



Citizen Budget Engagement Results (2020 Budget)

Summary of Findings

Out of 391 responses, 216 were zeros in all columns (no money allocated), indicating there was a major preference for no increase. There were a couple of repeating IP addresses as well, all with the same submission (zero funds allocated, lowest priority for all projects listed for prioritization). With those removed—save their first entry—the **final total of responses was 185, with 12 showing zero dollars allocated (6.5% of true respondents).**

Out of 185 true respondents, 145 identified themselves as being residents (two said ‘no’ and the rest were left blank).

The age demographics were as follows:

- 18-24: 6 respondents
- 25-34: 27 respondents
- 35-44: 38 respondents
- 45-54: 31 respondents
- Over 55: 33 respondents
- Unspecified: 50 respondents

Funds Allocation Module

Ranking	Area of Service	Total Dollars Allocated
1	Protective Services	\$57,130
2	Public Works	\$40,460
3	Economic Development	\$18,230
4	Recreation	\$16,020
5	Parks & Trails	\$13,190
6	Airport	\$8,890
7	Public Transit	\$8,730
8	Community Grants & Special Events	\$7,200

Prioritization of Projects

The priorities were determined by taking the number of people who indicated that the project was in their top 3 listing and ranking them accordingly. Ties have additional information included to show how many people ranked it is a 1, 2, or 3 priority, and the item with the higher priority was listed first.

Ranking	Project	Respondent Priority
1	Lead Pipe Replacement – Water Service	Top three for 99 people (54% of 185 respondents)
2	Asphalt Overlays	Top three for 81 people (44% of 185 respondents)
3	Fire Hydrant / Main Valve Replacement / Utility Infrastructure Rehabilitation	Top three for 77 people (42% of 185 respondents)
4	Roadway Lane Markings	Top three for 57 people (31% of 185 respondents)
5	Sidewalk Trail Rehabilitation	Top three for 51 people (28% of 185 respondents)
6	Manluk Centre Maintenance	Top three for 45 people (24% of 185 respondents)
7	Traffic Signal Replacement	Top three for 42 people (23% of 185 respondents)
8	Fire Training Facility Expansion	Top three for 41 people (22% of 185 respondents)
9	Public Works Shop Replacement (17/8/11)	Top three for 36 people (19% of 185 respondents)
9	Equipment Replacement (9/10/17)	Top three for 36 people (19% of 185 respondents)
11	Sports Field Rehabilitation (16/6/12)	Top three for 34 people (18% of 185 respondents)
11	Parks/Trails Infrastructure Replacement (6/7/21)	Top three for 34 people (18% of 185 respondents)
13	I.T. System – Server Upgrade	Top three for 32 people (17% of 185 respondents)
14	Upgrades and Elevator Installation at By-the-Lake Park	Top three for 29 people (16% of 185 respondents)

Additional Comments

- All possible funds should be going to road repairs. No upgrades unless those upgrades impact safety in a big way. For example: an elevator at BTLP would be great but shouldn't happen until the roads are fixed. Trail maintenance would be great but not until the storm sewers don't flood every time we have a large amount of rain.
- The COL allowance and any raises should freeze for all city workers until the vital things are fixed. Heck, I don't even think we should waste money on marketing/tourism until these things are fixed. No one will buy anything here or move here until the taxes are down and the infrastructure is maintained and up to snuff. Especially when our wastewater system is suffering. Hell, I'd lower all the marketing/tourism staff down to a part time position to help save money, except for one communications staff to monitor social media and answer questions etc. Even then when I've asked questions to the social media page, I just get asked to call someone else. I also found it frustrating that the city let go of many staff members due to budget concerns only to hire new ones. It seems very sketchy and not in the public interest.
- For roads: focus on the highest priority levels (best when combined with necessary utility placements); If you want to do something at the hospital intersection - dedicate all the road upgrade funding there. For recreation - moving towards an indoor facility (climbing wall, racquetball courts) would be great. More connectedness on bike paths; Library - an important service to continue funding.
- Instead of spending money on wants it should be spent on what needs to be done. Stop blaming previous councils when you are spending money that should be spent fixing our roads and getting rid of the lead pipes that were supposed to be removed years ago. You shouldn't have a wage increase when you are increasing taxes to cover costs, get rid of the flowerpots get rid of the Christmas lights and all that other spending and focus on keeping the town together.
- With the taxes increasing, service fees increasing, etc., we should be looking at making cuts. No more blaming previous governments for the shortcomings we are facing - we need to fix issues with budgeting now or we will never grow. Other similar size communities are growing in the region, but we are stagnated. I suggest looking at similar budgets and aligning with them to maximize our own success.
- Each department needs to be reducing their spending even if it is only 1 or 2 cents such as employees taking their coffee break where you are working, not driving back to the shop. Reducing the size of the paper for the parade of programs, not so much color pages, same with utility bills, etc. just to name a few. Not spending money on scratch pads and pens with City of Wetaskiwin imprinted on them. When work is contracted out, they should guarantee their workmanship. Example sidewalk replaced but already has crack in it after a year.
- No enhancements or upgrades, no new hires or raises, until our roads and storm drains are fixed!!

- Please ensure any monies available are put to the best use possible. While parks and trails are nice, they should hold a lower priority at this time. Not sure what encompasses equipment upgrades or a new public works shop...that seems like something we could postpone for now. Please select wisely city of Wetaskiwin!
- The City has spent over 1 million dollars on contracted and general services. Can some of these be completed by employees? Are we getting value for money on these contracted services? Why are all these services not tendered in a competitive process? As a business owner who keeps an eye out for opportunities on your website, this is disappointing.
- The survey is misleading because you don't mention the funding County/province provides for fire/RCMP. You make it sound like the city of Wetaskiwin pays for all the rural calls.... which isn't true. Maybe this should be clarified.
- The number one priority is the local crime. Anything addressed before that is a waste of time.
- Money should only be spent if mandatory. All other money should go towards city debt or towards the water treatment plant.
- Please review service level for all services.
- By the lake park should finish getting the path up graded.
- There is already an elevator at by the lake park. We need community growth and economic diversification - NOT a meddling and micromanaging council that is killing business and community growth!
- We need to focus more on the infrastructure and debt. Pull back on events. Yes, it not the popular choose, but we have to get the city back on track.
- Roads in Wetaskiwin need to be better maintained unless you want to keep replacing them. The potholes in this city are atrocious and if repairs were done right the first time it would eliminate a lot of the repeat charges. For example, there was too much cold mix used to repair the asphalt around the manhole on 45 ave and 53A street leaving a massive speed bump which is going to cause issues this winter if not corrected. Or worst case scenario is going to end up causing damage claims to the city because it's incorrectly repaired. Quality control is just as important as getting the job done.
- I feel like you likely know better than me where these priorities are. If you want my feedback I would need more information than just "lead pipe replacement" (is this a widespread problem? Where are these pipes? Etc)
- Cut cut cut to get costs under control. Lower taxes and costs of living here.

- I think there are many great opportunities for business if the airport was expanded. The airport is the hidden gem in Wetaskiwin.
- This town was the worst one I've ever lived in. So glad I left this joke of a place. Saddle lake is even better. Gross.
- We need to do more to get the drugs and thieves away from wetaskiwin. We have made several complaints about our neighbors and nothing ever gets done. We are wary of going away on vacation since we know our neighbors are thieves and addicted to meth. While away from home we constantly worry about our home and belongings.
- Need to revisit the local improvement taxes that are being placed on residents. All roads and sidewalks need to be addressed from the tax base, not penalizing residents depending on where they live and how the city decides to define their road. The road I live on is in good shape, having been fixed less than 15 years ago, now you are ripping it up to meet someone's schedule in City Offices. It doesn't need it!
- Communities and provinces across the country have had to make some hard decisions about parks, picnic areas, highway rest areas. Maybe for a few years we need to cut back on some of those types of expenses. I have lived in other parts of Canada where small municipalities have gotten together to do volume purchasing as a group to get better pricing. Our airport is a great deal for pilots and the training school. Possibly look at a modest fee, say \$3.00 a take off or landing. One day if we attract business we are going to have to lengthen the runway. Start putting money away for that day. With respect to the industrial area we are promoting, maybe we have to look at the book value and decide if selling at a lower price per acre might move some of that property, and produce other benefits to the city. Everyone says the land is priced competitively, and it may well be, but the cost to do business here is higher as would be the cost of living to its employees. I know the city has done a very good job, under Sues guidance in reducing costs thru staff reductions and other areas she got involved in. Is there room to get another 10% productivity in all departments without additional head count? Some of the fire departments apparatus is aging or not sufficient for today's standards imposed by insurance companies. Are we putting away money for the day we need to purchase new equipment? With good maintenance procedures can we get a few more years out of our works departments equipment. Usually at auction people want to purchase municipal equipment as its usually good value and not worked hard. Can we not benefit by holding onto to this equipment longer? I went thru this in the Oil and Gas industry a few years ago. The industry in general was able to cut cost by a good 12 to 15%. Its not fun to do, but you tell suppliers what your looking for or you will go elsewhere. Nothing wrong with fair but hard nosed purchasing. We have a good city and a lot to offer. We need to make sure we are attractive to outsiders, and provide the best the city can to its present citizens. Your all doing a good job, but your having to deal with a tough economy. The same economy that the tax payer is dealing with in trying to meet their bills and get ahead.
- Too many high paid staff, over paid managers.

- Maybe this money would not need to all be spent. If tourism is painting coloured stripes on the road, leave it off all together.
- I believe we should give this \$1000 back to the citizens of Wetaskiwin instead of wasting it on stupid things like an elevator at by the lake park. If the Fire Department needs a bigger training area then do fundraising. If the trails need to be done, do fundraising! Stop taking taxpayers money and putting it towards things that the taxpayers don't want to see. Instead lower the taxes to make more people want to move here and enjoy Wetaskiwin. I'm 32 and trying to raise my family here and it's getting to hard to with cost of taxes. I don't think we should be paying the same amount as Sherwood park or St. Albert. Maybe if we had the resources that they do then sure, but we are a Small Town with nothing here.
- Please take the \$1000 and use it to pay down our dept! STOP SPENDING AND START SAVING! or use to lower our taxes.
- STOP unnecessary spending on frivolous stuff. We are not Edmonton, Red Deer or any other city that you are copying from. You need to take the lead and be our own entity. Choosing staff who have been fired from previous employment and giving them higher wages is NOT the answer to these problems and dire straight DEBT that we are facing. Thank you.
- For the 2020 budget I would like to only see infrastructure improvements completed in the city. Replacing the public works shop, expanding the fire test facility, moving more parks, and installing an elevator at the BTLP are not essential for the city at this time. These projects costs should be saved for the Water Treatment facility and the Garbage Dump that need to be looked at with extraordinary cost. I also want to see a head count reduction in parks and recreation with an overall reduction in city-maintained parks.
- Head Count reduction should also take place in all assistant positions with the exception of City Manager. These are ridiculous for a city our size.
- A chair lift could be installed instead if an elevator at by the lake park but of course an elevator would be easier to use. By the lake park path smoothing would be ideal especially the west side as the ruts are hazardous to users (sprained ankles, etc.). Lead pipes seem like a priority out of everything listed as it could potentially be a risk to Wetaskiwin citizens. Maintenance of all city assets like the Manluk Centre seems beneficial as opposed to letting things go and end up with large repairs later on. Thank you.
- The prioritization question is poorly done! Only show 8 options or include more numbers for all of them and better yet the numbers you have chosen should eliminate once you pick one. very hard to keep track of the numbers.
- What is considered Recreation? it's the only description in the top question that has a very poor explanation.

- Cut cut cut to get costs under control. Lower taxes and costs of living here
- I believe the Airport is under-utilized and most successful cities have an active airport as an important part of their infrastructure.
- Please spend more money on our safety, policing, roads, so theft drops. Lower our Taxes so people want to move here. Nothing mentioned about the homeless either. We need to do something to make Wetaskiwin alive Again. Listen to the community, watch spending at city hall, and no increase that comes out of our already high taxes. Make this the city in motion. Stand behind your people, community, look for grants, make cuts. Why do we pay for environment levy on our water bill? What is this for?? To make Wetaskiwin great, it comes from the top. The people who have the power to listen, inform and educate, our best interests at heart. When city council doesn't listen to the People of the community who are paying you, it feels like we are nothing and don't have a voice. Nothing is done in life by one man alone; it takes a village. Please have our best interests at heart. I've wanted to raise my kids here, having second thoughts as my friends in other communities like Leduc, millet, not too far away, but a different world away in terms of taxes, and what they get for it. Also read somewhere that the Edmonton mayor took a pay cut, to make Edmonton better. He never gave himself a raise. Is there any way we can cut back in spending to put toward the RCMP and roads? So we don't have to pay for roads and extra security ourselves to feel safe? I find it crazy the amount I pay to live here, when we have two grocery stores and then Walmart. And only the pool for kids, plus it's expensive for a family membership. Why can't these be lowered? Our arenas are old and in need of repair, and we don't have much else for recreation. Other communities have outdoor pools that are free, spray parks that are free. People need something free to do, as everything costs so much. Otherwise you travel out of town. Which is what you don't want, everyone keep says to keep the money in Wetaskiwin, and do what? Go to the pool that is always shut down, and pay full price and then get kicked out for sanitation issues (plus no refund)? Also locks on lockers get stolen, shoes stolen, doesn't matter if they are locked up or not. Beach volleyball?? Some sand and a net wouldn't cost much... above all, lower our taxes, we can't pay this much to live here and not have anything.
- I'd really like to see more police follow up, looking into how they're responding to calls and ensuring they're updating files appropriately. We've called several times to report concerns often we get a different police officer responding. They'll do talk to the person and let them go. This has happened several times for the same person trespassing in the same location. I know our officers are doing the best they can I'd just like to see more put into policing. It would be nice to not have to be concerned about getting stabbed, by someone trespassing, while in my own yard playing fetch with our dogs.
- I feel the expansion of the library/new library is very important to our City.
- Why is the library not part of this?

- It would be helpful to know where major funding was allotted last year. It would also be helpful to see which facilities have had a lot of funding before.
- I would really like to see utility bills have an option for email delivery once a month. That would save the City a large amount of money in postage and the bills would be received in a more timely manner than regular mail and be easier to pay monthly.
- Um, lead pipes need to go! This is 2019 and we know how bad heavy metal poisoning is. It accumulates in our bodies and I can't believe the city hasn't replaced them in all these years.
- Need to find a way to keep/attract families. A few things I'd like to see. An upgrade to parks, when you can't go to school parks during school days the parks are pretty underwhelming, a spray park would be amazing (similar to millet's). We go to it often and think it's something lacking here. And why do we need such new equipment, all trucks look so new we can keep them for many years. And I see way too many city of Wetaskiwin employees smoking and texting and driving in city vehicles (a very bad look in my opinion). The transit system we have now is horrible. Most the time the bus is parked at Walmart and Tim Hortons, keep one for special needs/older people and create one in a bus route. Stopping in local neighbourhoods and at popular areas around town (main street, pool, by lake park, Safeway Walmart) flat fee for one way.
- Hi. We as citizens of Wetaskiwin voted in people and I know it's not an easy job you have with dealing with someone else's money. I personally don't know how much money departments need and to dedicate an amount would not be right, that's where you council members have more insights. I would say maybe in the tough times a wage rollback for you guys would be a good picture on your part that you care about Wetaskiwin. It's a part time job after all and I know some of you work full time positions on other jobs. I personally had a wage roll back as well as lots of other people I know. I personally can't afford more taxes if you guys keep on upping it there will be more people moving away including myself. Wetaskiwin has the highest taxes and what it has to offer, that doesn't attract people. Hate to move, I love Wetaskiwin. If you want more money, we need to have more people moving here and have more lots to build on, not all gobbled up by home builders and lots of us are small contractors and hard to buy a lot to build on. Mundare AB had a good idea they gave away the lots they had and the town grew over night. People moved there and they gained taxes from the new homes that got built and this is not something I pulled out of the hat we built 12 houses in one year. They had lots too that they couldn't sell and yes I know would not work here but we need something to put us on the radar. Sorry, just venting and hope and pray that you guys make the right decisions. Keep Wetaskiwin neutral don't give groups rights, we all live here.
- Stick some traffic lights at the hospital like you have just west of the overpass on the 13 and 2A connection.
- an elevator at by the lake park....QUIT wasting money...think before you spend!

- Public works should reconsider the time required for employees to travel back to the shop for their coffee breaks - can't they take their own coffee with them and eliminate the travel time. I am sure that the travel time is in excess of the mandated 15 minutes twice a day.
- Have each department review their spending to ensure that they are not wasting monies on frivolous advertising - note pads, pens, etc. I realize that at budget meetings costs are hashed out, but if you are going to cut spending, consider what is necessary and what can be done without. If salaries must be cut, start at the top - don't cut lower paying positions.
- Citizen's health should be the top priority!
- Money on policing not by-law! This community is suffering from crime and costing everyone in every capacity. Get more foot on patrol and take pride in making it safe again then we can talk vibrant when we have a reason to.
- We spend too much on manger wages. We have departments with single or dual employees where there really isn't a need for a manager and a wage to go with the title.
- I would like to see a city police service so RCMP are not run off their feet in the county. Crime would be better served by a city police department.
- I find this very difficult as I know the thing I'd like to see, but I'm not sure about the must do's. Like my house, I'd like new carpets, but I need new windows. Therefore, I have gone with mostly wants. I know there are needs but I'm not sure what they are, and I'm not sure I really care. Selfish, I know. Until the roadway, waterlines, etc. affect me personally, they are going to be on my radar. When they are hitting me personally, I will have a different opinion. I'm sure this is the case with most of us. Just keep up the good work!
- Roads and sidewalks have been low priority for too long and have to be moved up to the top. This has caused an image and safety problem for too long. A good start in 2019. 19 more years to go, then start over again.
- plan for a walkable city. We need new infrastructure to support walking and biking on same sidewalk all over our city.
- The city needs improvements to help it grow
- Allow households who are able to reduce their waste pick up from once a week to once every two weeks and provide a different color bin to accommodate this as it will reduce cost to the home owner and save money on picking up trash