

BUDGET 2024

WHAT WE
HEARD



sooke.ca



letstalk.sooke.ca/budget



TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Central to Sooke's history, we acknowledge that Sooke occupies the unceded traditional territories of T'Sou-ke Nation and Scia'new First Nation. We recognize the ongoing presence, influence, and rights of these Nations within the community.

The ancestors of the T'Sou-ke Nation and Scia'new Nation have lived in and stewarded these lands and waters since Time Immemorial.

The District of Sooke makes this land acknowledgment to raise awareness of the ongoing Indigenous presence and land rights in the territory that includes and encompasses Sooke. It invites us, a local government, to reflect on how colonial processes are ongoing – and from which we have benefited – as well as the changes we must make to honour the Indigenous peoples and the lands that we inhabit.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The District of Sooke invited residents to provide input into the District's **2024 Budget** from **June 21 to August 20, 2023**.

Throughout the engagement period, participants provided feedback through surveys and community pop-ups — engaging more than **1,000 persons** through all mediums.

This What We Heard Report summarizes our approach to engagement, including who we heard from, how we listened, and what we learned. What we heard from participants will be used to help inform the **2024 budget** and share with District Council what is important to residents as they work to update the financial plan and finalize the budget for the upcoming year.

To ensure best efforts were made to provide those wishing to participate with an opportunity to do so, the engagement process allowed for both light touch points and deep conversations. Through this engagement, we sought to understand more about:

- Residents' quality of life and opportunities for the District to enhance the quality of life for our residents;
- The importance of various local government services and the value residents feel they are receiving for current services;
- What changes residents would like the District to make regarding services; and
- How much residents would like to see invested in long-term infrastructure maintenance and replacement.

We received a range of feedback, with key priority areas emerging:

- Ability to safely walk or bike around Sooke;
- Traffic planning and management, including road maintenance;
- Emergency response services (police and fire);
- Parks and greenspaces (including care for the environment);
- Health and wellness services; and
- Community planning.

Through this engagement, we also looked to educate residents on the current availability of District services and the limitations of the District's budget.

A variety of engagement tactics made it possible for the greatest number of voices to be heard given available resources. These experiences included detailed information on the [Let's Talk Sooke Budget information page \(letstalk.sooke.ca/budget\)](http://letstalk.sooke.ca/budget), ten community pop-ups at local parks and markets with an interactive dot-voting station, and survey in three forms: digital short form, digital long form, random household sample print survey.

While analysis and interpretation have been conducted in-house with best efforts to exclude any potential bias, raw data is included in this report in our commitment to complete transparency.

KEY LEARNINGS

Summarized below are some key learnings and conclusions from the Budget 2024 engagement.

Areas of priority: the ability to safely walk or bike around Sooke; traffic planning and management, including road maintenance; emergency response services (police and fire); parks and greenspaces (including care for the environment); health and wellness services; and community planning.

Those participating in the budget conversation expressed clear priorities for District resourcing. The themes emerge consistently through each participation medium - whether survey or dialogue - and in responses describing top priorities as well as those ranked at the bottom of lowest priorities.

To increase services, an increase in property taxes is required. In doing so, staff are committed to ensuring utmost fiscal responsibility with an investment in priorities expressed by the community.

At the request of residents during last year's budget engagement, an option to express where residents may wish to pay more to see services increase was asked in this year's budget conversation.

The longer engagement period and simplified survey work well for Sooke residents.

Engagement rates increased by an estimated 50% this year with numerous comments received applauding the process. Survey participation increased by 34% and in-person engagement increased by an estimated 75%.

Capture non-resident and youth perspectives through future budget engagement processes.

Staff are always looking to evolve the process to receive the most relevant data and inspire ongoing commitment to local government engagement. Keen interest was expressed to include these two audiences in future budget engagements.

ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

The District of Sooke Budget experience is meant to be accessible, inclusive, practical, informative and fun! The experience has been iterative over the last three years to determine the best approach for our community. It evolved this year to include:

- 1-minute two-question survey (short form);
- More comprehensive 10-question, approximately 15-minute, survey (long form);
- 1-question pop-up dot voting experience, with a question pulled from the surveys; and
- Paid postage print survey to a random sample of 200 households in Sooke.

Both surveys were available from June 21, 2023 to August 20, 2023. Most participants participated in the survey on August 17, 2023 with 116 visits. Engagement was lowest on July 2, 2023 with two visits. A total of 268 (short and long) surveys were returned.

Comparatively, in 2022, the budget survey was available from June 15 to July 17, 2022. Most participants engaged on the platform on June 29, 2022, with over 200 visits. The engagement was lowest on June 19, 2022, with ten site visits. A total of 200 surveys were returned.

Annual Budget Survey

Short form

The short-form survey provided residents short on time with the opportunity to offer formal input. It asked three questions:

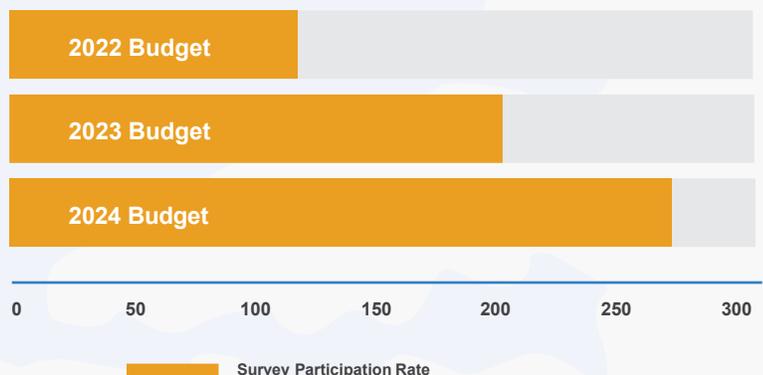
- Select the FIVE areas that are MOST important to you.
- Select the FIVE areas that are LEAST important to you.
- How much are you willing to contribute through taxes on an asset management program?

Long-form

The short-form survey provided residents with the opportunity to offer fulsome input. It asked:

- Please rate your overall satisfaction with the quality of life in Sooke.
- Please tell us what you like MOST about living in Sooke.
- Please tell us what you like LEAST about living in Sooke.
- In your opinion, as a resident of Sooke, what is the single most important issue facing the community that should receive the greatest attention from the District?
- Overall, how satisfied are you with the value of District services (the amount paid for the service received)?
- Rate value for specific service areas (Excellent Value; Good Value; Satisfactory; Poor Value)
- Priorities – select your top FIVE highest priorities.
- Priorities – select your top FIVE lowest priorities.
- Resource allocation – Rate allocations of resources (no local government resources; minimal resources; keep same; increase resources; high resource priority)

Survey Participation Rate



ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

Interactive “Pop-up”

The District attended ten local markets with an exhibit space (“pop-up”) sharing information and providing an interactive experience during evenings and weekends. The “interactive experience” invited persons to assign five blue dots (representative of limited tax dollars available) to twenty-seven boxes (representative of various services).

This activity intends to communicate how critical prioritization is – we cannot do everything all at once. Much like a resident’s household budget, there are limited dollars available and difficult decisions are required in determining where investments are made.

New to the 2023 experience, emerging from feedback received in 2022, residents were provided with the opportunity to place a green dot if they were willing to pay more in property taxes to ensure service levels increased in that area. At every pop-up, multiple residents for “the green dots.”

Inclusion and access

Surveys were accessible digitally, including at local markets where print surveys were available for anyone wishing to participate without computer/internet access. An option to complete the survey by phone was also provided and utilized by those with self-proclaimed lower computer literacy levels.

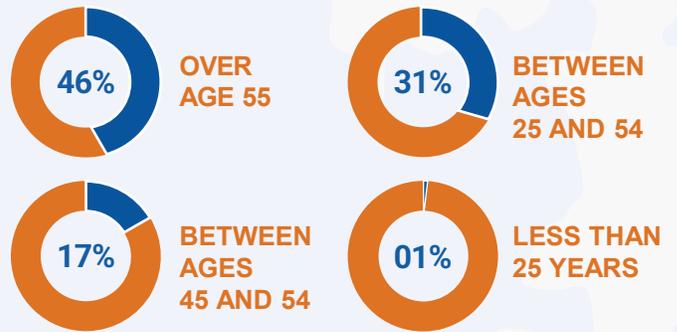
WHO WE ENGAGED

An optional disclosure of demographic information was included in the long-form survey.

Most survey respondents (96%) were homeowners with the remaining portion, 4%, indicating they rent in Sooke.

The greatest long-form survey participation was seen from those who indicated that they have lived in Sooke for more than 10 years (Figure 1)

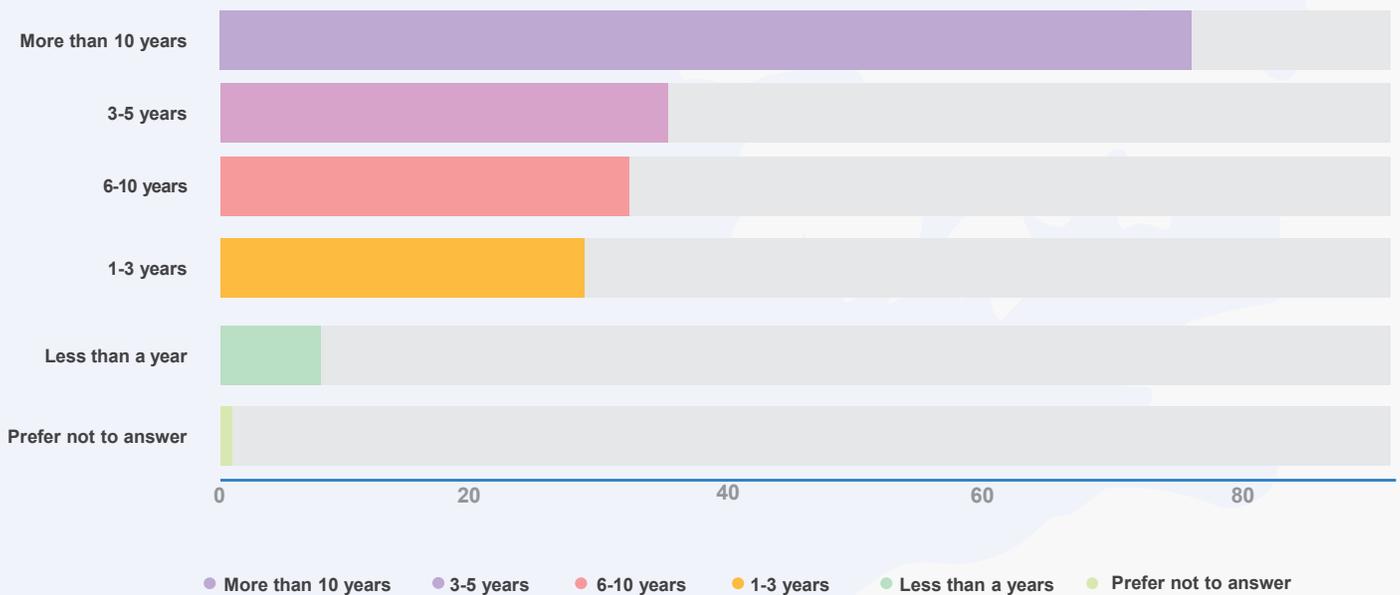
The age of long-form survey respondents reported to be:



Participation at the interactive “pop-ups” were generally participants aged **40 and 60 years**, with additional interest from youth.

How long have you lived in SOOKE?

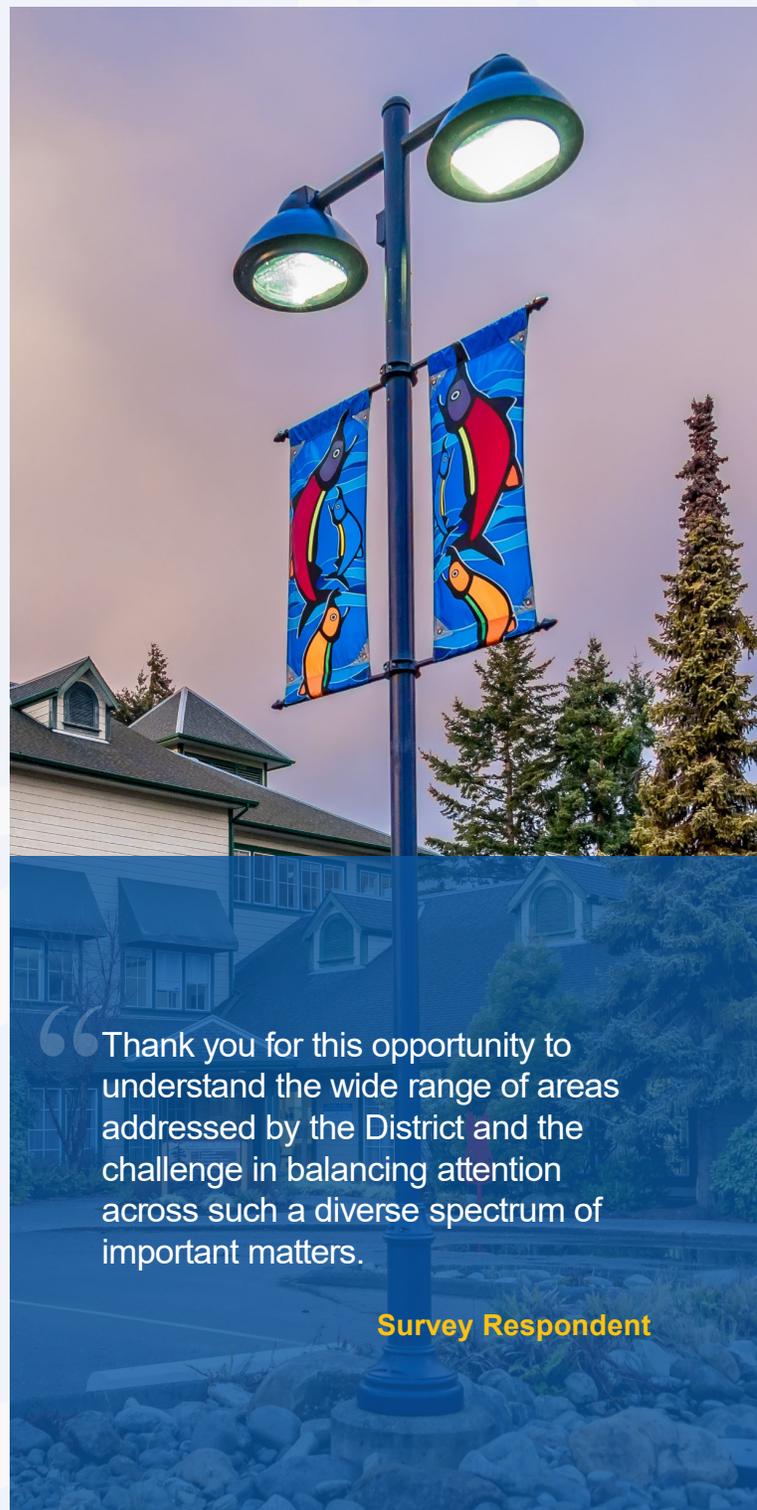
180 Responses – 2 Empty



FEEDBACK SUMMARY

The following offers a high-level summary of the feedback gathered:

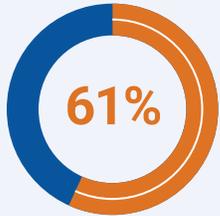
- **61%** of survey respondents rate their quality of life in Sooke **4 or 5 stars**; **30%** rate their quality of life in Sooke as average or **3 stars** and **9%** indicated a less desirable quality of life with **8%** giving **2 stars** and **1%** giving **1 star**.
- **72%** of respondents to the long-form survey report being satisfied with the overall value they are receiving for District services with **45%** rating the value paid for District services received a **3 out of 5**; **20%** rating a **4 out of 5** and **7%** rating **5 out of 5**.
- In looking at specific service areas, the majority of residents expressed satisfaction with ALL District service areas (asked about on the long-form survey)
- Long-form respondents indicated the highest level of satisfaction with Fire Rescue Services with **90%** of survey respondents indicating they are satisfied or feel they are receiving good or excellent value from this service area.
- Long-form respondents indicated the lowest level of satisfaction with local roads with **59%** of survey respondents indicating they are satisfied or feel they are receiving good or excellent value from this service area.
- Community priorities were identified as:
 - Ability to safely walk or bike around Sooke;
 - Traffic planning and management, including road maintenance;
 - Emergency response services (police and fire);
 - Parks and greenspaces (including care for the environment);
 - Health and wellness services; and
 - Community planning.



“Thank you for this opportunity to understand the wide range of areas addressed by the District and the challenge in balancing attention across such a diverse spectrum of important matters.

Survey Respondent

QUALITY OF LIFE



The majority **61%** of long-form survey respondent rates their quality of life as **4 or 5 out of 5 stars.**

When describing what residents like most about living in Sooke, nature and the outdoors were most expressed.

When describing what residents like least about living in Sooke, traffic was most expressed. Traffic was also expressed most commonly as the single most important issue facing Sooke that should receive the greatest attention from the District.

Please rate your overall with the quality of life in Sooke

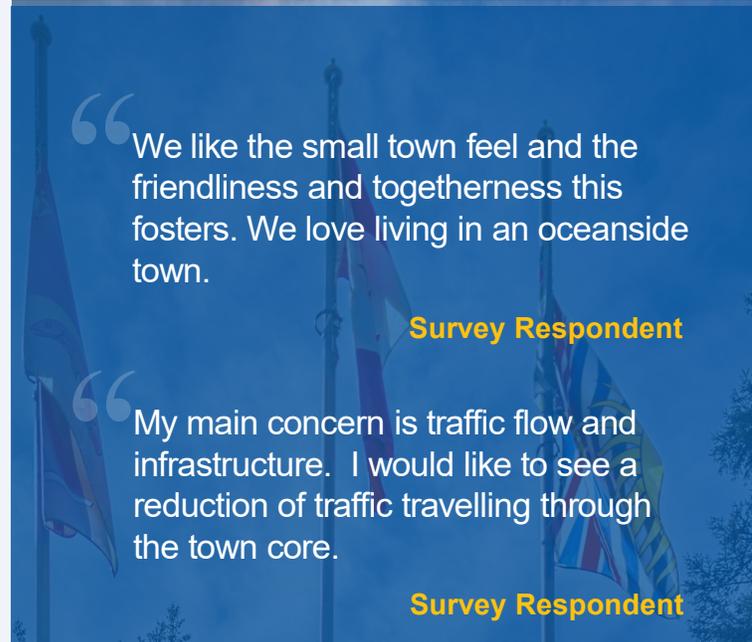
165 Responses-17 Empty



3.64
Avg. Responses

165
Responses

| | Responses | % |
|-------|-----------|-----|
| ★★★★★ | 21 | 13% |
| ★★★★☆ | 79 | 48% |
| ★★★☆☆ | 50 | 30% |
| ★★☆☆☆ | 14 | 8% |
| ★☆☆☆☆ | 1 | 1% |



MORE ABOUT QUALITY OF LIFE

Quality of life refers to the overall well-being and satisfaction that an individual experiences in various aspects of their lives. It encompasses physical, emotional, social, and environmental factors that contribute to one's happiness, fulfillment, and sense of contentment. Quality of life is subjective and can vary from person to person, as it is influenced by personal preferences, values, and circumstances.

Some key components that contribute to the quality of life include:

Physical well-being: This includes access to healthcare, nutritious food, clean water, safe housing, and a healthy environment. It involves maintaining good physical health, being free from pain or limitations, and having the ability to engage in daily activities without significant hindrances.

Mental and emotional well-being: This aspect involves feeling mentally and emotionally stable, content, and fulfilled. It includes having positive self-esteem, managing stress effectively, engaging in meaningful relationships, and having a sense of purpose and happiness in life.

Social connections and relationships: Strong social connections, supportive relationships, and a sense of belonging are crucial for a high quality of life. Positive interactions with family, friends, colleagues, and the wider community help foster a sense of connectedness, social support, and overall well-being.

Economic well-being: Financial stability and security play a significant role in determining quality of life. Access to employment opportunities, fair wages, economic resources, and social safety nets contribute to a higher standard of living and greater financial freedom.

Education and personal development: Access to education and continuous learning opportunities contribute to personal growth, intellectual stimulation, and broader career prospects. Lifelong learning enhances skills and knowledge, and promotes cultural and social integration, thereby improving quality of life.

Safety and security: Feeling safe and secure in one's community is essential for quality of life. Factors such as low crime rates, effective law enforcement, and access to emergency services create a sense of security and peace of mind.

Environmental well-being: A clean, sustainable, and natural environment contributes to quality of life. Access to parks, recreational areas, clean air, and a healthy ecological balance are vital for physical and mental well-being.

It is important to note that quality of life is a multifaceted concept and can be influenced by various socioeconomic factors, cultural backgrounds, and individual circumstances. Collaboration between individuals, neighborhoods and the local government while striving for equitable opportunities and resources can enhance quality of life.



What do you like **MOST** About living in Sooke?

When asked to describe what residents enjoy **MOST** about living in Sooke, a theme emerges that captures the natural environment:

| WORD/PHRASE | MENTION # |
|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Nature/ Outdoors / Outside | 55 |
| Ocean / Water / Waterfront | 45 |
| Community | 35 |
| Small town | 34 |
| People | 26 |
| Parks / Greenspaces | 23 |
| Quiet | 19 |
| Fresh Air / High air quality | 14 |
| Trees | 8 |
| Climate | 5 |
| Peace / Peaceful / Peacefulness | 5 |

“ Spending time outside cycling, swimming, kayaking, paddle-boarding, hiking and at community events (markets, fine arts show, Fall fair, etc..

Survey Respondent

“ Great People in a community whose population is growing at an incredible rate. People are what create an atmosphere and our many levels of government actually do take good care of us here.

Survey Respondent

“ Sense of community, proximity to nature and wilderness, the growing diversity, a chance to get it right around affordable housing.

Survey Respondent

“ We like the small town feel and the friendliness and togetherness this fosters. We love living in an oceanside town.

Survey Respondent

“ Great view of ocean and mountains. Living in the wilderness/urban interface.

Survey Respondent

“ Quiet natural setting, friendly residents, small-town feel.

Survey Respondent

“ Small town, wildlife and living close to the ocean.

Survey Respondent

“ The spirit of community. Moved here 7 years ago and found this a very welcoming place, many opportunities to volunteer, join clubs, get out into nature, hills and beaches. Love this place.

Survey Respondent

What do you like **LEAST** About living in Sooke?

When asked to describe what residents enjoy LEAST about living in Sooke, a clear theme emerges that captures traffic:

| WORD/PHRASE | MENTION # |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| Traffic / Road | 86 |
| Development | 23 |
| Health / Medical / Doctor / Hospital | 19 |
| Housing | 13 |
| Business / Retail | 10 |
| Amenities (lacking) | 8 |
| Homelessness | 7 |
| (Lack of) Waterfront Access | 5 |
| Jobs | 5 |

¹Comments about “development” speak a mix of the type of development and concerns with the amount of development, such as:

- “unbridled development and traffic congestion”
- “no commercial development”
- “the poor and unfortunate taste in housing development”

²General context appears to be lacking diversity and competitive pricing.

“The rate of growth and development is rapidly changing Sooke's character and we're losing all the qualities of life that we sought when we settled here years ago. Infrastructure (transportation in particular) isn't keeping up. We once had a great community and we're ruining it.

Survey Respondent

“That virtually few parks located close to the water in Sooke are even developed and most lack basic infrastructure. Too much money goes toward only a few parks and not enough left to distribute to other areas. This is poor planning and distribution of funds.

Survey Respondent

“The delay on the Billing Kaltasin waster water sewer system is starting to become farcical considering study in 2010 deemed it urgently required for local health of our Sooke Bay beaches and sea life. 13 years onward and nothing but hot air and excuses from council while our beaches are dying because of wastewater leeching from old septic fields.

Survey Respondent

“Lack of services, lack of things to do in the evening, lack of local businesses, lack of local parks, lack of walkable waterfront, overpriced businesses.

Survey Respondent

“Condensed housing, tight roads, lack of walkability, no safe places for kids to play.

Survey Respondent

“I don't feel safe walking or cycling on many of Sooke's roads due to lack of sidewalks, lack of shoulder, and/or lack of bike lane. For example, Grant seems like it has some space to accommodate better infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists

Survey Respondent

Single BIGGEST Issues

Determining the single biggest issue that affects can be subjective and it may vary depending on different perspectives and contexts, in particular as it affects quality of life. However, in Sooke, there is a commonly identified issue that emerges – traffic.

| WORD/PHRASE | MENTION # |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| Transportation / Traffic / Road | 72 |
| Housing | 14 |
| Climate change / Climate crisis | 9 |
| Economic development / More jobs | 8 |
| Sidewalks | 7 |
| Planning | 6 |
| Bike paths / Bike lanes | 6 |
| Homelessness | 6 |
| Environment | 5 |
| Sewer (lacking service) | 4 |
| Parking | 2 |

Clearly, tourism is the most viable growth opportunity for Sooke. We need to enhance and upgrade amenities and beautify the town’s physical appearance to attract tourists, and market ourselves. Amenities should include:

- a town-center waterfront with restaurants, pubs, shops, boat rentals, etc.
- another nice big hotel (with convention space);
- two or three more award-winning restaurants (in addition to Wild Mountain);
- an attractive outdoor shopping mall similar to Mill Bay Shopping Centre

“ Shuttles and sea buses to transport tourists to places like East Sooke Park and the beaches along Hwy 14. –

Survey Respondent

“ Please PLEASE take care of our infrastructure (ROADS) before allowing more development, - that means more than 1 lane in and 1 lane out. That means an alternate route (not double lanes on the same road). We live in Sooke because it is a small town - if we wanted to live in a big town, we wouldn't live in Sooke.

Survey Respondent

“ Too much building too much density no architectural planning most the apartments look like Federal prisons Need to impose restrictions of trailers, sea cans and recreation vehicles stored everywhere on streets in peoples yards in the front of the houses.

Survey Respondent

“ This town is in need of proper sidewalks. For such a small town it is in walkable. And painting a line on grant rd and calling it a sidewalk doesn't make it a sidewalk. Also the new trail system is great but the connections when having to walk on the road are unsafe.

Survey Respondent

“ Is there any focus on increasing public transit in Sooke. It would be great to see something like the trolley that Langford had, in Sooke. Public transit that helps people get around Sooke that runs more often than they currently are, and service more remote locations.

Survey Respondent

“ Fix roads and update infrastructure before allowing more housing.

Survey Respondent

“ Concentrate on solutions to the current traffic problem in Sooke.

Survey Respondent

More About Traffic and Its Impact on Quality of Life

Traffic affects people's daily lives in several ways. The following is shared to communicate an understanding of the significance of this issue as the "single biggest issue" facing Sooke residents.

Stress: Sitting in congested traffic for long periods can be incredibly stressful. The frustration caused by delays and slow-moving vehicles can contribute to increased stress levels, which can negatively impact mental well-being.

Time Management: Traffic congestion can lead to significant time losses. People may find themselves spending excessive amounts of time commuting to work, school, or other important engagements. This can result in less time available for leisure activities, rest, or spending time with loved ones, ultimately affecting work-life balance.

Health Concerns: Prolonged exposure to traffic-related air pollution, such as vehicle emissions, can contribute to respiratory problems and other health issues. In addition, long commutes in heavy traffic can discourage physical activity and make it challenging to prioritize exercise, leading to a sedentary lifestyle.

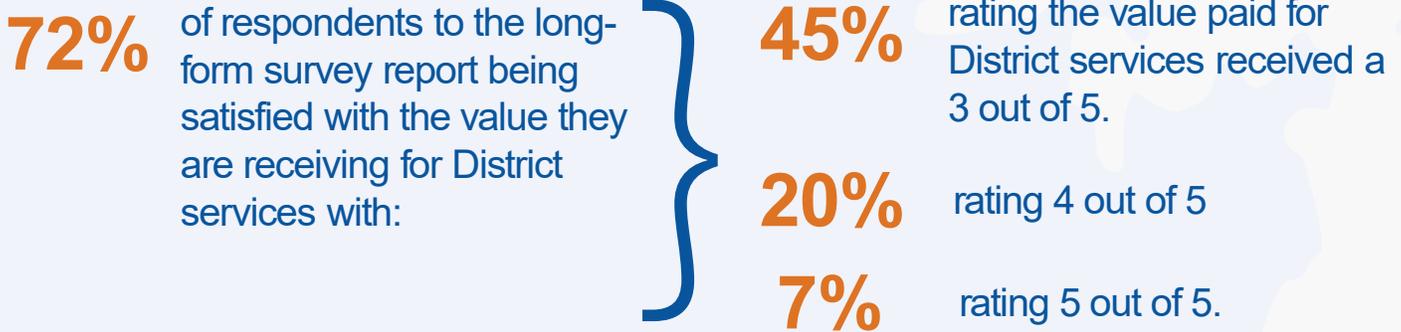
Productivity: Traffic delays can impact productivity both at work and in personal life. Frequent traffic jams or longer commute times can leave individuals feeling exhausted and drained before even starting their day, making it difficult to focus and perform optimally.

Environmental Impact: The high volume of vehicles on the road increases fuel consumption, air pollution, and carbon emissions. Traffic congestion contributes to the depletion of fossil fuels, environmental degradation, and climate change, all of which have long-term effects on the quality of life for everyone.

So what?

Efforts to reduce traffic congestion can greatly improve the overall quality of life for individuals and the community as a collective. This reality may inform strategic priorities and Council advocacy in areas such as transit, local employment opportunities and remote workspaces, priorities for grant application and related financial planning in the District's budget.

More On STAR RATINGS



When asked to explain why persons chose their rating, survey respondents explained:



“We get very little maintenance, our city looks awful.”
Survey Respondent

“I pay \$5100 in taxes for nothing. There is no garbage pick up, green spaces in my neighbourhood looks rundown and unkept.”
Survey Respondent

“Traffic is congested, and there is no urgent medical centre. There are no squash courts or access to a disc golf course.”
Survey Respondent

“Everything has decreased. Little to no road maintenance (Kaltasin Rd has not seen a brush cutter, any shouldering or a sweeper this year and the poor attempt at patching the horrid potholes is going to fall apart again as soon as it rains because no one is addressing the drainage.) The limits on burning yard waste, with no place to drop them off. We really see nothing here. We have Bylaw that does nothing, motor homes and people living on the side of the road and in public parking lots (thankfully after 6+ months and a trailer full of stolen goods the "welcome to Sooke" motorhome in the transit parking lot got removed) are all over and then we trip over their crap on the side of the road the next day. Then we have to pay full time fire fighter wages to cover BCEHS calls. Then to top it all off, you charge people who live/own in Sooke to use our Sooke tax dollar paid for services, like the boat ramp and the Sooke Potholes Parking lot.”
Survey Respondent

“We have a very limited police department. We only have 2 ambulances that service all of sooke and beyond. We pay you to fix our roads and there are still major issues with them including nasty potholes in otter point. There are no reliable medical services in sooke as in a walk in clinic etc. We have been promised better public transit for ages now and have yet to receive it we also need public transit that goes beyond otter point and to other areas in sooke besides just the town core circle. We also need more frequent public transit for the otter point kemp lake route it's ridiculous how little it comes each day and the last one is at 4:30 pm.”
Survey Respondent

More On STAR RATINGS

When asked to explain why persons chose their rating, survey respondents explained:



“Need to involve citizens in more major projects. Stop trying to be like a big high density city.”

Survey Respondent

“I believe we need access to yard/garden waste disposal and henceforth the banning of backyard burning in at minimum in the core of Sooke.”

Survey Respondent

“Property taxes go up every year due to development, which is ironic since we don't want it in this town, but it's going on regardless. Nothing else changes.”

Survey Respondent

“Shocking that garbage is not included in taxes. First community in Canada i have lived where not included. Creates the huge 'dumping' problem we have within Sooke.”

Survey Respondent



More On

STAR RATINGS

When asked to explain why persons chose their rating, survey respondents explained:



“Community planning and development need a masterplan to keep population growth and infrastructure in balance.

Survey Respondent

“Public transit is still needing a lot of work, especially on weekends. Ambulance service is stretched too thin.

Survey Respondent

“The municipality is very in effective with the money they are given.

Survey Respondent

“Shocking that garbage is not included in taxes. First community in Canada i have lived where not included. Creates the huge ‘dumping’ problem we have within Sooke.

Survey Respondent

“Garbage disposal should be managed by the city in order to set up bear / animal safe garbage systems. I'd like to see more infrastructure to encourage walking and biking over driving - it seems that we're heading in that direction but it would be amazing to have this prioritized to help reduce traffic congestion. Encouraging folks to use E-bikes to commute on the Galloping Goose, for example.

Survey Respondent

“Taxes continue to rise under the Provincial Assessment scam while service continue to decline. Policing and bylaw enforcement are poor.

Survey Respondent

“I believe we need access to yard/garden waste disposal and henceforth the banning of backyard burning in at minimum in the core of Sooke.

Survey Respondent

“Snow removal is substandard (48hrs +).

Survey Respondent

“traffic and road maintenance require the most attention, Sooke is lacking sidewalks and traffic lights (i.e. Sooke Rd at Kaltasin Rd), playgrounds are poorly maintained (Broomhill park has broken equipment for years

Survey Respondent

“No sewer, Kaltasin Road is disgraceful and has been overlooked for years. No sewer, now no excuse to pave the WHOLE ROAD and add pedestrian walkways. OCP delayed, Evergreen Mall badly laid out with no future forethought. Hoping the new centre at Mariner village will not have another same ol fast food and add a new dimension but in how many years ??”

Survey Respondent

“The portion of property tax that goes to Sooke does not seem exorbitant. Sooke is a nice town with lots of room for improvement. So I feel pretty middle of the road about the about paid for services received. That being said, I don't think I'm really knowledgeable enough to give an accurate answer on this, so you've got my best guess. I wouldn't mind if taxes were a bit higher, maybe up at Esquimalt's level.

Survey Respondent

More On STAR RATINGS

When asked to explain why persons chose their rating, survey respondents explained:



“ It is nice to have such low taxes, however, we probably need to spend a bit more on local road infrastructure like sidewalks and road improvements entering the town. **Survey Respondent** ”

“ Pretty satisfied with the taxes we pay vs the services provided. Can't think of anything that I'm not satisfied with at the moment. **Survey Respondent** ”

“ Overall a good job in balancing needs of community and keeping taxes reasonable. **Survey Respondent** ”

“ Access to online meetings, tax savings, excellent Mayor. **Survey Respondent** ”

“ We need municipal garbage pickup. **Survey Respondent** ”

“ I think it's a good balance. **Survey Respondent** ”



More On STAR RATINGS

When asked to explain why persons chose their rating, survey respondents explained:



“As the District of Sooke has just passed the 15K mark, we will continually be managing, changing and increasing services. Knowing this has really made me appreciate the amount of work that both our Elected Officials and DoS Employees actually do

Survey Respondent

“We are a small community with a small commercial tax base. We are fortunate they are not a lot higher.

Survey Respondent

“I will pay for additional services I desire myself and keep the taxes low.

Survey Respondent

“Good value for taxes paid.

Survey Respondent



FEEDBACK SUMMARY

Based on the average assessment of a residential property in Sooke, this question looked to understand the value residents felt they received in particular service areas. Of note, the list was not exhaustive.

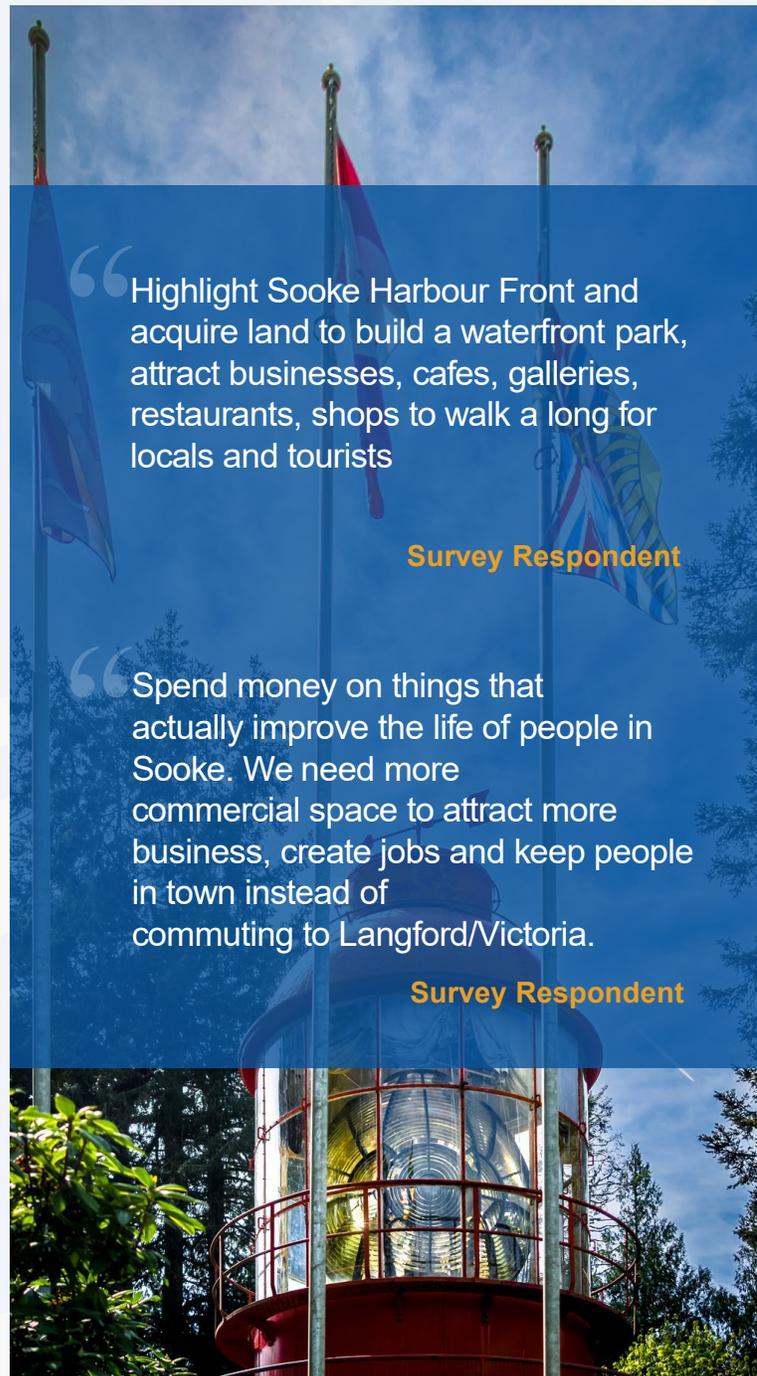
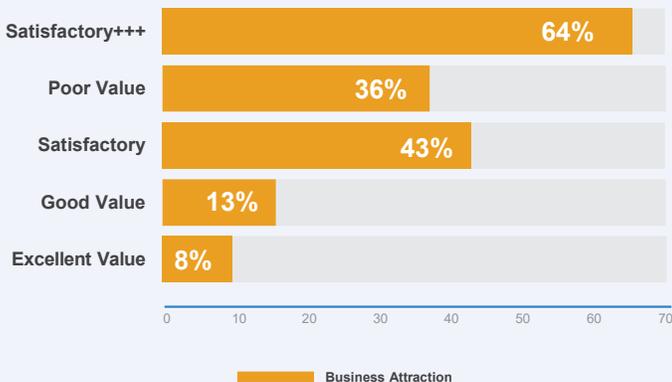
For example, areas that operate to meet legislative requirements or where costs are recovered through direct fees for services were not included.

Business Attraction/Retention and Commercial Development

**Average cost:
\$30.07/year or \$2.51/month**

Work in this service area encourages existing local businesses to stay and grow in Sooke, and boosts investment in new businesses to support well-paying local jobs and diversify our local economy.

BUSINESS ATTRACTION



“ Highlight Sooke Harbour Front and acquire land to build a waterfront park, attract businesses, cafes, galleries, restaurants, shops to walk a long for locals and tourists

Survey Respondent

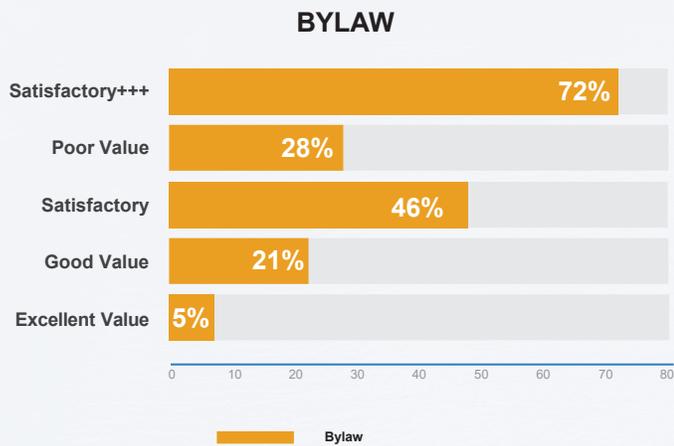
“ Spend money on things that actually improve the life of people in Sooke. We need more commercial space to attract more business, create jobs and keep people in town instead of commuting to Langford/Victoria.

Survey Respondent

Bylaw Education and Enforcement

Average cost:
\$34.71/year or \$2.89/month

This service area is responsible for education about and enforcement of local bylaws.



“ I think the municipality could do a better job of enforcing bylaws such as not leaving garbage bins on the street overnight (thus attracting bears). Fines could be imposed which could boost revenues while demonstrating that Sooke is serious about protecting wildlife.

Survey Respondent

“ Bylaw enforcement is difficult to get action on. If they need another person please hire one.

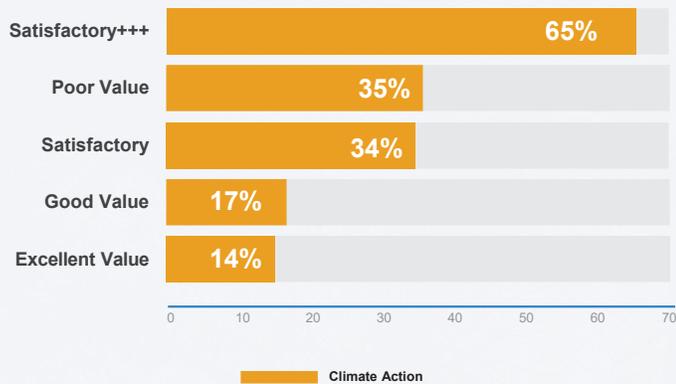
Survey Respondent

Climate Action

Average cost:
\$3.71/year or \$0.31/month

This service area seeks to implement the District of Sooke's Climate Action Plan, based on a priority project list as supported by Council on an annual basis.

Climate Action



“Don't waste precious funds trying to meet unachievable 'climate change' and greenhouse gas goals. The increase in population & increased traffic in the Sooke District ensures that these goals are not going to be met

Survey Respondent

“I selected "no local government resources" for climate action. I am sure that the administrator of this survey equates that with a lack of interest in the topic on my part but that is far from the truth. The CRD, provincial and federal levels are already extracting their pounds of flesh from my wallet and I am concerned that local efforts are merely duplicating the programs from other governments. Until District of Sooke stops giving carte blanc to the developers blasting down the forests and mountains around town then I do not care to hear anything about "climate action" from the District. I fully support the town buying e-vehicles or installing solar panels on their buildings but they shouldn't be harassing me while ignoring developers.

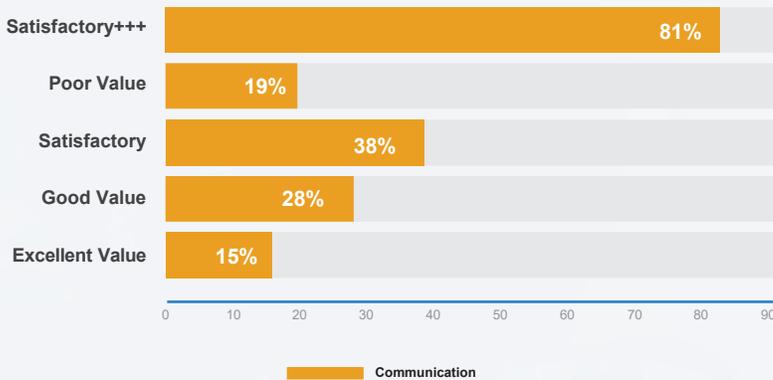
Survey Respondent

Communications, including Community Outreach and Engagement

Average cost:
\$20.65/year or \$1.72/month

This service area supports the connection between citizens and their local government through information, education and public participation opportunities.

Communication

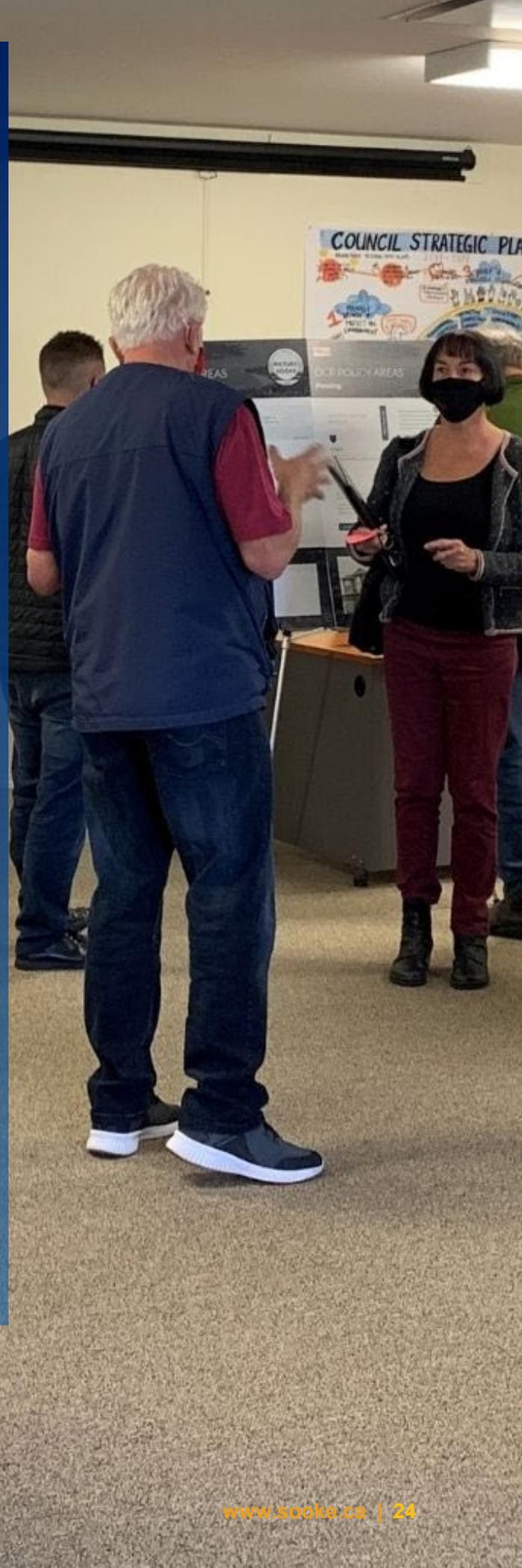


“The District should regularly communicate with the public on projects /development plans that will potentially have significant impacts on neighborhoods. A "Did you know" feature could be circulated in the Sooke Mirror.

Survey Respondent

“More transparency and more honest & balanced communication is needed. Most of the general public is unaware of many of the serious and/or costly issues facing the District of Sooke. 2 Examples: The Lions Club's \$1.00 for 50+50 years of use, developing a section of John Philips Memorial Park to the surprise & objection of many citizens. The misunderstandings schemozzles of the June 19, 2023 Special Council - Committee of the Whole Public Meeting.

Survey Respondent



Community Planning and Development

Average cost:
\$23/year or \$1.92/month

This service area provides guidance and direction on a variety of topics including land use, design, housing, transportation, parks and public spaces, and more. This area processes development applications including Zoning bylaw amendments, variance requests and building permits.



“Better road planning! If Throup road was extended to Phillips road with a roundabout at both ends it would get a lot of before and after school traffic off Sooke rd which would help Sooke road flow better. Charters road would not need upgrading and could be blocked off at the dip. Saving money??”

Survey Respondent

“I appreciate Sooke is under pressure from developers and builders to speed up permit approvals and processing. Fine - it's their business and they make a healthy profit from this opportunity. Make this function at least 100% user-pay for all staff and support costs (increase DCCs).”

Survey Respondent

“Must find a solution for all new development and growth to pay for necessary infrastructure rather than downloading this financial burden on existing residents in the form of increased taxes.”

Survey Respondent

“Must maintain level of service and quality of life in spite of growth.”

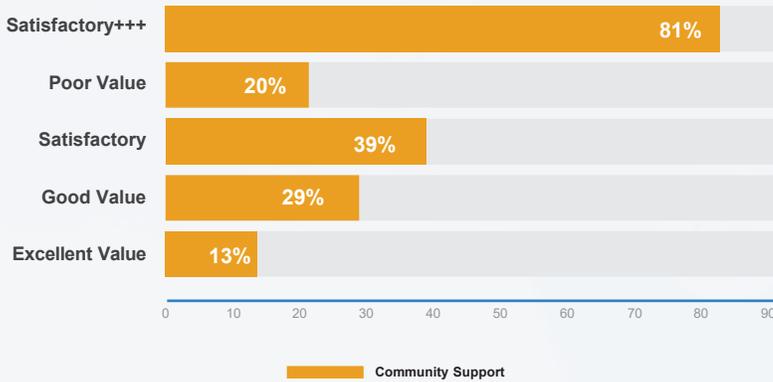
Survey Respondent

Community Support (local grants and events)

Average cost:
\$54.53/year or \$4.54/month

This service area funds community events and organizations through a local grant program. Additionally, community support is delivered through permissive tax exemptions, which accounts for an approximate \$700,000 contribution value from the District to local not-for-profit agencies.

Community Support

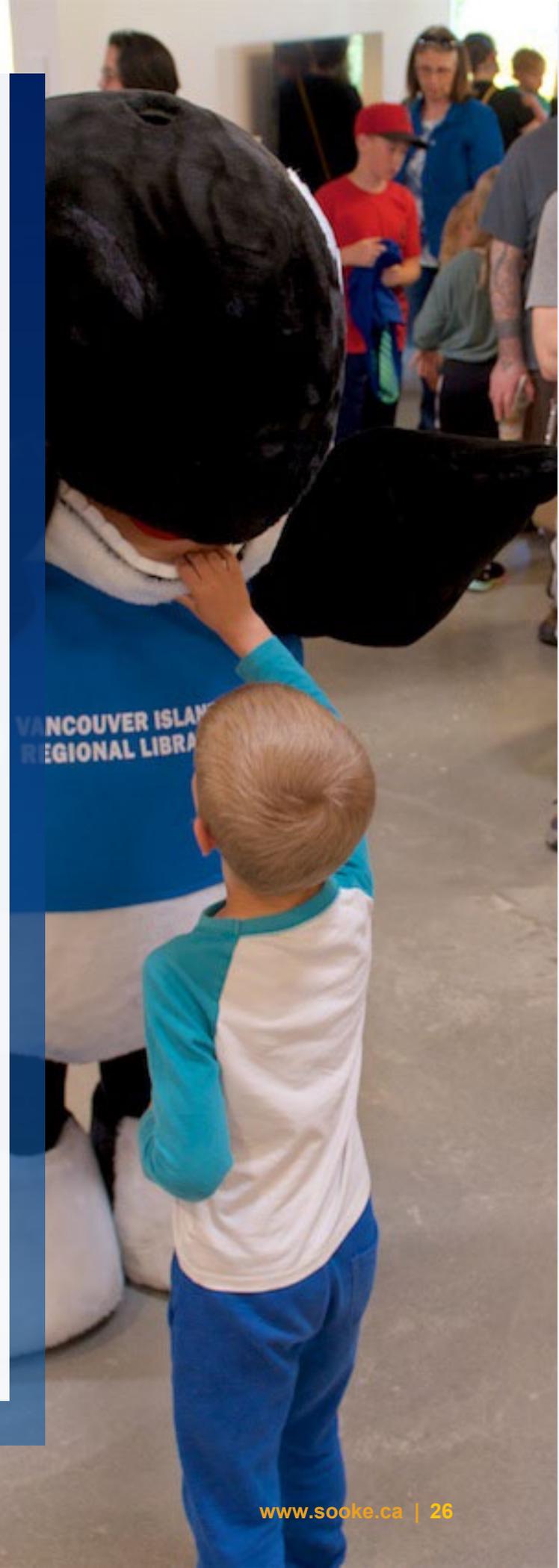


“When I support business attraction/retention I am thinking not of big box stores but low carbon, low waste, circular economy types of businesses; I would also like to see a green business event to attract business that helps the town grow in the direction it would like.

Survey Respondent

“The District has a wonderful cost saving option having Sooke Community Association funding sports and recreation in Sooke, other Municipalities are funding large dollars towards their parks and support their parks users, the District of Sooke needs to step up and provide annual funding to SCA and their children organizations that provide the biggest value that goes self funded.

Survey Respondent

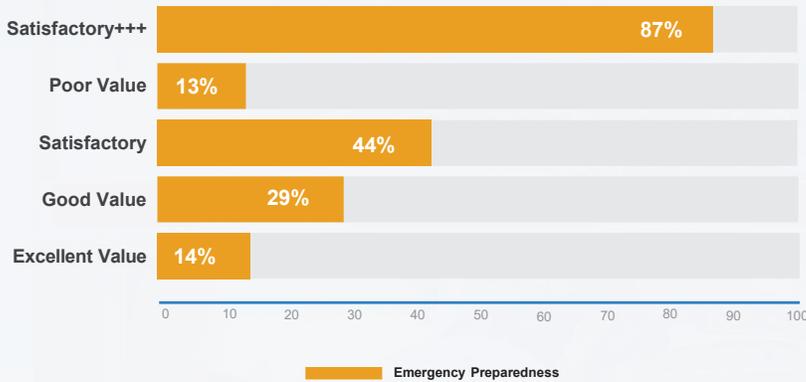


Emergency Preparedness and Planning

Average cost:
\$4.09/year or \$1.72/month

This services area works to prepare, mitigate and respond to local emergencies while ensuring community resilience through potential disasters.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

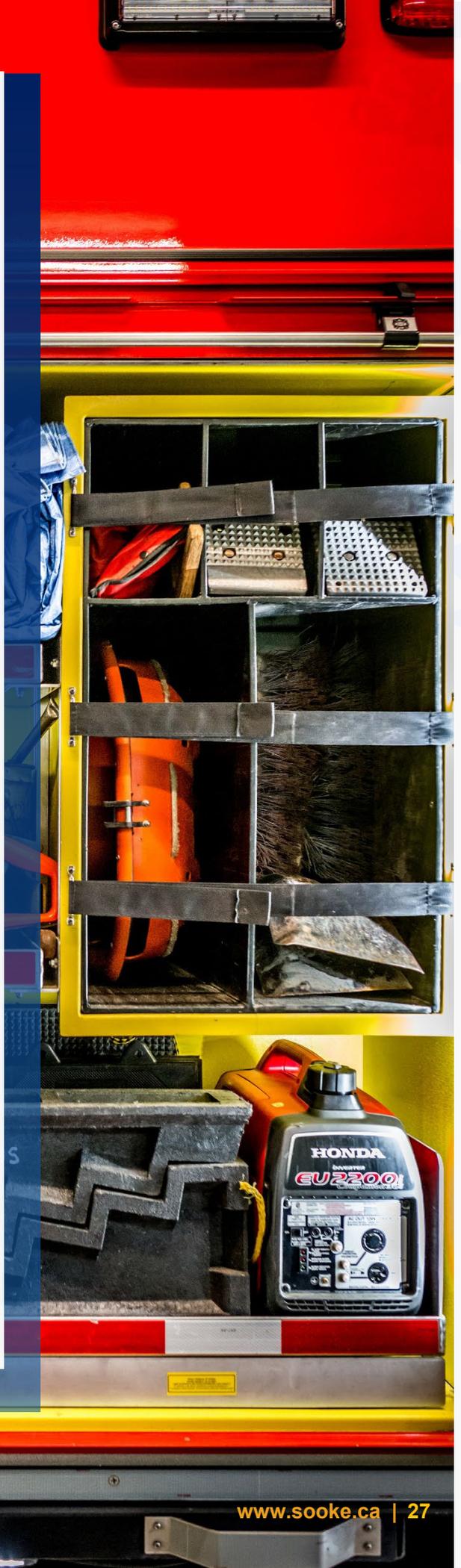


“It’s only a matter of time before Sooke citizens are trapped behind an inaccessible bridge in or out of town or Sun River; the township in partnership with the Ministry of Transportation need to expedite and remedy these two VERY important issues for the health and well being of the overall community and as a part of emergency planning. It’s only a matter of time before something catastrophic happens and you can only roll the risk management dice for so long until it comes up snake eyes.

Survey Respondent

“The District should prioritize policing, fire protection, minimizing on-street parking in residential areas, and improving road access to areas of the community at risk of being cut off from main transport routes.

Survey Respondent

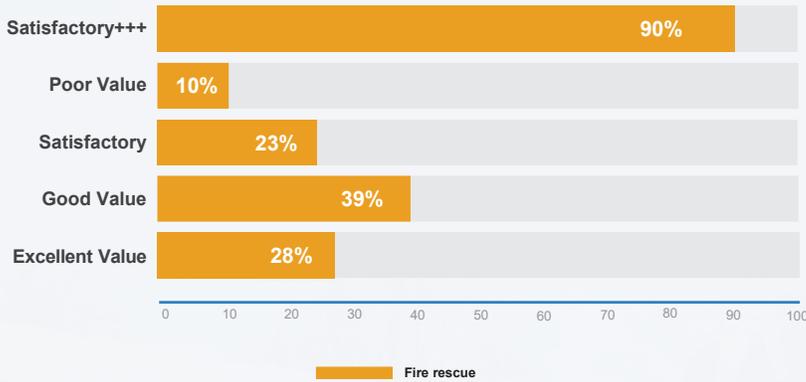


Fire Rescue Services

Average cost:
\$322.75/year or \$26.90/month

Fire Rescue Services provide fire prevention, response and rescue services, along with support for medical emergencies.

FIRE RESCUE

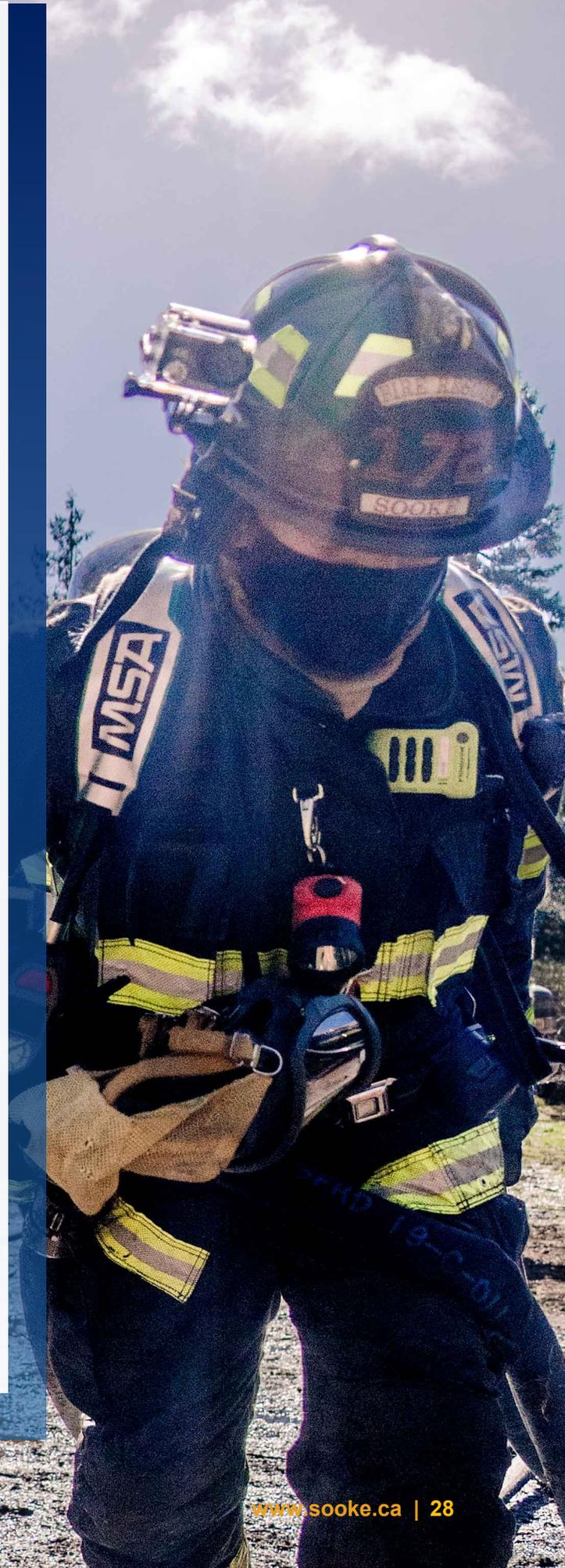


“ This BC Wildfire season is a wake-up call for us all. Sooke is most certainly situated in an extremely vulnerable location. There needs to be a much more lively community discussion and more proactive preventative measures put into place. Our buildings need to become much more fire resistant, especially the roofs (resistant to embers falling from a local fire); review of landscape fire prevention and resistance strategies - e.g. planting of "fire resistant" trees (e.g. aspen?); thinning of potential forest floor debris that is a latent fuel reserve; proactive creation of more fire breaks and access roads for firefighting around the town; more aggressive monitoring of local folks building bonfires or lighting fireworks in their backyards (no kidding! I've seen some just across the street from my home during certain times of the year). Generally speaking, we need to become much more vigilant.

Survey Respondent

“ I don't think the community should buy new firetruck every 5 years. Most new buildings are sprinklers. Fire fighting cost should therefore decrease.

Survey Respondent



Local Streets and Roadways

Average cost:
\$124/year or \$10.33/month

The District is responsible for 96 kilometres of local streets and roadways (including related stormwater management). Highway 14 is the responsibility of the province, specifically the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure.

Local Streets and Roadways



“Stop trying to please everyone all the time speed up approval time of community projects like waste water and road construction, just get things done! Enough discussion its time for action.

Survey Respondent

“We need a bypass road to alleviate traffic coming into sooke and possibly a walkway overpass by the schools and galloping goose for safe highway crossing. We need to plan traffic routes now as there is so much new development happening and the infrastructure is not currently there to support it.

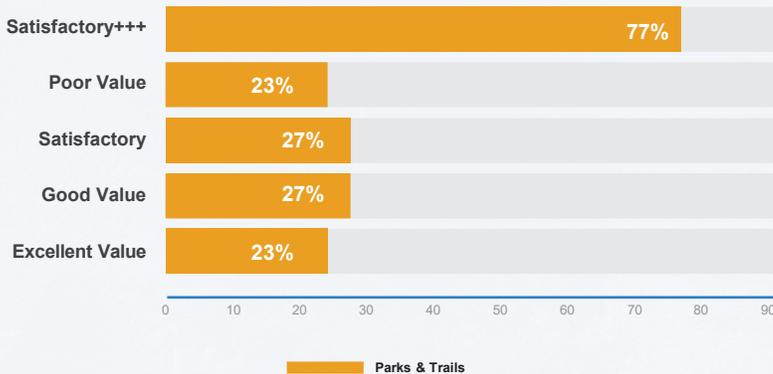
Survey Respondent

Parks maintenance and amenities, including trails and walkways

Average cost:
\$177.67/year or \$14.81/month

This service area works to maintain as much of the District's 114 hectares and 92 parks and green spaces, including 20 kilometres of trails and walkways, and over 2,000 municipally-owned trees

Parks & Trails



“Get creative and find a way to buy the 33 acres currently for sale on whiffin spit and make it a park!!!!!!”

Survey Respondent

“Please pay more attention to incrementally improving our parks, roads, and trail systems. Even small investments yearly will contribute to good maintenance and user satisfaction. Not every project needs to be enormous, and great benefits can be achieved by ensuring at least something gets done every year to improve each area.”

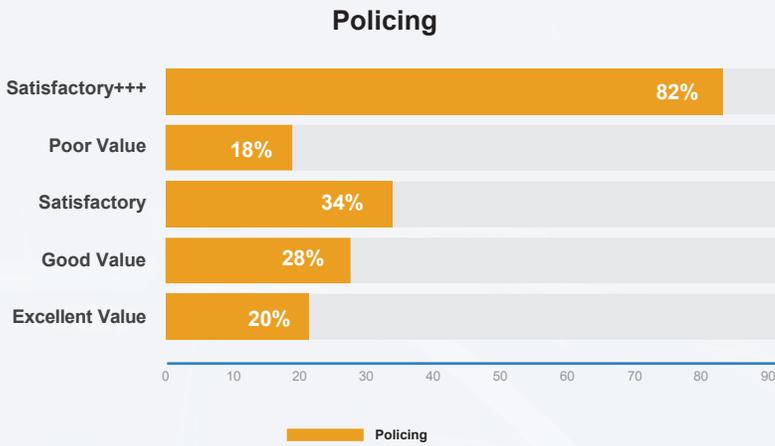
Survey Respondent



Policing

Average cost:
\$323.73/year or \$26.95/month

Sooke RCMP are responsible for the provision of policing services in Sooke, which in addition to crime prevention and response include processing of criminal record and vulnerable sector checks, fingerprinting, and non-emergency response.



“Before advertising Tourism, area needs more resources for policing/ fire protection & emergency services. Roads through residential neighborhoods to destinations such as Spit & Potholes totally inadequate for exponential # s of tourists!!”

Survey Respondent

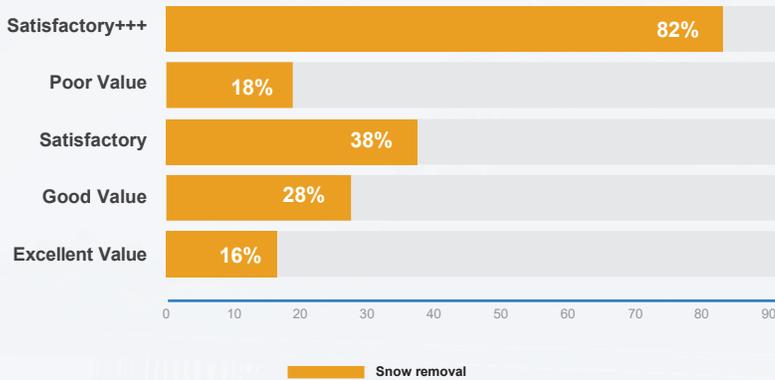


Snow Removal

Average cost:
\$0.69/year or \$0.06/month

This service is provided through a contract for services for local roads, with parks services supporting park access and park walkways.

Snow Removal



“Snow removal is substandard (48hrs +).

Survey Respondent

Understanding Priorities

Where the District sought to understand service area priorities received the greatest feedback. This section is informed by data from more than 1,000 residents.

Understanding priorities was the common question asked through long and short-form survey participation and the pop-up experience. Additionally, where persons preferred not to participate in the survey or dot-voting (in-person activity), verbal comments informed the observations of What We Heard through this section.

Regardless of the participation medium, clear themes present as top priorities from residents who joined the Budget 2024 conversation. These include:

- Ability to safely walk or bike around Sooke;
- Traffic planning and management, including road maintenance;
- Emergency response services (police and fire);
- Parks and greenspaces (including care for the environment);
- Health and wellness services; and
- Community planning.

This interpretation of the data emerges from reviewing both those expressed as the top priorities, those expressed as not the lowest priorities and comments received.

HIGHEST PRIORITIES

Culmination (Survey + Pop-up)

Note: The same persons could participate in multiple experiences, so while not scientific in the collection, the commonality of emerging themes offers a reliable picture of residents' community priorities.



REOCCURRING

Feedback

Several common themes emerged through the consultation process in both written and verbal expressions. Reoccurring comments are summarized as following:



Development/Community Planning

- Managing growth is a priority. What is happening with the OCP?
- How will the Housing Supply Act impact Sooke?
- Parking – residential and commercial. There is not enough in Sooke.
- Available and affordable rentals for seniors.
- The impact of decisions on how they impact children should be the central focus of community planning.

Parks and Environment

- Environmental protection should form the foundation for all development considerations and District decision-making.
- Waterfront access is limited and not wheelchair accessible.
- More amenity spaces are needed to service youth.

Health/Wellness Services

- Interest in learning more about the public health registry for a primary health care provider.
- Seeking more information about the BC Pharmacists prescription program.
- Provincial service levels for adult and children special education are lacking.

Operations' Contracted Services

- Concerns about declining services from roads contractor.
- Roads contractor not tending to issues on weekends, such as deceased animals.

Pedestrian Travel

- Whiffin Spit neighbourhood sidewalks.
- Rhodenite sidewalks.
- Townsend Road crosswalk by John Phillips Memorial Park and Pond's Park Corridor.

REOCCURRING FEEDBACK



Additional reoccurring comments, generally not captured elsewhere and received during the community pop-up events include:

Traffic Management

- Upgrades to Highway 14 are not enough “to make it work.”
- BC Transit direct routes needed: Sooke to downtown
- Bring back the double-decker busses
- Curiosity expressed about a co-working hub and how the District could be involved to develop satellite office spaces in Sooke.

Community Safety

- Hydrant and supervisor shuttle tank service for rural areas in Sooke.
- Appreciation for “children playing signs.”
- Need for increased police presence.

Water

- Water access is becoming an emergent issue. More persons are seeing dry wells earlier in the year than “is typical.”

Bylaw

- Co-existing with wildlife – enforcement needed for persons to secure attractants.

Financing

- Growth should pay for growth. New development does not appear to be paying enough.
- Commercial industry needed in Sooke

Resource Allocation

This question sought to understand the importance of resource allocation, both the human (staff) and financial (budget) needed to deliver on what is important for District operations, including our community AND within local government jurisdiction.

Persons expressed their priority for resources on a scale of:

- No local government resources (do not feel service/initiative is appropriate for local government to deliver)
- Minimal resources
- Keep same
- Increase resources
- High resource priority (comfortable having taxes increased)

Items asked were included from ongoing feedback received from residents throughout the year.

Of the **28 items** asked, areas of **GREATEST PRIORITY** were expressed as:

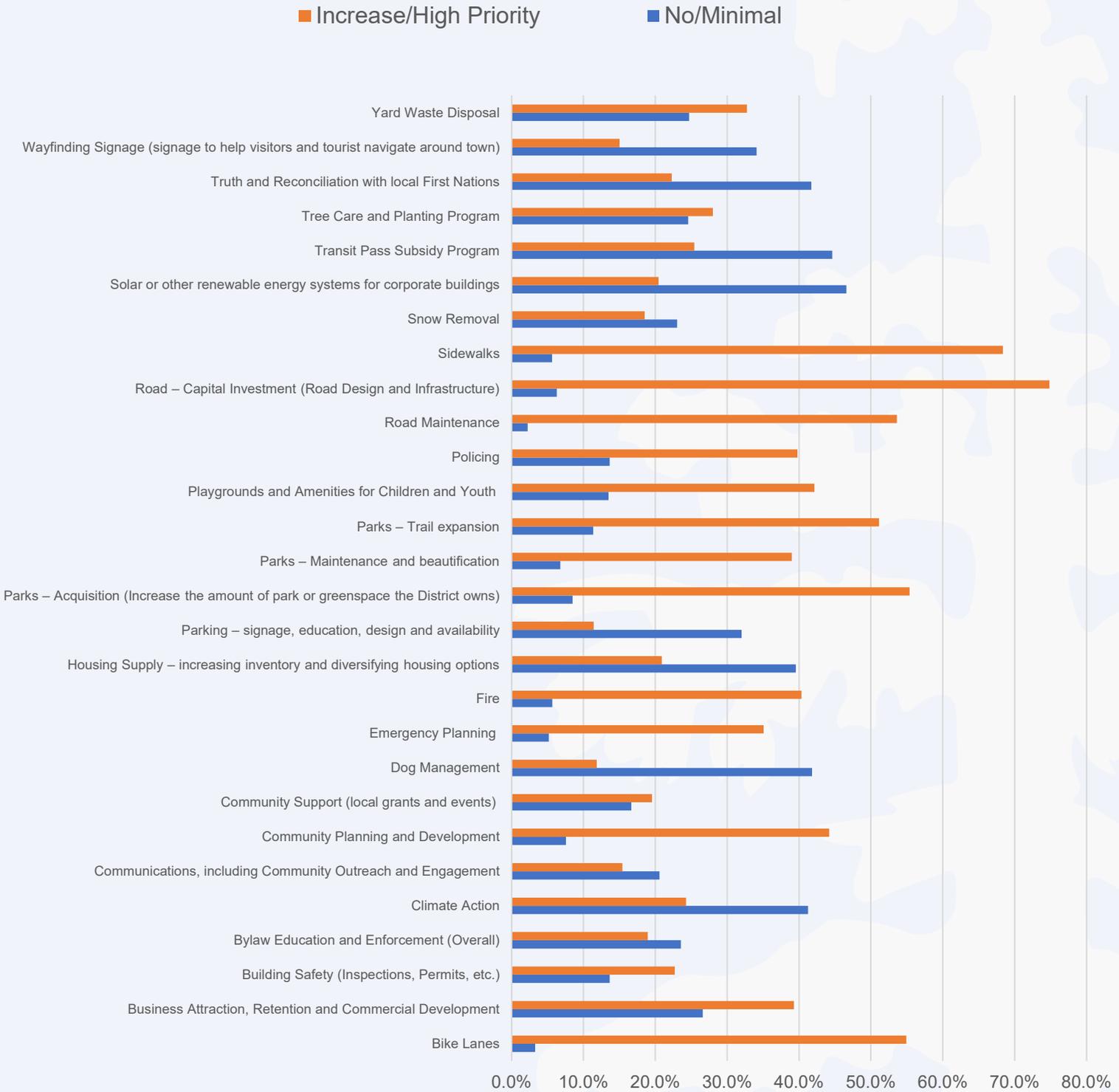
- 74.9%** Road – Capital Investment (Design and Infrastructure)
- 68.4%** Sidewalks
- 55.4%** Park Acquisition
- 54.9%** Bike Lanes
- 53.6%** Road Maintenance

Of the **28 items** asked, areas of **LOWEST PRIORITY** were expressed as:

- 46.6%** Solar or other renewable energy for corporate buildings
- 44.6%** Transit Pass Subsidy Program
- 41.8%** Dog Management
- 41.2%** Climate Action
- 39.5%** Housing Supply – increasing inventory and diversifying housing options

HIGHEST PRIORITIES

Culmination (Survey + Pop-up)



ASSET MANAGEMENT

As the District looks to develop an asset management program, the annual budget survey was used to inform considerations of this program. The question asked:

District's assets exist to deliver services to our residents. Services in our community depend on assets like roads, bridges, culverts, buildings, parks and playgrounds, firetrucks, and much more. All of these assets have a lifespan and will eventually require replacement. Ongoing care of these assets helps extend their lifespan, and appropriately saving to prepare for their replacement can minimize large expenses at a later date.

The District is developing an asset management program to help us plan for the future. It is anticipated such a program will include an asset management levy to ensure funds are set aside for this specific purpose.

How much are you willing to contribute through taxes toward the asset management program?

The question sought to understand:

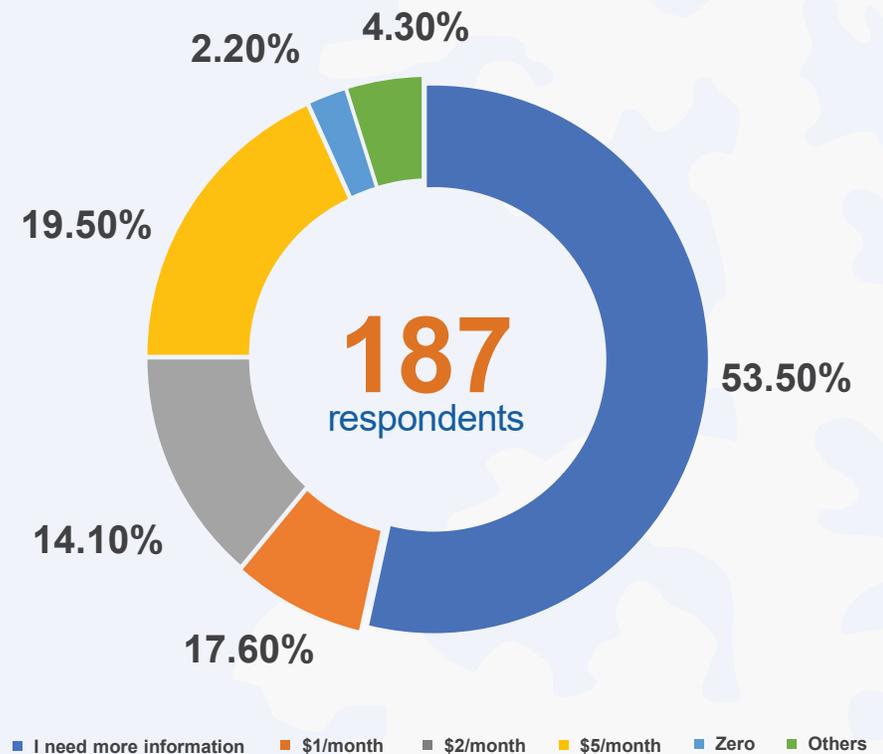
1. how well-informed residents are currently on this topic and;
2. what potential fee, at least a sample of the community, feel is reasonable to support such a program.



ASSET MANAGEMENT

Of the **187** respondents who answered this question, just over half indicated that they need more information and a combined **40.9%** expressed willingness to contribute between **\$1/month** and **\$5/month** towards such a program (with the majority of those respondents, **19.5%**, indicating support at a rate of **\$5/month**).

Assessment Management Program Contribution



“What amount is in the sinking funds already in existence. Without that information no one can answer this.”

Survey Respondent

“Figure out lifespan, approximate cost for replacement and come out with amount needed”

Survey Respondent

“This should be accounted for in each service's budget, but I would be willing to allocate 5\$/month for the specified assets.”

Survey Respondent

“This should already be factored in with current taxes remove funding from other areas to find this.”

Survey Respondent

“I thought that money was always set aside for these purposes. I have to say I am extremely surprised that this doesn't happen and now more angry that despite all the "talent" in town hall management we are not doing this. I don't wish to pay more taxes for this when it should have been done all along. Reallocate it from somewhere else (parking ticket income, community grants, etc.)”

Survey Respondent

“I'd want to know what the asset is! My willingness might vary.”

Survey Respondent

Appendix A:

Understanding Priorities, Tally by Method (Highest Priority)

| LONG-FORM SURVEY AREA | Ranked As TOP FIVE HIGHEST Priority |
|---|--|
| Ability to safely walk or bike around town | 95 |
| Traffic Planning and Management | 88 |
| Emergency Response (Police and Fire) | 87 |
| Parks and Greenspaces | 85 |
| Health and Wellness Services | 63 |
| Community Planning | 50 |
| Road Maintenance | 45 |
| Business Attraction, Retention and Commercial Development | 42 |
| Environmental Protection and Sustainability | 38 |
| Local Employment Opportunities | 31 |
| Emergency Preparedness and Planning | 31 |
| Playgrounds and Amenities for Children and Youth | 30 |
| Decrease Permit Processing Times | 25 |
| Residential Yard Waste | 25 |
| Bylaw Education and Enforcement | 24 |
| Arts and Cultural Facilities | 22 |
| Recreational Activities | 22 |
| Events | 17 |
| Housing Supply | 16 |
| Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction | 14 |
| Tree Care and Planting | 13 |
| Truth and Reconciliation with Local First Nations | 10 |
| District Talent Recruitment, Retention | 7 |
| Snow Removal | 7 |
| Public Participation | 7 |
| Tourism | 6 |

Appendix A:
Understanding Priorities,
Tally by Method (Highest Priority)

| SHORT-FORM SURVEY AREA | Ranked As TOP FIVE HIGHEST Priority |
|---|--|
| Ability to safely walk or bike around town | 46 |
| Traffic Planning and Management | 36 |
| Parks and Greenspaces | 35 |
| Health and Wellness Services | 34 |
| Emergency Response (Police and Fire) | 30 |
| Environmental Protection and Sustainability | 29 |
| Community Planning | 23 |
| Business Attraction, Retention and Commercial Development | 22 |
| Road Maintenance | 19 |
| Emergency Preparedness and Planning | 19 |
| Truth and Reconciliation with Local First Nations | 13 |
| Housing Supply | 13 |
| Residential Yard Waste | 11 |
| Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction | 11 |
| Playgrounds and Amenities for Children and Youth | 10 |
| Local Employment Opportunities | 9 |
| Decrease Permit Processing Times | 9 |
| Arts and Cultural Facilities | 8 |
| Events | 6 |
| Tree Care and Planting | 6 |
| Snow Removal | 6 |
| District Talent Recruitment, Retention | 6 |
| Bylaw Education and Enforcement | 5 |
| Tourism | 4 |
| Public Participation | 3 |
| Recreational Activities | 2 |

Appendix A:
Understanding Priorities,
Tally by Method (Highest Priority)

| POP-UP EXPERIENCE AREA | PRIORITY VOTES | INCREASE TAXES, IF SERVICE EXPANDED |
|---|-----------------------|--|
| Ability to safely walk or bike around town | 372 | 23 |
| Traffic Planning and Management | 234 | 12 |
| Emergency Response (Police and Fire) | 132 | 9 |
| Emergency Planning and Preparedness | 78 | 0 |
| Parks and Greenspaces | 204 | 4 |
| Health and Wellness Services | 378 | 22 |
| Community Planning | 204 | 0 |
| Road Maintenance | 210 | 0 |
| Business Attraction, Retention and Commercial Development | 105 | 1 |
| Environmental Protection and Sustainability | 336 | 19 |
| Local Employment Opportunities | 138 | 3 |
| Playgrounds and Amenities for Children and Youth | 144 | 14 |
| Decrease Permit Processing Times | 42 | 0 |
| Residential Yard Waste | 42 | 0 |
| Bylaw Education and Enforcement | 36 | 0 |
| Arts and Cultural Facilities | 81 | 5 |
| Recreational Activities | 126 | 2 |
| Events | 114 | 0 |
| Housing Supply | 123 | 5 |
| Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction | 54 | 4 |
| Tree Care and Planting | 156 | 0 |
| Truth and Reconciliation with Local First Nations | 141 | 0 |
| District Talent Recruitment, Retention | 42 | 0 |
| Snow Removal | 18 | 0 |
| Public Participation | 17 | 1 |
| Tourism | 39 | 1 |
| Water | 36 | 4 |
| Garbage | 24 | 2 |
| Public WiFi | 2 | 0 |

Appendix A:
Understanding Priorities,
Tally by Method (Lowest Priority)

| LONG-FORM SURVEY AREA | Ranked As TOP FIVE LOWEST Priority |
|---|---|
| Decrease Permit Processing Times | 77 |
| Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction | 71 |
| District Staff Talent Attraction, Retention and Development | 63 |
| Housing Supply – increasing inventory and housing choices | 61 |
| Residential Yard Waste | 56 |
| Truth and Reconciliation with Local First Nations | 56 |
| Tourism | 54 |
| Arts and Cultural Facilities | 52 |
| Snow Removal | 45 |
| Bylaw Education and Enforcement | 32 |
| Business Attraction, Retention and Commercial Development | 30 |
| Tree Care and Planting | 27 |
| Events | 24 |
| Public Participation | 23 |
| Environmental Protection and Sustainability | 21 |
| Playgrounds and Amenities for Children and Youth | 19 |
| Local Employment Opportunities | 18 |
| Recreational Activities | 16 |
| Emergency Response (Police and Fire) | 10 |
| Community Planning | 5 |
| Ability to safely walk or bike around town | 5 |
| Road Maintenance | 2 |
| Traffic Planning and Management | 0 |

Appendix A:
Understanding Priorities,
Tally by Method (Lowest Priority)

| SHORT-FORM SURVEY AREA | Ranked As TOP FIVE LOWEST Priority |
|---|---|
| Decrease Permit Processing Times | 36 |
| District Staff Talent Attraction, Retention and Development | 37 |
| Truth and Reconciliation with Local First Nations | 34 |
| Snow Removal | 30 |
| Housing Supply – increasing inventory and housing choices | 29 |
| Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction | 27 |
| Residential Yard Waste | 25 |
| Arts and Cultural Facilities | 24 |
| Tourism | 21 |
| Bylaw Education and Enforcement | 20 |
| Business Attraction, Retention and Commercial Development | 16 |
| Tree Care and Planting | 13 |
| Public Participation | 12 |
| Playgrounds and Amenities for Children and Youth | 11 |
| Events | 9 |
| Local Employment Opportunities | 6 |
| Ability to safely walk or bike around town | 6 |
| Recreational Activities | 5 |
| Emergency Response (Police and Fire) | 4 |
| Environmental Protection and Sustainability | 3 |
| Community Planning | 2 |
| Road Maintenance | 2 |
| Traffic Planning and Management | 1 |

Appendix B:

RESOURCE ALLOCATION

| RESOURCE ALLOCATION | No Resources | Minimal | Keep Same | Increase | High Priority | TOTAL | C No Resources3 | Minimal4 | Keep Same5 | Increase6 | High Priority7 | C No/Minimal | Increase/High Priority |
|---|--------------|---------|-----------|----------|---------------|-------|-----------------|----------|------------|-----------|----------------|--------------|------------------------|
| Bike Lanes | 2 | 2 | 51 | 45 | 22 | 122 | 1.6% | 1.6% | 41.8% | 36.9% | 18.0% | 3.3% | 54.9% |
| Business Attraction, Retention and Commercial Development | 12 | 34 | 59 | 46 | 22 | 173 | 6.9% | 19.7% | 34.1% | 26.6% | 12.7% | 26.6% | 39.3% |
| Building Safety (Inspections, Permits, etc.) | 3 | 21 | 112 | 31 | 9 | 176 | 1.7% | 11.9% | 63.6% | 17.6% | 5.1% | 13.6% | 22.7% |
| Bylaw Education and Enforcement (Overall) | 6 | 35 | 100 | 20 | 13 | 174 | 3.4% | 20.1% | 57.5% | 11.5% | 7.5% | 23.6% | 19.0% |
| Climate Action | 40 | 33 | 61 | 24 | 19 | 177 | 22.6% | 18.6% | 34.5% | 13.6% | 10.7% | 41.2% | 24.3% |
| Communications, including Community Outreach and Engagement | 3 | 33 | 112 | 20 | 7 | 175 | 1.7% | 18.9% | 64.0% | 11.4% | 4.0% | 20.6% | 15.4% |
| Community Planning and Development | 2 | 11 | 83 | 51 | 25 | 172 | 1.2% | 6.4% | 48.3% | 29.7% | 14.5% | 7.6% | 44.2% |
| Community Support (local grants and events) | 4 | 25 | 111 | 28 | 6 | 174 | 2.3% | 14.4% | 63.8% | 16.1% | 3.4% | 16.7% | 19.5% |
| Dog Management | 28 | 46 | 82 | 14 | 7 | 177 | 15.8% | 26.0% | 46.3% | 7.9% | 4.0% | 41.8% | 11.9% |
| Emergency Planning | 1 | 8 | 104 | 40 | 21 | 174 | 0.6% | 4.6% | 59.8% | 23.0% | 12.1% | 5.2% | 35.1% |
| Fire | 0 | 10 | 95 | 48 | 23 | 176 | 0.0% | 5.7% | 54.0% | 27.3% | 13.1% | 5.7% | 40.3% |
| Housing Supply – increasing inventory and diversifying housing options | 32 | 38 | 70 | 24 | 13 | 177 | 18.1% | 21.5% | 39.5% | 13.6% | 7.3% | 39.5% | 20.9% |
| Parking – signage, education, design and availability | 18 | 38 | 99 | 14 | 6 | 175 | 10.3% | 21.7% | 56.6% | 8.0% | 3.4% | 32.0% | 11.4% |
| Parks – Acquisition (Increase the amount of park or greenspace the District owns) | 5 | 10 | 64 | 56 | 42 | 177 | 2.8% | 5.6% | 36.2% | 31.6% | 23.7% | 8.5% | 55.4% |
| Parks – Maintenance and beautification | 1 | 11 | 96 | 51 | 18 | 177 | 0.6% | 6.2% | 54.2% | 28.8% | 10.2% | 6.8% | 39.0% |
| Parks – Trail expansion | 6 | 14 | 66 | 57 | 33 | 176 | 3.4% | 8.0% | 37.5% | 32.4% | 18.8% | 11.4% | 51.1% |
| Playgrounds and Amenities for Children and Youth | 6 | 18 | 79 | 46 | 29 | 178 | 3.4% | 10.1% | 44.4% | 25.8% | 16.3% | 13.5% | 42.1% |
| Policing | 5 | 19 | 82 | 45 | 25 | 176 | 2.8% | 10.8% | 46.6% | 25.6% | 14.2% | 13.6% | 39.8% |
| Road Maintenance | 1 | 3 | 79 | 62 | 34 | 179 | 0.6% | 1.7% | 44.1% | 34.6% | 19.0% | 2.2% | 53.6% |
| Road – Capital Investment (Road Design and Infrastructure) | 3 | 8 | 33 | 69 | 62 | 175 | 1.7% | 4.6% | 18.9% | 39.4% | 35.4% | 6.3% | 74.9% |
| Sidewalks | 3 | 7 | 46 | 67 | 54 | 177 | 1.7% | 4.0% | 26.0% | 37.9% | 30.5% | 5.6% | 68.4% |
| Snow Removal | 16 | 25 | 104 | 26 | 7 | 178 | 9.0% | 14.0% | 58.4% | 14.6% | 3.9% | 23.0% | 18.5% |
| Solar or other renewable energy systems for corporate buildings | 46 | 36 | 58 | 20 | 16 | 176 | 26.1% | 20.5% | 33.0% | 11.4% | 9.1% | 46.6% | 20.5% |
| Transit Pass Subsidy Program | 45 | 34 | 53 | 38 | 7 | 177 | 25.4% | 19.2% | 29.9% | 21.5% | 4.0% | 44.6% | 25.4% |
| Tree Care and Planting Program | 18 | 25 | 83 | 34 | 15 | 175 | 10.3% | 14.3% | 47.4% | 19.4% | 8.6% | 24.6% | 28.0% |
| Truth and Reconciliation with local First Nations | 48 | 25 | 63 | 21 | 18 | 175 | 27.4% | 14.3% | 36.0% | 12.0% | 10.3% | 41.7% | 22.3% |
| Wayfinding Signage (signage to help visitors and tourist navigate around town) | 24 | 35 | 88 | 17 | 9 | 173 | 13.9% | 20.2% | 50.9% | 9.8% | 5.2% | 34.1% | 15.0% |
| Yard Waste Disposal | 19 | 24 | 74 | 30 | 27 | 174 | 10.9% | 13.8% | 42.5% | 17.2% | 15.5% | 24.7% | 32.8% |

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- Want to eliminate car travel locally? Extend safe pedestrian walkway from town center to all the way to Whiffin Spit. White painted lines are not safe zones for pedestrians in lieu of sidewalks or pathways between local parks. Regarding all permits, especially for business and secondary suites:
 - Demonstrate need for permit.
 - Issue permit on demand regarding regulations to applicant.
 - Collect fees.
 - Allow reasonable time to comply.
 - Expedite inspection and approval **note several new business potentials have been seen to fail or relocate due to current slow (small space)process.
 - All our loss of employment and taxes
- An interesting idea presented to me recently is to create an opening in Whiffen Spit - with bridge access, in an attempt to have a cleaner sweep of debris from high tide to low tide. In other words, for a clean sweep /-2x daily of Sooke Harbour. A bridge would connect the two sides, of course a feasibility study would require increased resources. Thanks
- Wildfire mitigation measures (grants available)
- I am paying way too much in taxes. Anything that can be done to keep taxes at the present level or lower would be appreciated. Most tax payers can't handle anymore.
- High Priority: Development of waterfront with businesses, walkway, high-density housing.
- Urgent Care Centre.
- Spend money on things that actually improve the life of people in Sooke. We need more commercial space to attract more business, create jobs and keep people in town instead of commuting to Langford/Victoria. Pressure the government for a REAL Urgent Care Centre like Alberta has throughout their province. Create more playgrounds and spray parks. We need a new Elementary, Middle and High School.
- Would like to see more funds allocated to policing with the result being more of a police presence around town and in parks. Have felt unsafe at times trying to enjoy our downtown area and park space with our grandchildren due to the presence of people on and or doing drugs.
- Too much building too much density no architectural planning most the apartments look like Federal prisons Need to impose restrictions of trailers, sea cans and recreation vehicles stored everywhere on streets in peoples yards in the front of the houses.

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- As a coastal community all citizens should have access to parks and Greenspace that is adjacent to the waterfront. The city centre should be linked directly to the waterfront.
- Yard waste disposal should be accompanied by the banning of backyard burning.
- Sooke is a small, compassionate society and we should not be encouraging the wrong businesses (profiteers), greedy developers (all of them) or facilitating anything that would lead to larger amounts of tourism - travel is the worst thing for the planet during a climate crisis. Spending large amounts of money foolishly is also a tone-deaf action. We need to focus on quality of life, which means fresh, affordable food, reasonably-priced rentals, tiny home communities, resources for low-income seniors and more compassionate policing of the addicts among us.
- Stop trying to please everyone all the time speed up approval time of community projects like waste water and road construction, just get things done! Enough discussion its time for action.
- Please get us an urgent care centre and something for teens/young adults to do like a bowling alley or movie theatre or something fun that's open later.
- We need a bypass road to alleviate traffic coming into sooke and possibly a walkway overpass by the schools and galloping goose for safe highway crossing. We need to plan traffic routes now as there is so much new development happening and the infrastructure is not currently there to support it.
- Community Planning and Development must change its focus so that every single recommendation or action reduces or eliminates GHG emissions. This is a climate emergency and we cannot trigger initiatives which run counter to that and instead stoke the heat and fires that are literally burning BC, Canada and the world. There must be a complete mindset change and I do not know what will make that happen short of a fire in Sooke District, since nothing, not IPCC reports, not the U.N Secretary General appeals, not heat domes, not record fire seasons seems to get through to anyone.
- More tangible things that make life better and less political activities or those of uncertain impact such as efforts to mitigate "climate change". Also, less funding for niche activities like bike lanes which in the context of Sooke are strictly recreational and do nothing to support commuting like in big cities.
- There should be no green spaces removed from this community to build slabs of concrete or to build more housing.

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- we really really need a water park for children in the summer, whether it is adding on some features at an existing park or adding a new park
- Transit, Climate Action & Indigenous Initiatives are not priorities for our family or many of my neighbours. These programs receive more than enough funding & attention from other levels of government & the District should stop wasting time & money on these programs.
- Focus on getting things right for the residents before investing in growing tourism traffic and population
- The road allowance is something I did not address, and that needs to be increased exponentially. For example, with the amount of infrastructure that is increasing quite rapidly and if you're going to be putting in 950 more units, the roads need to be updated quite a bit. For example, Charters road is still one lane and you're building a lot of units up in that area that has never been addressed..
- Protect tall trees in all town boundaries and increase trees in city centre to help regulate temperatures, incentives for reduced car use, incentives for less commuting, incentives for reconciliation in community building projects, reduce single use residential lots.
- When I support business attraction/retention I am thinking not of big box stores but low carbon, low waste, circular economy types of businesses; I would also like to see a green business event to attract business that helps the town grow in the direction it would like
- The District of Sooke has not placed enough effort regarding preparing for food security for its growing population.
- Balanced growth in this area should depend more on encouraging smaller, local businesses rather than trying to attract big business to the area.
- Acquired park space should be accessible (not just habitat preservation), and ideally provide increased access to waterfront.
- Better road planning! If Throup road was extended to Phillips road with a roundabout at both ends it would get a lot of before and after school traffic off Sooke rd which would help Sooke road flow better. Charters road would not need upgrading and could be blocked off at the dip. Saving money??
- Ensure Sooke does not become another Langford! If people want large commercial businesses close they can move to Langford. Let's keep Sooke a small community!

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- Bike lanes need to be a priority
- District should work on improving existing parks NOT increasing what we have. Finishing improving what we have FIRST. Stop trying to sell the public on this. We want the parks in our neighbourhoods improved. NOT NEW ONES
- Not clear what "dog management" is referring to. The city should not be spending resources on subsidizing dog ownership but should spend money enforcing the rules that already apply. The city should encourage responsible ownership and disincentivize irresponsible owners. Pets are important to our overall health but there lots of choices for pets and choice of pet should be appropriate for living situation and means. Too many people buy a dog without spending the money on training and responsible ownership.
- Low scores do not mean to cut the service, it just means that it shouldn't be on the residents alone to finance. High scores express an interest in getting more provincial and federal funding (not suggesting heavily increasing taxes).
- Sooke taxes are lower than other communities but when comparing, does this take into account how accessible these communities are? More accessible means more policing requirements etc. Sooke is also a destination for those that can't afford to live closer to the rest of greater Victoria. Keeping taxes low is a priority as well.
- Desperately need a 2nd bridge across the Sooke River.
- Please move installing a sidewalk along Whiffin Spit Road to the front of the list. Ideally also add off-site parking for visitor access to the Spit.
- Overall as the community expands services needs is going to increase in proportion but budget should be spent to elevate quality of life engaging the residents to live in within the community and not just consider this town a place to sleep
- With the relatively small community we live in, I think the budget has been well allocated.
- I appreciate Sooke is under pressure from developers and builders to speed up permit approvals and processing. Fine - it's their business and they make a healthy profit from this opportunity. Make this function at least 100% user-pay for all staff and support costs (increase DCCs).
- My main concern is traffic flow and infrastructure. I would like to see a reduction of traffic travelling through the town core.

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- Must find a solution for all new development and growth to pay for necessary infrastructure rather than downloading this financial burden on existing residents in the form of increased taxes.
- Must maintain level of service and quality of life in spite of growth.
- Our police should be on the roads 24hours a day. Need more officers.
- Dogs off leash needs to be curtailed, more educations needs to be pushed out to residents that the parks are NOT off leash areas.
- The District should prioritize policing, fire protection, minimizing on-street parking in residential areas, and improving road access to areas of the community at risk of being cut off from main transport routes.
- I selected "no local government resources" for climate action. I am sure that the administrator of this survey equates that with a lack of interest in the topic on my part but that is far from the truth. The CRD, provincial and federal levels are already extracting their pounds of flesh from my wallet and I am concerned that local efforts are merely duplicating the programs from other governments. Until District of Sooke stops giving carte blanc to the developers blasting down the forests and mountains around town then I do not care to hear anything about "climate action" from the District. I fully support the town buying e-vehicles or installing solar panels on their buildings but they shouldn't be harassing me while ignoring developers.
- Make Sooke a cultural centre, convert shopping mall parking lot every two weeks in summer to outdoor concert venue.
- There are problems with the last few questions. When you ask us to say if we like, don't like or want to allocate more money to: 1. business attraction/retention and commercial development / 2. housing supply-increasing inventory and housing choices. If you like one part of the answer and not the other, it is impossible to respond.
- Really just want a family doctor. More than anything else I want to have primary care available for me and my family.
- A nice bonus would be a solution to the traffic caused by our roundabout being bookended by two traffic lights. If we had two more traffic circles there would never be a reason for traffic to stop during rush hour.

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- Hard for me to know...but if I choose 'keep the same' it means I am satisfied with current services.
- There is a place for yard waste disposal? Maybe more information needs to be spread.
- Bike lanes along major thoroughfares or just a good way to get from one end of town to the other without being on the highway
- It's not just more housing, its affordable housing.
- Highlight Sooke Harbour Front and acquire land to build a waterfront park, attract businesses, cafes, galleries, restaurants, shops to walk a long for locals and tourists.
- I would pay more if Mayor, Council and Staff would quit.
- Think long term (>50yrs), think about how we can take advantage of our waterfront for tourism and business. I envision an area where you can walk the full waterfront, pop in for dinner, head for a drink and listen to live music, there is a place for teens for people wanting to enjoy the evening (think football, arcade, board game cafe, etc). I see a waterfront with buskers, street vendors, festivals, art, fountains etc.
- Deal with the homeless at the hope center
- Please make Sooke more walkable. We live in Sunriver and the lack of sidewalks on Phillips to walk to Seaparc or the museum is disappointing. The lack of sidewalks to walk from there into town to run errands is extremely unsafe.
- Should have a priority for hiring local people. Seek more volunteers to input on committees, action groups and get opinions of long standing community members instead of the same old standards that came from a textbook. Stop manicuring Wadams Way it's a waste of money.
- The District should regularly communicate with the public on projects /development plans that will potentially have significant impacts on neighborhoods. A "Did you know" feature could be circulated in the Sooke Mirror.
- Sidewalks in the core of Sooke need to be built and funded by the municipality on major arterial roads that are served by school buses.

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- This BC Wildfire season is a wake-up call for us all. Sooke is most certainly situated in an extremely vulnerable location. There needs to be a much more lively community discussion and more proactive preventative measures put into place. Our buildings need to become much more fire resistant, especially the roofs (resistant to embers falling from a local fire); review of landscape fire prevention and resistance strategies - e.g. planting of "fire resistant" trees (e.g. aspen?); thinning of potential forest floor debris that is a latent fuel reserve; proactive creation of more fire breaks and access roads for firefighting around the town; more aggressive monitoring of local folks building bonfires or lighting fireworks in their backyards (no kidding! I've seen some just across the street from my home during certain times of the year). Generally speaking, we need to become much more vigilant.
- Vancouver Island is also in a certified earthquake zone. On this latter point, I strongly feel that the bylaws regarding stone retaining walls requires serious review since the current practice is creating retaining walls of dubious value during an earthquake!"
- Maybe council and Mayor should take a wage cut until they bring Sooke into the 21st century by prettying up the town and putting in proper sidewalks so kids are safe and not walking on the roadside. Like really people, do the job that you were elected for.
- Yes, do not waste money on countless surveys. Show transparency for the developers contribution fund and where it exactly goes. Looks like the last. \$ 6m only covered the District of Sooke salaries !
- I don't get a sense that the District is really listening to low-income or retired citizens, but I'm always happy to be asked for my opinion. Most people believe that if they're asked, actions might be taken, but I have worked in PR and I know that often survey results go nowhere unless they fit a specific agenda. Honestly, if Sooke council members and local government can't even change the bylaw that prohibits tiny homes? Such an incredible solution, and yet no one can act on it, it seems. I have no faith that anything will be done in the interest of low-income people. It seems that only people with money are heard in the world today. So sad.
- Stop taking cash gifts from developers and just tossing it in the pot. Make them pay for and do the proper upgrades, which should include traffic management/road upgrades for the ENTIRE road to get to the development. Example the Church Road upgrades/roundabout. That should NOT be paid for by Sooke tax payers, that should be paid for by Woodlands Development, they added the traffic, they pay for it.

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- I am concerned about the traffic regulation around Chevron gas station - traffic coming from Sooke road to Church road is now making a left turn to enter the gas station by crossing two lanes. The construction site next to the municipal hall does not follow the safety regulations - site worker do not wear straps when working up high, sometimes not wearing hard hat.
- Create an adequate fund to complete “overdue” projects and start getting them completed
- Please provide some services in the Silver Spray area (Thornton Heights) for the exorbitant taxes that we pay out here.
- Sewer system for all of sooke
- Please make it a priority to bring in chain businesses (ie. Walmart, white spot etc) not everyone can afford to shop in sooke with the price gouging the stores here do. We desperately need an Urgent care centre. We also desperately need a place for teens and young adults to have fun like a bowling alley or movie theatre etc.
- With the increasing demand for more affordable housing, the improvement of infrastructure is the foundation for potential solutions. Improving the sewer system, access roads and sidewalks is what I see as most important to do at this time.
- Balancing the books is never easy and anything to do with tax payer money is highly visible and extremely subjective. Do your best and no one can ask more (despite rude voices yelling otherwise). Good luck.
- If we are so concerned about the environment, let's quit having 3 or 4 different waste disposal companies doing the same route (neighbourhoods) on different days. These companies should be awarded routes by areas, not individual homes.
- Stop wasting money playing around at the Official Community Plan and get the job done.
- Bylaw enforcement is difficult to get action on. If they need another person please hire one.
- A multi use trail from the town center to the spit would tranform sooke for the better in my opinion
- There needs to be a more informed approach to development planning to ensure that all citizens benefit from population growth. Sooke is currently a hodge podge of affluent enclaves like Sunriver Estates that have all the amenities, while older parts of the town lack proper sidewalks. Not equitable.

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- It would be nice to have sewer expended to rural Sooke, as currently the only option is to be on septic.
- We should prioritize the building and staffing of an urgent and primary care clinic in Sooke with an x-ray machine.
- Sewer should be a top priority. Removing boats and squatters in Cooper's Cove. Should be addressed, I know it's a quagmire of authority but I just don't care, solve the problem.
- We are actively looking to move from sooke as the quality of life and diminishing since we got here.
- Climate changes still being ignored, swept under the carpet. or sidelined. It is an existential threat to all of us and it is here now and Sooke Council is doing nothing. In fact it is doing the opposite with its focus on growth it is literally fanning the flames. Until Sooke (and towns all across Canada) understand and internalises the urgent principle of a carbon budget that must not be overspent, we are all ultimately going to suffer. In fact we already are and what we have seen in 2021 and now this year is just the beginning of the catastrophe that is upon us.
- Thank you to each person that makes decisions based on the "power of love" rather than the "love of power".
- The District has a wonderful cost saving option having Sooke Community Association funding sports and recreation in Sooke, other Municipalities are funding large dollars towards their parks and support their parks users, the District of Sooke needs to step up and provide annual funding to SCA and their children organizations that provide the biggest value that goes self funded.
- Spend more money that will keep people from having to drive out of town to do fun things
- Streamlining rental developments. As Sooke grows, we need to ensure there are a variety of housing options to meet the diverse needs and range of household incomes of people who live and work here. Building more secure rental housing in all areas of the city is a critical component to this. Getting sewer brought to more areas quicker is essential to this plan.

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- It would be great to see the development in some parks for disc golf. Very cheap and enjoyable for youth and adults alike.
- This is a great community to live in and overall appears to be well managed. Very happy to have moved here.
- I was shocked to see the massive increase to the fire fighters wages as well as policing. All in the backs of Sooke residents that have wages well below this and are now having to foot the bill. How is it even possible that a fire fighter makes over \$100,000 a year?! They don't have fires occur daily and test make way more than an average citizen. Unbelievable.
- As a former resident of Alberta & employee of both municipal government & Provincial government organizations in both Alberta & B.C. I feel confident in my understanding of the civic budgeting process. I am well aware of Roads maintenance & the time it takes to repair pavement. The road maintenance here is a joke.
- Commercial development is non-existent yet houses are being built non-stop.
- It's disappointing that I have to drive to Langford to access affordable grocery shopping, restaurants & pubs as well as recreational opportunities for my daughter (including outdoor spray parks/splash pads). Where are the locals accessing all this new affordable housing expected to shop for essentials with really no options?
- I would rather spend my money locally but without local businesses to support that's not possible.
- Whatever money you're supposedly allocating to climate change initiatives is totally wasted when I'm driving to other cities several times a week to access their businesses & services.
- Our entire waterfront is a completely wasted space, with so much potential. Even Whiffin Spit is poorly maintained, without enough parking.
- Our dream is for Sooke to become a thriving community with businesses & amenities similar to Canmore or Whiterock - not just a place visitors drive-through on their way to beaches.

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- You are doing such great work with such a limited budget, making hard choices. Keep it up!
- I understand the reasoning behind more development and providing more housing but for one thing I don't want to look like a Langford. Also, on the other hand, our infrastructure cannot handle 950 more units, between the lack of medical and a single lane highway out in this area it's just not feasible. Also, with the amount of building that is going to be taking place this is also causing environmental issues with the removal of so many trees and none being replaced. The government wants to be environmentally conscious, but this is not the case in the western properties. The other thing that needs to be addressed is the Saseenoos elementary school and its lack of parking. The way it is set up now people have to cross the road during rush-hour traffic and holding traffic up for miles. To increase the flow of traffic and also the safety of the pedestrians are they not able to use the lot that is adjacent to the playground on the school grounds for a parking lot.
- Improve livability for young families- increase taxes to make this happen
- There is a great need to make considerable progress, and it's unclear whether the District is advancing priorities in an efficient, timely manner. I would add that I've contacted District staff with some of my concerns, and have been unable to get District staff to respond. This lack of engagement and shirking of responsibility on the part of District staff is troubling.
- I really appreciate engagement opportunities like this as well as ways to participate in building our future and governance, ie through citizens committees...they are great value to the community with minimal cost.
- I love that the District reaches out to its residents to get their opinions on issues that matter to them. Sooke is undoubtedly evolving to be a suburb, rather than a small-town/coastal community. Understanding that the District, with the help of the CRD, can only intervene to a certain extent in the private-sector activities, it should demonstrate efforts to maintain as much as possible the small-town charm Sooke provides.

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- It's only a matter of time before Sooke citizens are trapped behind an inaccessible bridge in or out of town or Sun River; the township in partnership with the Ministry of Transportation need to expedite and remedy these two VERY important issues for the health and well being of the overall community and as a part of emergency planning. It's only a matter of time before something catastrophic happens and you can only roll the risk management dice for so long until it comes up snake eyes.
- I understand the need for increased housing and support it, however I think Sooke is going ahead with it too fast and without the proper infrastructure to support it. We do not have access to medical care, a hospital and our roads can't support the extra traffic.
- Please spend more on communication between the District and Sooke residents.
- Please focus on road maintenance! It impacts all of us.
- Stop allocating funds to non-essential items.
- If you are making money from all the development you are allowing, I think it is your duty to put thought into the infrastructure. Number one being an alternate route, going south, in and out of Sooke. The traffic is horrific and outrageous. Take care of the infrastructure before allowing any more development. If you're not making money from all the development that you are allowing, then why are you doing it? The people of Sooke wanted to live in a big town, they would live in a big town. It seems so obvious to me.
- It would be great to be able to see what various services are actually costing me, directly, without having to decipher a huge governmental document. Also, the charm and joy of Sooke is its small town nature. Would hate to see it turn into another Langford.
- Thank you for this opportunity to understand the wide range of areas addressed by the District and the challenge in balancing attention across such a diverse spectrum of important matters.
- Please stop downzoning residential - for example, the new single family homes now being built in Sunriver which was previously zoned for multi-family. This is tremendously short-sighted and drives up cost. Other municipalities have lengthy and expensive processes to upzone and we should not be giving these up.

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- This is a rapidly growing community with a lot of active young families who moved here with their young children specifically for the lifestyle opportunities here. Investing in bike lanes, playgrounds, park acquisition/maintenance/trail building will encourage these young families to stay in Sooke.
- Cool it with the environmental regulations. Wood stoves are not killing the planet.
- Mental health support for homeless drug addicted residents roaming the streets. "
- There is very little money allocated to the Kaltasin neighbourhood. We need: 1. Sewer, 2. Sidewalks, 3. Park infrastructure, 4. Road and edge of road fixed so there is a place to walk, 5. Water access points developed safely and so ALL can access to water.
- Develop a plan to increase the number of sidewalks to increase safety for pedestrians such as helagsen road
- Set aside funds for specific future development rather than implementing plans piecemeal and burdening people now with costs for developments that may never be completed.
- Focus on getting results. A budget is defensible if the community can see that the money is going to improving the lives of the community. Money spent on endless studies would be a waste because it doesn't get results. The ideological issues that are trending with other governments are not our priority, those are gravy issues if you have time and money left over. If failing to meet the demands of the community and constant discontent is plaguing the city then focus on the core issues. Responsible government. Treat it like a household budget. Don't waste money of the daily takeout coffee when the roof needs replacing.
- Consider tax abatements and other tools to incentivize businesses to open locations in Sooke.
- Please form a "waterfront development corporation" to develop Sooke's town core waterfront (down Brownsey perhaps). This kind of project needs integrated rather than piece-meal planning, its own financing (including bond issuing powers), significant professional expertise and a 5 to 7 year timeline."
- Slow down the growth of Sooke if possible

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- Please build more playgrounds for kids. The green space between otterpoint road and Townsend road would be the perfect place for a community playground. A playground near the library would also be a great location.
- The online development tracker is a great tool. The public would benefit knowing more about this tool.
- Before advertising Tourism, area needs more resources for policing/ fire protection & emergency services. Roads through residential neighborhoods to destinations such as Spit & Potholes totally inadequate for exponential # s of tourists !!
- Do what the people want. Yes, they don't know. Yes, they will waste money. Yes they will never agree. But that is democracy. Eventually the public will realize that spending all tax dollars on parks and stop buying diesel fuel for trucks will ruin the district.
- No Thank You!?
- Taxes can't keep going up time to find savings with in current budget. Don't talk climate change with police service all driving big suv and truck. Does everyone working for crd have a truck or van.
- Keep up the good work!
- Significant growth in population and housing starts yet taxes continue to rise in excess of inflation. The growth model isn't working if we aren't seeing commensurate economies of scale and improved efficiencies. Growth and development must pay for the burden it imposes.
- Need more resources in health care . Plan now fir a health care centre.
- Sooke is obviously growing. Aside from general amenities, it would be good to have more recreational/cultural spaces for adults in our community. It would also be great if there were more Pop-up or small scale business opportunities/spaces to encourage micro businesses and artists to move here.

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- I have been to a few town halls. I always hear something new that I didn't know of and often the town employees have clarified something. However, I don't think the town is receptive to new ideas. I suggest designating a future bypass route. Highway 14 dips south into Sooke and then back north. In the long term (next 20 or 30 years) a road should be built from somewhere around Saseenos, cross the Sooke River, and maybe join up to Otter Point Rd at its northern extreme where it turns west. With a plan in place then property for such a purpose could be identified and purchases. Right now there is only one bridge into town and highway 14 through downtown is congested any day of the week. When I suggest this town staff always point out the future Throup Rd bypass and Grant Rd. I don't think throwing more traffic through these school/playground zones and residential areas is helpful past a couple of years. They also say that they want the traffic to stop and patronize the downtown businesses. So it sounds like we are a tourist trap. Some business owners make lots of money and the only return to the town is a few more minimum wage dead end jobs. We are starting to look like downtown Duncan. The transcanada through there has negatively changed the look of that community. That is what is happening here. It is too busy for me to shop in Sooke, I just go to Langford. As we are the last town before the west coast then if people need to shop they will get off the bypass and shop here. Otherwise please funnel them away so they can quickly get to the west side of Sooke or on to Pt Renfrew without clogging our town. Unfortunately, the town will say that a new road is a provincial issue (and from the comments I have heard from town staff the town and province do not talk or coordinate with each other easily on the matter of Hwy 14) and not have the imagination or long-term thinking to even consider this idea.
- The last question is too vague. I don't think the community should buy new firetruck every 5 years. Most new buildings are sprinklers. Fire fighting cost should therefore decrease.
- Get creative and find a way to buy the 33 acres currently for sale on whiffin spit and make it a park!!!!!!
- Please pay more attention to incrementally improving our parks, roads, and trail systems. Even small investments yearly will contribute to good maintenance and user satisfaction. Not every project needs to be enormous, and great benefits can be achieved by ensuring at least something gets done every year to improve each area.
- Every action taken by Sooke Corp needs to be evaluated through a climate first lens. A carbon budget needs to be initiated and administered along side our financial one. When used it can lead to priorities set that offer financial saving for the community and growth but not growth that we have been told to expect.
- Traffic management! Thanks for the lacrosse box!!

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- Nope
- For the love of God get us some doctors. More than anything else we need health care.
- Is District of Sooke a living wage employer? Are all employees covered with benefits etc. including cleaning staff etc? Be part of the solution. People and environment first.
- Don't waste precious funds trying to meet unachievable 'climate change' and greenhouse gas goals. The increase in population & increased traffic in the Sooke District ensures that these goals are not going to be met.
- Look at current and recent population growth in Sooke, forecast it forward 5, 10, 20 years and be ready with roads, sewers, schools, recreation, police & fire protection.
- I really hope that the district listens to Sooke's residents rather than the developers, real estate agents and the ones who can profit from the destruction of this beautiful town. There has already been a lot of development and permits approved before the OCP has even been released. There will never be enough that the developers will be happy with. They will never be satisfied until every little piece of land and green space has been utilized. It is traumatic to see it in other districts, and I fear that now it is happening here.
- Sooke is a beautiful place to live and we need to keep it this way. Top priority should be making sooke a more walkable area and ensuring that the ocean views are not obstructed by development.
- I see alot about increasing costs, but what can be done to lower costs?
- Less housing development. Each residence has 2 cars. Too much high volume traffic in and out of Sooke daily with one bridge and one road. Learn from the recent West Coast wildfire road closure and the impact on the people.
- I'm impressed with the services we received for the amount paid for taxes. Elsewhere taxes are going up far more than Sooke. Keep up the good work!
- Several different companies doing same garbage routes in same neighbourhoods, waste of resources and not environmentally friendly. Whole blocks should be awarded to single companies, either by lowest bid or vote by residents on each block.

Appendix C:

Comments

- Loosely modeling the Sooke's development after a similar district, such as Squamish, BC (where I lived prior to Sooke) shows their working strategy of attracting population through developing lifestyle amenities leaning into "resort", and "outdoor playground" "worldclass trails system", watersports, rockclimbing, and more with a tagline: "...Hardwired for Adventure". The underpinnings of Sooke's evolution could be based on leaning into a toned-down "beach resort" feel, where beachfront boardwalks attract retail and mixed use businesses and tourists. Squamish is showing strong, controlled growth and sits between Vancouver and Whister. Sooke could do the same, while leveraging Victoria's weekend recreationers. Dev. Priority: Right of Way to waterfront, beachfront/boardwalk development to attract ""resort style"" businesses is a priority to set an (economical) framework ammenable resort style businesses (cafes, fishing, etc). Does not have to be expensive infrastructure as just a framework where business could ""build to suit"" to the strongly established building themes (example: all with cedar shakes roof, or colour schemes, consistent signage, etc). Finally, I am happy to offer further conversation (I took some Urban Land Development at UBC and also worked with developers' marketing for many years in Vancouver).
- Please PLEASE take care of our infrastructure (ROADS) before allowing more development, - that means more than 1 lane in and 1 lane out. That means an alternate route (not double lanes on the same road). We live in Sooke because it is a small town - if we wanted to live in a big town, we wouldn't live in Sooke. Please stop over developing Sooke. No one wants it. Yes, it is possible. Other communities do this, like our neighbour, Metchosin. Please stop over development, from sensitive ecosystems like the Sooke River. And one last thing, PLEASE stop talking about the environment like it is an important issue to you. We do not have any form of pollution, other than cars (that sit and idle, multiple times a day, because traffic is not moving. I witness this, first hand). The more development you allow, the more pollution from cars there will be. It is that simple. The area we live in requires people to have a vehicle. Don't try and kid yourself otherwise. So please, no more empty words about wanting a clean environment. It is impossible with more development. Please, use some common logic.
- For years now and many more years to come home owners and residents are putting up with almost daily blasting and loud noise from rock crushers and other huge machines used in some of the new housing developments above town on Broom hill. The noise certainly causes significant loss of enjoyment of our homes. Therefore our property taxes should be reduced and the noisy large scale developers should be charged more taxes. If they damaged or filled in a creek, for example, they should be fined or made to repair the damage.

Appendix C: Comments

- Sooke is beautiful area. I lived in Langford and saw it changing from quiet place to treeless dusty unfriendly city. What ever you do,keep this in mind, developing too much is not good legacy to leave behind.
- Is there any focus on increasing public transit in Sooke. It would be great to see something like the trolley that Langford had, in Sooke. Public transit that helps people get around Sooke that runs more often than they currently are, and service more remote locations.
- There needs to be a speed bump on Whiffin Spit Road to slow down the traffic speed. Currently, as a dog walker, the traffic speed is between 60 - 70 when leaving the Spit or coming off of West Coast Road. I filmed a group of teens who hit and killed a deer on Whiffin Spit at Richview because of the speed they were driving. This should be a high priority before someone gets seriously hurt.
- The city engineering/administrative/department which employs several people to manage the affairs of Sooke (ie. the people who are responsible for hiring and managing ie.the building inspectors and other city staff) need to be more accountable for the abismal non -action at city Hall in sooke. I have requested information re. Riparian waterways, as of late (months ago) and was given a voicemail, of which no one has ever contacted me.i am unable to physically go down to city Hall and speak to anyone responsible, because they either work from home or are on vacation or LOA. This is a very very sad state of affairs. I do know the "" higher ups"" get paid very very well, with very poor management of their staff or accountability.
- We need to get back to basic. Sooke is not going to change the world. Total fatigue from all the time and talk wasted on things outside the control of this district. We need to get back to basics and concentrate on what changes can be readily achieved at this level of government.
- Would like to see a water park specifically
- This town is in need of proper sidewalks. For such a small town it is in walkable. And painting a line on grant rd and calling it a sidewalk doesn't make it a sidewalk. Also the new trail system is great but the connections when having to walk on the road are unsafe.
- Please fix/replace the waterpark at Broomhill. Thank you!
- If we don't have a livable planet, there's no point having fun cultural activities, much as I love arts and music. Zero emissions by 2030 is super important for our children's and their children's futures.

Appendix C:

Comments

- Of all my 5 choices I think promoting walking and cycling are the most important. Existing cycle lanes are not kept swept and Sooke desperately needs more sidewalks especially near Prestige hotel and down Whiffin Spit Road. Walking and cycling promotes health, reduces greenhouse gas emissions and helps reduce car centric living.
- We need another way out of SunRiver in case if emergency. Also need a bike path to connect across river from SunRiver
- More nightlife in sooke and less apartments
- Attract more knowledgeable council members by increasing compensation and reduce costs for staff who are not qualified. Read the Hugget report and find out why thereâ€™s a bullying and harassment problem within staffing personnel. This is a fact that is well known to many in my community.
- Concentrate on solutions to the current traffic problem in Sooke.
- Fix roads and update infrastructure before allowing more housing.
- I don't want Sooke to become Langford. I hope there is a master plan to keep Sooke from becoming just a commercial center.
- More things for families!!! And sidewalks.
- Ensure that all are paying there share of property taxes. A lot of building without permits in Sooke as wait times are excessive!!
- After 15 years isn't it about time you set aside some funds to put up a sign to name John Phillips Park. I think you need to slow down on building apartment buildings as the traffic will become more unmanageable as it already is. Bumper to Bumper traffic is not good for the environment, this is what we have now, how is it going to be with all the news apartments being built.
- Not a word about infrastructure that means life and death. Water, sewage. Just lets get more and more and more housing and residents to use up limited water and where will the sewage go?

Appendix C:

Comments

- The District is continuing unlimited/unrestricted growth and development however economies of scale are not being realized commensurate with growth. Fix the strategy such that there is a benefit to existing residents from this growth rather than an increasing financial burden. Costs and expenses today are rising exponentially so it behoves the district to be extremely prudent with tax payer's money.
- Spending on frivolous items such as dog park gazebos, large fancy named signs made of wood which are not maintenance free (e.g. the large signs named after dead citizens found in parks), tiny metal signs at the base of trees along Wadams Way naming various early settlers which more rightly belong in a cemetery (Does anyone read them?).
- More transparency and more honest & balanced communication is needed. Most of the general public is unaware of many of the serious and/or costly issues facing the District of Sooke. 2 Examples: The Lions Club's \$1.00 for 50+50 years of use, developing a section of John Philips Memorial Park to the surprise & objection of many citizens. The misunderstandings schemozzles of the June 19, 2023 Special Council - Committee of the Whole Public Meeting.
- The delay on the Billing Kaltasin waster water sewer system is starting to become farcical considering study in 2010 deemed it urgently required for local health of our Sooke Bay beaches and sea life. 13 years onward and nothing but hot air and excuses from council while our beaches are dying because of waste water leeching from old septic fields.



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