

City of Cambridge Task Force

Prepared By:



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APPENDIX: SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction

The purpose of this research study is to examine the awareness and perceptions that residents of the City of Cambridge have toward the proposed alternative to regional government.

The project was developed in conjunction with representatives from PMG Consulting and the City of Cambridge Task Force. The questionnaire was designed, in part, using the following research objectives.

- To determine if respondents have seen/read all or part of the Cambridge Task Force report
- To determine the level of approval/disapproval of the general recommendations of the report
- To determine the level of approval/disapproval of the specific recommendations in the report, in terms of:
 - ❖ Restructuring of the Regional Government to a Management Board
 - ❖ Level of representation from each of the three cities and the four townships
 - ❖ Method of selecting representatives to the Management Board
 - ❖ Method of selecting Chair of the Management Board and the term of office
 - ❖ Areas of responsibility for the Management Board - i.e. policing, quality control of water, cost sharing of sewage treatment and social services
 - ❖ The appointment of a Planning Coordinator and a Traffic Coordinator and how they interact with each of the communities
- To determine the level of approval for the budgeting/funding/assessment process
- To determine attitudes towards the impact of accountability, accessibility and simplicity
- General attitude toward complete amalgamation of the three communities and the four townships
- To measure perceived impact on sense of community if full amalgamation was implemented
- General attitude towards maintaining current governance model
- To measure the impact of potential higher or lower property taxes on the attitudes towards full amalgamation

Methodology

The nature of this study is a telephone survey administered to a random sample of residents living in the City of Cambridge. The total sample for the survey is 701 and provides a margin of error of +/- 3.8% (95% confidence level).

The sample was selected using a specialized computer program designed specifically to randomly select a raw sample from the current Canadian telephone database. Once the names were selected, and with the assistance of CATI (computer assisted telephone interviewing), each respondent was qualified directly by telephone. Upon qualifying, the questionnaire was administered by telephone to the person who was the main owner or renter of the residence.

In terms of the fielding time frame, the study provides recent resident feedback as field-work was conducted from June 11 to June 27, 2001. The entire research process was designed and executed exclusively by PMG Consulting in our Waterloo, Ontario based facility.

Executive Summary

The nature of this study is a telephone survey administered to a random sample of 701 Cambridge residents.

Perceptions of the Preferred Alternative

- Most Cambridge residents surveyed have not read the report from the Cambridge Task Force
- People that have seen/read some or all of the report were, on average, older than those that had not seen/read the report
- Slightly over one-half of the sample agreed with the Cambridge Task Force's recommendation of replacing the current regional government with a management board
- Being more aware of the Cambridge Task Force's report does NOT increase its' acceptance.
- Half of those that agreed with the recommendation to change to a management board would change their mind if the recommendation cost them money
- Those that had initially disagreed with the recommendation of a management board would maintain their opinion even if it resulted in savings to their property tax bill
- Approximately two of every five respondents believe that replacing regional government with a management board would result in the management board having more responsibility to the citizens of Cambridge
- There was no general consensus on what the impact would be for access to politicians and city staff if the management board option were implemented
- Almost half felt that the preferred alternative would result in higher taxes

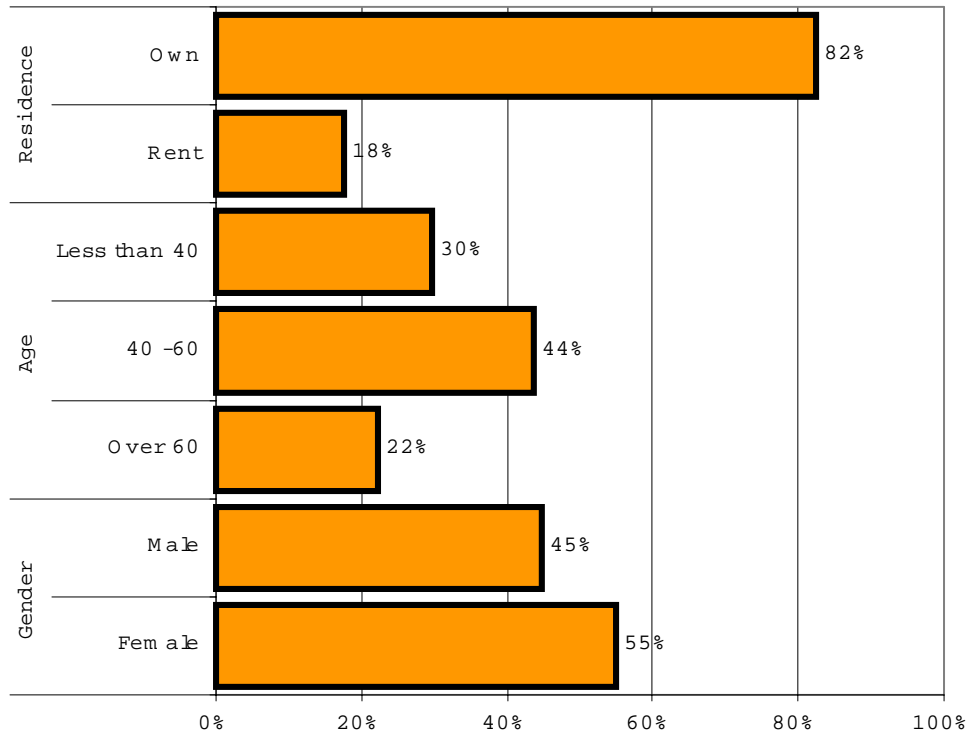
Perceptions of Amalgamation

- By a two to one margin Cambridge residents indicated that they did NOT want to see an amalgamation take place
- The majority of those opposed to amalgamation would not change their mind even if it saved them money on their property tax bill
- Over half believed that there would be a resulting loss of a “sense of community”, if amalgamation were to be adopted

Importance and preference of changes to municipal government

- Being responsible to the taxpayer and offering a good level of service were believed to be the most important factors to consider when reforming municipal government
- When asked for a preference of options for municipal government, maintaining the current system was the most popular choice. More people were in favour of the Cambridge Task Force’s recommendation of a management board than they were to full amalgamation

Profile of Respondents



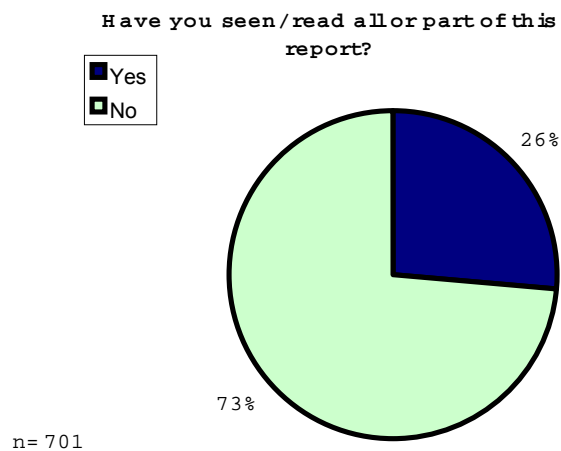
- The majority own their residence (82%)
- A good age representation was achieved (less than 40 (30%), 40 – 60 (44%), over 60 (22%))
- Gender was evenly split between males (45%) and females (55%)

Report of Findings

This section specifically analyzes the overall responses from the survey. Charts and graphs are supported with written analysis for all relevant questions.

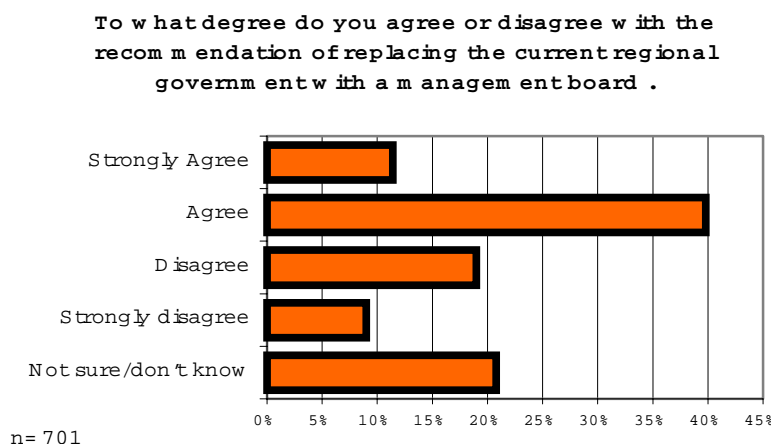
Perceptions of the Preferred Alternative

Most Cambridge residents surveyed have not read the report from the Cambridge Task Force. About one-quarter (26%) of the sample had read/seen some or all of the Task Force report at the time the research study was in the field. Of those who indicated seeing/reading the report, only 8% indicated that they have seen/read all of the report. It is likely that some respondents have subsequently read all or part of the report and quite likely they have read or heard some commentary about the report.



People that have seen/read some or all of the report were, on average, older than those that had not seen/read the report (seen/read - median age (54), not seen/read - median age (44)).

If someone indicated that they had not seen/read the report, they were read a brief description of the key recommendation of the report. When asked about their level of agreement with the recommendation to replace Regional Government with a Management Board, slightly over one-half of the sample either “somewhat” agreed (40%) or agreed “strongly” (11%) with most of them falling in the less vigorous “somewhat” agree category. A little over one-quarter either “somewhat” disagreed (19%) or disagreed “strongly” (9%) with the recommendation, with the balance of respondents



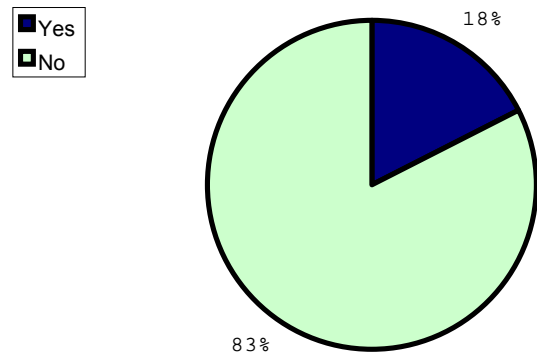
indicated being “not sure/didn’t know”. When those 21% of respondents that indicated that they were “not sure/didn’t know” are removed from the sample, over two-thirds of

respondents indicated agreement with the recommendation (14% agreeing “strongly”) of replacing the current regional government with a management board.

Being more aware of the Cambridge Task Force’s report does NOT increase its’ acceptance. In fact, the residents of Cambridge that HAVE seen/read all or some (44%) of the Task Force report are less likely to agree with the recommendation of replacing the current regional government with a management board than those who have NOT seen/read the report (55%). They are also less likely to have their minds changed even if it saved them money on their tax bill when compared to the sample that had not read the report.

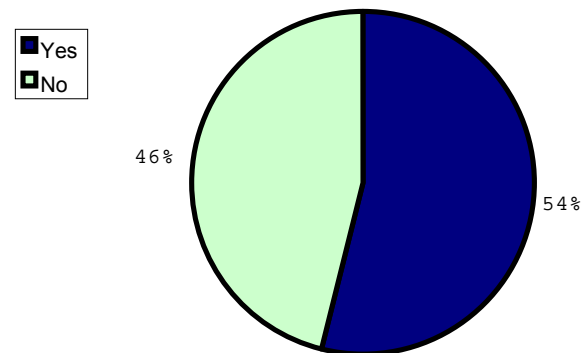
Slightly less than one-in-five (18%) of those that either “somewhat” or “strongly” agreed with the recommendation to change to a management board would change their mind if the recommendation cost them an additional \$50^ψ per year on their property tax bill. If, however, the changes cost \$150 per year, over half (54%) would change their minds. These results clearly show that while a slight majority seem to like the recommendation of a management board, they are not willing to have any change cost them more in their tax dollars.

Would you change your answer if the recommendations cost you an additional \$50 per year on your property tax bill?



n= 359

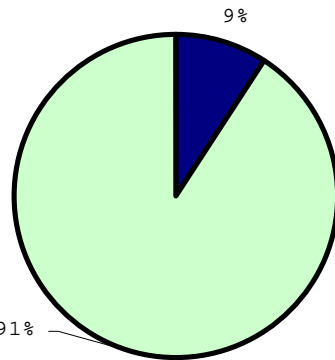
Would you change your answer if the recommendations cost you an additional \$150 per year on your property tax bill?



n= 359

^ψ It is important to note that the \$50 and \$150 figures are not reflective of any actual increase or decrease but are being used as a research method to gauge the strength of opinions

Would you change your answer if the recommendations saved you \$50 per year on your property tax bill?

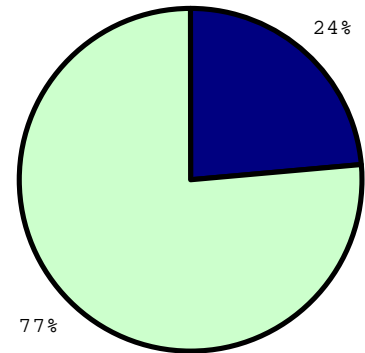


n = 196

property tax bill. Only around one-in-ten (9%) would change their mind if it saved them \$50 and one-in-five (24%) would change their mind if the savings were \$150.

Those that had initially disagreed with the recommendation of a management board were much more likely to maintain their opinion even if it resulted in savings to their

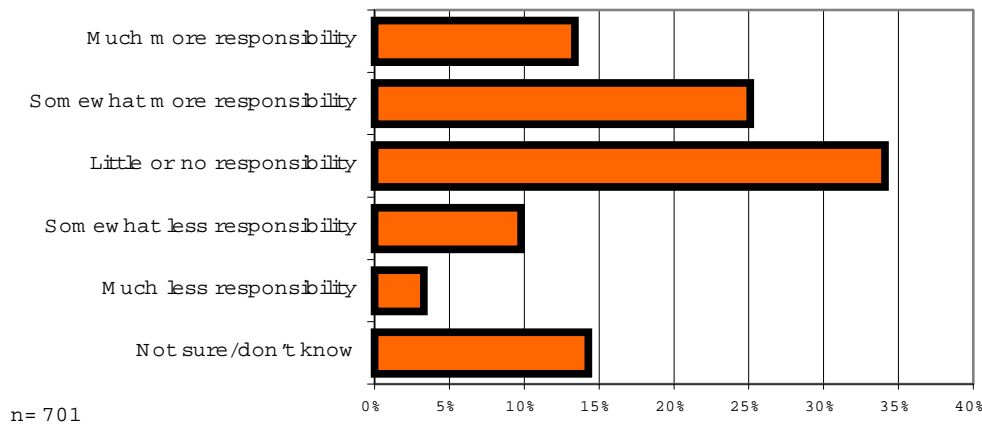
Would you change your answer if the recommendations saved you \$150 per year on your property tax bill?



n = 196

A slight majority of respondents do like the recommendation to move to a management board. However, if this change cost them additional property tax dollars, their opinion would quickly change while the people who disagreed with the recommendation are much more likely to hold their opinion even if it can be shown to save them property tax dollars. The above illustrates that people who oppose the alternate management board option have more conviction in their opposition than those who are in favour of the option to change the current regional government into a management board.

What impact do you believe this would have on their level of responsibility to the citizens of Cambridge:

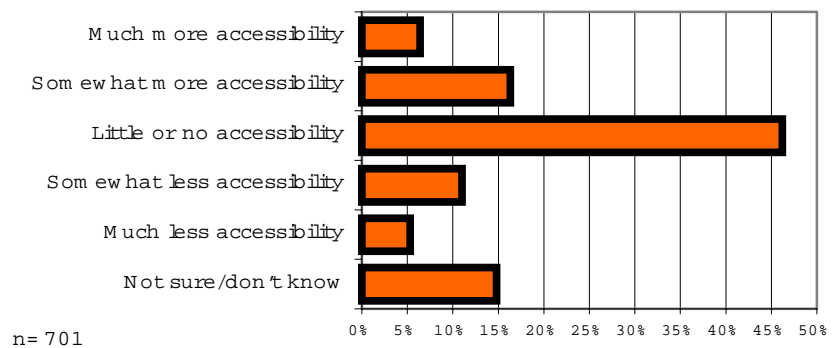


Approximately two of every five respondents believe that replacing regional government with a management board would result in the management board having

somewhat (25%) or much (13%) more responsibility to the citizens of Cambridge. A third (34%) believe there would be little or no change in the level of responsibility. Slightly over one-in-ten (13%) believe that there would be less responsibility with the remaining 14% being not sure/don't know. When we eliminate the people who are without an opinion, slightly less than half (45%) believe that there would be a higher level of responsibility to the citizens of Cambridge.

There was no general consensus on what the impact would be for access to politicians and city staff if the management board option were implemented. Less than one-in-four (23%) believe that changing to a management board would increase their access to politicians and city staff (6% increase substantially) with slightly less 16% believing that access would actually decline (5% decrease substantially). When the people who stated they were not sure/don't know what the

What impact do you believe this would have on the level of accessibility to politicians and city staff:

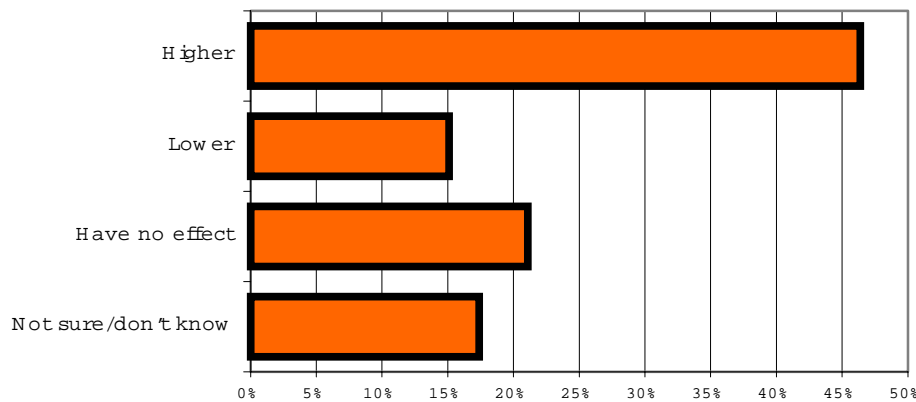


impact would be are eliminated, around one-in-five (19%) believe that accessibility would decline, 54% believe that there would be no change and slightly more than one-in-four (27%) believe that access would improve.

It is clear that the residents of Cambridge have mixed feeling about the impact on the level of responsibility and the accessibility to city staff and politicians if a management board replaced the current regional government. A management board is not generally seen as a structure that would significantly impact on the level of responsibility or their access to politicians and city employees.

When asked if they thought that the proposed management board as recommended by the Cambridge Task Force would result in higher or lower costs to the taxpayer, only 15% believed that the change would result in lower taxes. Almost half (46%) felt that it would

Do you believe that the preferred alternative as recommended by the task force would result in higher or lower costs to the taxpayer?



n= 701

result in higher taxes with one-in-five (21%) believing that it would have no impact. Almost the same number (17%) indicated being unsure of the tax implications if the preferred alternative were to be implemented. These results

should be considered significant, as cost savings are one of the benefits that the Cambridge Task Force believed would result from moving to a management board. Cambridge residents do not, for the most part, see it that way.

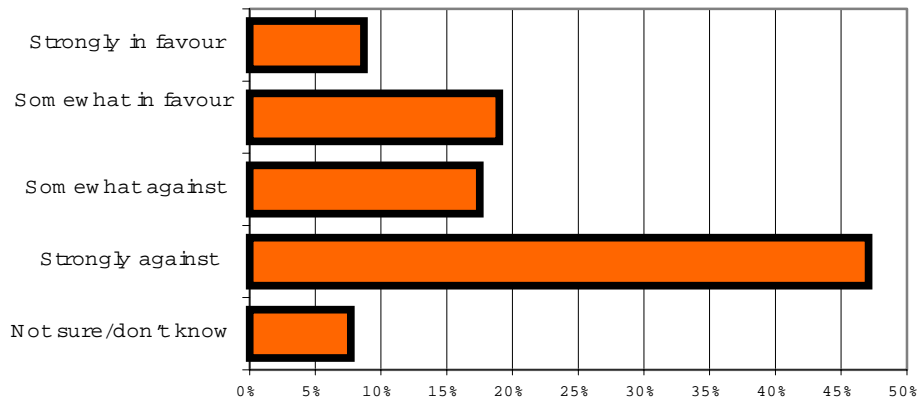
Generally speaking, having read the report does very little to change the opinion that a management board would result in a savings to the taxpayer. (19%) of those who have seen/read all or some of the report believe that there would be lower costs to the taxpayer compared to (14%) of those who have not seen/read the report.

Perceptions of Amalgamation

Respondents were much clearer when asked whether they favoured complete amalgamation of the three cities and four townships. By a two to one margin they indicated that they did NOT want to see this amalgamation take place. Most of those indicated that they were “strongly” against (47%) this proposed change.

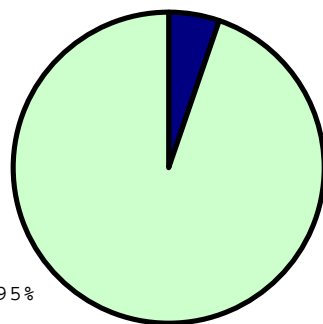
By contrast, those that indicated that they did like the idea of amalgamating the three cities and four townships were much less passionate in their opinions. Those that indicated that they DID like the idea of amalgamation were more likely to indicate that they were only “somewhat” (19%) in favour of this amalgamation.

To what degree do you agree or disagree with the recommendation of replacing the current regional government with a management board.



Would you change your answer if this proposed amalgamation saved you \$50 per year on your property tax bill?

■ Yes
■ No



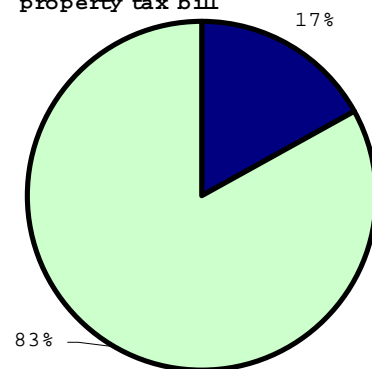
n= 453

property tax bill. If it saved them \$150 per year slightly less than one-in-five (17%) would change their mind and accept amalgamation.

Almost all of those that indicated that they were against amalgamation would not change their mind (95%) even if it saved them an additional \$50 on their

Would you change your answer if this proposed amalgamation saved you \$150 per year on your property tax bill?

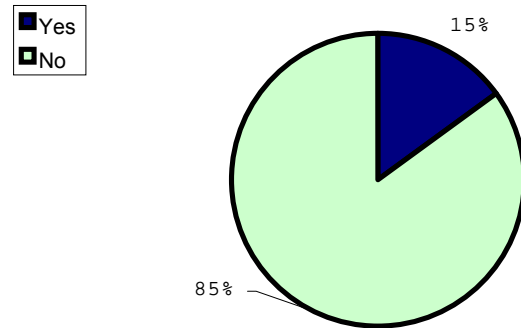
■ Yes
■ No



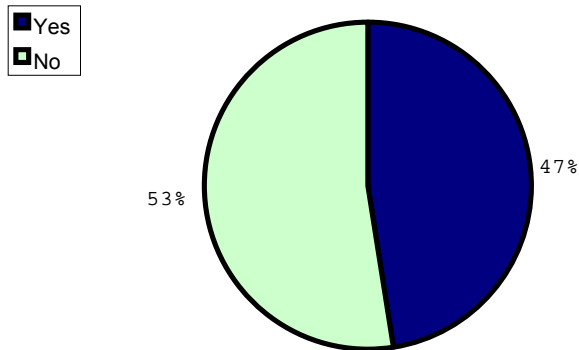
n= 453

By contrast, the minority of respondents that do favour amalgamation are much more likely to change their view if they believed that it would cost them more money. If the resultant costs of amalgamation were to increase by \$50

Would you change your answer if this proposed amalgamation cost you an additional \$50 per year on your property tax bill



Would you change your answer if the proposed amalgamation cost you an additional \$150 per year on your property tax bill



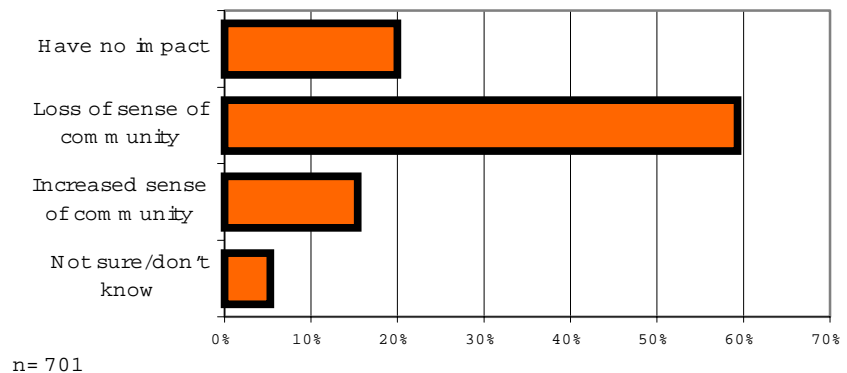
(15%) would change their minds to oppose amalgamation but if the costs went up by \$150 almost half (47%) who originally supported amalgamation would change their mind.

n= 194

These results clearly show that, by a considerable margin, the residents of Cambridge do not want amalgamation and those that do, do so in the event that amalgamation will not cost them money.

Respondents were asked what impact amalgamation would have on the “sense of community.” Over half (59%) believed that there would be a resulting loss of a “sense of community.” 15% believed that there would be an increase in the “sense of community” and one-in-five (20%) believe that the amalgamation of the three cities and four townships would have no impact to the “sense of community.” 5% were unsure of the impact that amalgamation would have to the “sense of community.”

What impact, if any, do you believe an amalgamation into one municipal government would have on the “sense of community”



n= 701

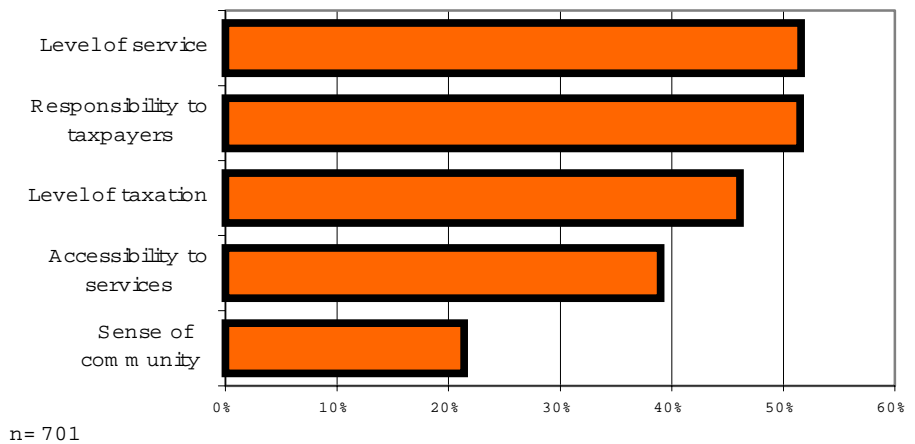
Importance and preference of changes to municipal government

Respondents were asked to rank various factors as to their importance when considering reorganizing municipal government. For the purpose of analysis, the percentage of respondents that picked each of the factors as either the most important or the second most important to them are combined. This technique allows for an easy comparison of the importance for each factor. Using this technique, a clear picture is seen.

Offering a good level of service (52%) and being responsible to the taxpayer (52%) followed closely by level of taxation (46%) were believed to be the most important factors to consider when reforming municipal government.

Having good access to services (39%) and a sense of community (21%) were not deemed nearly as important as the other factors. It is very

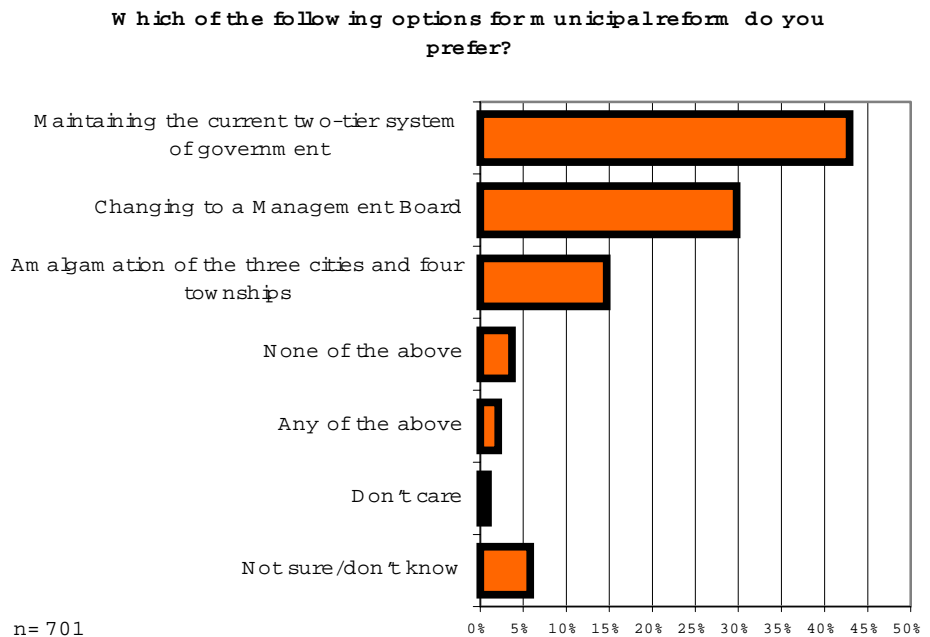
Rank the following in order of importance to you when considering changes to the structure of municipal government



important to note, however, that the numbers do not indicate that accessibility to services and a sense of community are not important, it's just that they are not as important as the other factors measured.

When asked which of the possible governance options they preferred; 1) Changing to a Management Board, 2) Amalgamation of the three cities and four townships, and 3) Maintaining the current two-tier system of government, as expected, the results were mixed. No one option gained a majority of responses. However, maintaining the current system was the most popular choice with 43% picking that option. Just under a third (30%) preferred the Cambridge Task Force's

recommendation of a management board. 15% said that, if given the choice, they preferred amalgamation. The rest were either not sure (6%), didn't care (1%), or didn't want



any of the measured options for municipal reform (4%). When calculating the responses using only those in the sample that picked one of the three options for municipal reform, we see the current two-tier system was preferred by 49%, the management board preferred by 34% and amalgamation by 17%.

When asked to pick from the three possible governance models; management board, amalgamation or maintaining the current regional government, those who had read the report (34%) were slightly more likely to pick the management board than those that had not read the report (29%). It is important to note, however, that both groups were more likely to pick the current regional government than the other two options (seen/read (43%), not seen/read (43%)).

Conclusions

While initially, on hearing the brief description of the recommendation to move to a management board, the respondents did indicate that they liked the concept. However, as more specific questions were asked about the impact on taxation, level of responsibility level of service etc. their attitudes changed as they had a chance to digest what the change meant. When asked directly which of the three governance models they preferred, the current two-tier regional government system received the strongest response.

The residents of Cambridge do not believe that that the management board model would result in greater cost efficiencies or significantly improve their access to politicians and city staff. Responsibility to taxpayers, level of service and level of taxation were considered to be the most important factors to consider when changing governance models. Respondents did not see measurable improvements in these key areas by moving to a management board and in fact approximately one half believed that property taxes would actually increase if the management board model were adopted.

Residents of Cambridge are clearly against the proposed amalgamation of the three cities and the four townships. Support for the management board is supported by around a third of the population leaving the current two-tier regional government system as the preferred choice. Although this may seem like a negative, the fact that the Cambridge Task Force's alternative was the preferred regional model to a third of people surveyed shows that people are, at the least, open to change. There is a general sense of uncertainty with the citizens of Cambridge in regards to municipal reform. Although more than half do not prefer the current two-tier government model, there is no consensus on a better alternative.

Any alternative to regional government must be perceived as being cost effective. Support for any option quickly erodes if there are perceived cost increases. If, on the other hand, it can be shown to save people money, support should increase.

Appendix: Sample Questionnaire

Hello, My name is _____ and I'm calling from PMG Consulting, a public opinion research company. We are calling on behalf of the City of Cambridge Task Force to ask opinions on how Cambridge residents feel regarding municipal reform. The survey will take approximately 10-12 minutes to complete and your responses will remain anonymous. Would you be willing to answer our questions at this time?

- Yes (continue)
- No (schedule call back if possible, if not, thank, terminate and record)

1. Recently, the City of Cambridge Task Force on restructuring had published the results of a study, which presented an alternative model for municipal government. Have you seen/read all or part of this report?

- Yes, seen/read all (continue)
- Yes, seen/read some (continue)
- No (if No, read "As you may know, currently there are two levels of local government. The city of Cambridge (municipal) and the Region of Waterloo (regional). Currently, regional government is responsible for providing a wide range of services. Regional government consists of the mayors and separately elected representatives of the three cities and four townships. This regional government has decision-making powers and does not report back to the individual cities and townships. The report that was released by the Cambridge Task force consisted of an alternative to regional government. The City of Cambridge Task Force is recommending that the Cities have responsibility for handling all municipal services except for policing, social services, regional roads, sewage treatment and water testing. These five activities would be handled by a management board on behalf of Cambridge and the other two cities and townships. This management board would be made up of elected councilors appointed by the different cities and townships and would have decision-making powers."

Read "Although you may not have had a chance to think about it thoroughly, we want your immediate impressions."

2. Generally speaking, to what degree do you agree or disagree with the recommendation of replacing the current regional government with a management board outlined by the recommendation from the City of Cambridge Taskforce? (re-read recommendation if required)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Not sure/don't know

For those that strongly agree or agree:

3. Hypothetically, if the recommendations cost you an additional \$50 per year on your property tax bill, would you change your answer?

- Yes,
how? _____

- No

4. Hypothetically, if the recommendations cost you an additional \$150 per year on your property tax bill, would you change your answer?

- Yes,
how? _____

- No

For those that strongly disagree or disagree:

5. Hypothetically, if the recommendations saved you \$50 per year on your property tax bill, would you change your answer?

- Yes,
how? _____

- No

6. Hypothetically, if the recommendations saved you \$150 per year on your property tax bill, would you change your answer?

- Yes,
how? _____

- No

7. Various factors may or may not be important to taxpayers when it comes to re-organizing municipal government. Please rank the following in order of importance to you when considering changes to the structure of municipal government.
[RANDOMIZE LIST]

- _____ Level of taxation
- _____ Level of service
- _____ Responsibility to taxpayers
- _____ Sense of community
- _____ Accessibility to services

8. If the recommendation that the current regional government be replaced with a management board having some of their duties and the City of Cambridge having the vast majority of the duties, what impact do you believe this would have on their level of responsibility to the citizens of Cambridge:

- There would be much less responsibility to taxpayers
- There would be somewhat less responsibility to taxpayers
- There would be little or no change in the level of responsibility to taxpayers
- There would be somewhat more responsibility to taxpayers
- There would be much more responsibility to taxpayers

9. If the recommendation that the current regional government be replaced with a management board having some of their responsibilities and the City of Cambridge having the vast majority of the responsibilities, what impact do you believe this would have on the level of accessibility to politicians and city staff:

- There would be much less accessibility to politicians and city staff
- There would be somewhat less accessibility to politicians and city staff
- There would be little or no change in the level of accessibility to politicians and city staff
- There would be somewhat more accessibility to politicians and city staff
- There would be much more accessibility to politicians and city staff

10. As you may know, there has been much discussion of amalgamating the three cities of Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo along with the four townships in Waterloo Region creating one municipal government.

Are you...

- Strongly against
- Somewhat against
- Somewhat in favour
- Strongly in favour **...of this proposed amalgamation.**

For those who were against or strongly against:

11. Hypothetically, if this proposed amalgamation saved you \$50 per year on your property tax bill would this change your answer?

- Yes,
how? _____

- No

12. Hypothetically, if this proposed amalgamation saved you \$150 per year on your property tax bill would this change your answer?

- Yes, how? _____
- No

For those who were in favour or strongly in favour:

13. Hypothetically, if this proposed amalgamation cost you an additional \$50 per year on your property tax bill would this change your answer?

- Yes, how? _____
- No

14. Hypothetically, if the proposed amalgamation cost you an additional \$150 per year on your property tax bill would this change your answer?

- Yes, how? _____
- No

15. Do you believe that the preferred alternative as recommended by the task force would result in higher or lower costs to the taxpayer?

- Higher
- Lower
- Have no effect

16. What impact, if any, do you believe amalgamation into one municipal government would have on the “sense of community”

- Have no impact on the sense of community
- Result in a loss of sense of community
- Result in an increased sense of community for the newly created community

17. Which of the following options for municipal reform do you prefer?

- Regional government be changed to the management board as described earlier with the vast majority of responsibilities being administered by the City of Cambridge
- Amalgamation of the three cities and four townships forming one municipal government
- Maintaining the current two-tier system of government with city governments and a regional government.
- None of the above
- Any of the above
- Don't know
- Don't care

To better analyze and interpret the results of this study, we would like to ask you some brief questions about your household and investing practices.

18. Gender? [DO NOT READ]

- Male
- Female

19. Do you own or rent your current residence?

- Own
- Rent

20. In what year were you born?

21. Are there any comments you would like to make at this time regarding the topics discussed in this survey?

