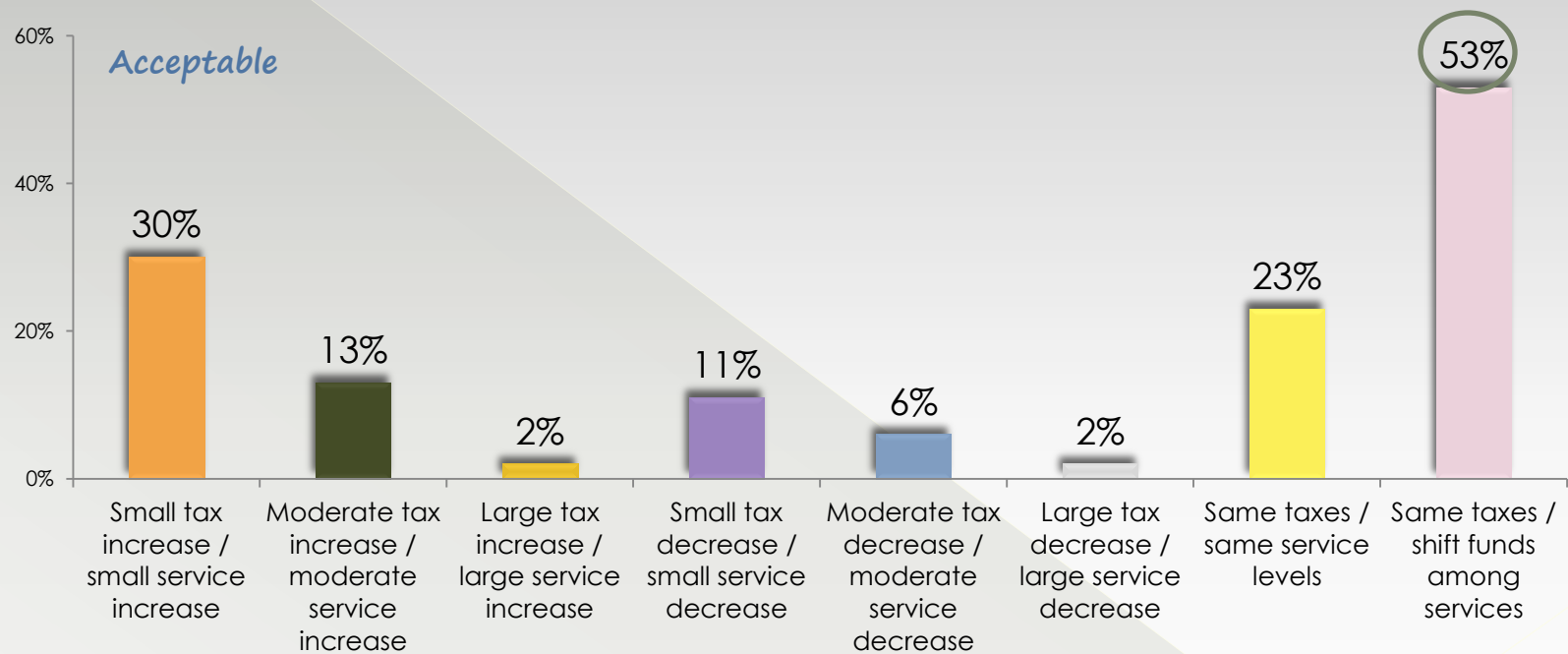


Changes for better value for taxes?

- ~ Improved transit (11%)
- ~ Lower taxes (9%)
- ~ Improved roads (9%)
- ~ Timely snow removal (7%)
- ~ Better run municipality (6%)

Key Findings

A majority of citizens prefer to have taxes remain the same, but redistribute priorities within the services provided.



Key Findings

Among the highest “votes” for increased spending, public transit service is the only one with a majority.

Increase Service	Increase	Maintain	Reduce / Eliminate
Public transit service	58%	37%	5%
Police protection and patrols	38%	59%	3%
Ongoing regular street maintenance (e.g. repaving / pothole filling)	34%	62%	3%
Recycling programs	33%	61%	6%
Economic development	31%	55%	13%
Major street improvement projects (e.g. reconstruction / traffic safety measures)	28%	62%	10%
Snow and ice removal	28%	67%	5%
Environmental protection and management	26%	62%	12%
Cleanliness and litter control	25%	65%	10%

Key Findings

The highest “votes” for reduction in services fall below the proportions who would like them maintained.

Reduce Service	Increase	Maintain	Reduce / Eliminate
Parking enforcement	5%	49%	46%
By-law enforcement	11%	57%	32%
Communications / Public affairs	8%	59%	32%
Animal control services	7%	60%	32%
Community grants	14%	54%	31%
Graffiti removal	13%	56%	31%
Publicly supervised beaches	6%	64%	30%
Arts and cultural programming	16%	54%	29%
Festivals and community events	13%	58%	29%
Community beautification (e.g. landscaping / floral displays)	14%	58%	27%

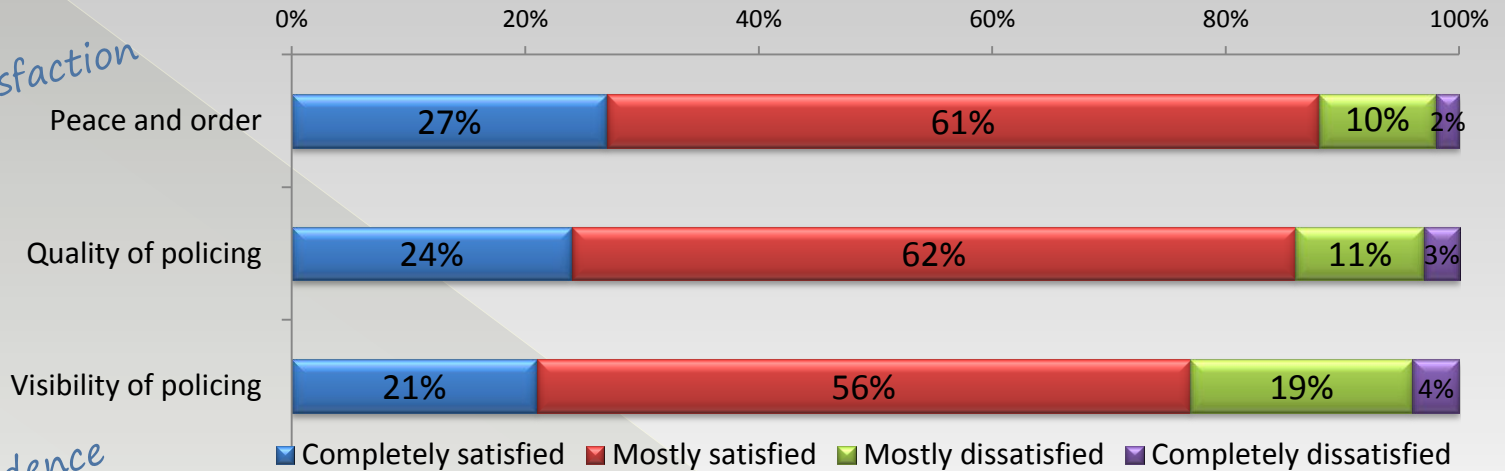
Public Safety

- Satisfaction with Police Services
- Confidence in Emergency Responsiveness
 - Perceptions of Safety

Key Findings

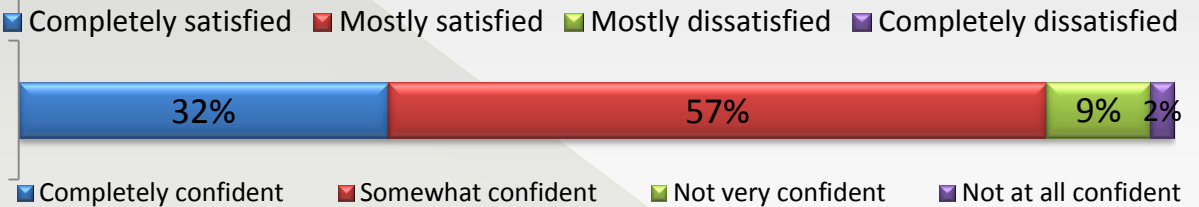
A very strong proportion of citizens feel at least “mostly” satisfied with peace and order in their neighbourhood.

Satisfaction

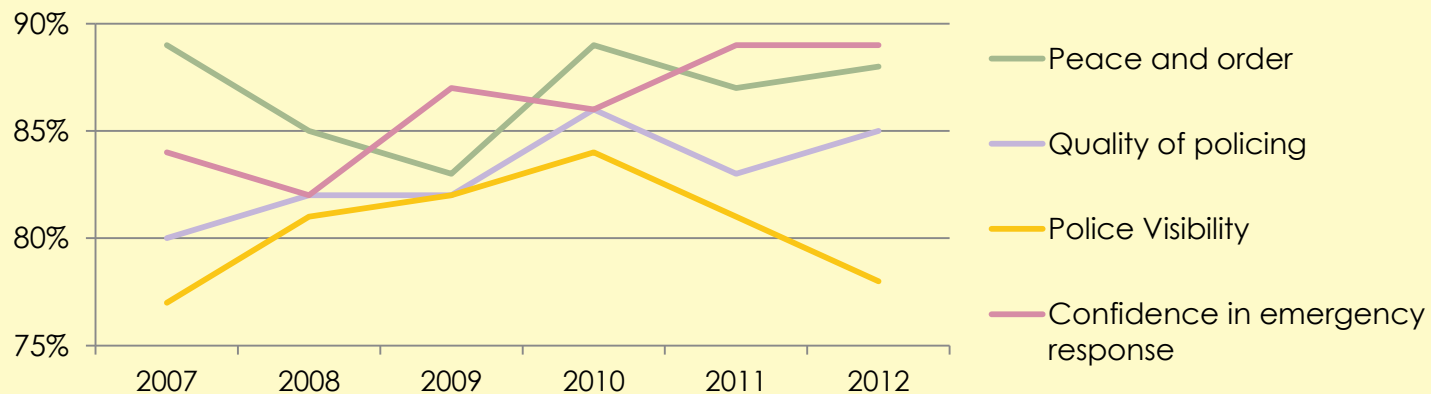


Confidence

Confidence in police response to emergency calls



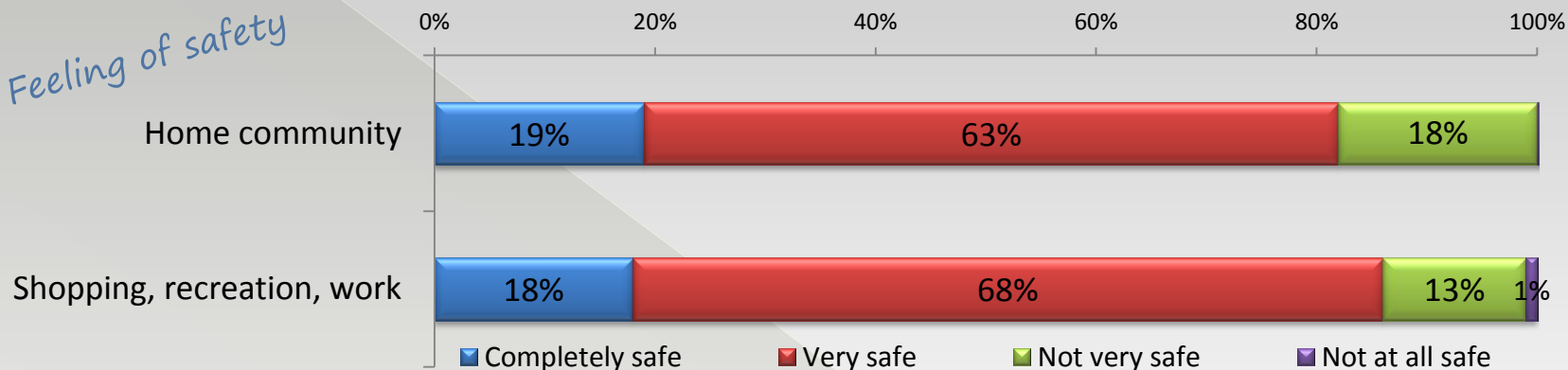
TREND - Satisfied / Confident



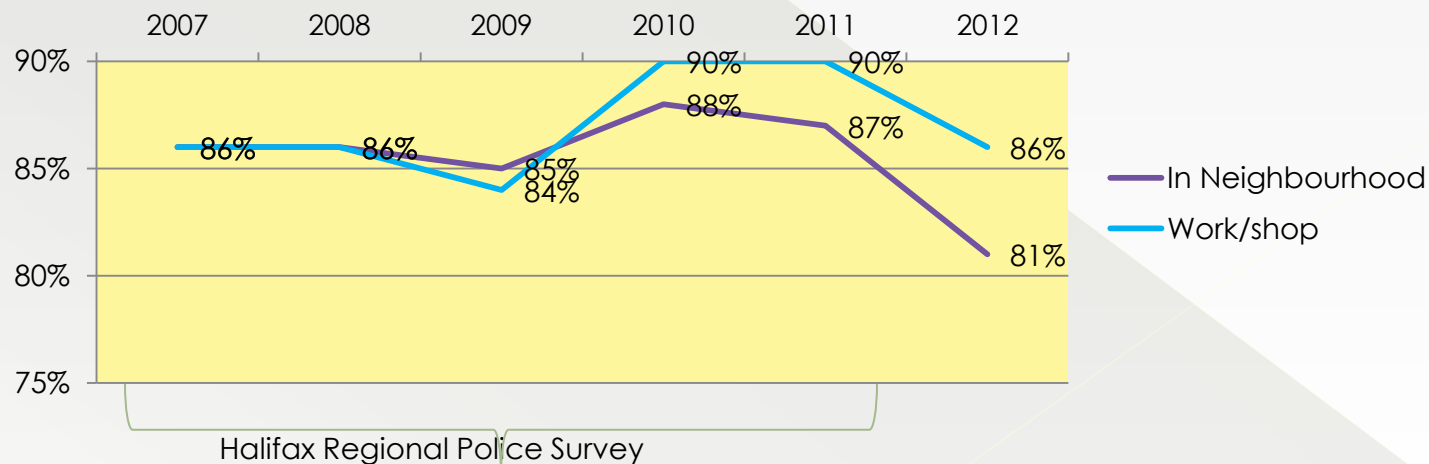
Key Findings

Similar proportions feel safe in their neighbourhoods and where they shop.

Feeling of safety



TREND - Feeling safe



Infrastructure

- Transportation
 - Community
- Environmental
- Overall Priorities

Key Findings

Maintaining existing streets and roads and upgrades to major roadways are the highest transportation infrastructure priorities.

Transportation infrastructure spending priorities

Spending priority ↓	TOTAL HRM	AGE		
		18-34	35-54	55+
Maintain existing streets and roads	21%	16%	21%	25%
Upgrade major roadways to provide increased capacity (e.g. road widening, reversing lanes)	16%	15%	17%	17%
Active transportation improvements (e.g. trails, sidewalks, bike lanes)	15%	23%	13%	10%
More buses so that service can be expanded to new areas	14%	8%	17%	16%
Improved / additional public transit facilities	14%	12%	14%	15%
More buses on existing routes	10%	15%	9%	5%
Expand the harbour ferry service	3%	1%	4%	4%
Maintenance of existing sidewalks	2%	1%	1%	4%
Other	5%	9%	3%	5%

Broad priority

Community development – 32%

Environmental progress – 27%

Urban – 26%

Key Findings

Improving existing recreation facilities and a new stadium are the highest community infrastructure priorities.

Community infrastructure spending priorities

Spending priority ↓	TOTAL HRM	AGE		
		18-34	35-54	55+
Improving existing recreation facilities	20%	19%	21%	19%
New stadium	16%	15%	16%	16%
Beaches and waterfront areas	11%	11%	12%	11%
New outdoor recreation facilities (playgrounds / skate parks / sports fields, etc.)	11%	11%	12%	11%
Community centres	10%	11%	11%	8%
Arts and cultural facilities	10%	13%	8%	9%
New / refurbished community branch libraries	6%	3%	7%	7%
Public restrooms	6%	4%	4%	9%
Outdoor skating facilities	4%	7%	3%	2%
Arenas / ice surfaces	3%	4%	1%	3%
Other	2%	1%	3%	3%

Broad priority
Community development - 28%
Urban - 16%

Key Findings

Renewable energy projects and reducing demand for additional land fill cells are the top environmental infrastructure priorities.

Environmental infrastructure spending priorities

Spending priority ↓	TOTAL HRM	AGE		
		18-34	35-54	55+
Renewable energy projects (e.g. wind farms / solar power / etc.)	35%	36%	35%	33%
Develop capability to reduce waste program costs and flexibility in waste program to reduce the demand for additional land fill cells.	28%	18%	29%	34%
Invest in expanding recycling infrastructure	17%	24%	16%	13%
Water / Wastewater facilities	10%	9%	11%	10%
New compost plant to meet capacity and regulatory requirements	6%	10%	4%	5%
Build landfill cells (garbage waste site)	3%	2%	2%	4%
Other	1%	1%	1%	1%

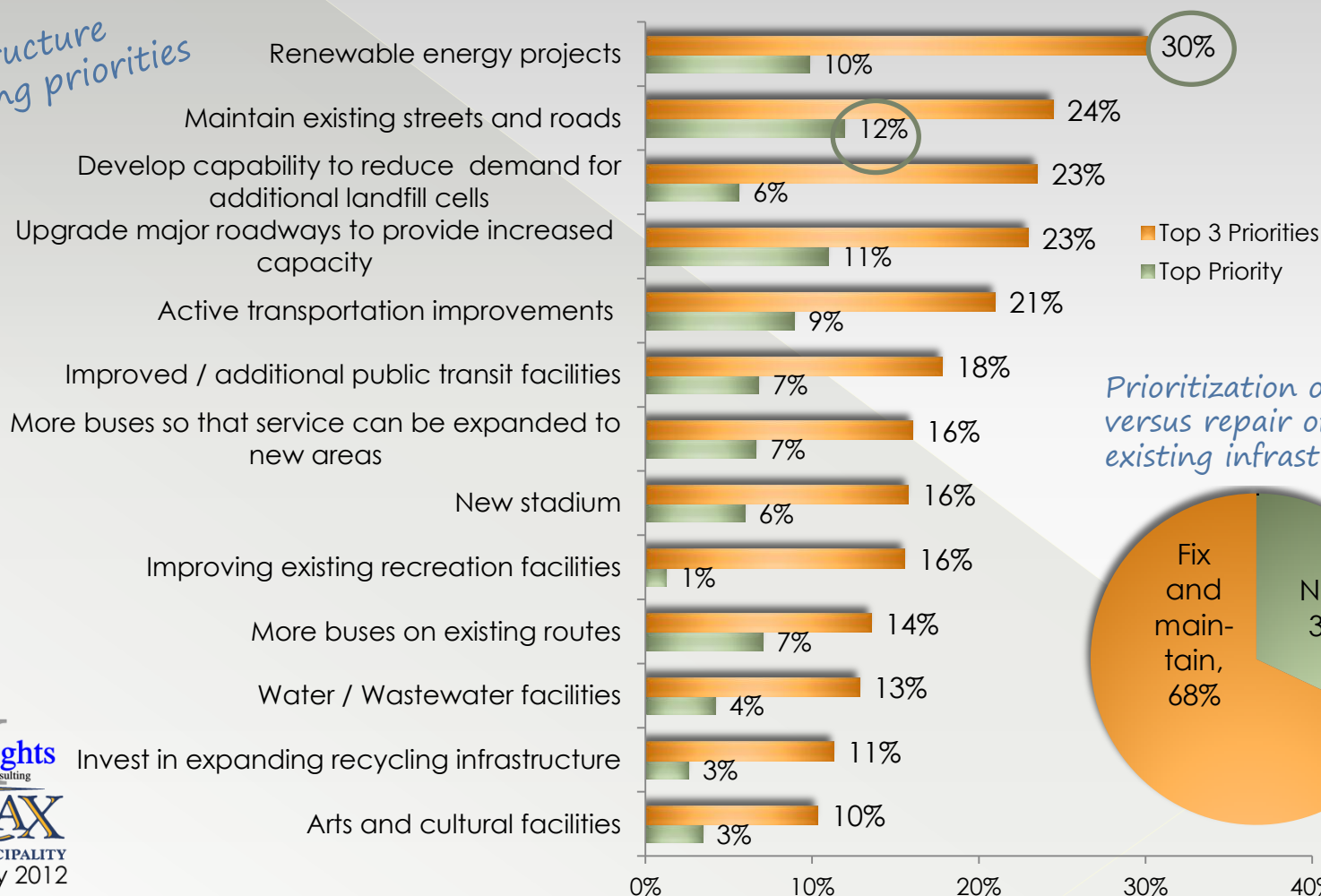
Good priority
Environmental progress – 40%

Good priority
Community development – 19%

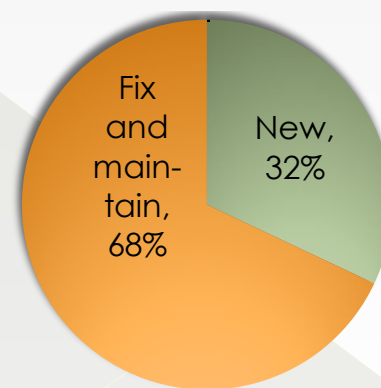
Key Findings

Considering all infrastructure projects, renewable energy projects receive a top three ranking more often than any other project.

Overall infrastructure spending priorities



Prioritization of new versus repair of existing infrastructure



Planning and Growth

- Investing in Downtown
- Addressing traffic issues

Key Findings

Parking improvements and beautification top the list of suggestions for how HRM can make the downtown more attractive.

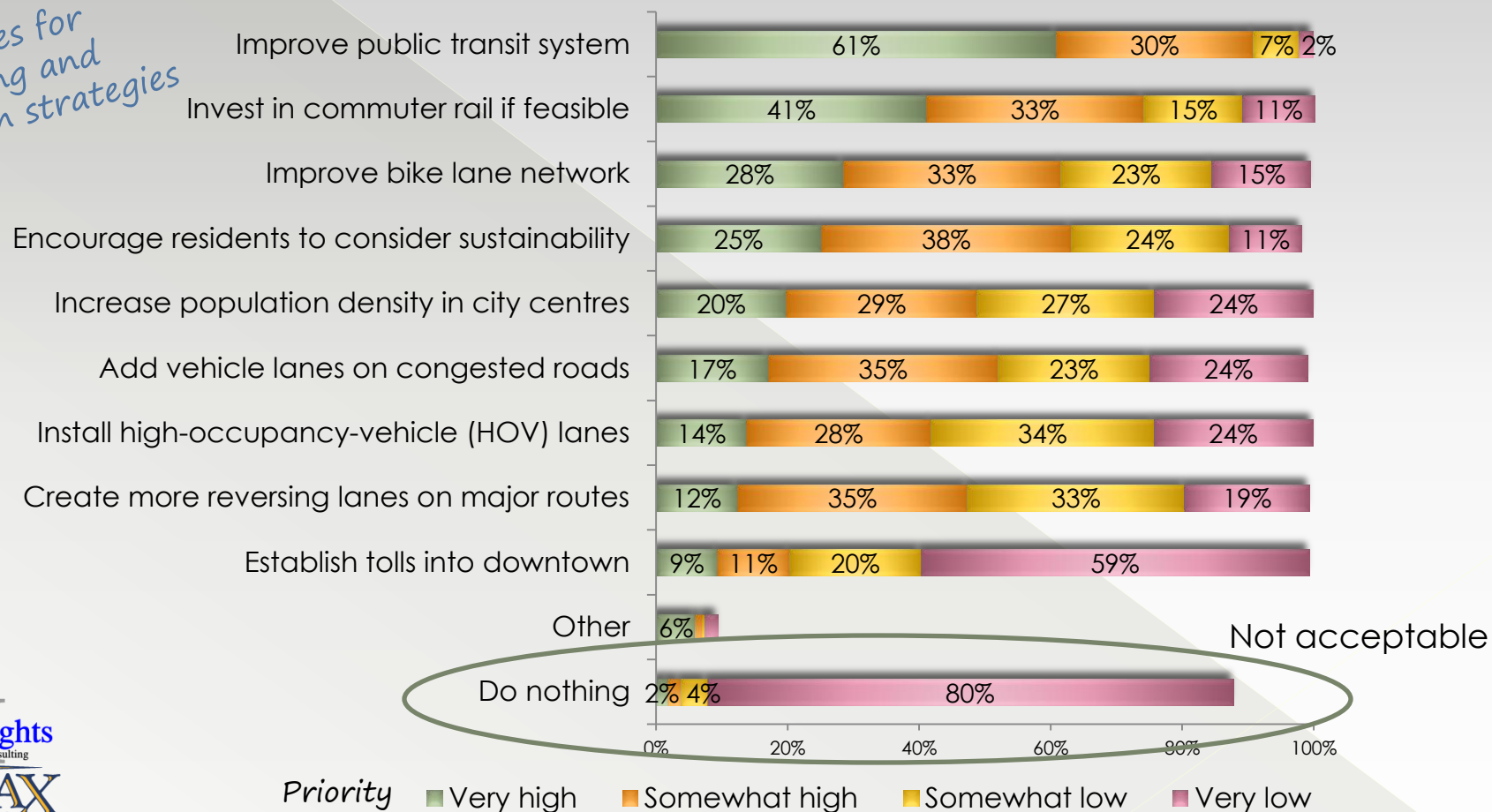
How to make downtown more attractive

		AGE		
	TOTAL HRM	18-34	35-54	55+
More parking / Free parking	20%	15%	21%	22%
Beautification - Cleanliness / graffiti / waste collection / landscaping	14%	11%	14%	15%
Tax incentives for businesses to locate / relocate downtown / Make it more affordable for small businesses to operate downtown	12%	19%	9%	10%
More / Better transit serving the downtown	8%	17%	6%	3%
Increased police presence	6%	4%	6%	7%
Make pedestrian friendly only / Block off certain roads to vehicular traffic	5%	4%	6%	4%
Make it easier for developers to develop / reduce red tape	5%	3%	6%	4%
Clean up old / derelict buildings	4%	3%	4%	3%
More green spaces / plazas / places for people to congregate	3%	3%	3%	3%
Revitalize Barrington street	3%	3%	2%	3%
Protect heritage elements of downtown	2%	3%	2%	3%
Other	11%	6%	13%	14%

Key Findings

An improved public transit system and a new commuter rail are the most common top priorities to deal with traffic congestion.

Priorities for
planning and
growth strategies



Summary

- Residents priorities generally centre around 5-6 key service areas
 - Transit
 - Environment
 - Public safety
 - Transportation infrastructure
 - Taxation
 - The Economy
- While they feel safe, some residents would still like to see increased spending on public safety initiatives
- Generally satisfied with tax and service levels
 - Prefer to see spending on services mirror priorities

Questions ?

