



# CANADA'S MAYORS SPEAK

[MayorsProject.ca](http://MayorsProject.ca)

 **PUBLIC SQUARE**  
putting the people back in research

In January 2018, we asked Canada's mayors to tell us about themselves, their jobs, and the issues facing their communities.

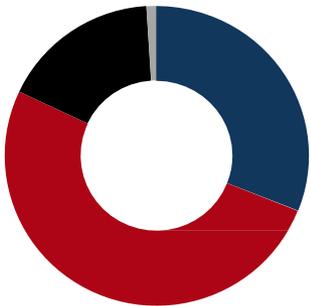
Here's what **105 Canadian mayors** had to say.



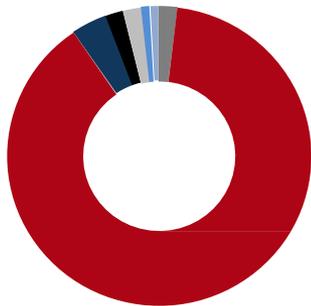
**Who are Canada's  
mayors?**

# DEMOGRAPHICS

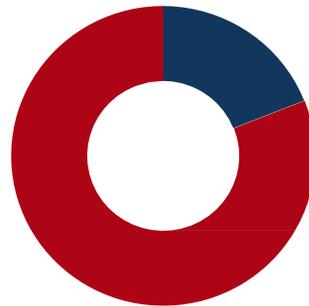
As a group, Canada's mayors are more likely to be older, whiter, more male, and more educated than the rest of Canada's population.



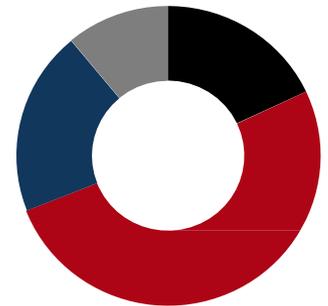
50% 51-65 Years



93% Caucasian



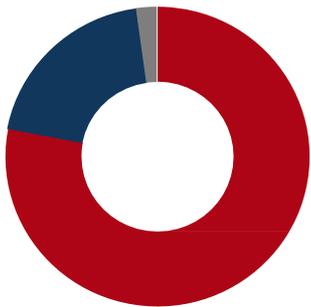
81% Male



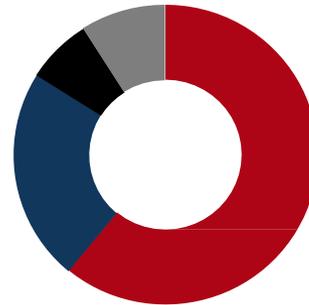
51% University Degree

# EMPLOYMENT

**Prior to being elected as mayor, most mayors were employed full time and most often in the private sector.**



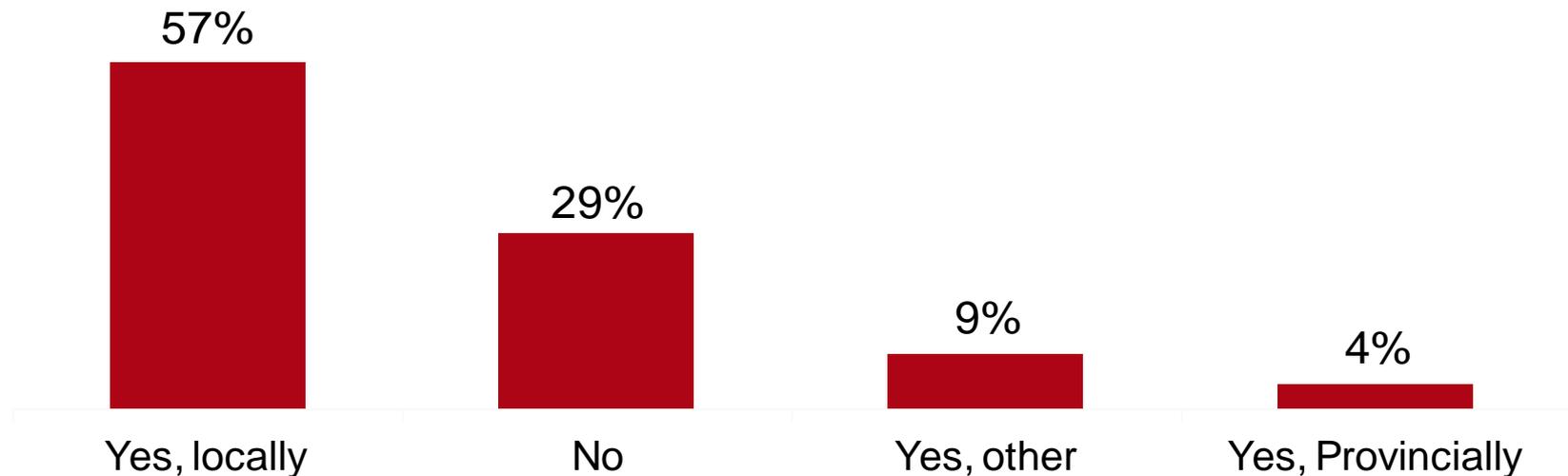
71% - Employed Full Time  
18% - Employed Part Time  
12% - Not Employed



61% - Private Sector  
23% - Public Sector  
7% - Nonprofit Sector  
9% - Other

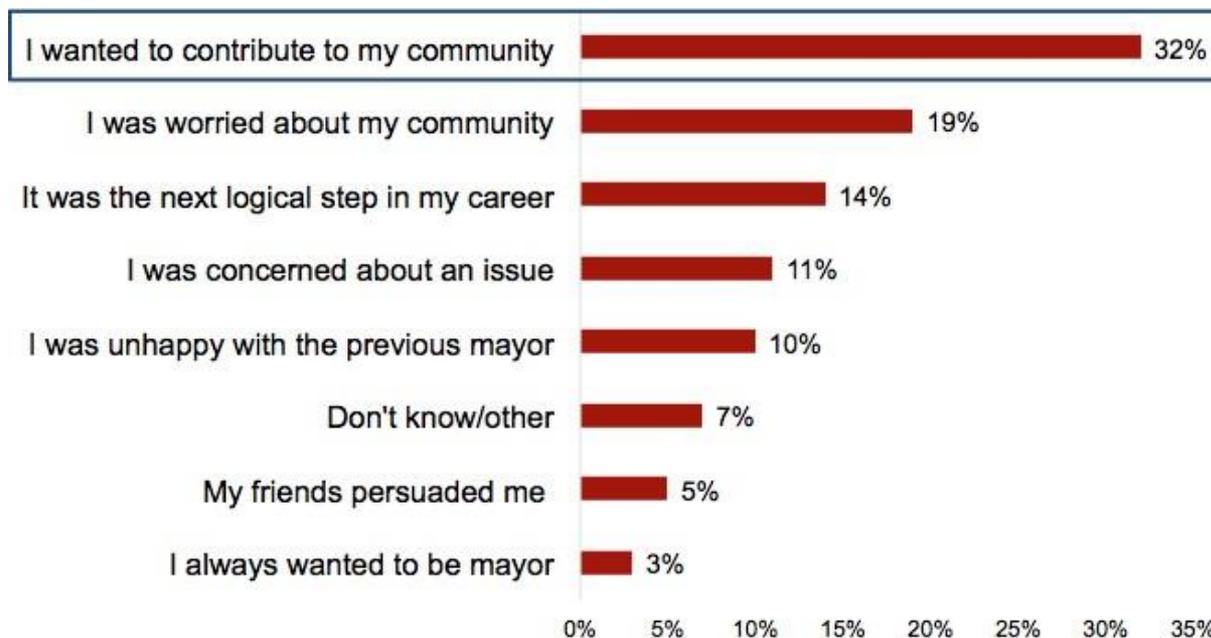
# EXPERIENCE

When asked about whether they had any experience as an elected official before becoming mayor, we found that almost six in ten had experience serving in local government.



# MOTIVATION

When asked about why they ran for office, three in ten mayors cited care or concern for their communities.



**What's it like to  
be a Canadian  
mayor?**



# TIME

**Council and committee meetings are the most time consuming part of a mayor's job, on average taking two work days each week.**

Attending council & committee meetings:

- 34% spend 10+ hour per week
- 33% spend 5-10 hours per week
- 31% spend 2-5 hours per week
- 2% spend 1 hour or less per week

Preparing for council & committee meetings:

- 11% spend 10+ hours per week
- 35% spend 5-10 hours per week
- 50% spend 2-5 hours per week
- 7% spend 1 hour or less per week



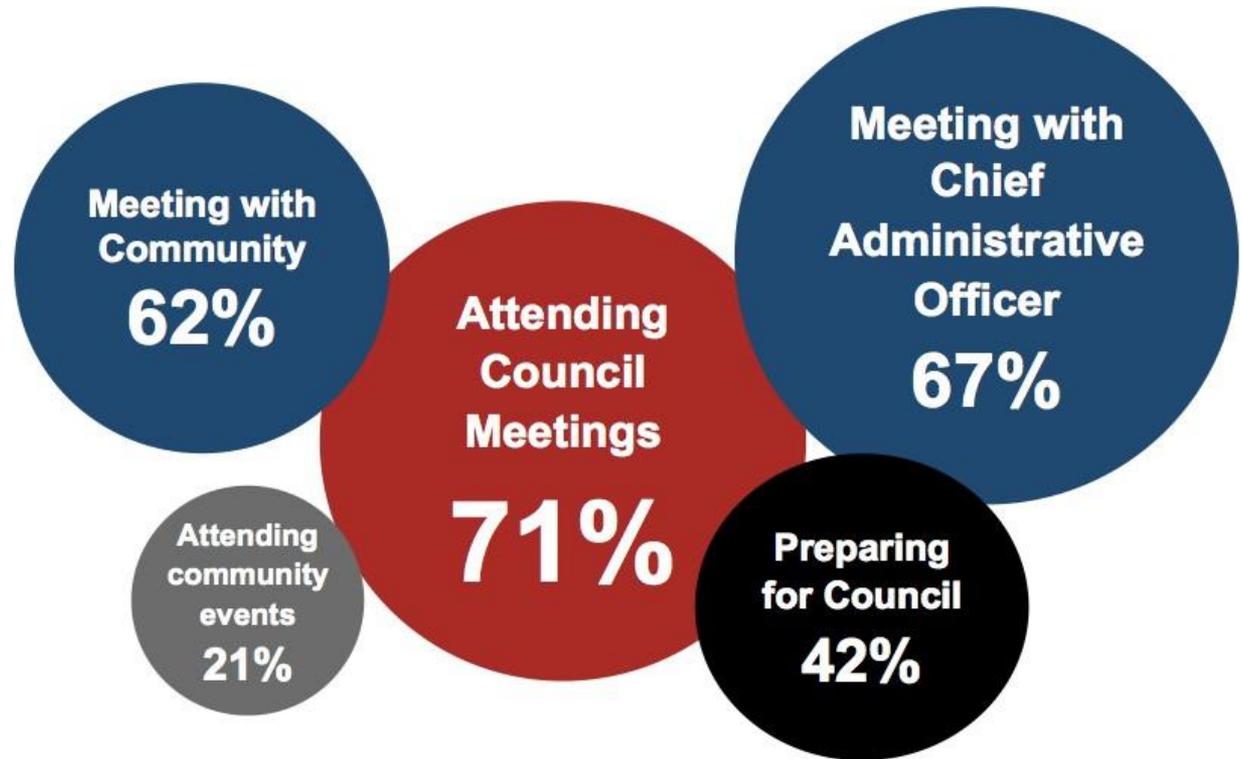
# TIME

## **Outside of council meetings, mayors report spending the most time on the following activities:**

- Attending community events
- Meeting with community members
- Attending external committee and board meetings
- Meeting with the Chief Administrative Officer or equivalent
- Meeting with other staff from their municipality
- Meeting with officials from other governments
- Speaking to media

# PRIORITIES

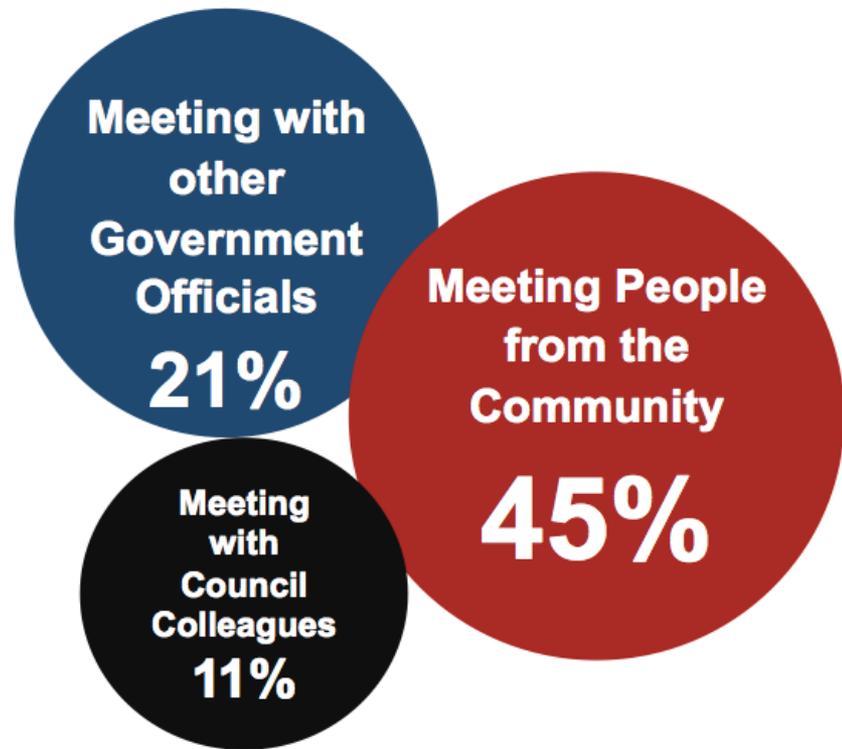
When asked about what parts of the mayor's job are most important, mayors identified the following:





# PRIORITIES

When asked about which activities they would like to spend *more* time on, mayors identified the following priorities:



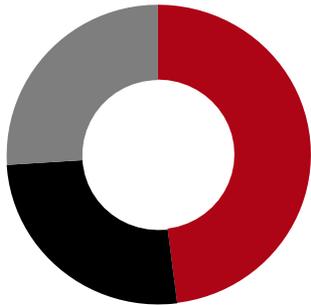
# PRIORITIES

When asked about which activities they would like to spend *less* time on, mayors identified the following:



# RELATIONSHIPS

**Mayors state that, while relationships with council and staff are important, their relationships with citizens and community stakeholders are more important.**



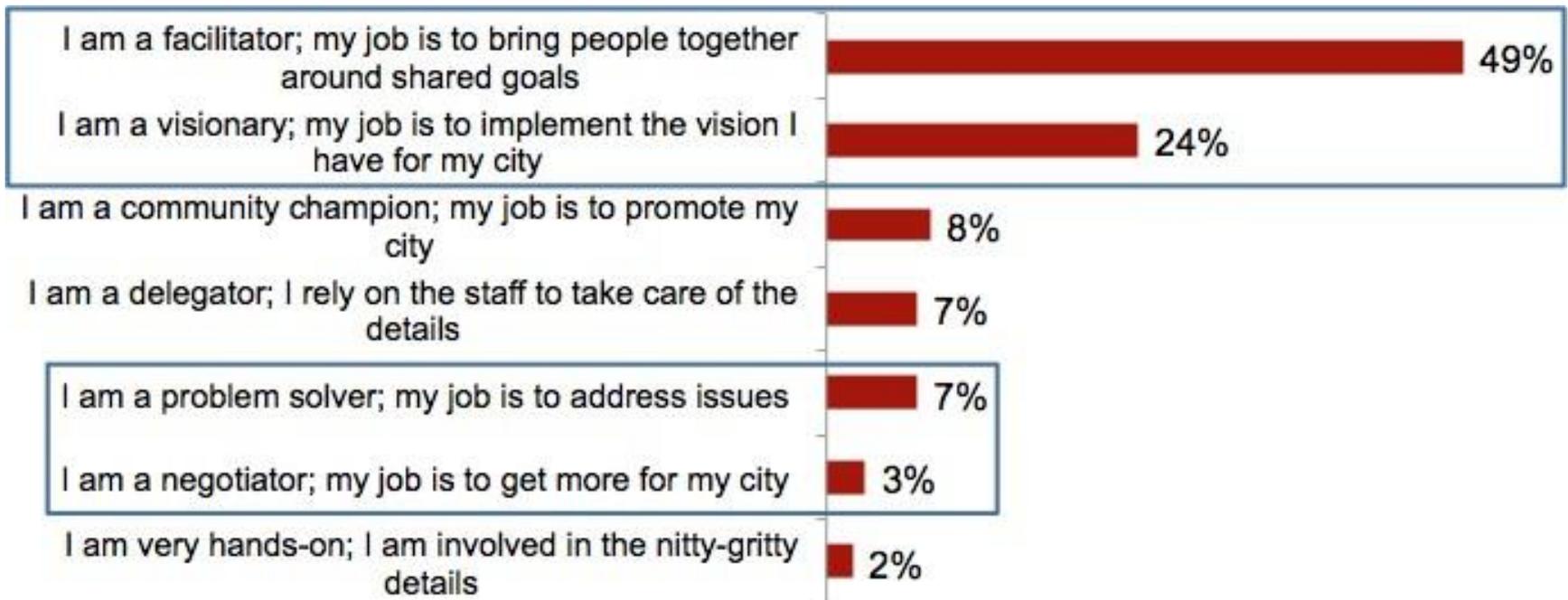
48% - Relationship with citizens and community stakeholders

26% - Relationship with council

26% - Relationship with CAO and municipal staff

# STYLE

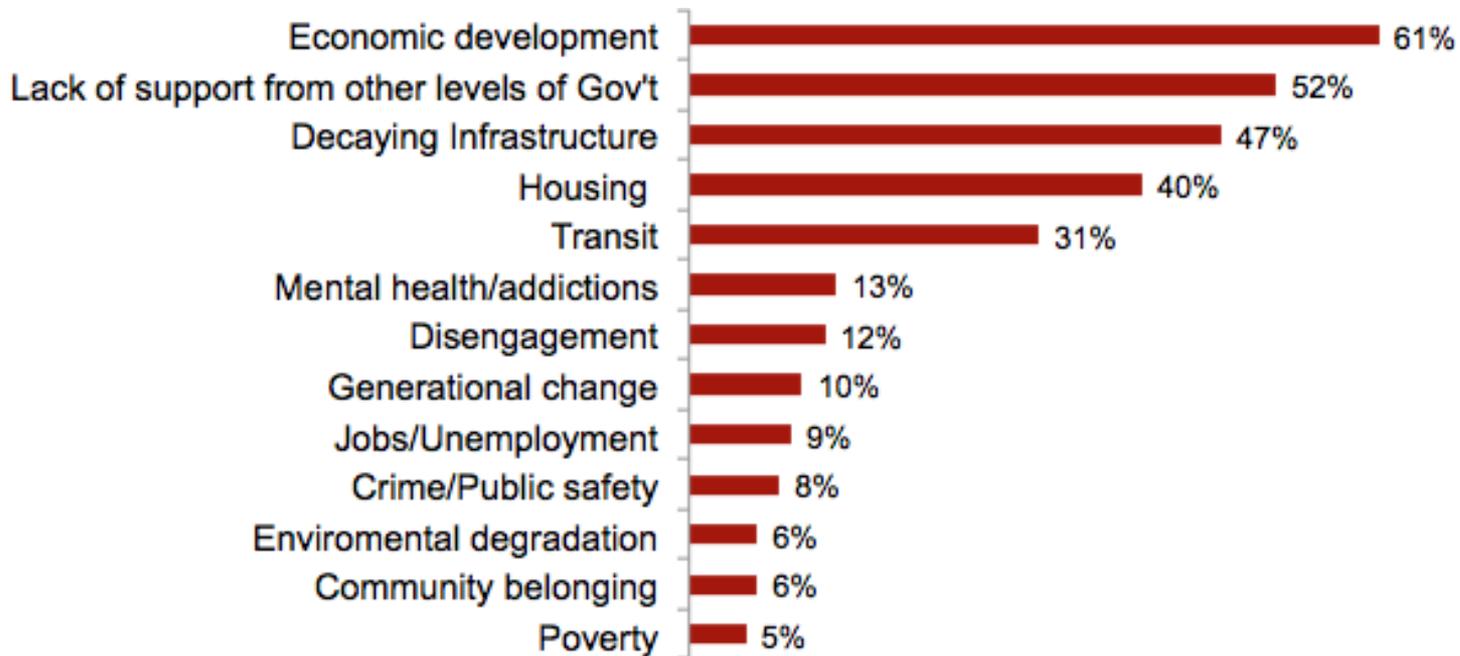
**Almost half of Canadian mayors view their role as a “facilitator”, and another quarter see themselves as “visionary”, and few see themselves as “problem solvers” or “negotiators”.**



**What are the biggest  
issues facing our  
communities?**

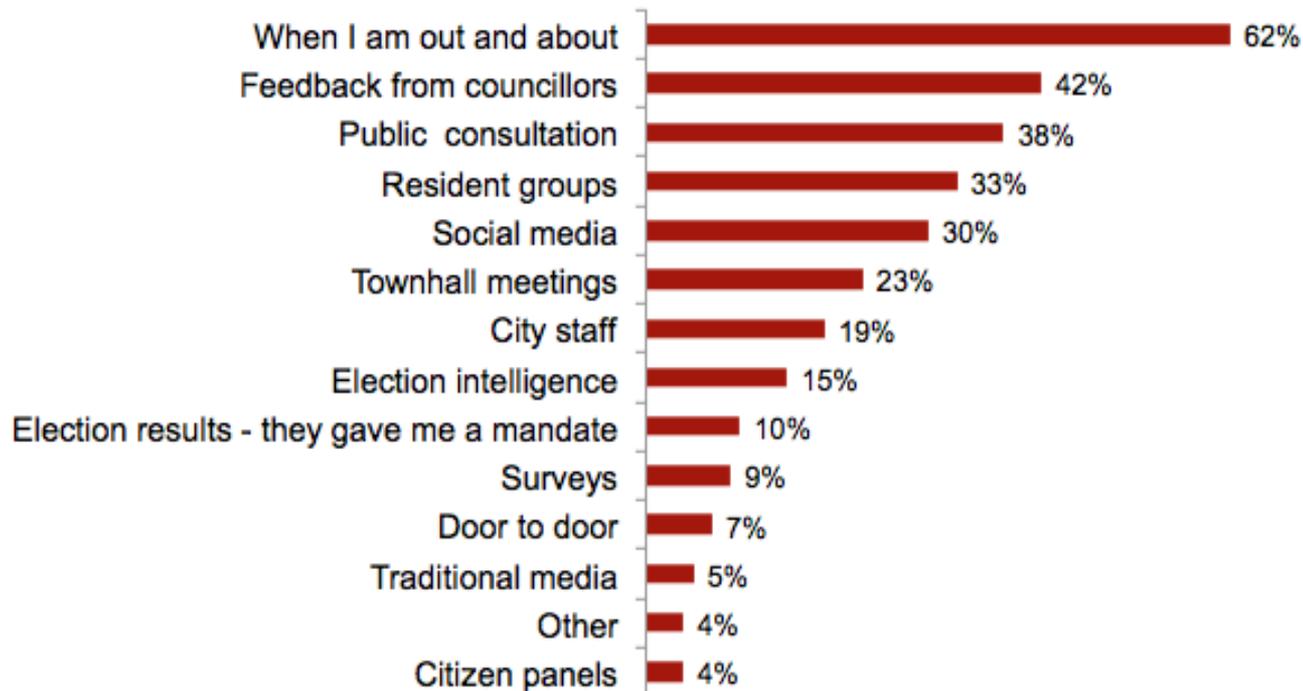
# ISSUES

**Mayors identify economic development as the top priority, followed by lack of support from other levels of government and decaying infrastructure.**



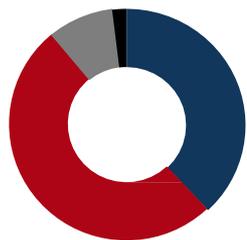
# INTEL

**Six in ten Mayors rely on personal interactions to find out what issues are most important, far more than they rely on traditional media or intelligence gathered in surveys.**



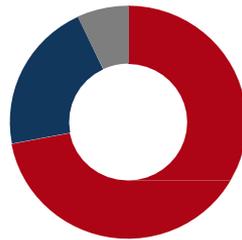
# CAPACITY

**Mayors feel confident that municipal governments in Canada have the ability to address the issues faced by communities, and have the expertise to do so.**



**Can municipalities address the issues faced by communities today?**

38% - Very confident  
51% - Somewhat confident  
9% - Not very confident  
2% - Not at all confident



**Does your municipality have the expertise it needs to address top issues?**

72% - Yes  
21% - No, but we get support from others  
7% - No

**What 'one thing' would  
you change about  
municipal  
government?**

# CHANGE

*“More certainty around funding”*

*“Give legal status and respect to the municipal government”*

*“Tax reform to give local governments more financial flexibility”*

*“Reduce the amount of time chasing government”*

*“Provision for improved levels of funding beyond municipal property tax”*

Greater Revenue/Tax Generation Autonomy

Greater Decision-Making Autonomy

36%

*“Stop the interference from the province; they require that municipalities act as they say...”*

43%

Educational support for Mayors and Councillors

Other  
10%

*“Less control by provincial government”*

*“Stop the downloading from the province”*

7%

*“More education for elected officials”*

*“Enhanced governance powers and broader expanded fiscal and taxation abilities”*

# Methodology

A faint, dark background image of a person in a suit pointing towards the right. The person is positioned on the left side of the frame, with their right arm extended and hand pointing towards the right. The image is semi-transparent and serves as a background for the text.



# METHODOLOGY

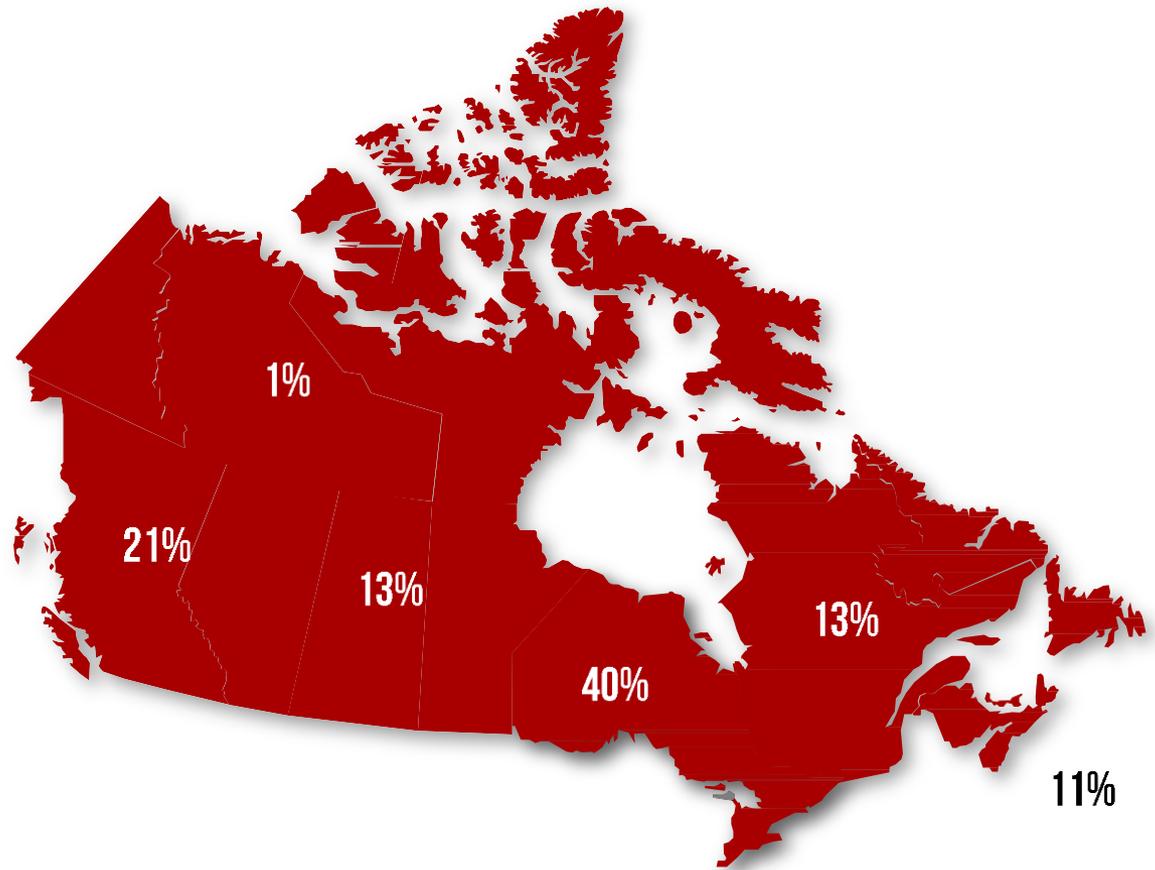
- The survey was distributed by email to 400 Canadian mayors serving communities of more than 10,000 people. The survey was administered from January 8 to 18, 2018. The survey was offered in both English and French.
- A total of 113 mayors responded to the survey (28.3%). The response rate was higher among mayors serving communities with smaller populations:
  - 29.3% - Population between 10,000 to 24,999
  - 24.3% - Population between 25,000 to 99,999
  - 14.7% - Population between 100,000 to 249,999
  - 12.5% - Population above 250,000

\* No cities with populations over 500,000 responded to the survey

# METHODOLOGY

Mayors from all regions in Canada responded to the survey.

- 11% - Maritimes
- 13% - Quebec
- 40% - Ontario
- 13% - Prairies
- 21% - British Columbia
- 1% - Territories





# Contact

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