

MFC

2019 Client Satisfaction Survey

Municipal Administrators

The 2019 Client Satisfaction Survey for Municipal Administrators was launched in January through the AMA listserv as well as direct emails to villages and municipal enterprises. The survey was directed at Chief Administrative Officers, Clerk/Treasurers, Directors of Finance, Village Clerks, and Municipal Enterprises Administrators. Municipal Enterprises were added this year as they do represent a portion of our clients. Questions included how they perceived the level of service they received, their opinion on current and potential services, and suggestions for improvement. Of the 50 municipalities, 22 Villages and 10 Municipal Enterprises to potentially complete the survey, 21 responded, providing a 24% response rate.

Demographics

Of the respondents who completed the survey, 47% were from towns; 38% were from rural municipalities; 9% were from regionals; and 5% were from municipal enterprises. No villages responded. Those who completed the survey indicated that they participate in MFC debenture issues frequently, with 88% of respondents having borrowed from MFC at least once in the last two years.

Section I: Communication and Client Satisfaction

The first section of the survey gauges the level of communication between the MFC and its clients. Results indicate that most respondents contact MFC at least twice per year (90%), typically for information on the debenture application process (52%) or debenture pricing (55%). Respondents indicated that they were either very satisfied (79%), satisfied (17%), or neutral (3%) with the products and services provided by the MFC.

Contacting MFC staff directly was highly rated for the long-term financing, short-term borrowing programs and the Debt Affordability Model. Additionally, AMA Conferences and Municipal Finance Officers workshops were popular sources of information for the Financial Management Best Practices, GFOA Sponsorship and FCM Green Fund Loan programs. This information will be useful in helping to determine the most effective avenues for communicating about these programs in the future.

Section II: Debenture Process

The second section asked respondents for their view of the MFC's debenture process. The clear majority (100%) indicated that the current debenture schedule of twice a year (spring and fall) meets their needs. Most (96%) also agreed that the terms and structures offered by MFC on its debenture issues were flexible enough to meet their needs. When surveyed about MFC's turnaround time from the pricing of the debenture until the time the municipality received its funds, the responses were positive. Of the respondents, 100% agreed that the turnaround time was reasonable.

Finally, respondents felt that their questions about debenture issues were handled well by MFC staff. All respondents agreed that staff were knowledgeable regarding the debenture process and 100% indicated that their questions were answered in a timely manner.

Section III: MFC Products and Services

The third section of the survey determined the respondents' opinion of the services that are currently offered by the MFC. Some potential new services and products were also examined. These answers can help MFC determine respondents' interest in maintaining or taking on different products and services.

According to the results, the most effective products and services for municipal administrators are:

- Training on the Debt Affordability Model (100%)
- Long-term capital finance planning (100%)
- Training on the MFC's Financial Management Best Practices (97%)
- Municipal Finance Officers Workshops (100%)
- Short Term Loan Program (100%)
- Training on Municipal Finance (100%)
- High Interest Savings Program (100%)
- Mentoring Program (100%)

Section IV: Other Financial Programs

This section was designed to determine how well MFC promotes its programs and services, aside from the fall and spring debentures. By far the product that respondents had the most awareness of is the Debt Affordability Model. 87.5% of respondents are aware of the model: 50% have used it and 37.5% are aware of it but have not used it.

While MFC has continued to actively communicate other programs, however, uptake of them is still comparatively low. Most respondents indicated that they were aware of the following but had not used them yet: the short-term loan program (74%), GFOA Sponsorship program (58%), Financial Management Best Practices (46%), High Interest Savings Program (87.5%), Mentoring Program (79%) and FCM Green Fund (46%). This trend represents an opportunity for MFC to reconsider its strategies for promotion of these programs.

Staff actively assists municipalities in populating and maintaining the Debt Affordability Model. The success of this program may indicate that staff needs to take a more hands-on approach to helping municipalities implement MFC's other programs. This is not surprising given that municipalities are increasingly busy and strapped for resources.

Conclusion

The respondents who completed this survey provided MFC with useful information. The administrators who completed the survey are pleased with the services they are receiving. Indeed, all respondents felt that MFC is a valuable organization that provides long-term financing its clients.

As in previous years, there is room for MFC to improve in terms of communicating the benefits of certain programs and services so that they can be utilized more frequently. Furthermore, administrators appear to be pleased with the timing of the debenture issues and with the flexibility that MFC has to offer.