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# HAMILTON CITY QUALITY OF LIFE PULSE SURVEY

REPORT #3: July 2020

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# BACKGROUND & APPROACH



## BACKGROUND

**This report presents the third wave of this study. Wave by wave comparisons are conducted and highlighted as appropriate.**

**The purpose of this study is to understand the views and sentiments of residents in Hamilton City and track key indicators so that public products and services can be improved over time by the Hamilton City Council.**

Hamilton City Council has committed to improving the quality of life of its residents by including the following five key indicators in the 10 year plan:

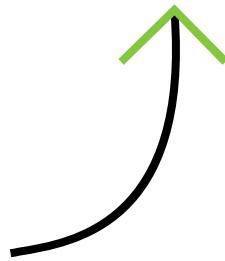
- The proportion of residents agreeing that Hamilton is a great place to live
- The proportion of residents saying that Hamilton has got better in the last 12 months
- The proportion of residents agreeing that they feel a sense of pride in the way Hamilton looks and feels
- The proportion of residents agreeing that they feel a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood
- The proportion of residents agreeing that they have confidence the Council makes decisions that are in the best interest of the city.



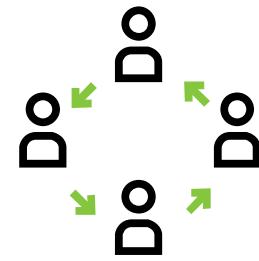
## APPROACH

- Online Survey via Nielsen's research partner panel (Dynata)
- Sample size: n=370
- Sample profile: Those aged 18 years and over who live in the Hamilton City area
- Average survey length: 6 minutes
- Incidence rate: 100%
- Weighting: Results are weighted by age, gender and ethnicity to be representative of those aged 18 years and over who live in the Hamilton City area
- Fieldwork period: Thursday 28 May – Friday 12 June 2020
  - Fieldwork for this wave took place during the COVID-19 global pandemic, while New Zealand was in alert levels 2 and 1, around 4 weeks after level 4 lockdown ended
- Significance testing: Statistically significant differences in this report are significant at the 95% confidence level. Only differences with a 5 percentage point difference from the total/ previous wave have been mentioned in this report
- **Note:** Due to differences in approach, the results presented in this report are not directly comparable with the biennial Quality of Life Survey conducted by a consortium of councils throughout New Zealand.

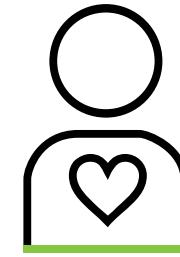
# SUMMARY



This wave, two out of the five key indicators have significantly increased – feeling a sense of community with others in the neighbourhood and having confidence in the Council making decisions that are in the best interests of Hamilton.



COVID-19 appears to have had a positive impact on residents, particularly on feeling a sense of community, with many saying it has bought them closer to their neighbours.



For the majority of measures it is those who were born outside of New Zealand and those who have lived in Hamilton for less than 5 years that tend to rate the indicators higher.

# INDICATORS SUMMARY

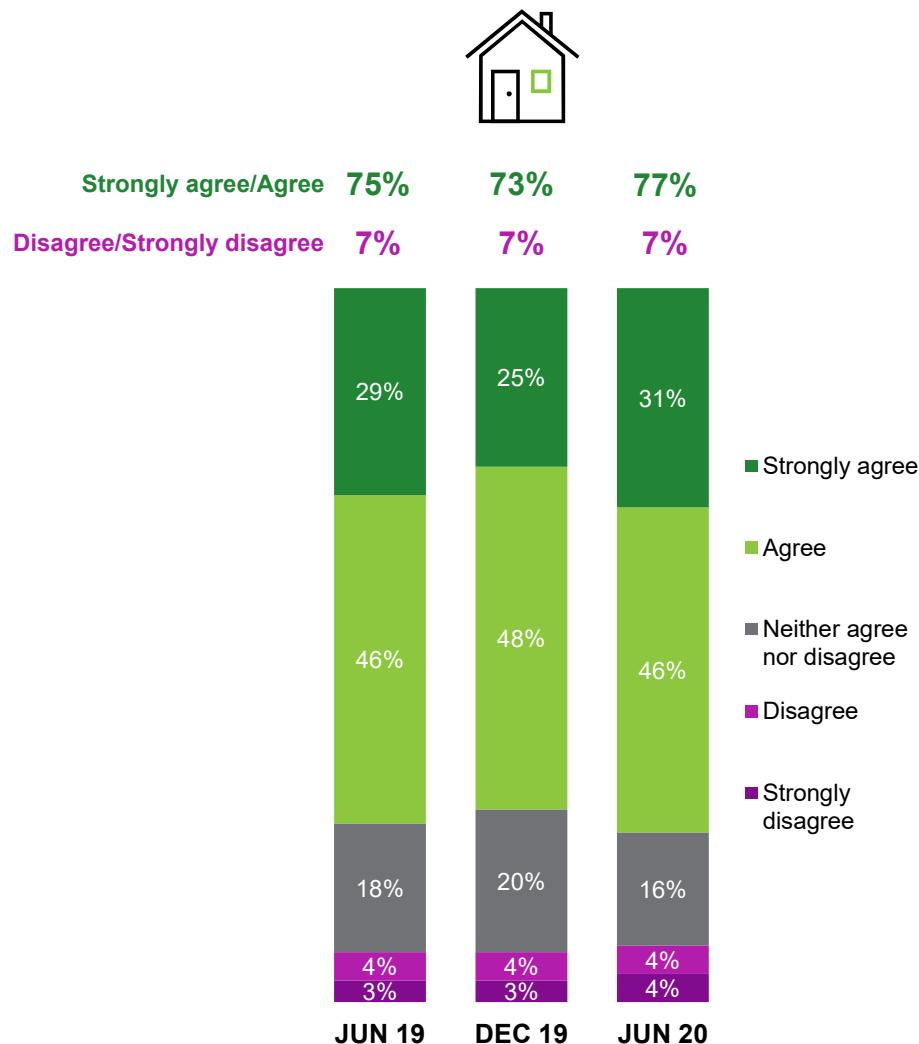
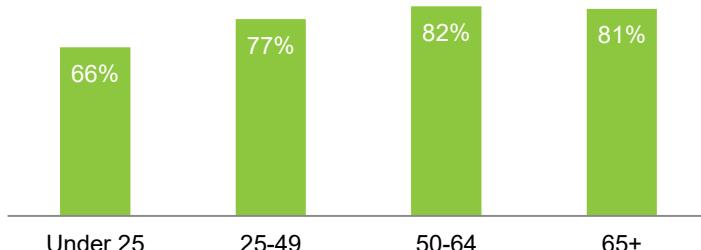
INDICATORS	RATING	CHANGE SINCE W2	TWO MOST PREVALENT THEMES FOR RATINGS GIVEN
 Hamilton is a great place to live	77% Agree 7% Disagree	+4 --	
 Better, worse or the same as a place to live compared with 12 months ago	32% Better 19% Worse	-3 -3	Good/improved/new amenities Growth - economy, businesses  More traffic/traffic congestion Crime/increased crime rate
 A sense of pride in the way Hamilton looks and feels	53% Agree 12% Disagree	+3 -1	Great place to live Beautiful scenery/street plantings/looks good  Rundown, dirty, untidy area Lacks appeal, character
 A sense of community with others in the neighbourhood	47% Agree 15% Disagree	+8 ▲ -3	Friendly, helpful people I know and get on well with my neighbours  People keep to themselves/no interaction with neighbours More undesirable elements (incl. drug addicts, gang members)
 Confidence in the Council making decisions that are in the best interests of Hamilton	42% Agree 16% Disagree	+12 ▲ -5	Do a great job/I agree with their decisions Trust in them/their reputation to do what is best  Ratepayers' money not being spent wisely Poor decision-making (incl. short term policies)

# IS HAMILTON A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE?

Agreement with Hamilton being a great place to live is not significantly different to last wave, 77% (compared with 73% in December 2019). Disagreement remains stable at 7%.

Compared to last wave, households without children (81%) are more likely to agree that Hamilton is a great place to live (70% in Dec 19).

As with previous waves, agreement is lower among younger age groups and higher among older age groups. Those aged under 25 are significantly less likely to agree (66% cf. 77% total).



Base: All Respondents; W1 (n=370), W2 (n=370), W3 (n=370)  
Q6. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "Hamilton is a great place to live"?

# ARE THINGS GETTING BETTER OR WORSE?

Half of residents believe Hamilton has remained the same as a place to live in the last 12 months. There are no significant changes in the proportion of those who think the city has got better or worse compared to December 2019.

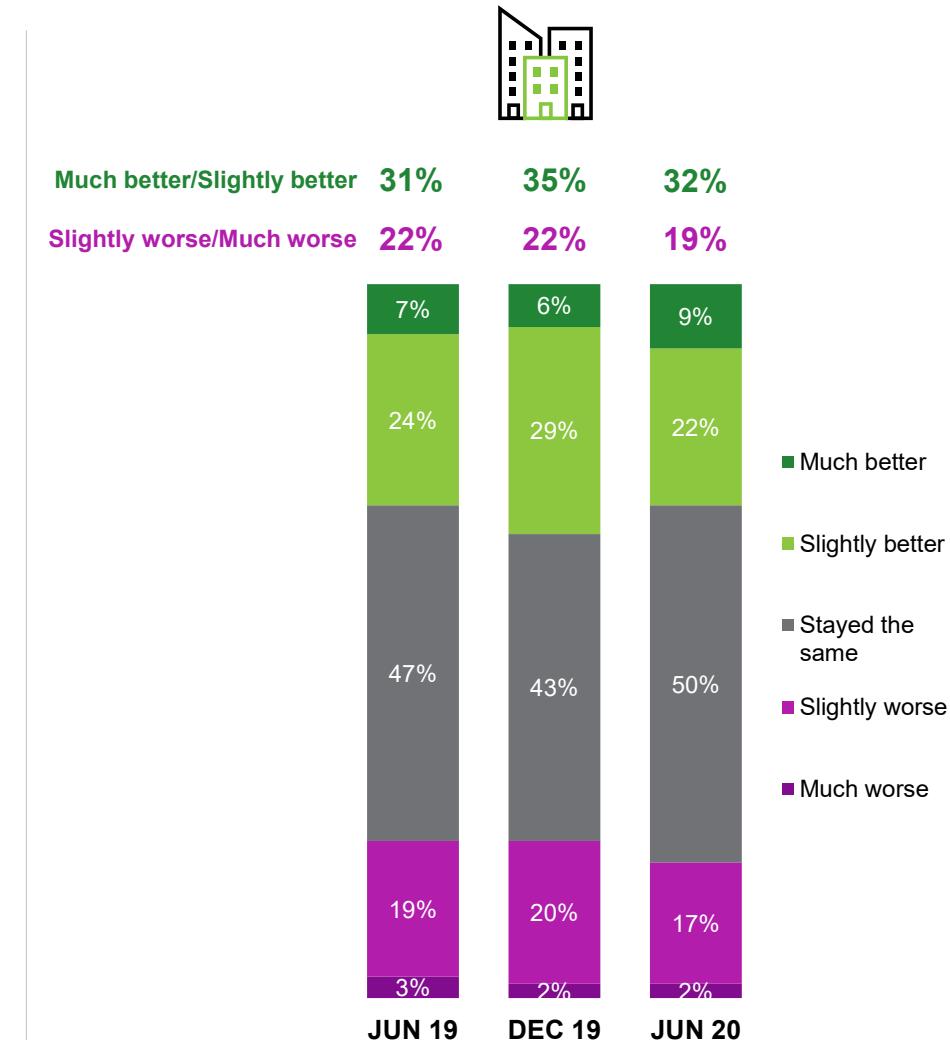
Similar to last wave, Asians/Indians (50% cf. 32% total) along with those born outside of New Zealand (42%) are more likely to say Hamilton has got better as a place to live in the last 12 months.

Those who have lived in Hamilton for 5-10 years are less likely to say it has gotten worse (8% cf. 19% total).

*"I feel like the city is expanding and developing. Lots of nice new parks, cycle ways and the CBD is looking great!"*

*"Hamilton is going through rapid urban sprawl resulting in increase traffic congestion and air pollution. There seems to be a lack of sustainable environmentally friendly city growth."*

*"Facilities and road improvements were a lot better such as better playgrounds, bike lanes."*

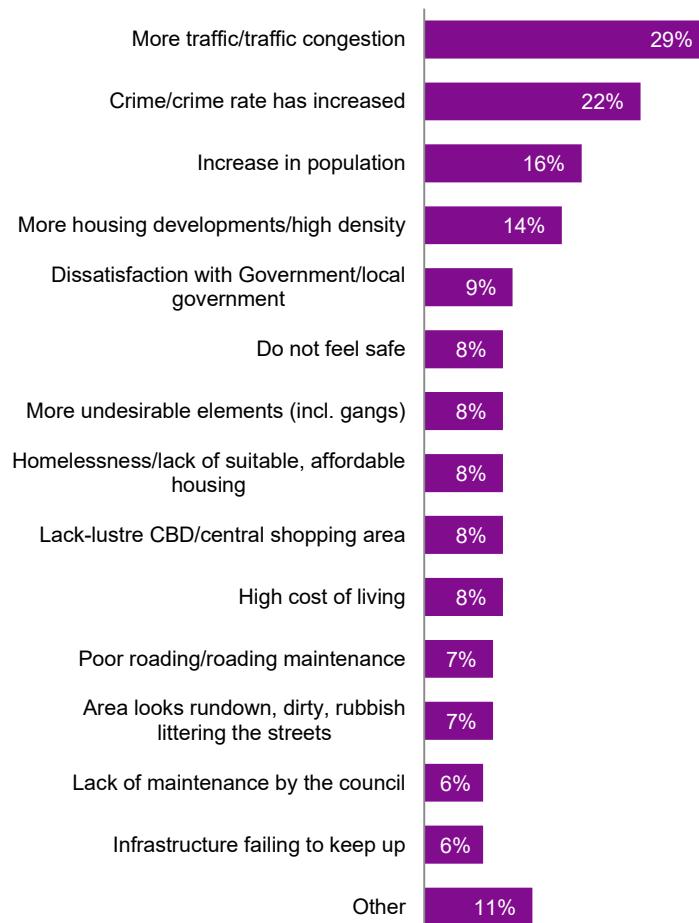


Base: Those who have lived in Hamilton for one or more years; W1 (n=348), W2 (n=343), W3 (n=338) Q7. And in the last 12 months, do you feel Hamilton has got better, worse or stayed the same as a place to live?

# WHY ARE THINGS GETTING BETTER OR WORSE?

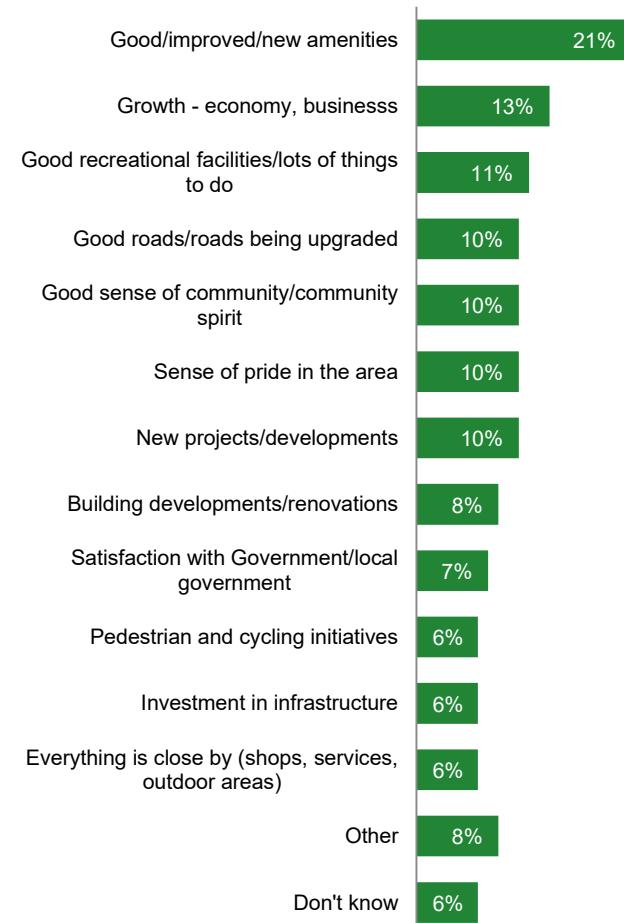
## Reasons for Hamilton becoming worse among n=64 who gave this rating

The top reasons for Hamilton becoming a worse place to live compared to a year ago are increased traffic (29%), crime (22%), population (16%) and housing developments (14%).



## Reasons for Hamilton becoming better among n=103 who gave this rating

Good/improved/new amenities (21%) and economic growth (13%) are the top reasons for residents saying that Hamilton has become a better place to live in the last 12 months.



Only showing reasons above 5% mentions

Base: Those who say Hamilton has got worse as a place to live (n=64)  
 Q8. And for what reasons do you say Hamilton has got worse as a place to live?

Base: Those who say Hamilton has got better as a place to live (n=103)  
 Q8. And for what reasons do you say Hamilton has got better as a place to live?

# DO PEOPLE HAVE PRIDE IN HAMILTON?

Residents' feeling of pride in Hamilton has remained stable with December 2019, with 53% agreeing and 12% disagreeing that they feel a sense of pride in the way Hamilton looks and feels.

Sentiment amongst those aged 50-64 has improved compared to the last wave as the proportion of those who agree with the statement has significantly increased (from 45% to 70% this wave). Those aged 65+ are less likely to agree this wave (from 71% to 49%).

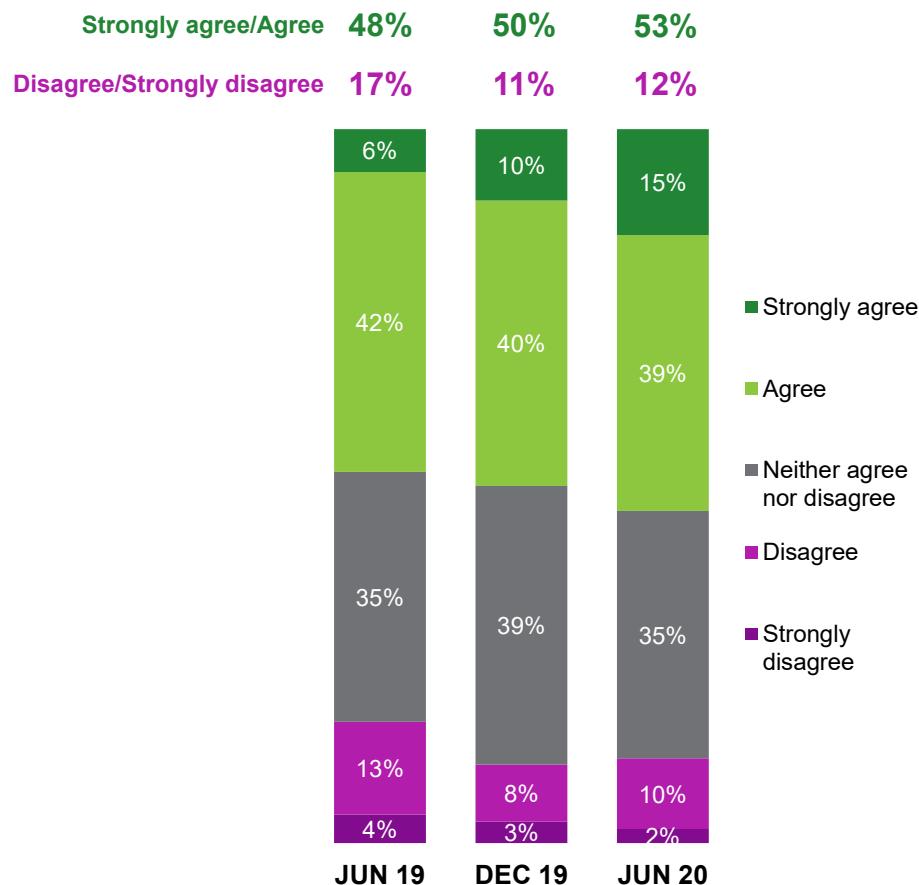
This wave, Māori (41% cf. 53% total) and those aged under 25 (31%) are less likely to agree that they feel a sense of pride in Hamilton.

*"Hamilton city itself is a pretty city with many streets having large, old established trees lining them and a few parks. The lake is also a nice area and only 5mins from the city. The surrounding suburbs are handy to the city and are tidy, attractive areas too."*

*"Easy to get around except when people going to work or returning from work when traffic much busier. River areas really attractive."*

*"Don't feel overly safe going out at night and there is a fair amount of rubbish outside in the streets."*

*"There are less vacant shops in the CBD. Wairere Drive has improved traffic flow around town. The City Council is keeping rates relatively under control."*



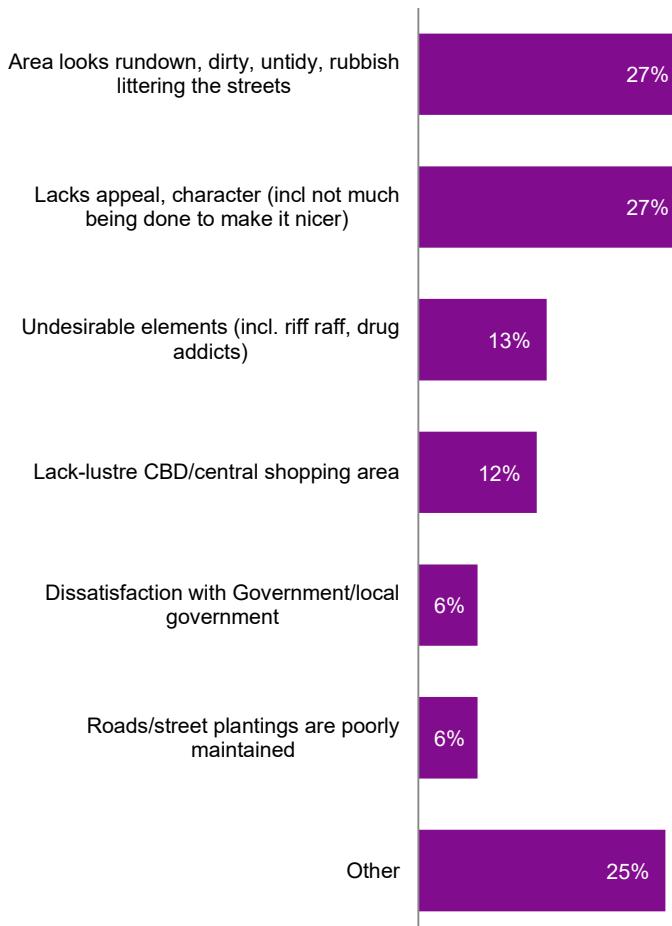
Base: All Respondents; W1 (n=370), W2 (n=370), W3 (n=370)

Q9. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "I feel a sense of pride in the way Hamilton looks and feels".

# REASONS FOR HAVING PRIDE/ NOT HAVING PRIDE

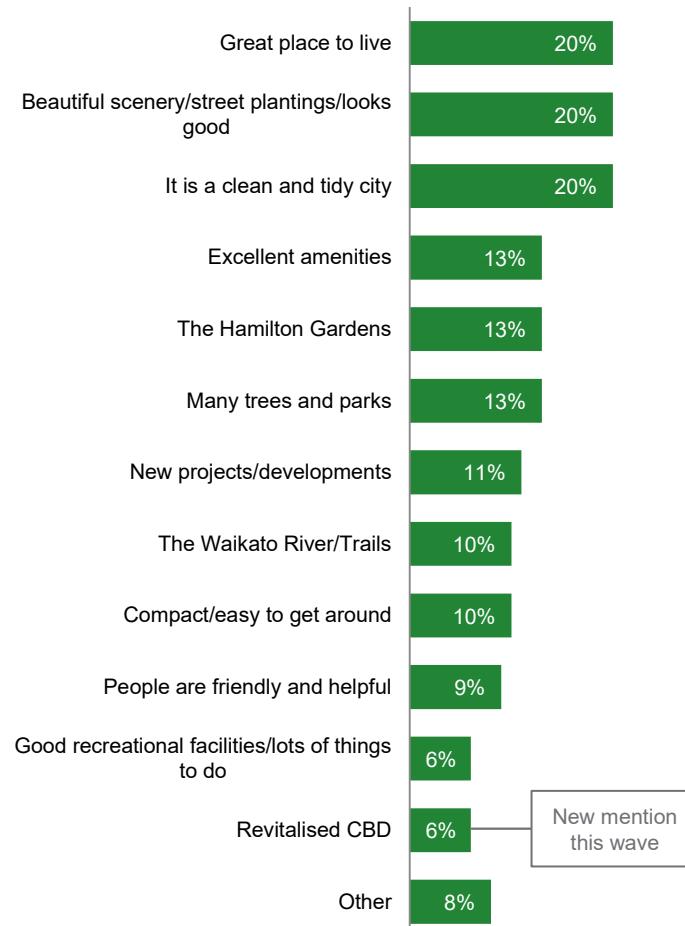
## Reasons for not having pride among n=47 who gave this rating

The top reasons for not having pride in Hamilton are the same as last wave – run down/untidy area (27%) and lacks appeal/character (27%).



## Reasons for having pride among n=188 who gave this rating

Great place to live (20%), beautiful scenery (20%) and cleanliness (20%) continue to be the primary reasons for residents saying they have pride in the way Hamilton looks and feels.



Only showing reasons above 5% mentions

Base: Those who disagree that they have pride in the way Hamilton looks and feels (n=47)  
Q10. And for what reasons do you disagree that you have pride in the way Hamilton looks and feels?

Base: Those who agree that they have pride in the way Hamilton looks and feels (n=188)  
Q10. And for what reasons do you disagree that you have pride in the way Hamilton looks and feels? 9

# DO PEOPLE FEEL A SENSE OF COMMUNITY?

Nearly half (47%) of Hamilton residents agree that they feel a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood which is significantly higher than the previous two waves. The proportion who disagree has fallen slightly over the three waves from 21% in June 2019 to 15% this wave.

The level of agreement has significantly increased within the following subgroups compared with the previous wave (Dec 19):

- Females (from 40% in Dec 19 to 52% this wave)
- Europeans (from 36% to 45%)
- Owner-occupiers (from 41% to 52%)
- Those who live in stand alone houses (from 39% to 50%).

Those aged 50-64 are significantly less likely to disagree that they feel a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood compared to the previous wave (9% cf. 23% in Dec 19).

This wave, those more likely than the total to agree they feel a sense of community are females (52% cf. 47% total) and those born outside of New Zealand (56%). Those more likely than the total to disagree are those aged under 25 (26% cf. 15%) and private renters (24%).

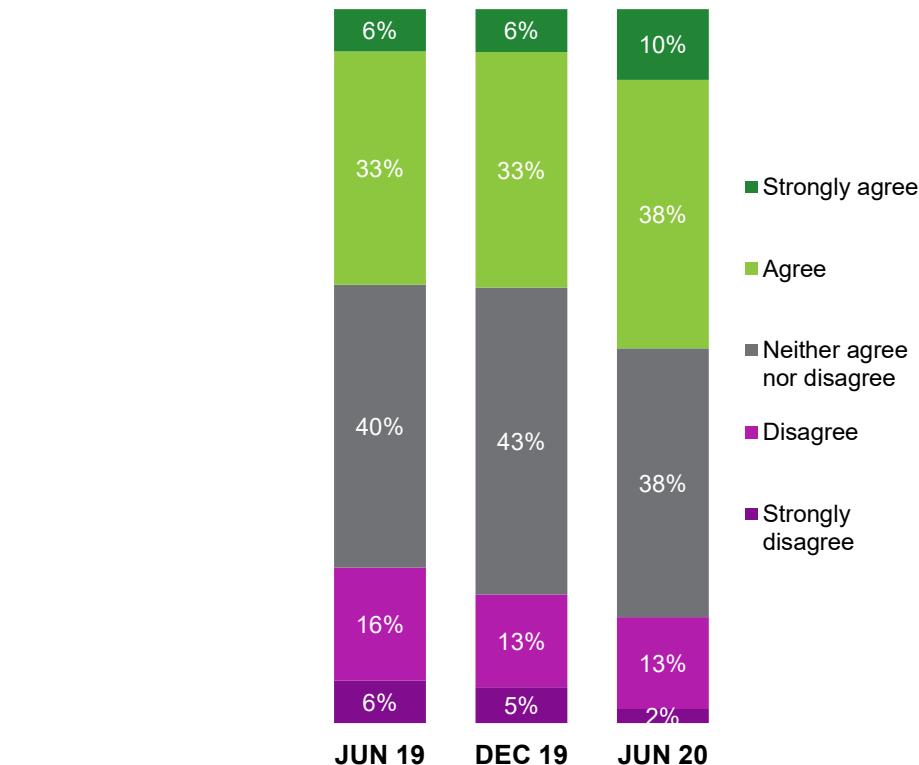
*“Displayed during the Covid 19 lockdown, community was very considerate of others and offering assistance in my area.”*

*“I do not want to be associated with neighbours or feel the need to have a sense of community privacy, is the best policy.”*

*“This has probably come around more from covid 19 isolation. Neighbours are keeping an eye on each other and speaking more.”*



	Strongly agree/Agree	39%	39%	47% ▲
Disagree/Strongly disagree	21%	18%	15%	



▲ Significantly different  
▼ to the previous wave

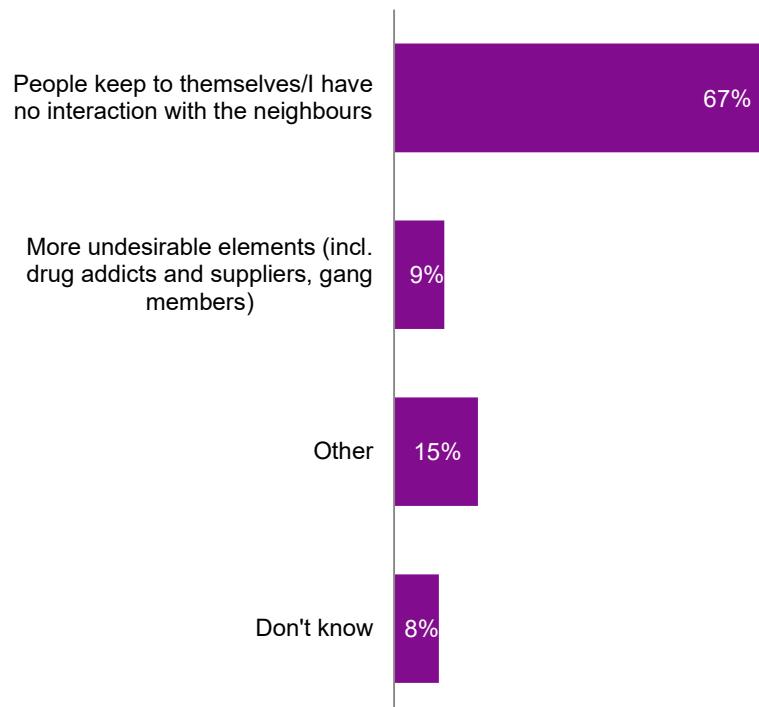
Base: All Respondents; W1 (n=370), W2 (n=370), W3 (n=370)

Q11. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? “I feel a sense of community with others in my neighbourhood”.

# REASONS FOR FEELING/NOT FEELING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

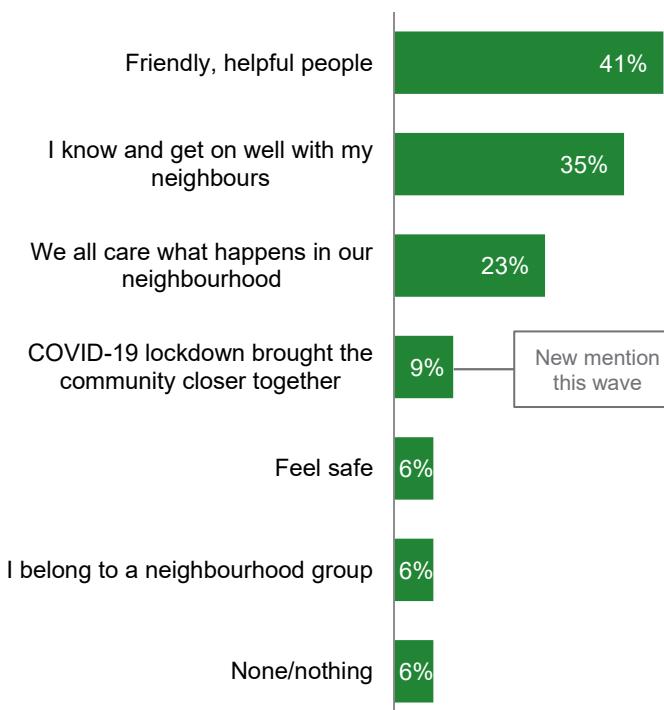
## Reasons for not feeling a sense of community among n=60 who gave this rating

Nearly 7 in 10 (67%) of those who don't feel a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood say that everyone keeps to themselves/they have no interaction with their neighbours.



## Reasons for feeling a sense of community among n=165 who gave this rating

Friendly, helpful people (41%) and getting on well with neighbours (35%) are the main reasons for feeling a sense of community with others in the neighbourhood. This wave 9% specifically mentioned that the COVID-19 lockdown brought them together.



Only showing reasons above 5% mentions

Base: Those who disagree that they feel a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood (n=60) Q12. And for what reasons do you not feel a sense of community with others in your neighbourhood?

Base: Those who agree that they feel a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood (n=165) Q12. And for what reasons do you feel a sense of community with others in your neighbourhood? 11

# CONFIDENCE IN COUNCIL DECISION-MAKING

The proportion of Hamilton residents who agree that they have confidence in the Council's decision making has significantly increased. The proportion who disagree continues to decrease over the three waves.

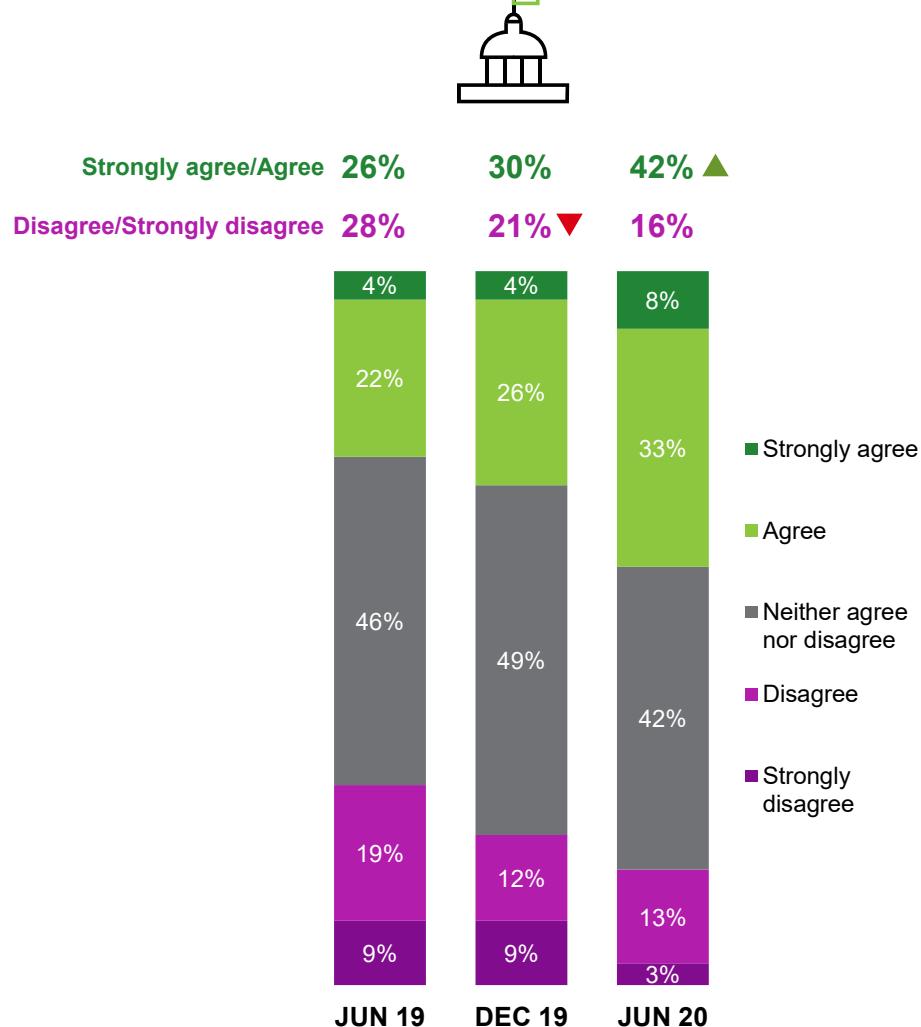
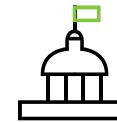
The level of agreement has significantly increased within the following subgroups compared with the previous wave (Dec 19):

- Males (from 29% to 43%)
- Females (from 32% to 41%)
- Europeans (from 27% to 39%)
- Those aged 25-49 (from 33% to 47%)
- Owner-occupiers (from 26% to 40%)
- Those who were born outside of New Zealand (from 34% to 52%)
- Those who have lived in Hamilton for less than 5 years (from 38% to 54%)
- Those who have children living at home (from 32% to 46%).

This wave, those more likely than the total to agree that they have confidence in the Council's decision making are Asian/Indian (57% cf. 42%), those born outside of New Zealand (52%) and those who have lived in Hamilton for less than 5 years (54%). Those more likely than the total to disagree are males (22% cf. 16%) and those aged 65+ (30%).

*"Too many projects that turn out to be connected to councillors in some way, maintenance work being done in more affluent areas and other areas left to become more and more run down."*

*"I have confidence that those who are in charge to make the decisions best for the city have enough preparation and consider all stakeholders when deciding what is a worthwhile investment in the city."*



▲ Significantly different to the previous wave  
▼ to the previous wave

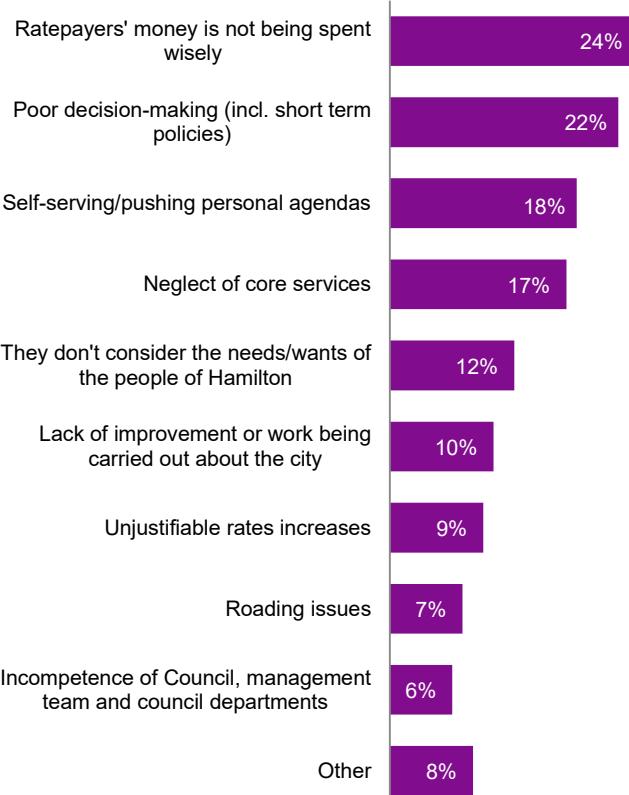
Base: All Respondents; W1 (n=370), W2 (n=370), W3 (n=370)

Q13. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "Overall, I have confidence that the Council makes decisions that are in the best interests of my city".

# REASONS FOR HAVING CONFIDENCE/NOT HAVING CONFIDENCE IN COUNCIL DECISION-MAKING

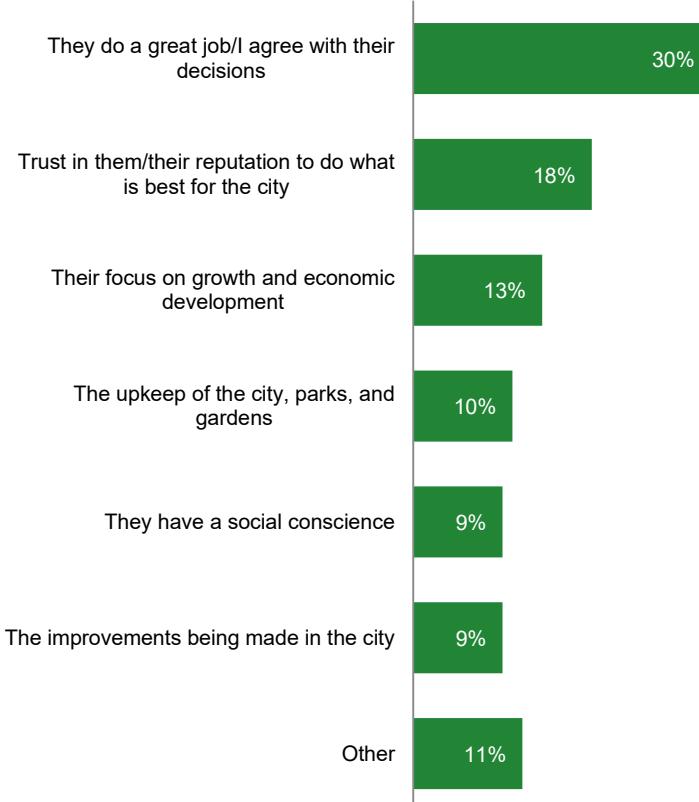
## Reasons for not having confidence in Council decision-making among n=54 who gave this rating

Residents who have less confidence in the Council believe ratepayers' money is not being spent wisely (24%) and that they make poor decisions (22%).



## Reasons for having confidence in Council decision-making among n=146 who gave this rating

Those who have more confidence in the Council believe they are doing a great job (30%) and they trust them to do what is best for the city (18%).



Only showing reasons above 5% mentions

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Base: Those who disagree that the Council makes decisions that are in the best interests of their city (n=54) Q14. And for what reasons do you not have confidence that the Council makes decisions that are in the best interests of your city?

Base: Those who agree that the Council makes decisions that are in the best interests of their city (n=146) Q14. And for what reasons do you have confidence that the Council makes decisions that are in the best interests of your city? 13



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