

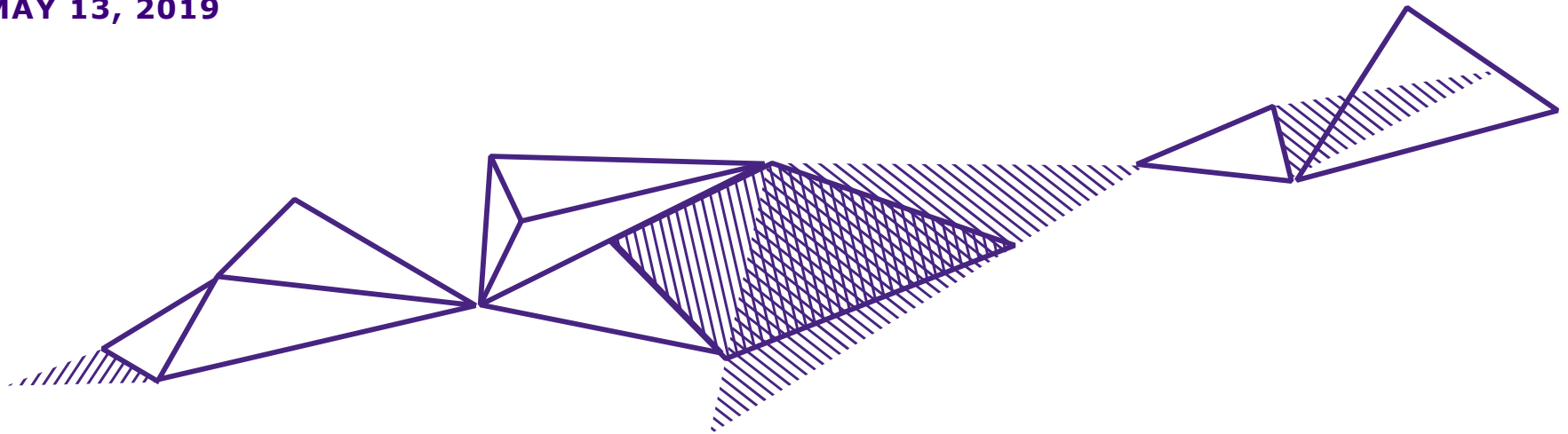
**ENVIRONICS**  
RESEARCH



# **Provincial Review of Regional Government Presentation of Survey Findings**

**CITY OF KITCHENER**

**MAY 13, 2019**

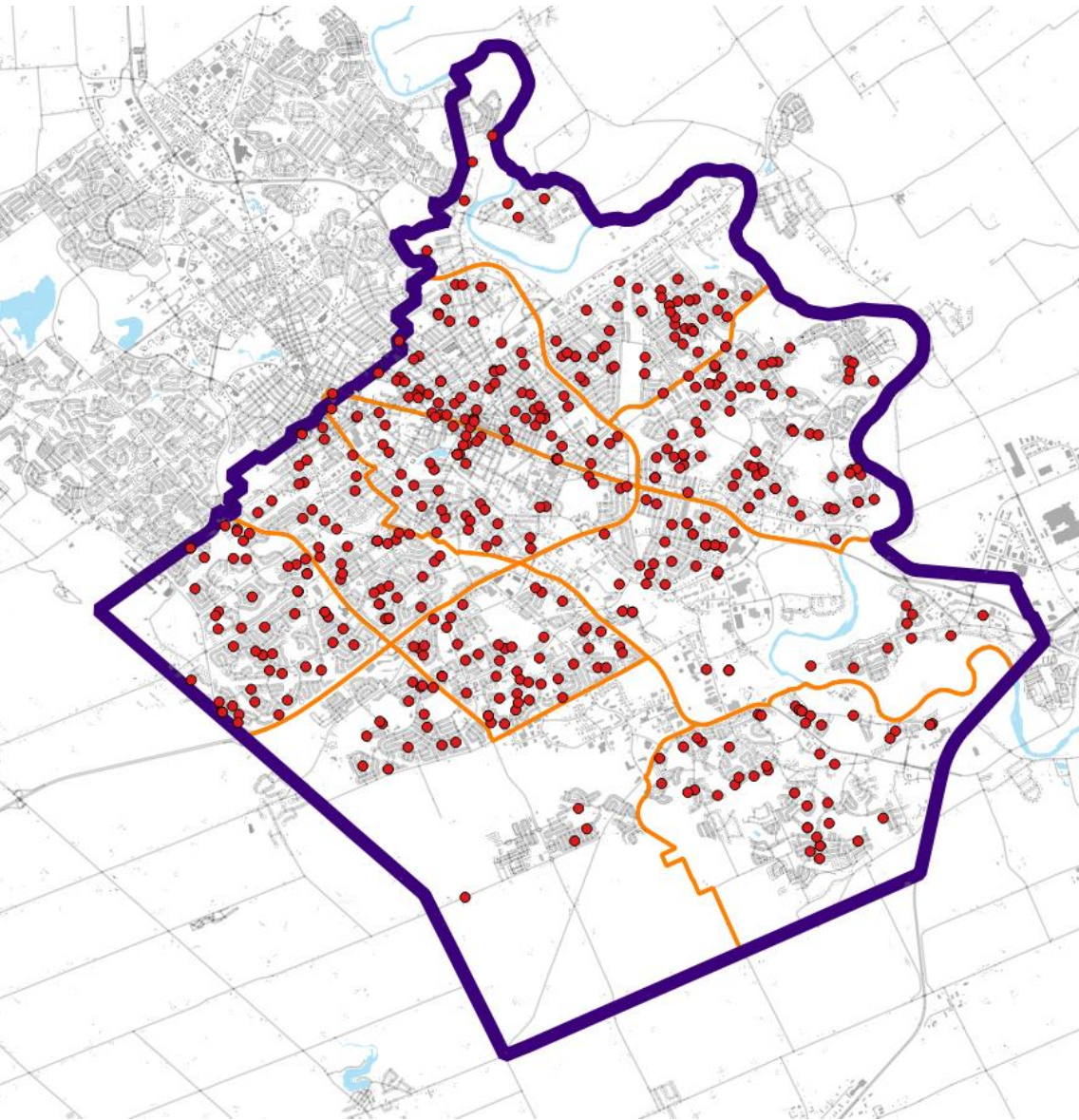


# METHODOLOGY

## Telephone survey with N=611 Kitchener residents between April 17-29, 2019.

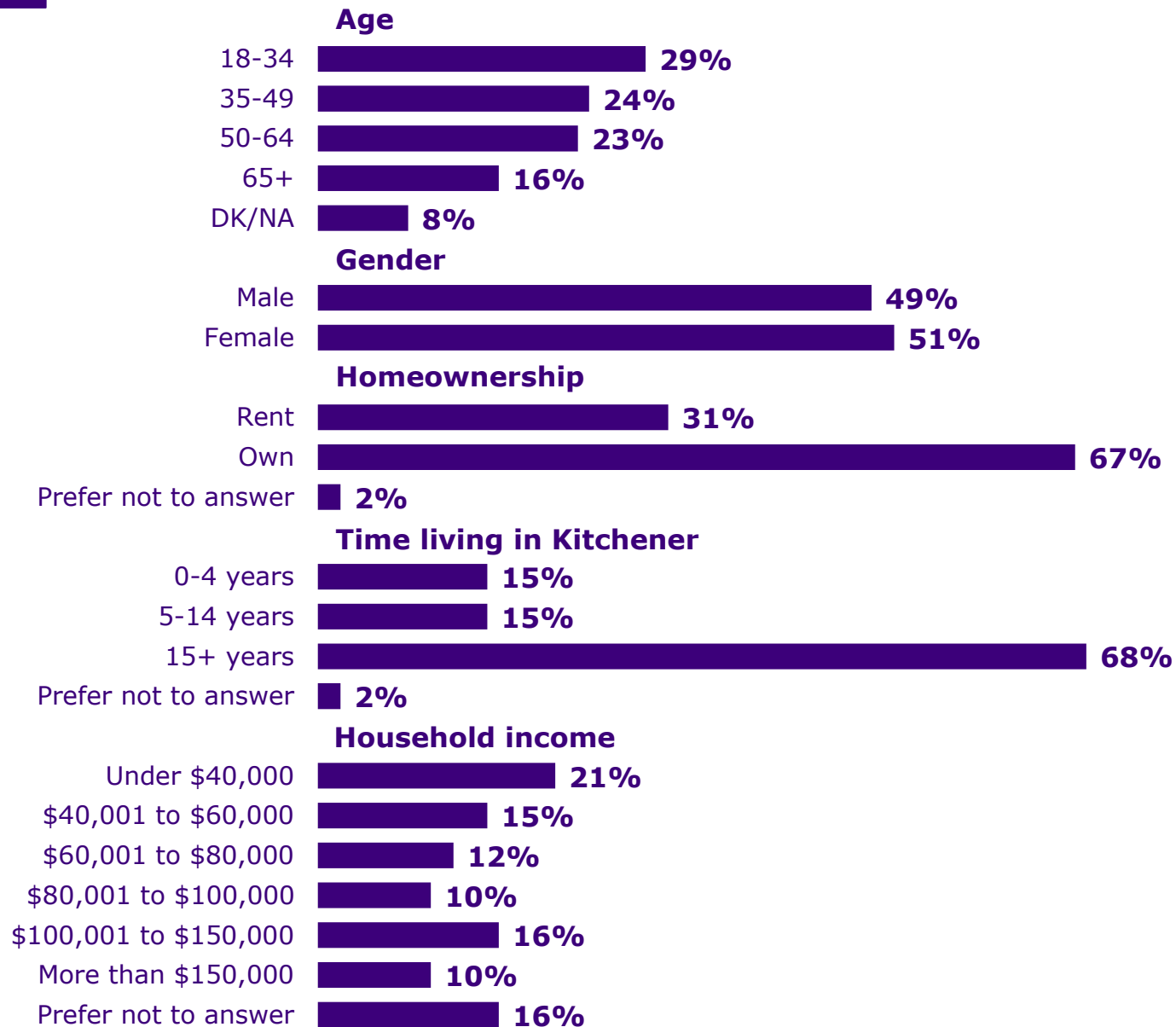
- ▶ Demographically representative sample of Kitchener residents
- ▶ Margin of Error of +/-4.0%
- ▶ 32% of sample reached by cell phone
- ▶ 12 minute average length of interview
- ▶ Questions were developed to reflect issues and scenarios that have been featured in recent local discussions and align with the province's areas of focus including local governance, decision-making and service delivery.
- ▶ Environics Research is one of Canada's longest-serving research consultancies with deep municipal experience, bringing research best-practices, questionnaire design and analysis of results.

# REPRESENTATION ACROSS KITCHENER



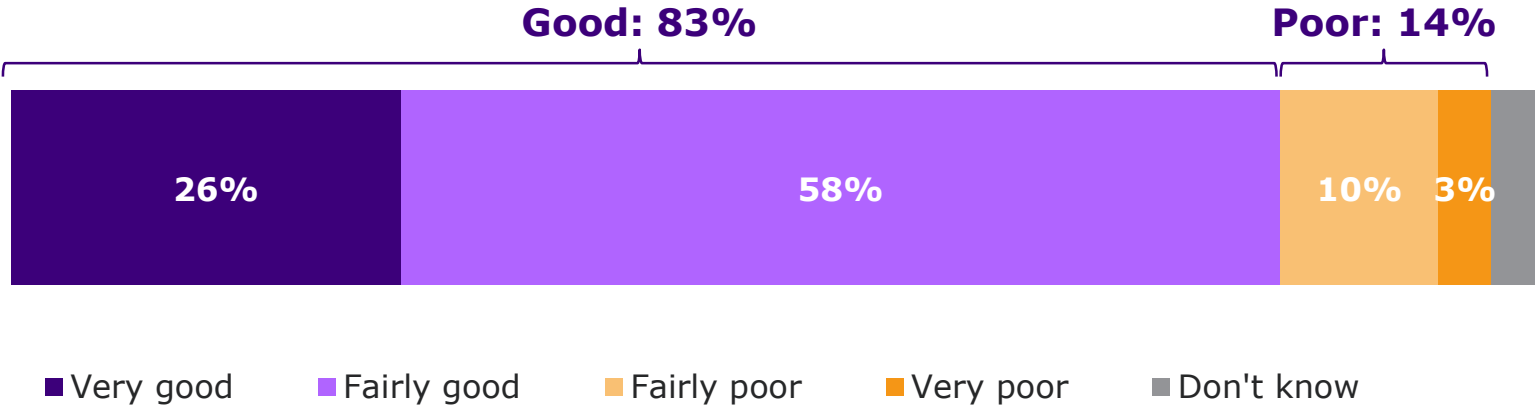
	Actual sample (unweighted)	2016 Census (weighted)
<b>Gender</b>		
Men	53%	49%
Women	47%	51%
<b>Age</b>		
18-34	16%	29%
35-49	17%	24%
50-64	27%	23%
65+	31%	16%
<b>Income</b>		
<\$60K	38%	36%
\$60K-100K	24%	22%
\$100K-150K	13%	16%
\$150K+	10%	10%

# DEMOGRAPHICS



# EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE

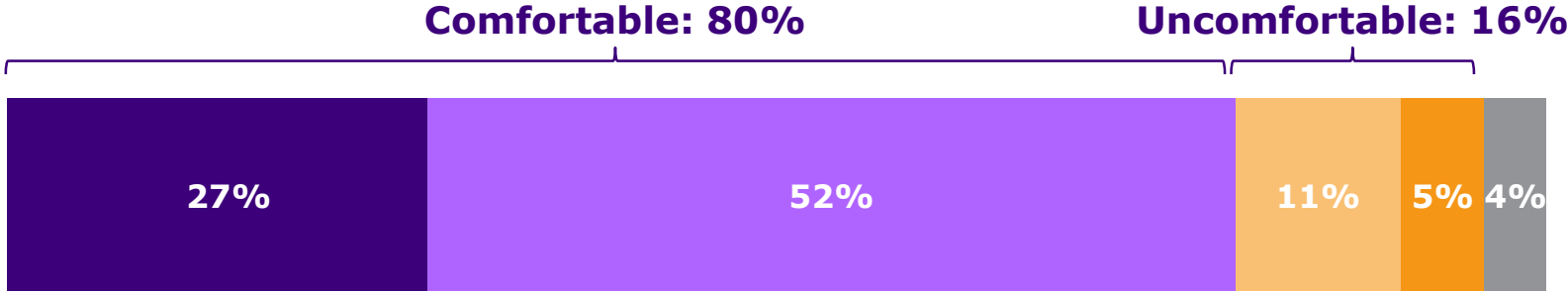
More than eight in ten Kitchener residents feel they are well-served by the current two-tier structure of municipal government.



Q4. As you may know, Kitchener residents are served by two levels of municipal government: the City of Kitchener, providing local services such as road maintenance, parks, community centres, arenas and pools, and the Region of Waterloo, which provides services across a broader geography such as transit, the airport and waste management. How well do you feel Kitchener residents are being served by this current two-tier structure of municipal government? *Base: full sample (n=611)*

# REPRESENTATION OF INTERESTS

Eight in ten say they are comfortable that their interests are effectively represented by the current make-up of City Council.



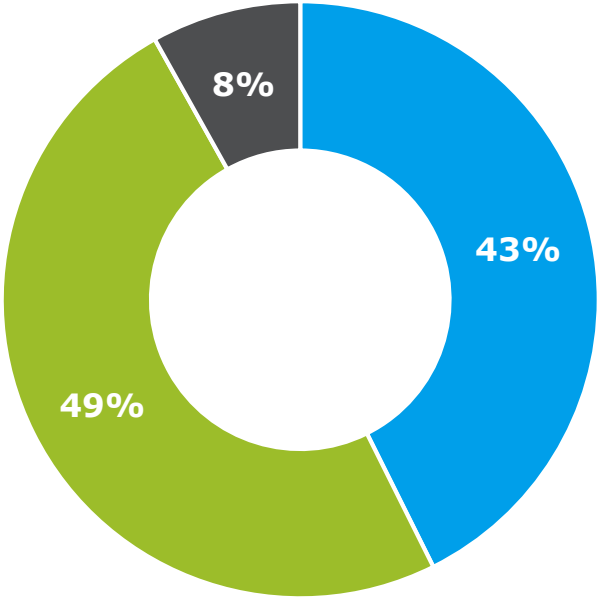
■ Very comfortable ■ Moderately comfortable ■ Moderately uncomfortable ■ Very uncomfortable ■ Don't know/no opinion

Q5. Political representation for the City of Kitchener consists of a full-time mayor and 10 part-time ward councilors. The mayor also sits on the council of the Region of Waterloo. Setting aside your political views, how comfortable are you that this make-up of elected officials effectively represents your interests when they are making decisions at the City level?

Base: full sample (n=611)

# PREFERENCE FOR ELECTED REPRESENTATION

One-half of residents prefer having one set of councilors to represent the City and Regional levels, while four in ten prefer separate councilors.



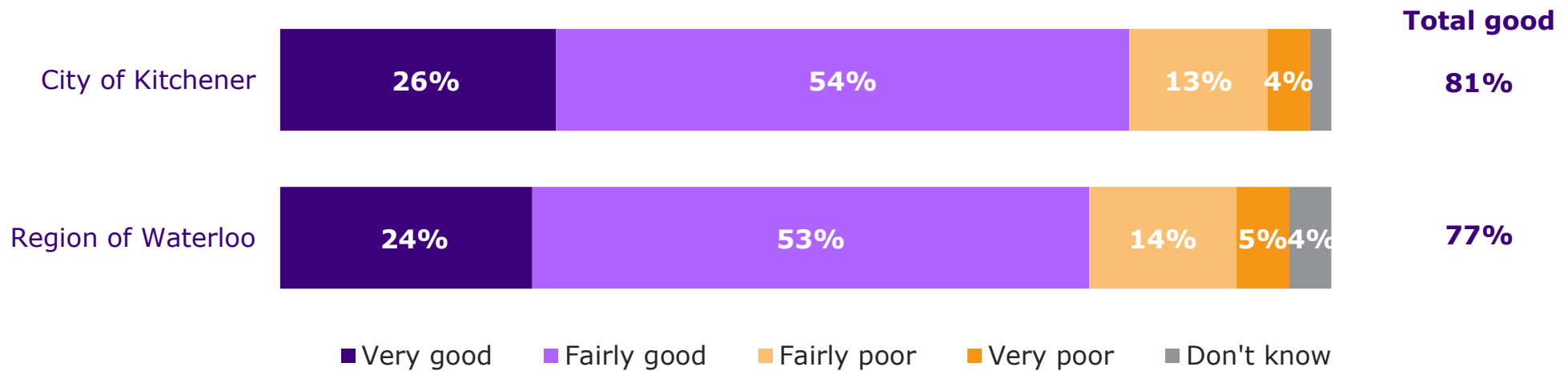
- Separate Councilors elected to represent residents at the City and Regional levels
- One set of Councilors elected to represent residents at both the City and Regional levels
- Don't know/no opinion

Q6. In addition to electing city councilors who represent Kitchener residents at the city level, Kitchener residents also elect a separate group of regional councilors who, together with the mayor, represent the city at the regional level. When you think about how you are represented at both the City and Regional levels, which scenario would you prefer?

Base: full sample (n=611)

# VALUE FOR TAX DOLLARS

More than three-quarters of residents say they receive good value for their tax dollars from both the City and the Region.



Q7. Thinking about all the programs and services you receive from the City of Kitchener, would you say that, overall, you receive very good, fairly good, fairly poor or very poor value for your tax dollars?

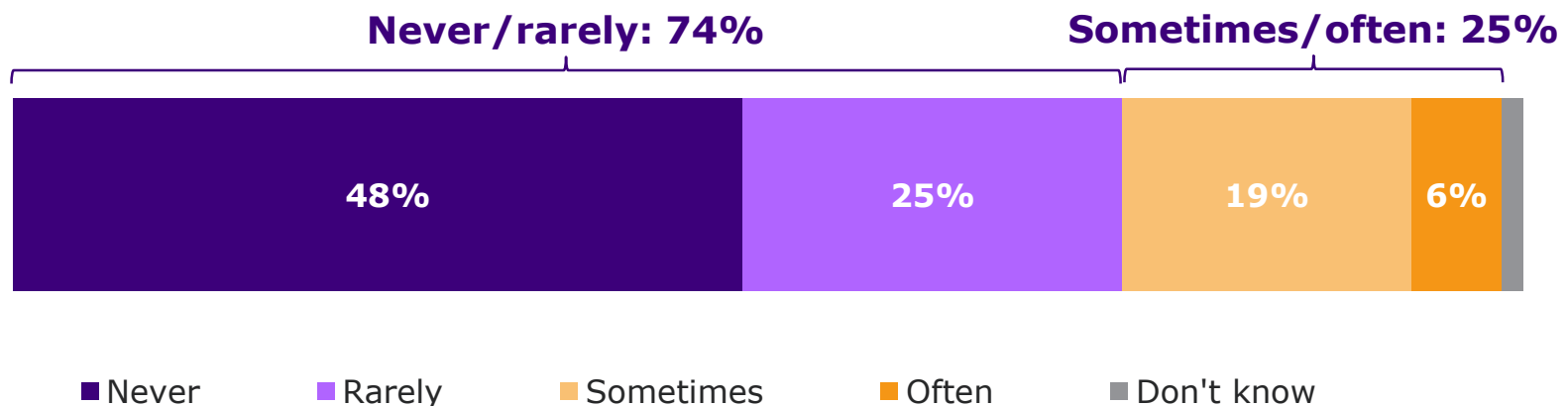
Q8. And thinking about all the programs and services you receive from the Region of Waterloo, would you say that, overall, you receive very good, fairly good, fairly poor or very poor value for your tax dollars?

Base: full sample (n=611)



# CONFUSION OVER RESPONSIBILITIES

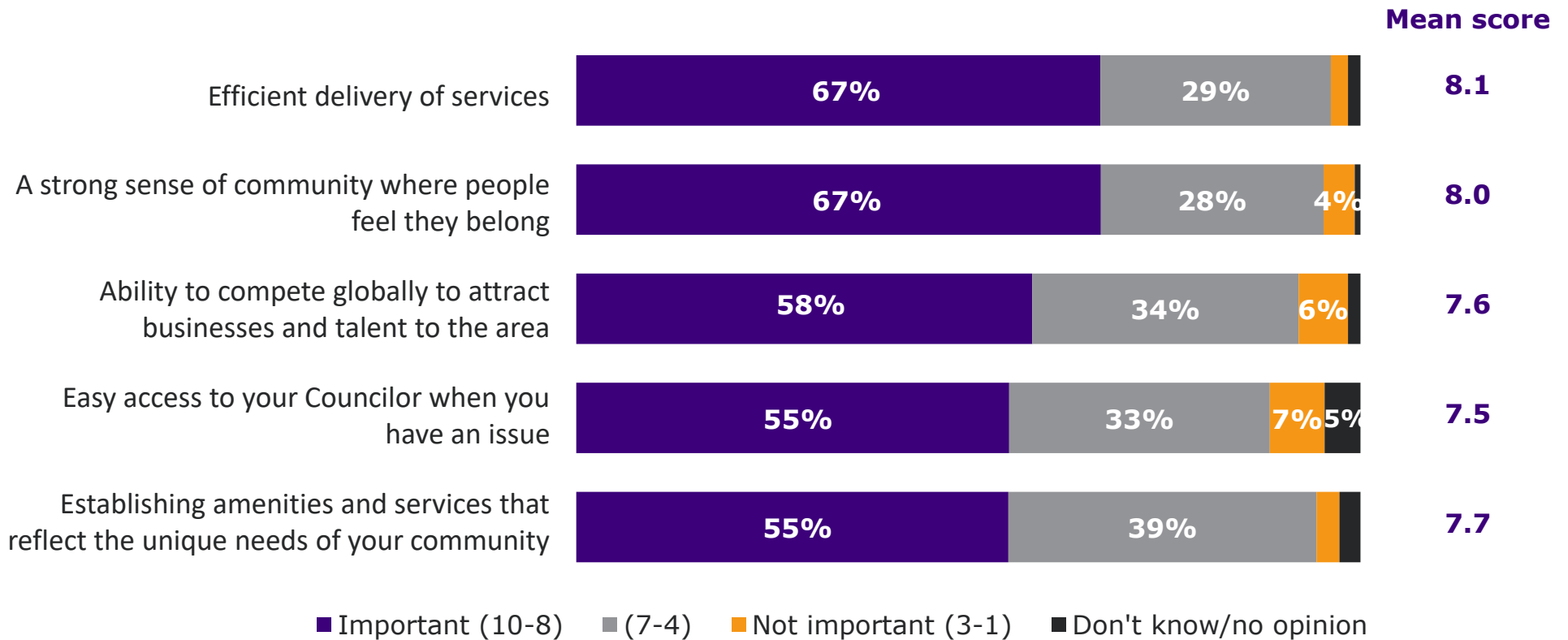
A large majority of residents report that they rarely/never encounter situations where the division of responsibilities between City and Region is a source of confusion.



Q9. How often, if ever, have you encountered a personal situation where the division of responsibilities between the City and the region has been a source of confusion or frustration for you? *Base: full sample (n=611)*

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

When considering aspects of local government that are of importance, Kitchener residents prioritize the efficient delivery of services and a strong sense of community.



Q10-Q14. Using a ten-point scale where one means “not at all important” and ten means “extremely important”, please indicate how important each of the following are to you personally when thinking about your local government.

Base: full sample (n=611)

# DEFINITIONS OF POTENTIAL STRUCTURES

Residents were given the following descriptions of potential municipal government structures before being asked which structure they prefer.

As you may know, the provincial government is currently undertaking a review of the governance, decision-making and service delivery functions of Ontario's regional municipalities, including the Region of Waterloo and its seven local municipalities. Some possible outcomes from this review could include the following:

**Current Structure.** The province may decide to leave the current structure in place where the City of Kitchener remains a lower-tier municipality within Waterloo Region. Each level of government would retain responsibility for delivery of services.

**Partial amalgamation.** A scenario that combines some municipalities like Kitchener and Waterloo into larger municipal governments which are responsible for delivering services within the new geography.

**Total amalgamation.** A scenario whereby the Cities of Kitchener, Cambridge and Waterloo along with the four surrounding townships are brought together into one central government which has the sole responsibility for administering services across a new amalgamated geography.

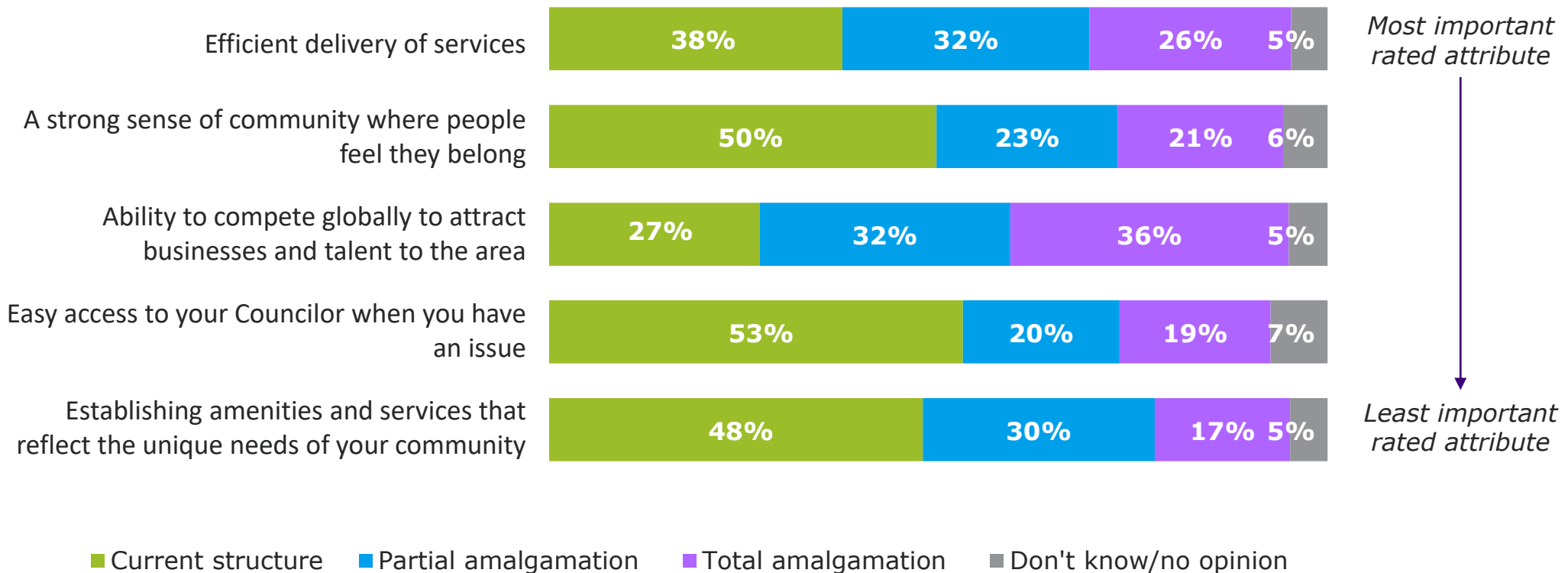
I'd like to ask you about the different aspects of municipal governance and administration discussed earlier and get your sense of which of these three municipal models you think would do the best job of delivering services in a way that meets your expectations.

To recall, the three options are:

- The **current structure**, or two-tier model, in place now in Kitchener;
- The **partial amalgamation** of a few municipalities into one municipality, like Kitchener and Waterloo.
- A **total amalgamation** of all of the municipalities currently within Waterloo Region.

# PREFERRED GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE

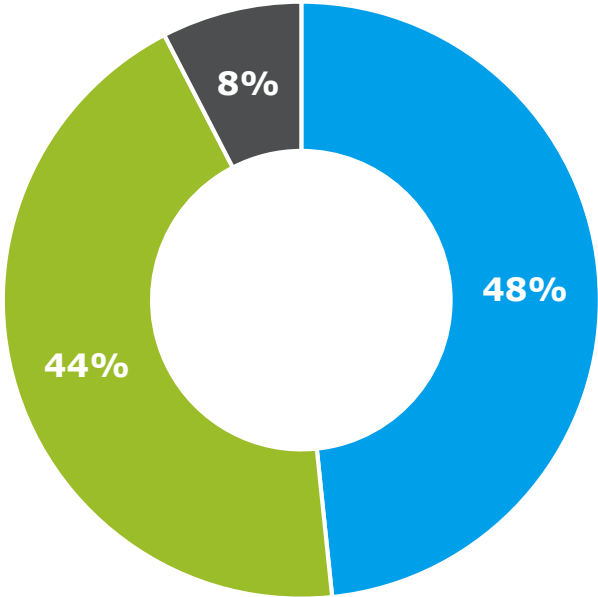
A plurality of residents identify the current two-tier structure as best suited to deliver on most aspects of local government.



Q15-Q19. Which of the three models would do the best job of...  
 Base: full sample (n=611).

# K/W MODEL: STANDALONE OR TWO-TIER?

If Kitchener and Waterloo are amalgamated into one municipality, residents are split on whether it would function best as a stand-alone city or one requiring the support of an upper-tier region.

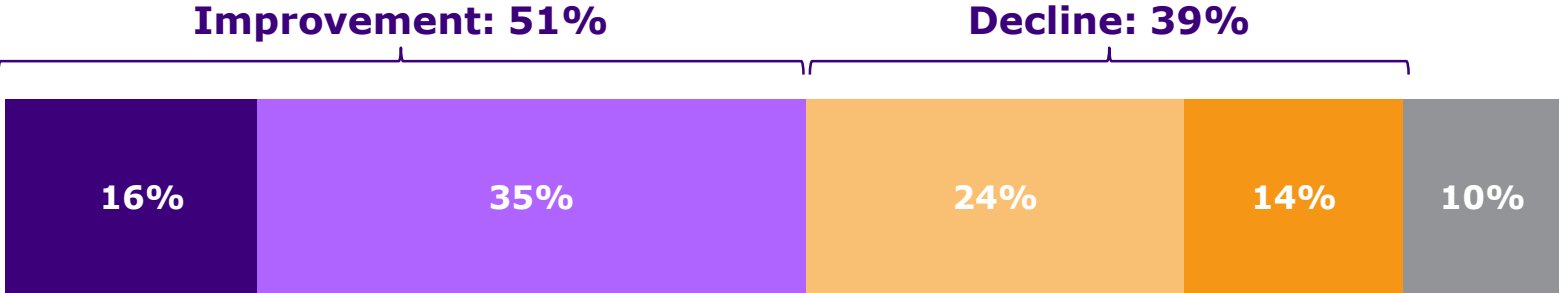


- New Kitchener/Waterloo could deliver services as a one-tier municipality
- New Kitchener/Waterloo would require the support of two-tier regional system
- Don't know/no opinion

Q20. If the Cities of Kitchener and Waterloo were joined together to become one municipality, do you believe it would function best as a stand-alone City or would it still require the support of an upper-tier regional government to help deliver services to the area? *Base: full sample (n=611)*

# EFFECT OF LARGER GOVERNMENT ON SERVICES

One-half of residents expect that a larger local government would result in an improvement in the quality of service delivery. Of note are equivalent proportions who hold strong opinions on both ends of the spectrum.

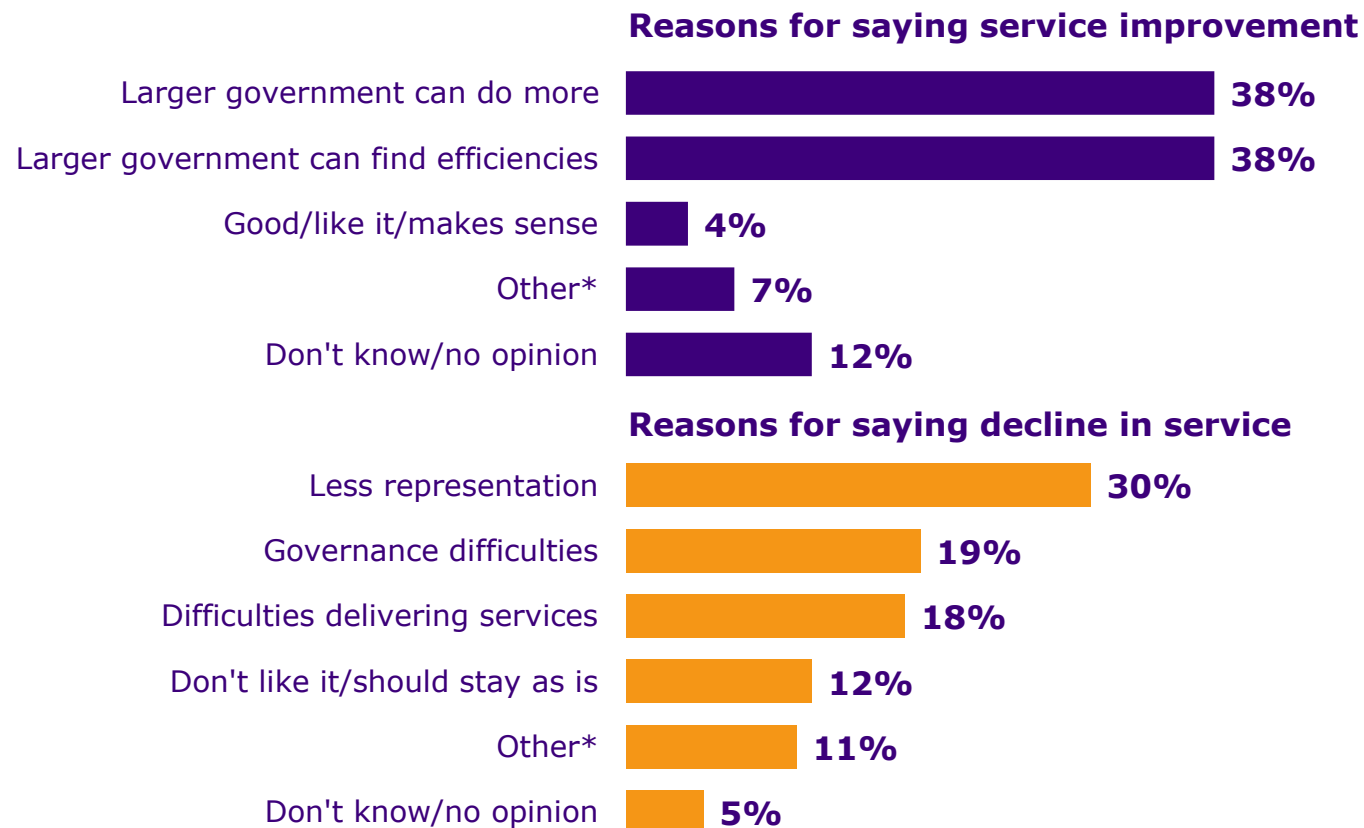


■ A significant improvement   ■ A moderate improvement   ■ A moderate decline   ■ A significant decline   ■ Don't know/no opinion

Q21. If Kitchener's local government was reorganized in a way that made it larger – either through partial or full amalgamation – do you think that would result in an improvement or a decline in the quality of service delivery to the residents of Kitchener?  
Base: full sample (n=611)

# REASONS FOR EXPECTING SERVICE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT/DECLINE

Residents expecting service improvements often say larger government can do more or find efficiencies. Those expecting a decline say there will be less representation, or difficulties in governance and service delivery.



Q22A. What is the main reason you believe a larger government will represent an improvement in service delivery in Kitchener?

Base: Improvement in Q21 (n=302)

Q22B. What is the main reason you believe a larger government will represent a decline of service delivery in Kitchener?

Base: Decline in Q21 (n=244)

\*Categories less than or equal to two percent are included in the 'other' category.

# TAKE-AWAYS

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- ▶ Residents generally express **confidence in the current state** of representation in Kitchener; they feel well-served by current political representation, feel their interests are well represented by the two-tier system and derive value for the taxes they pay to both tiers of municipal government.
- ▶ There are small pockets of evidence of a **limited appetite for some changes** to the two-tier system.
  - ▶ Small majorities of residents express interest in one set of councilors to represent residents at both City and Regional councils, and believe that a larger government could result in improved service delivery.
- ▶ Comfort with the current government structure translates into confidence that **existing representation can best deliver important services and community character**.
  - ▶ Amalgamation challenges the current structure when considering competing globally for business and talent.