



THE CORPORATION OF THE DISTRICT OF SAANICH

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News Release

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Saanich Council Surveys Residents

Citizen input provides feedback to improve municipal services

Saanich, BC, June 21, 2006 – Today, Saanich Council released the results of a comprehensive survey of citizens' ideas and opinions of Saanich as a community.

The eight page long 2006 Saanich Survey was mailed to a random selection of almost 1200 residents on February 28. The survey asked respondents to share their perceptions on the quality of municipal service delivery, to indicate their preferences on the allocation of municipal resources, and to tell Council what direction the municipality should head in the future. A total of 382 surveys were received – a response rate of 33%.

Survey results show that 88% of respondents rate the overall quality of life in Saanich as "good" or "very good". When asked why they like Saanich, respondents most often touted the municipality's central location, its quiet, safe, friendly neighbourhoods, and its extensive parks and trails system.

However, overwhelmingly, residents voiced primary concern about transportation problems – as detrimental to their quality of life.

When asked to rate 58 different local government services, Saanich residents rated 84% of them as meeting or exceeding their expectations. Residents give particularly

high praise to Saanich's fire fighting, parks, trails, recreation facilities and programs, and landscaping of public property.

Conversely, residents consider key challenges include building inspection/permits and bylaw enforcement.

Not surprisingly, residents voiced a strong preference for low property taxes and limited or no increases in services, preferring instead that a greater percentage of revenue be raised through user fees. When asked to spend an imaginary \$100 on a selection of municipal projects, residents allotted the largest portion to roads and traffic control, following closely by the municipal water system and then the municipal sewer and drains system.

When asked to give overall ratings of the performance and direction of the District of Saanich, residents were generally pleased, with fewer than 6% of the population voicing their displeasure.

Mayor Frank Leonard said the public opinion survey results are an important part of the Municipality's Strategic Plan. "Council and staff will use this public feedback to guide corporate decision-making and the financial planning process."

The complete report on the Saanich 2006 Citizen Survey is available for download from the Saanich website at www.saanich.ca or by contacting municipal staff at (250) 475-5415.

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