

URBAN POLICY TRENDS

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MAYOR AND COUNCIL SATISFACTION IN CALGARY

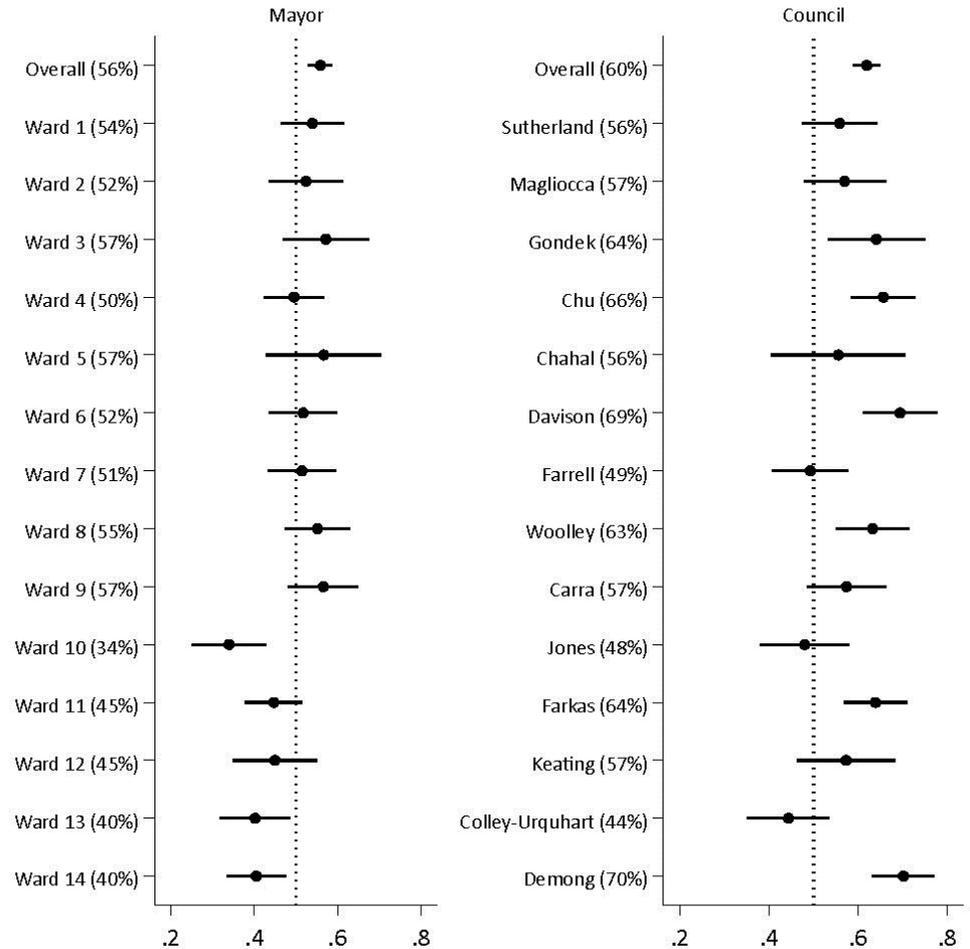
By Jack Lucas

How satisfied are Calgarians with their city council?

To answer this question, The School of Public Policy partnered with the Canadian Municipal Election Study to survey 2,001 Calgarians at the end of 2018. The survey was carried out by Forum Research between November 14 and December 13, 2018; margins of error for overall satisfaction scores reported here are +/- 2.2% (mayor) and +/-2.3% (council).

The figure summarizes the results of survey questions about mayor and councillor satisfaction in Calgary. In the “Mayor” column, we report satisfaction scores for Naheed Nenshi across the city as a whole (“Overall”) and in each ward. These scores report the proportion of respondents who told us they were “somewhat” or “very” satisfied with the Mayor’s performance; the percentage score is reported on the left-hand side and estimates with 95% confidence intervals are reported in the figure itself.

Mayor Nenshi’s overall satisfaction score is 56% city-wide, but it varies substantially across the city, ranging from well over 55% in some northeast and central wards to 40% and below in central-east and southern wards. Unsurprisingly, these scores are broadly in keeping with ward-level votes for Mayor Nenshi in the 2017 election.



¹ As is clear in the figure, ward-level margins of error are higher. Overall city-wide scores are weighted; ward-level estimates are unweighted. For full weighted and unweighted results, along with technical documentation, data, and replication files, please visit <https://dataverse.scholarsportal.info/dataverse/jacklucas>

The second column, labelled “Council”, provides the same scores for Calgary’s fourteen councillors.

In general, about 60% of Calgarians indicate that they are satisfied with their councillor’s performance. Once again, however, these scores vary substantially by ward.

Several councillors enjoy strong scores in the 60 and even 70 per cent range, including Councillors Gondek, Chu, Davison, Woolley, Farkas, and Demong. In other cases, such as wards seven (Farrell) and ten (Jones), opinion is a bit more divided. Just one councillor, Diane Colley-Urquhart, receives an overall score below 45 per cent.

While Calgarians are moderately satisfied with the performance of their mayor and individual councillors, they are much less satisfied with the performance of Calgary city council as a whole: just 37 per cent of Calgarians report being satisfied with city council’s general performance.

These numbers are nearly identical to Calgarians’ low satisfaction with the Alberta provincial government, which is also just 37 per cent.