

Winnipeggers want city council to concentrate on core services

Winnipeg Chamber calling for public consultation on city mandate and all civic services

May 3, 2019, WINNIPEG – An overwhelming majority of Winnipeggers want the City of Winnipeg to focus its funding on core services, according to a recent poll done by Probe Research on behalf of the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce.

Of those surveyed, 81% agreed the City should, “carefully review which services it provides and reduce spending on services considered to be less essential.”

Additionally, 47% of respondents ranked a core service review as the top priority for how the City should address its budget challenges, ahead of seeking more money from other levels of government (35%) or increasing business (13%) or property taxes (4%).

“The City hasn’t done a comprehensive service review in more than 20 years, and a lot has changed during that time,” said Loren Remillard, President & CEO of the Winnipeg Chamber. “We all know the City is dealing with limited financial resources. This poll shows the public wants City Hall to stem the tide of mission creep by focusing on effectively delivering essential services.”

Remillard highlighted options like selling some civic golf courses, leasing vacant city-owned office space at fair market value to external organizations, and uploading ambulance services to the Province as areas City Council should consider as it sets its own spending priorities in advance of adopting a four-year budget model. He also suggested the City look to partner with the private and non-profit sectors to deliver more services in a more cost-effective manner.

“We know there are savings to be found in a core service review. There could be an even bigger benefit from streamlining operations, allowing city council and the administration to focus on delivering its core responsibilities really well rather than being stretched too thin,” Remillard added.

The City’s 2019 budget did include funding to conduct a review of its mandate under the City of Winnipeg Charter, but the Winnipeg Chamber is calling on city council to engage citizens in a more robust community-wide conversation about what services the municipal government should provide and how we will all pay for them.

About The Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce

The Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, founded in 1873, is the largest organization representing the voice of business in Winnipeg. Our mission is to foster an environment in which Winnipeg business can prosper.

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