

To: Chris Ross, Councillor
Cora Hoekstra, Councillor
Cc: Council
From: Matthew Goudy, CAO
Date: May 20, 2019

Reference: 11/154/2019-162

RE: Citizen Satisfaction Survey Concerns

Thank you for your written concerns regarding the experience of some Lacombe citizens with the telephone portion of the City's 2019 Citizen Satisfaction Survey. Specifically, you mentioned:

- Surveyors calling County residents
- People agreeing to be interviewed only to be told they were not "eligible" to participate in the survey due to their age or gender
- People concerned they were being targeted by scammers

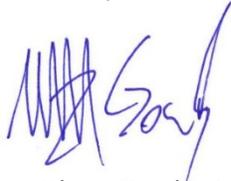
Yardstick Assessment Inc. (formerly Bannister Research) is conducting the City of Lacombe 2019 Citizen Satisfaction Survey. The survey launched in the first week of May and consisted of two parts: an open access online portal (still open) collecting unlimited data; and a telephone interview campaign designed to collect data from a specific sample of 400 citizens evenly spanning every adult demographic (i.e., males and females in every age category).

To survey this critical sample size, the company randomly dialed area phone numbers. Many were County residents who could not then be surveyed. Toward the end of the campaign, specific demographic quotas were reached and others, that hadn't yet been proportionally represented, were targeted for survey. Yardstick declined completing the survey with some contacted citizens, presumably as a time/cost saving measure. This, understandably caused consternation for some residents, who felt they had been told their opinion wasn't valid because of a specific demographic factor. Yardstick reports they declined under 10 citizens, in what is apparently a standard industry practice.

Yardstick's interviewers have scripts to use when declining to survey a citizen, and they also ensure to redirect the citizen to the online portal. Clearly, some citizens were offended and others feared a scam attempt, indicating a communication strategy that may have been insufficient. The City might avoid this in the future by using more robust public notice of the Survey; this year, the City did not provide notice through print media at all.

Most Lacombians freely give their time and effort to provide input if there is an opportunity, and the City must at all times preserve this openness and trust. The analysis of citizen responses in this survey will provide both Council and Administration with performance measurements of today and action for the future; many Council strategic goals specifically await this information. I hope this response alleviates your concerns to some degree, but please let me know if any further issues emerge.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Matthew Goudy". The signature is stylized with a large, looped initial "M" and a long, sweeping underline.

Matthew Goudy, P.Eng
Chief Administrative Officer