



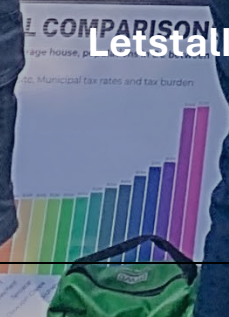
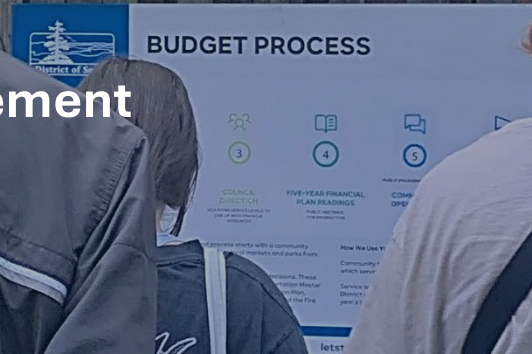
Budget 2026

What We Heard

Phase One Public Engagement

Stay informed!

Letstalk.sook.ca/budget





The District of Sooke acknowledges that we are located on the traditional territories of the T'Sou-ke and Scia'new Nations. We honour the long history and continued presence of the Indigenous people and express our gratitude for their stewardship of the lands and waters that sustain our community.

Executive Summary

Each year, the District of Sooke invites community input to guide the annual budget through surveys, pop ups, and in-person conversations to ensure residents' voices shape financial planning and service delivery.

For the 2026 budget, more than 1,500 people participated, the highest engagement to date. Alongside the online survey, residents and visitors joined interactive pop ups at the Town Centre kiosk, Whiffin Spit (including evening sessions), the Thursday Night Market, and the Sooke Country Market. Participants described the process as welcoming, fun, and informative, with many enjoying the hands-on "budget dots" activity. Increased youth and visitor participation reflected Sooke's dual identity as both a community and a destination.

The Budget 2026 engagement program combined three approaches:

- Online Survey (197 responses): detailed feedback on service satisfaction, priorities, and spending preferences.
- Random Household Survey (58 of 300 mailed): capturing input from residents less active online.
- Pop up Engagements (1,500+ participants): providing inclusive, interactive opportunities across all ages.

Together, these provided a comprehensive and balanced picture of community perspectives.

Key Takeaways

1. Transportation Remains a Priority

Transportation continues to remain high as a community concern, with calls for congestion relief on Highway 14 and an emphasis on investment in multimodal connections - sidewalks, trails, bike lanes, transit, and traffic calming to improve mobility.

2. Balancing Growth and Infrastructure

Residents support growth aligned with infrastructure capacity - roads, utilities, schools, and healthcare - while maintaining affordability and quality of life.

3. Parks and Environment

Parks and outdoor recreation ranked highest for investment. Participants emphasized protecting green space, improving trail connectivity, and advancing environmental stewardship.

4. Public Safety and Preparedness

Fire Rescue, policing, and emergency planning received high satisfaction and strong support. Residents emphasized maintaining capacity as the community grows.

5. Economic Development and Local Resilience

Residents called for more local jobs, small business support, and tourism initiatives to diversify the tax base and reduce commuting.

6. Evolving Engagement

Residents valued the conversational, hands-on format. Future engagement will build on this with mapping tools to understand participation by location, age, and visitor status.

Community Vision

Across all engagement streams, residents expressed a clear direction for Sooke's future:

- Invest in transportation and multimodal networks.
- Expand and care for parks, trails, and green spaces.
- Align growth with infrastructure capacity.
- Maintain strong public safety and emergency services.
- Strengthen local economic and environmental resilience.

What's Next

Community input will inform the 2026–2030 Five-Year Financial Plan. Next steps include:

- Staff presenting service area overviews for Council direction.
- Preparation and public deliberation of the preliminary budget.
- A Budget Open House prior to final adoption.

This report summarizes Phase One engagement findings; future phases of the District's budget process will continue to ensure community priorities guide financial decisions.

Contents

- Executive Summary.....3
- Key Learnings6
- How We Engaged8
- Who We Engaged 11
- What We Heard 13
- Service Area Satisfaction..... 17
- Priorities for Investment 19
- Financial Sustainability and Revenue Diversification 24
- Exploring Support for Potential Tax Increases..... 29
 - Fire Rescue Services Plan 29
 - Policing Services 30
 - Parks and Trails Services..... 30
 - Land for Future Community Needs 31
 - Overall Interpretation..... 31
- Trade-Offs and Cost-Saving Measures..... 33
- General Comments Text Analysis..... 34
- Appendices 38
 - Appendix A: What adds to your quality of life in Sooke? What takes away from it? 39
 - Appendix B: Priority Areas – Other Comments 48
 - Appendix C: Land for Future Community Needs - If you feel the District should buy land now for future community needs, are there specific types of land or areas the District should prioritize?..... 50
 - Appendix D - What topics would you like covered to help you make an informed decision – Other responses 54
 - Appendix E - Do you have any additional comments you would like to share with the District? 55

Key Learnings

Community feedback gathered through the 2026 budget engagement revealed a consistent set of themes that reflect both evolving and enduring priorities in Sooke. While transportation and growth management remain top concerns, residents also emphasized parks, environmental stewardship, and the importance of maintaining essential services that support safety and livability.

Applying a growth mindset, the District continues to enhance the listening tour experience - building on what works well, learning from community input, and refining engagement methods to make participation more accessible, meaningful, and responsive each year.

These key learnings summarize highlights from the first phase of Budget 2026 engagement.

1. **Growing Emphasis on Multimodal Transportation**

Transportation remains a top concern, but the conversation is broadening. Residents continue to call for congestion relief on Highway 14 and improvements to local roadways, while also emphasizing multimodal connections - sidewalks, trails, bike infrastructure, and transit. Traffic calming is emerging as a new theme, with participants highlighting the need to make neighbourhoods safer and more walkable.

2. **Balancing Growth with Infrastructure**

Concerns about housing and development are closely tied to infrastructure capacity. Feedback shows strong support for ensuring that growth is aligned with adequate roads, utilities, schools, and healthcare. Affordable housing remains a priority, but residents stressed the importance of not expanding too quickly without the infrastructure to support it.

3. **Sustained Focus on Parks and Environment**

Parks and outdoor recreation continue to be the number one priority for both residents and visitors. Participants also underscored the importance of protecting greenspace and advancing environmental protection.

4. **Public Safety Services Remain Essential**

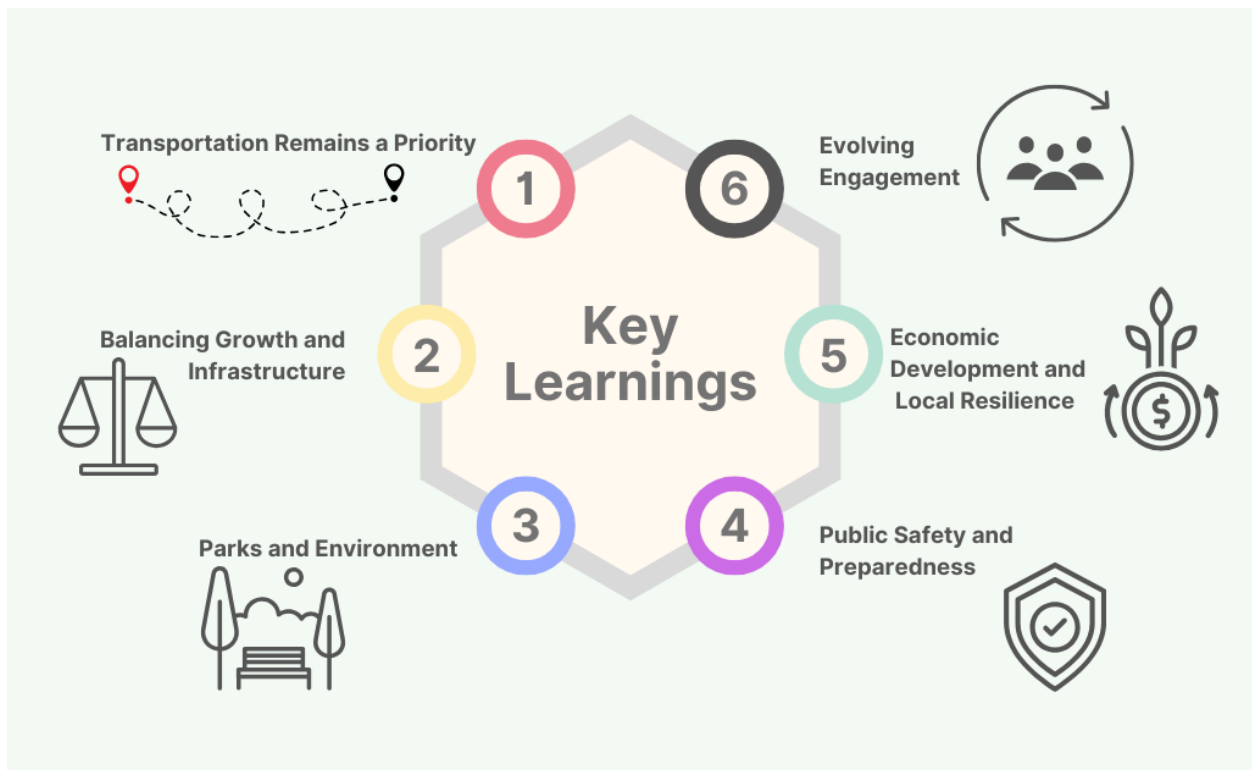
Fire Rescue, policing, and emergency preparedness consistently receive strong support. While satisfaction levels for Fire Rescue remain high, comments highlighted the importance of strengthening policing and ensuring emergency services keep pace with population growth.

5. Economic Development as an Ongoing Priority

Residents continue to view economic development as key to diversifying the tax base, attracting local jobs, and supporting small businesses. Healthcare, tourism, and local business growth were highlighted as sectors that can strengthen Sooke’s resilience and reduce reliance on commuting.

6. Evolving Engagement Process

This year’s outreach saw record participation and expanded methods, including evening engagement at Whiffin Spit and a new presence at the Town Centre kiosk. Residents described the process as fun and welcoming, reinforcing the value of interactive activities. Tourists and visitors also participated in higher numbers than in previous years. To capture this more effectively, future engagement will include a world map and neighbourhood map, allowing participants to share where they live or are visiting from. This will provide richer insight into the perspectives shaping Sooke’s budget process.



How We Engaged

Engagement Opportunities Provided

From June to September 2025, the District of Sooke offered multiple ways for community participation on Budget 2026, encouraging residents and visitors to share feedback on priorities and community needs. Engagement opportunities included:

- Annual Budget Survey (Online)
- Interactive “Pop up” Booths
- Random Household Survey (Mail Out)

Budget Survey

The annual budget survey was available online from June 18 to August 24, 2025. Participants were invited to provide feedback on satisfaction with District services, rank priorities, suggest changes to service levels, and share comments on local issues such as transportation and growth management.

A total of 197 completed surveys were received, compared to 329 last year. The higher response in 2024 was likely influenced by the closure of Charters Road and resulting traffic impacts, which prompted the District to deliver an expanded traffic-focused survey that generated additional interest. In 2025, many residents engaged instead through in-person pop ups; several noted that these sessions gave them sufficient opportunity to share input, and they therefore felt no need to also complete the online survey.



Community Budget Engagement at the Sooke Night Market. Families and residents stopped by to learn more about the budget process, ask questions, and provide feedback to help shape updates to the District’s financial plan.

The online survey remained open 24/7 throughout the engagement period to ensure broad accessibility, and the random household survey was expanded from 200 to 300 households. To further support equitable participation, residents without internet access could also contact staff by phone or in person.

Interactive “Pop up” Booths

Between June and August 2025, the District hosted interactive budgeting booths at multiple community locations, including:

- Town Centre kiosk (new for 2025)
- Whiffin Spit (daytime and evening sessions – evening being new for 2025)
- Thursday Night Market
- Sooke Country Market on Saturdays
- Broomhill Playground

At these events, participants were given five dots (representing tax dollars) to allocate to different service areas. This hands-on activity helped residents visualize the trade-offs involved in budgeting and see the collective choices and priorities of the community, including visitors. Pop ups fostered meaningful conversations between community members, Council, and staff, often described by participants as fun and engaging.

A total of more than 1,500 people participated in the pop-up events, making them the most impactful component of this year’s engagement program. Importantly, self-identification categories - resident, resident willing to pay more, youth, and tourist/visitor - allow the District to better understand differences in perspective across groups.



Pop up Budget Engagement with community members at Whiffin Spit. Staff and Council connected with residents to share information and gather input on the District’s financial planning process

Tourist and visitor participation was higher than in previous years. To build on this, future engagements will include a world map and neighbourhood map so participants can share where they live or are visiting from. This will give the District richer insight into who is engaging and help shape inclusive, community-responsive budgeting processes.

Random Household Survey (Mail Out)

To supplement online and in-person engagement, the District again mailed a print version of the budget survey to randomly selected households. This year, distribution was expanded from 200 households in 2024 to 300 households in 2025, in hopes of capturing a broader and more representative cross-section of the community.

To reduce duplication, postal codes collected through the online survey were cross-referenced against the mail-out sample. This step ensured that households already represented in the online data set were excluded from the random mail distribution, improving the validity of results. While overlap between formats cannot be fully eliminated, this refinement strengthened the reliability of the data.

Of these, 58 surveys were returned and 29 were marked undeliverable, yielding a 21.7% response rate.

The random household survey added valuable depth to the engagement process, confirming key themes from online and in-person feedback while also providing insights from residents less active in digital platforms. Together, these three engagement streams, online, pop up, and mail-out, ensured a comprehensive and inclusive budget engagement program.

Who We Engaged

This year’s budget engagement combined an online survey with in-person pop up events to reach a broad cross-section of the Sooke community. The online survey provides a more detailed picture of who participated and the perspectives shaping local priorities.

Survey Participants

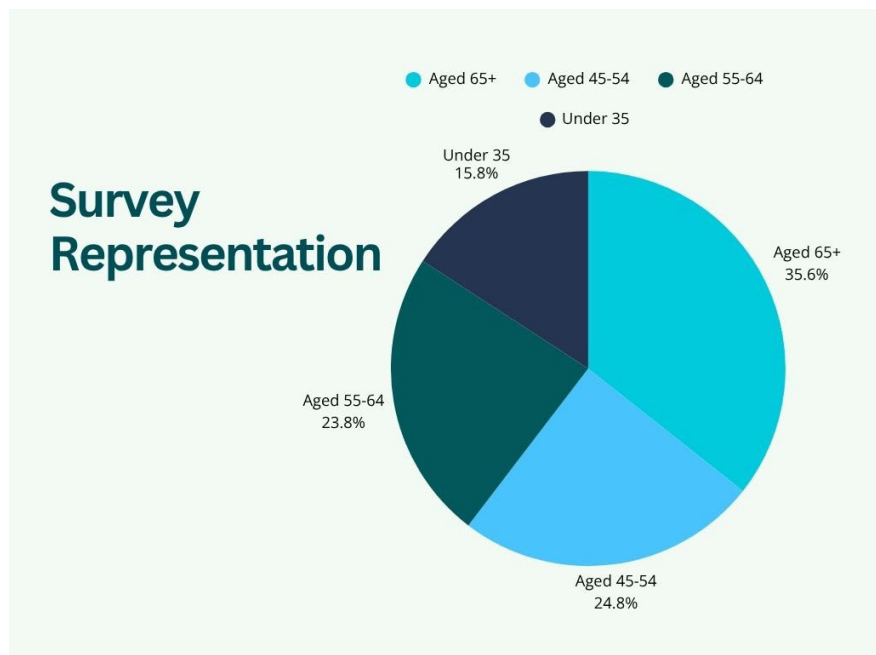
Respondents represented a range of age groups, with the largest proportion (36%) aged 65 and older, followed by 45–54 (25%) and 55–64 (24%). Participants under 35 were less represented, accounting for roughly 16% of responses combined across younger age brackets. This distribution aligns with past engagement patterns, reflecting strong participation from long-term residents and those with established ties to the community.

A majority of respondents (51%) have lived in Sooke for more than 10 years, while another 48% were newer residents - 25% for 1–5 years and 23% for 6–10 years - indicating that both long-term and newer community members are actively contributing to conversations about Sooke’s financial future.

Employment data suggests that most participants are either working full-time (46%) or retired (37%), reflecting a mix of working professionals and those with established roots in the community. Smaller groups included self-employed residents (9%) and part-time workers (7%).

When asked where they work or study, 41% reported employment outside Sooke, primarily in Victoria (18%), Langford/Colwood

(10%), or other areas of the region. Another 34% work locally or are retired, while the remainder identified as students, remote workers, or otherwise not currently employed.



This balance highlights both the community’s commuter character and the importance of local economic development.

Pop up Engagements

To broaden representation, the District also hosted pop up engagement booths throughout the summer at community events, parks, and youth-oriented spaces. These activities reached over 1,600 participants—many of whom were youth, families, and visitors. Pop up participants were invited to rank investment priorities and share what matters most to their quality of life in Sooke. Their input helped ensure that younger voices and tourists who contribute to our visitor economy were part of the conversation.

What We Heard

Interpreting the Results

Two primary data sources informed this year’s budget engagement: the online/household survey (197 responses) and the priority-setting exercise at community pop ups (1,500+ participants). While survey results provide valuable insight into satisfaction with services, growth management, and verbatim comments, the pop-up data is statistically more significant given the much larger participation rate. Taken together, these inputs provide both depth (through detailed survey responses) and breadth (through high-volume priority ranking).

Community Priorities

Across all engagement streams, the strongest and most consistent message was the need to invest in **multimodal transportation** and **parks and outdoor recreation**. Both residents and visitors echoed this priority through the pop-up experience.

Other key priorities included:

- **Housing and Growth Management** – residents expressed the need for affordable housing but cautioned that new development must align with infrastructure capacity, particularly roads, utilities, schools, and healthcare.
- **Economic Development** – calls to create more local jobs, support small businesses, and diversify the tax base to reduce reliance on residential property taxes.
- **Public Safety Services** – strong support for continued investment in policing, Fire Rescue, and emergency preparedness as the community grows.

Further emerging priorities include wildlife education and traffic calming on local roads, with an increasing interest in buying land for parks, roads and public facilities.



Quality of Life in Sooke

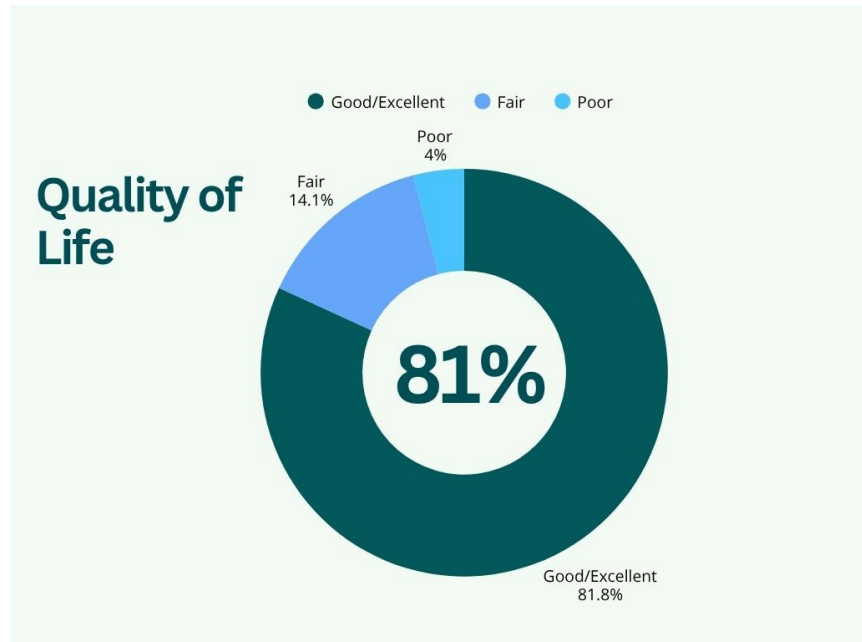
When asked, “How would you rate your overall quality of life in Sooke?”, the majority of respondents reported being satisfied.

- 57% rated their quality of life as Excellent
- 24% rated it as Good
- 14% rated it as Fair
- 4% rated it as Poor
- 0% selected Very Poor

This indicates that more than four out of five participants (81%) feel their quality of life in Sooke is either Good or Excellent.

While a small portion identified areas for improvement, overall satisfaction levels are high.

Themes emerging from other survey responses suggest that maintaining this high quality of life is closely tied to effective management of growth, transportation, and the natural environment. Comments from pop up engagement further reinforced that traffic calming, wildlife education, and balanced development are viewed as essential to sustaining the community’s livability.



Diving Deeper into Quality of Life

While the overall quality of life in Sooke was rated positively by most respondents, the survey also asked participants to rate specific elements that contribute to day-to-day livability. This provided a more nuanced understanding of where residents feel well-served and where there are challenges.

- **Access to Parks, Trails, and Outdoor Recreation**

A strong majority expressed satisfaction with access to natural amenities, with 63% (Good or Excellent) rating these opportunities positively. A small portion (6%) indicated “Poor” or “Very Poor.” This suggests that access to the outdoors remains one of our greatest strengths.

- **Access to Community Services (e.g., libraries, recreation, health services)**

Responses were more mixed: 41% rated access as Good, but 33% felt access was only Fair, and 22% rated it Poor or Very Poor. This suggests growing concern about the availability, accessibility, or adequacy of community services as the population increases.

- **Access to Local Shopping, Dining, and Business Services**

Perceptions were less favourable in this area: 42% rated access as Fair, while only 32% rated it Good and 6% as Excellent. Together, this indicates that many residents feel limited in local commercial and business options, often having to travel outside Sooke for their needs. Feedback from the pop-up engagement events reinforced this finding, where economic development emerged as a recurring priority.

Together, the survey data and engagement feedback highlight that economic development is central to improving quality of life, directly tied to access to goods, services, and local employment opportunities.

- **Neighbourhood Safety During the Day**

Comfort levels were high, with 85% (Safe or Very Safe) feeling secure in their neighbourhoods during the day. Concerns were limited, with just 5% reporting feeling unsafe.

- **Neighbourhood Safety at Night**

Perceptions of safety declined at night: 46% reporting they feel Safe, and 20% feel Very Safe, while 31% expressed Neutral or lower ratings, including 8% Unsafe or Very Unsafe. This suggests that perceptions of safety after dark impact quality of life.

Open-Ended Feedback: What Adds To & Takes Away From, Quality of Life

Open-ended community feedback highlights strong appreciation for Sooke's natural setting and small-town character, while also pointing to priorities for future investment. Residents emphasized transportation, walkability, healthcare access, and expanded amenities as key areas needing attention. Emerging asks focus on enhanced recreation opportunities, improved waterfront and town core accessibility, and more commercial spaces to support local jobs and services.

What's working

- **Nature and outdoors** are the standout strength ($\approx 47\%$ of comments): easy access to parks, trails, shoreline, and green space.
- **Community character:** friendly neighbours and a small-town feel are praised.

What needs attention

- **Traffic on Highway 14** and related congestion are the key concerns ($\approx 39\%$).
- **Limited local amenities**—shopping, dining, and evening entertainment—prompt trips to Langford/Victoria ($\approx 33\%$).
- **Walkability gaps** (sidewalks, bike lanes, safe crossings/lighting) reduce safe access to daily needs and recreation ($\approx 26\%$).
- **Healthcare access**—difficulty finding family doctors/clinic capacity ($\approx 17\%$).
- **Public space safety & cleanliness** related to homelessness, drug activity, and petty crime ($\approx 22\%$).
- **Transit**—infrequent/indirect service and few direct routes to Victoria ($\approx 20\%$).

Emerging asks

- **More recreation options** (family/youth/seniors; e.g., splash park, second ice sheet, curling, indoor facilities) ($\approx 31\%$).
- **Better public waterfront access** and a more walkable, attractive town core ($\approx 14\%$).
- **Commercial lands and spaces** to attract businesses and jobs, reducing out-of-town travel (ties to growth/land-use comments at $\approx 20\%$).

Service Area Satisfaction

When asked how satisfied they are with the services delivered relative to the monthly property tax amount allocated to each, most residents indicated that they feel they are receiving value for money. Across nearly all service areas, the majority of respondents were Satisfied or Very Satisfied, and importantly, very few expressed dissatisfaction. This indicates that overall, residents perceive District services as effective, reliable, and appropriately scaled to the amount they contribute each month - suggesting a strong alignment between the cost of service delivery and the value residents feel they receive in return.



Residents review District information and share feedback during community engagement

The **highest satisfaction ratings** were found in areas most closely tied to safety, communication, and quality of life. **Fire Rescue Services** led all categories with 74% satisfied or very satisfied, accompanied by very low dissatisfaction. **Communications and Community Engagement** and **Policing** followed at 65% satisfied or very satisfied, also recording minimal negative sentiment, suggesting strong confidence in public safety and the District's outreach efforts. **Parks, Trails, Environment, and Facilities** earned 61% satisfaction, reflecting widespread appreciation for the community's natural amenities. **Emergency Planning** was also well-regarded, with 55% satisfied or very satisfied and only a small portion dissatisfied, demonstrating trust in the District's preparedness and coordination.

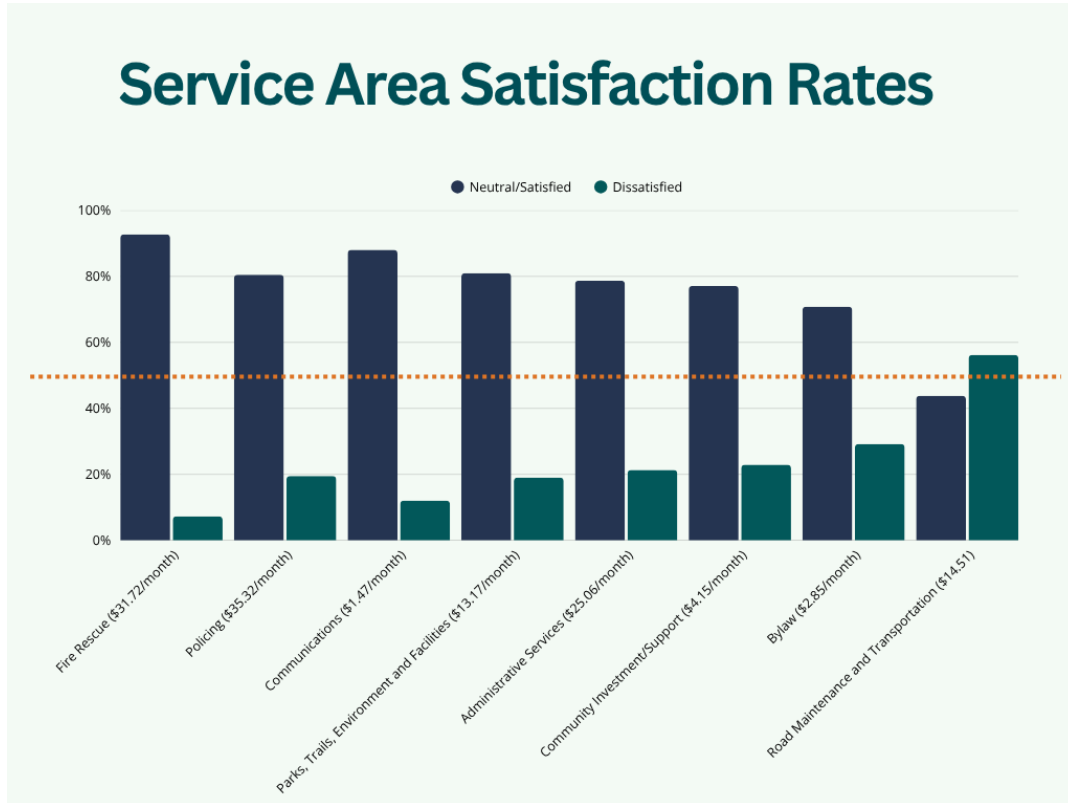
A second group of services - including **Bylaw Enforcement, Administrative Services, and Community Investment/Support** - saw a larger share of neutral responses, paired with low dissatisfaction rates. This suggests that while these services may not be as visible or top-of-mind for residents, they are broadly viewed as functioning effectively. The strong neutral showing reflects steady performance without notable discontent, and points to an opportunity for the District to communicate more clearly about the value these internal and regulatory services provide to the community.

Across all categories, dissatisfaction was relatively low, typically concentrated in single digits or the low teens. This overall pattern of neutral to positive sentiment indicates that

residents are not broadly dissatisfied with District operations - rather, they are generally content and looking for enhancements rather than overhauls.

The exception remains **Road Maintenance and Transportation**, which drew the highest dissatisfaction levels. Here, 56% of respondents were dissatisfied (35%) or very dissatisfied (21%), while 30% were satisfied (21%) or very satisfied (9%), and 14% provided neutral responses. This distribution suggests that while nearly half of residents are dissatisfied with current road conditions and traffic flow, a notable portion remain neutral or satisfied - indicating that experiences likely vary across neighbourhoods depending on location and frequency of use. Overall, this service area stands out as the most significant opportunity for improvement, reinforcing the need to address concerns related to road conditions, congestion, and investment in transportation infrastructure to raise satisfaction levels and strengthen perceived value for cost.

Overall, the results show that most residents are confident and satisfied with the services their property taxes support. The findings point to a municipality performing well across its core mandates, with low dissatisfaction and stable satisfaction levels across the majority of services - and a clear signal from residents that future investment in transportation and road maintenance would have the greatest visible impact on daily quality of life.



Priorities for Investment

Across both the Budget 2026 online survey and community pop up sessions, residents, youth, and visitors clearly expressed where they would like to see the District direct future investment. The priorities reflect a strong emphasis on livability, safety, and sustainability - balanced with an appreciation for the natural environment and local character that define Sooke.

1. Outdoor Spaces and Recreation

Parks and Outdoor Recreation ranked #1 overall in the pop-up results, receiving 298 mentions, far exceeding any other category. This emphasis was echoed in the survey, where over 45% of respondents identified it among their top investment areas.

Participants across all groups - residents, youth, and visitors - strongly supported continued development of trails, park maintenance, waterfront access, and family-friendly outdoor spaces. Youth in particular highlighted the need for more accessible recreation opportunities, while visitors emphasized trail connectivity and amenities that support both residents and tourism.



Children enjoy a game of basketball at the new multi-use games area in Ravens Ridge Park — an example of Sooke’s investment in accessible, family-friendly outdoor recreation.

2. Active Transportation and Road Safety

The second and third highest priorities were Active Transportation (#2, 282 mentions) and Local Roads (#3, 236 mentions), followed by Traffic Calming (#6, 153 mentions).



Recent sidewalk and lighting improvements enhance walkability and safety along Otter Point Road — reflecting community priorities for active transportation and safer local roads.

Residents consistently linked these issues to daily quality of life, safety, and congestion concerns. Youth responses focused on walkability, bike safety, and crosswalk improvements, while visitors reinforced the importance of clear signage, safe intersections, and road conditions for an accessible, welcoming community.

Together, these results show a strong collective interest in complete streets - improving how people move safely through Sooke, whether by car, wheel, or on foot.



Upgraded transit stops and pedestrian pathways along Sooke Road improve accessibility and comfort for all travelers—supporting the community’s vision for safer, more connected streets.

3. Environmental Care and Stewardship

Environmental values were a defining theme across all demographics. Environmental Protection (#7, 138 mentions), Climate Action (#10, 132 mentions), and Wildlife Education (#9, 146 mentions) all ranked within the top ten.

Residents often connected these priorities to coastal and forest conservation, wildfire preparedness, and sustainable growth. Youth emphasized education and awareness, while visitors appreciated Sooke’s commitment to preserving its natural assets - a core draw for tourism.



Residents enjoy a community event featuring eco-grazing goats — a hands-on example of Sooke’s focus on environmental stewardship, wildlife education, and sustainable park maintenance practices.

The emerging emphasis on Wildlife Education represents a desire to coexist respectfully with the surrounding ecosystem.

4. Community Safety and Preparedness

Fire Rescue (#8, 156 mentions) and Policing (#14, 164 mentions) were consistently identified as key services warranting continued support. These themes reflect confidence in the District’s emergency response capacity but also a shared interest in maintaining readiness as the community grows.



Sooke Fire Rescue conducts Superior Shuttle Tanker operations training — strengthening community safety and emergency preparedness as the community continues to grow.

5. Housing, Inclusion, and Local Economy

Social and economic themes also emerged as important investment directions.

Affordable Housing (#12, 152 mentions) and Support for Vulnerable Populations (#15, 112 mentions) were both prioritized by residents who linked affordability to community stability and inclusivity.



Local businesses in the town core contribute to Sooke’s vibrant economy — supporting jobs, services, and a welcoming community hub that connects housing, inclusion, and local prosperity.

Economic Development (#13, 102 mentions) and Town Core Beautification (#16, 76 mentions) were also common, especially among visitors, who expressed interest in a more vibrant, walkable, and attractive core with local shopping and dining. Youth emphasized opportunities for local employment and social spaces.

Nuances Across Groups

Residents emphasized infrastructure and mobility, with Local Roads, Active Transportation, and Parks topping their lists - reflecting daily needs and the desire for tangible community improvements.

Youth leaned toward Active Transportation, Outdoor Recreation, and Environmental Education, signaling long-term, sustainability-focused priorities.

Visitors selected Parks, Environmental Protection, and Beautification, reinforcing the link between a well-kept environment and Sooke's tourism appeal.

Budget Pop Up Tracking	Resident	Resident Willing to Pay More	Youth	Tourist/ Visitor
Active Transportation	282	26	41	168
Affordable Housing	152	2	9	148
Asset Management	98	4	27	86
Bylaw	34	2	10	16
Climate Action	132	8	32	128
Communications and Public Participation	39	1	6	19
Community Investment (incl Grants and Support for Volunteers)	89	2	32	86
Customer Service	17	0	6	22
Planning and Development	96	3	9	92
Town Core and Beautification	76	4	12	75
Economic Development	102	3	18	93
Environmental Protection	138	12	26	144
Public Facilities	52	2	12	68
Financial Planning	42	2	8	26
Fire Rescue	156	8	19	148
Food Security and Agriculture	116	2	11	118
Indigenous Relations	97	4	13	102
Buying Land for Parks, Roads and Public Facilities	102	3	16	103
Local Roads	236	12	18	127
Parks and Outdoor Recreation	298	29	52	294
Policing	164	16	19	138
Public Parking	64	2	16	98
Support for Vulnerable Populations	112	14	24	102
Technology	39	1	12	32
Traffic Calming	153	8	28	142
Tree Care	106	3	32	116
Wildlife Education	146	8	37	160

Additional Comments

Participants could add further comments if they felt their priorities were not already identified. Comments from these additions include:

- Health Centre
- Rate of Tax Increases
- Support for Arts and Cultural Development - “the lifeblood of community!”
- Cover all bus stops
- Generational Planning
- Bigger support for Search and Rescue
- Accessibility
- Food security and local food production
- Better defined downtown core
- Legal Aid
- School improvements – graffiti, respect, better music programs, more money for arts and sports
- Poverty and homeless crisis
- Health Centre
- Playgrounds
- Pedestrian-friendly sidewalks near playgrounds and schools
- Signage for accessible parking at Sooke Potholes
- Shuttle from Parks and Ride to Potholes

Summary Insight

When viewed together, the priorities show strong alignment around four themes:

- Investing in outdoor spaces and recreation that enhance livability.
- Improving roads, safety, and mobility to support a growing community.
- Protecting the environment and fostering coexistence with nature.
- Supporting community wellbeing through inclusion and local opportunity.

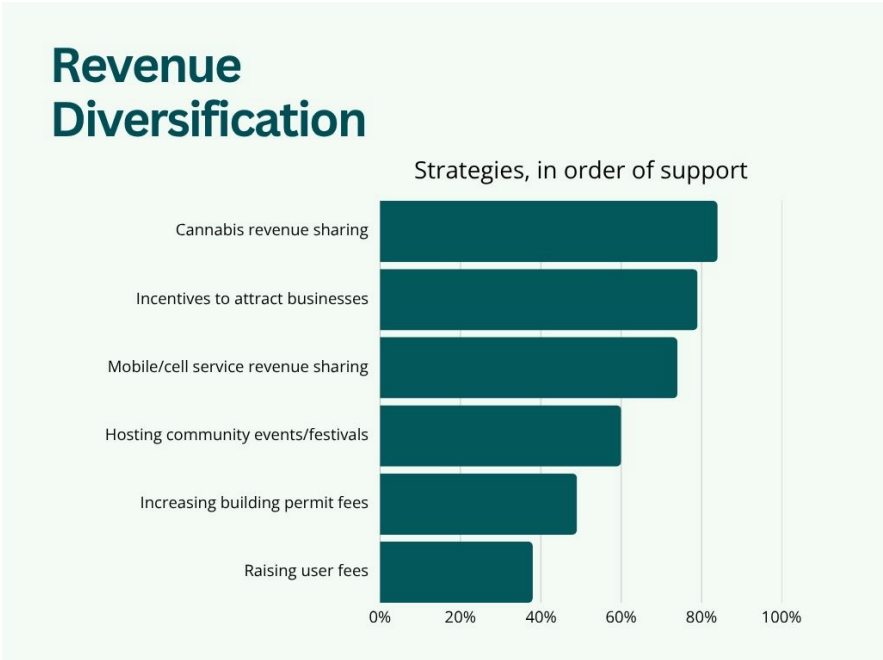
This balanced picture indicates that residents and visitors alike want Sooke to remain safe, connected, green, and welcoming - with investments that preserve its character while preparing for the future.

Financial Sustainability and Revenue Diversification

The District recognizes that the current trajectory of property tax increases is not sustainable over the long term. While District Council continues to advocate strongly for new funding sources and a reformed financial framework for local governments, the District also acknowledges that there are local opportunities worth exploring to reduce reliance on residential taxation.

To better understand community perspectives on this issue, the 2026 Budget Survey asked respondents how much they support a range of options aimed at diversifying revenues and improving financial sustainability.

Results show clear resident support for pursuing external funding partnerships and shared revenues over measures that would directly increase local fees or costs. The highest support was



expressed for asking the provincial and federal governments to share cannabis (84%) and mobile/cell service revenues (74%) with local governments. A strong 79% supported offering incentives to attract new businesses, recognizing that a stronger commercial tax base can relieve residential pressures.

Meanwhile, measures such as raising user fees (38% support) or increasing building permit fees (49% support) drew mixed views, indicating sensitivity to affordability and cost-of-living concerns. Notably, 60% supported hosting revenue-generating community events and festivals, underscoring a preference for creative, tourism-friendly approaches to economic development.

The District’s successful participation in the Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT) Program demonstrates meaningful progress toward these goals. Revenues generated

through the program are reinvested locally to promote tourism, enhance amenities, and support community vibrancy - helping to grow the local economy while improving the quality of life for residents and visitors alike. Building on this success, the District continues to seek opportunities to maximize use of this funding stream and align future initiatives with both economic and community development objectives.

Together, these findings and ongoing initiatives affirm that residents support a balanced approach - one that prioritizes advocacy for fairer revenue sharing from senior governments, while expanding creative, sustainable avenues to strengthen local fiscal resilience.

Bylaw Enforcement and Community Priorities

Sooke continues to take an education-first approach to bylaw enforcement, helping residents understand and follow community rules before issuing fines. This approach reflects the District's commitment to supporting awareness and shared responsibility while maintaining fairness and accountability.

However, the 2026 Budget Survey findings indicate that many residents believe there are certain areas where

stronger enforcement or higher fines may be appropriate. The most frequently identified areas were illegal dumping (88% support for stronger fines), repeat bylaw offences (79%), and not securing wildlife attractants (61%). These were followed by securing unsightly properties such as neglected yards or debris

(57%), building or construction without a permit (43%), and parking violations (28%).



These results highlight two key insights:

- Community expectations for accountability are growing - particularly regarding issues that directly affect neighbourhood livability and the natural environment.

- Securing wildlife attractants remains a recurring theme across multiple engagement sessions, reflecting strong community interest in aligning bylaw enforcement with environmental stewardship and coexistence with local wildlife.

Exploring modest fine adjustments or dedicated enforcement efforts in these areas could contribute to (nominal) revenue diversification, while reinforcing fairness and responsibility within the community. Aligning enforcement strategies with education and outreach ensures that compliance efforts remain balanced, transparent, and values-driven.

Together, these approaches strengthen the District's broader goals of financial sustainability, community safety, and environmental responsibility, while ensuring residents feel supported, informed, and heard.

Community Ideas for Revenue Diversification

As part of the District's ongoing efforts to strengthen financial sustainability and reduce reliance on residential property taxes, this year's Budget Survey also asked residents for their ideas on how the District could raise money without increasing residential taxes. Sixty-two respondents provided thoughtful suggestions, offering valuable insight into community priorities and creative opportunities for local revenue diversification.

Key themes from the 62 comments include:

Expand the commercial and industrial tax base

The most common suggestion was to attract and retain more businesses, both large retailers and local entrepreneurs, to rebalance the tax burden and increase year-round economic activity. Some respondents proposed establishing an Economic Development Commission or accelerating redevelopment of underutilized lands to achieve this.

Grow the tourism and visitor economy

Many residents saw opportunity in expanding the tourism base through events, destination marketing, and experiences that highlight Sooke's unique waterfront setting. Ideas included promoting film production, establishing a campground or food truck hub, and improving waterfront access through a boardwalk or festival area. These align with the District's success under the Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT) Program, which reinvests visitor revenues locally to enhance amenities and attract new spending.

Introduce targeted user fees and visitor charges

Suggestions included paid parking at busy visitor sites such as Whiffin Spit, nominal EV charging fees, and permit-based systems for certain high-use public spaces. These measures were viewed as fair, placing more cost recovery on visitors rather than residents.

Ensure “growth pays for growth”

Respondents supported the principle that new development should contribute its fair share toward the cost of the infrastructure, sidewalks, parks, and amenities needed to serve a growing community. Respondents expressed that existing taxpayers should not be subsidizing development-related costs, and that higher Development Cost Charges (DCCs) are an appropriate way to make growth more financially sustainable.

At the same time, participants also recognized the trade-offs between higher DCCs and housing affordability. Feedback gathered through both the survey and pop up engagement events indicated concern that substantially raising development fees could increase the cost of housing, particularly for first-time buyers or renters. Several participants noted the importance of balancing the need for infrastructure investment with maintaining Sooke’s relative affordability within the region.

Improve cost efficiency and streamline processes

Several respondents emphasized making the most of existing resources by reviewing staffing and contracting levels, improving permit and inspection turnaround times, and ensuring that projects are delivered efficiently to attract investment.

Enhance grants and advocacy

Continued pursuit of provincial and federal grants and stronger advocacy for new funding models, such as revenue sharing from utilities or cannabis taxes, were seen as essential to long-term fiscal stability.

Promote renewable energy and sustainability initiatives

A smaller segment of respondents proposed local solar and wind power generation as a way to offset energy costs and create potential future revenue streams.

Other innovative ideas

These included local licensing initiatives (e.g., pet or vehicle permits), fines for repeat offences, community fundraising events, and policies to encourage tiny homes as incremental tax revenue sources.

Overall insight

Residents recognize that maintaining quality services while managing growth will require a broader mix of funding tools. They support an approach that combines economic development, tourism activation, efficient operations, and strategic user-based revenues - rather than broad tax increases.

This feedback reinforces the direction of the District's financial strategy: continuing to advocate for fair revenue sharing from senior governments while maximizing local opportunities through business expansion, MRDT-supported tourism initiatives, and well-designed cost-recovery models that strengthen both the economy and quality of life.

Exploring Support for Potential Tax Increases

To better understand community perspectives on investments that may drive future tax increases, the budget survey tested several service-specific scenarios. Each described an estimated cost, household impact, and expected benefit, allowing respondents to weigh service needs against affordability concerns.

Overall, most participants showed willingness to support modest increases when linked to visible, safety-related, or quality-of-life improvements. However, across all areas, a consistent minority expressed opposition - largely citing concerns about affordability, rising living costs, and a desire to see efficiencies or growth-based revenues used before raising taxes.

Fire Rescue Services Plan

The Fire Master Plan recommends adding two full-time firefighters per year over the next three years to improve response times and maintain safety standards.



Sooke Fire Rescue responds from Station One on Otter Point Road — there is strong community support for continued investment to maintain related safety and emergency response standards.

- Support: 65% of respondents indicated they somewhat or strongly support this investment, with 31% strongly supportive.
- Opposition: 16% opposed and 7% somewhat opposed, representing about 23% respondents expressing opposition
- With a 1% tax increase (estimated at \$4.41/month): Opposition rose slightly to 27%, suggesting a mild price sensitivity while remaining supported by the majority

Key insight:

Support for Fire Rescue investment was among the strongest across all options, reflecting trust in the service and an understanding of its direct link to safety and property protection. Opposition was primarily from those concerned about affordability or tax fatigue.

Policing Services

The RCMP proposed strengthening local service delivery, including additional staffing and a school resource officer, at an estimated cost equating to a 5% tax increase (\$7.35/month).

- Support: 63% of respondents indicated they somewhat or strongly support increased investment, with 42% strongly supportive before a tax value was applied.
- Opposition: 16% opposed and 8% somewhat opposed, representing about 24% respondents expressing opposition
- With the 5% tax impact applied: Opposition rose to approximately 32% (35 opposed and 15 somewhat opposed), making policing the most divisive of the service areas tested.



The Sooke RCMP detachment provides local policing services — an important area of public interest balancing safety, response times, and affordability considerations.

Key insight:

Supporters recognized the value of community policing and response times, while opponents raised concerns about affordability and questioned whether additional policing or alternative safety programs (e.g., community outreach or traffic calming) should take priority.

Parks and Trails Services

As Sooke's parkland expands, the District outlined increasing maintenance and operational funding needs.

- Support: 71% somewhat or strongly support increased funding for parks and trails.

- Opposition: About 12% total, among the lowest of all categories tested.
- With a 1% tax increase (\$1.47/month): Opposition grew to 18%, while support remained relatively strong

Key insight:

Residents see parks and trails as a key quality-of-life feature. Those who opposed cited limited park use personally, competing priorities (roads, housing), or a belief that new developments should fund these costs through developer contributions rather than taxation.



A trailhead crosswalk connects residents to Sooke’s growing network of parks and pathways — reflecting continued investment in outdoor spaces and trail maintenance.

Land for Future Community Needs

As another competing priority for District investment, participants were asked how important it is for the District to buy land now for future parks, roads, or public buildings, even if it requires borrowing or setting aside funds.

- Support: 79% rated this as Very Important (50%) or Somewhat Important (29%).
- Opposition: Only 12% rated it Not Very or Not at All Important, with an additional 9% unsure or providing other comments.

Key insight:

While most supported proactive land acquisition, those opposed worried about debt levels and preferred that current funds be directed toward existing infrastructure and maintenance rather than future land banking.

Overall Interpretation

Across all service scenarios, respondents demonstrated a willingness to consider moderate property tax increases when there are clear, tangible benefits to safety, livability, and community preparedness. Support was strongest for Fire Rescue and Parks and Trails, while Policing support remained positive but more price sensitive. Ensuring residents’ voices shape financial planning and service delivery. The Land for Future Needs question revealed a forward-thinking sentiment among residents who see value in planning ahead.

Overall, this data suggests the community favours balanced, needs-based investments, particularly those tied to visible service outcomes and long-term community benefit — provided tax increases are communicated transparently and kept at a manageable scale.

While strategic investments are supported in safety, parks, and long-term planning, future financial decisions should continue to balance service enhancements with affordability. This means carefully phasing in new initiatives, pursuing grants and non-tax funding wherever possible, and ensuring that “growth pays for growth” through appropriate development contributions. Maintaining this balance will be essential to sustaining community trust and fiscal resilience as Sooke continues to grow.

Trade-Offs and Cost-Saving Measures

The District recognizes that continued property tax increases at recent rates is not sustainable and that maintaining affordability will require a balanced approach between investment, efficiency, and restraint. To better understand community perspectives, the 2026 Budget Survey invited residents to share their views on potential cost-saving strategies and the trade-offs they would consider acceptable. The goal was to explore not only where efficiencies might be found, but also the community's threshold for service reductions or operational changes.

The responses reveal that residents understand the complexity of municipal budgeting - many emphasized that there are “no easy cuts” without consequences to service delivery or staff capacity. Instead, most respondents supported efficiency-based approaches over broad service reductions.

What residents would consider

- **Expand staff cross-training:** About **48%** selected this. Seen as a practical way to keep services running if staff are supported to avoid burnout.
- **Use more technology/automation:** About **36%**. Many endorse modernizing (including AI for admin work), while noting start-up costs and a less “personal” feel.
- **Move more services online:** About **33%**. Improves access for many, but can exclude residents without reliable internet or digital skills.
- **Share services with other governments/non-profits:** About **29%**. Favoured to reduce duplication, with cautions about loss of local control or slower Sooke-specific response.
- **Adjust service levels** (e.g., less frequent mowing/park litter pickup): About **28%**. Mixed support given visible impacts.
- **Reduce service hours:** About **16%**. Concern about limiting in-person help and evening/weekend bylaw response.
- **Delay filling vacant positions:** About **11%**. Least supported; residents worry about slower service and staff burnout.

Trust in decision-making

40% said they trust the District to identify savings and manage trade-offs responsibly—signaling confidence in staff/Council to balance affordability with service quality.

Themes from Open-Ended Comments

Written feedback reinforced these quantitative results. Residents highlighted:

- A preference for efficiency and modernization over service cuts.
- Concerns about staffing levels and high administrative costs, with a few suggesting reviews of upper management or departmental structure.
- Desire to see greater accountability for developer-related costs and caution against “subsidizing” growth at the expense of taxpayers.
- Encouragement for shared services, partnerships, and volunteer-based initiatives to reduce costs and strengthen community involvement.
- Calls to ensure essential services, such as fire, policing, and infrastructure maintenance remain adequately funded, even as efficiencies are sought elsewhere.

Summary

Overall, the survey results and comments demonstrate that Sooke residents are pragmatic about the realities of municipal finance. They support efforts to operate more efficiently, embrace technology, and reduce duplication - but not at the expense of core service quality or staff well-being. The community message seems apparent: pursue innovation and collaboration first, communicate trade-offs transparently, and maintain a careful balance between fiscal restraint and livability.

General Comments Text Analysis

A total of over 130 individual comments were analyzed. While opinions varied, several dominant and consistent themes emerged around transportation, infrastructure, growth management, affordability, and safety. Many respondents expressed appreciation for the District’s efforts, paired with clear calls for action on long-standing issues.

Theme	Summary of Feedback	Approx. Frequency
Transportation & Traffic	The single most dominant topic. Strong concern about congestion on Highway 14 and local roads. Many calls for bypass routes, road widening, improved intersections, and long-term traffic management. Others suggested traffic circles instead of lights, better maintenance, sidewalks, bike paths, and expanded transit options.	~40% of comments

Public Safety & Policing	Numerous comments emphasized safety concerns—both general (crime, drugs, homelessness) and specific (shelter safety, impaired driving, school zones). Calls for more RCMP officers, enforcement, lighting, and emergency preparedness.	~20%
Growth & Infrastructure Planning	Many expressed frustration that development is outpacing infrastructure. Calls to “plan ahead for growth,” ensure roads, sewers, and water systems are in place first, and make “growth pay for growth” through developer contributions.	~18%
Healthcare & Services Access	Strong, repeated demand for better healthcare: a local hospital or urgent care facility, expanded clinics, and mental health and addiction support. Healthcare often linked to livability and population growth.	~15%
Affordability & Taxes	Comments split between calls for restraint (“spending is out of control”) and acceptance of higher taxes if results are visible and well-managed. Strong desire for fiscal responsibility, efficiency, and comparison to other municipalities.	~14%
Economic Development	Residents want more local employment, retail, dining, and small business opportunities to reduce commuting and expand the tax base. Some urge a “destination identity” for Sooke—boutique shops, marine theme, and beautification.	~12%
Environment & Greenspace	Balanced views: some call to protect green spaces, wildlife corridors, and waterfront access; others urge limiting environmental spending in favour of roads and policing.	~10%
Community Identity & Livability	Desire to preserve Sooke’s small-town charm while improving walkability, beautification, and amenities. Frequent comparisons to Sidney or Langford.	~9%
Housing & Development Approach	Calls for affordability, density in the town core, support for tiny homes, and managed growth—“thoughtful, high-quality development over rapid expansion.”	~8%
Appreciation for District Efforts	Many short, positive notes thanked staff and Council, recognized complexity of issues, and encouraged continued engagement.	~7%

Note: percentages exceed 100% as comments touch multiple themes

Sentiment Overview

Tone	Description	Approx. Share
Constructive Concern	Majority tone -frustration with current issues but accompanied by practical suggestions.	~55%
Positive / Supportive	Appreciation for staff, recognition of engagement efforts, optimism about direction.	~20%
Critical / Dissatisfied	Focused on taxation, traffic, and perceived over-spending or inefficiency.	~15%
Visionary / Aspirational	Forward-looking ideas - green energy, town identity, walkability, climate resilience.	~10%

Understanding More About Transportation as a Community Priority – Referendum on Borrowing

Transportation continues to stand out as one of the more significant community priorities identified through engagement. Building on last year’s findings - where residents expressed strong support for a referendum to fund the Throup Road Connector and Phillips Road Corridor Project - the District used this year’s survey to learn more about how to best support residents in making an informed decision. Following Council’s direction to proceed to referendum alongside the October 17, 2026 general election, this engagement focused on how people prefer to receive information, when and where they want to participate, and which topics they consider most important in shaping their vote.

How residents want to learn

Most respondents indicated a preference for clear, accessible updates through both digital and in-person channels. The most popular choice was email newsletters (49%), followed by District website updates (43%) and pop up information booths at community events (26%). Town hall meetings in person (29%) also drew interest, reflecting the ongoing value of face-to-face engagement, while online town halls (4%) were less favoured. Together, these results point to a preference for direct, local, and interactive ways to stay informed.

When to connect

Engagement timing also matters. The majority of respondents preferred weekday evenings (44%) and weekends (38%) for events, suggesting the need for flexible scheduling that accommodates working families and commuters. Only 16% preferred weekday daytime

sessions, indicating that after-work and weekend events are most effective for reaching the broadest audience.

Where to connect

When asked which locations work best for in-person events, residents favoured community gatherings and festivals. The Sooke Music and Arts Festival at Fred Milne Park ranked highest (42%), followed by the Sooke Country Market (31%) and the Sooke Night Market at the Museum (30%). Other well-rated options included All Sooke Day (24%) and Sookarama at SEAPARC (23%), confirming that meeting people where they already gather remains an effective approach.

What residents want to know

When it comes to helping residents make an informed decision, respondents prioritized clarity on key aspects of the project. The most requested topics included:

- How the project supports walking, biking, and active transportation (53%)
- How the project is funded, including grants versus local taxes (51%)
- Other transportation opportunities and network connections – and the greater context of our transportation system (46%)
- How wildlife and environmental impacts will be managed (45%)
- How the project will improve traffic flow and travel times (38%)

These insights show that residents are looking for transparent, fact-based information that explains costs, benefits, environmental considerations, and transportation outcomes.

Overall, the data reaffirms that transportation remains a core community priority - not only in terms of infrastructure investment but also in how information is shared, and decisions are made. District staff will apply these insights to the next phase of project engagement and will focus on delivering clear, accessible information through multiple channels and offering opportunities for dialogue to ensure residents are well-informed ahead of the 2026 referendum.

Appendices



BUDGET PROCESS

- 1 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT THROUGH AN ANNUAL BUDGET SURVEY (MAY 1 - JUNE 15, 2023)
- 2 PRELIMINARY BUDGET DEVELOPMENT (MAY 15 - JUNE 15, 2023)
- 3 COUNCIL DIRECTION (JUNE 15 - JUNE 22, 2023)
- 4 FIVE-YEAR PLAN REVISION (JUNE 22 - JUNE 29, 2023)

Each year, the budget process starts with a community survey and pop-up events at local markets and parks from mid-May to mid-June.

We also rely on community plans to guide decisions. They include the Official Community Plan, Transportation Master Plan, Parks and Trails Master Plan, Climate Action Plan, Community Economic Development Strategy, and the Master Plan. Each of these plans has its own public engagement process to help shape it.

YOUR VOICE MATTERS!
PARTICIPATE IN OUR SURVEY, TELL YOUR HIGHWAYS, TOO!



Appendix A: What adds to your quality of life in Sooke? What takes away from it?

- Nature, friends, easy commute to work. Takes away: traffic, need better medical care.
- Improved shopping and restaurants are needed. A health centre is needed so travel to town is not needed to see a doctor or get other medical services.
- Beautiful places to walk/exercise. Lack of medical services is a big negative for me.
- Having more access to amenities such as restaurants would be nice. Bike paths and shoulders/sidewalks to safely access the town core would be a huge benefit.
- Access to trails is important to me. It would be nice to have more options for health services locally.
- Better access to trails with parking, maps, trail markers and bike routes.
- Nearness to the ocean and the beaches; small enough to know that you are known for who you are and what you are, which can be a double-edged sword at times but nonetheless important from a resident perspective.
- Pros: so much! The people, the environment, parks, wildlife, the engaged volunteers, the pleasures of retired life. Cons: unpredictable traffic slow-downs on occasional trips into Victoria.
- Adds: the opportunity to join fitness classes and gyms, outdoors, restaurants. Takes away: the homeless and drug addicts walking our streets, and the nighttime (caught on security cameras) of the homeless going into backyards and around houses and neighbourhood to steal. And, of course, the traffic situation.
- Lack of doctors and remoteness of hospitals. Can't even buy a decent pair of socks as the retail sector is tiny. Lived in a rural town in Alberta that had a population slightly under 4000 and it had the same size of retail sector and more doctors and a clinic!
- Quiet, safe, peaceful environment. Downtown amenities are limited but provide basic needs.
- I love the parks and the recreation and the general outdoor lifestyle. What takes away from the quality of life is the rising crime, fear of drunk drivers and the increased drug dealing in my neighborhood.
- I believe we need more police presence and help with transient crime issues. Otherwise I find the community friendly.
- The access to nature improves my quality of life. The increase in vagrants has made my neighborhood feel unsafe which has taken away from my quality of life.

- The insane traffic and the amount of drug addicts doing drugs in open areas and parks takes away from my quality of life in Sooke.
- The following takes away from my quality of life: the significant increase in property taxes year after year, and inefficiency in management of the District office.
- My quality of life is negatively impacted by the overall amount of property taxes we pay each year, and for what? In comparison to other properties in Sooke. We have no city water, no sewers, no natural gas, and no road services or upkeep of overgrown trees and shrubs. Property owners are not being held accountable for clearing the overgrown trees and scrubs that encroach onto the power lines and road. I see every day while driving through Sooke the construction of different upgrades to utilities, none of which are available to us and I suspect my tax dollars are being spent on services new or upgrades that we don't have access to.
- Sadly, the people intoxicated by drugs on the streets in the last few years has very much affected how safe I feel while walking in Sooke, and where I let my children (teens and tweens) go. As well as the low police presence. If in Port Renfrew we know the police is probably an hour away and this is terrifying to me. Also, 15 years ago we used to be able to go to our favourite beaches no problem. Now, there is often nowhere to park! It's so sad. Sandcut, Muir Creek, Fishboat Bay, China Beach and Whiffin Spit are often unattainable.
- We have a larger population than Prince Rupert or Duncan yet totally lack the same amount of goods and services providers. The district must begin to open land for development and draw commercial opportunities in. We need this to turn the town from a bedroom community to a livable place. It will also help our youth find work at an early age. We shouldn't have to leave Sooke to find affordable products. The lack of parking at parks is painful.
- I enjoy all of the community events that are held. I disagree with the rate of increase of new housing when the highway can't support it very well.
- Adds: friendly people, access to outdoors, trails, parks—connecting home to commerce to work via trails; community organizations and events. Takes away: angry drivers venting on cyclists; need more trails (risk of losing currently used trails through properties up for development); lack of health services (doctor/clinic, etc.); not enough community gardens; access to locally grown food.
- Feeling safe while shopping and doing needed errands and medical appointments. Feeling unsafe.
- Adds: the green spaces. Takes away: homeless problem and the desecration of our parks and safe outdoor spaces by them.

- Local vendors are nice to have. More food trucks and quality entertainment events. Lack of commercial business options that we go to Langford for. Traffic and lack of medical facilities and doctors.
- Street lighting, sidewalks, adequate first responders coverage.
- Natural beauty. Activities for seniors (e.g., Sooke Horseshoe Club) add. Road congestion takes away.
- Cranky residents, poor drivers (tailgaters and those who cross the centre line and don't stop for pedestrians), businesses that are not open on Sundays or have limited offerings/hours. Residents who dump their garbage/yard waste in natural spaces. Racism and intolerance.
- Traffic takes away. Green space adds to it. More waterfront and cool shops would add a lot to it.
- Nothing really. Too expensive to shop in Sooke. Have to travel to Langford. We need more stores which would create more jobs so people wouldn't have to travel into Greater Victoria for work and things they need.
- Traffic congestion and property taxes definitely take away from enjoying the community. Tax increases are unsustainable on every level imposed by government. As a retired person on fixed income this has become a major stressor to the quality of life here. The people out here are wonderful and add to the quality of life. Government decisions are, on the other hand, out to lunch.
- Access to parks and walkable areas and waterfront, local activities, restaurants, and businesses all add to my quality of life. Having to drive to Victoria for any of these is a sore point.
- The people add; the price of real estate and food take away from it.
- The natural environment, in particular access to forests and ocean for hiking and kayaking, is paramount. The destruction of this (i.e., no tree cutting bylaw and people clearcutting their properties) and not good access to the ocean for walking along the shoreline takes away from my quality of life. Also, driving into and out of Sooke during a good portion of the day is slow and congested.
- Adds: friendly people. Takes away: traffic congestion and lack of bus service.
- SEAPARC adds to quality of life in Sooke. Lack of bike lanes and infrastructure takes away.
- Adds: walking distance to shopping and amenities; safe walking and biking via sidewalks, bike lanes, pathways, crosswalks; accessibility with stroller (e.g., sidewalk ramps at crosswalks); clean air; quiet (especially at night and early morning); kids activities and amenities. Takes away: significant traffic congestion; loud vehicles; noise from the Legion late at night; fireworks; drivers not conscious of

people walking or biking; lack of sidewalk and bike lane/path connectivity; smoke from open burning and wood fireplaces; lack of diversity on District Council; speeding vehicles; no playground in town centre; lack of kids amenities; lack of district-owned recreation facilities; lack of organized adult recreational programs.

- The beautiful surroundings and access to nature; Route 14 and its congestion is a major problem.
- The proximity to nature, the small town feel, and the people all add to my quality of life in Sooke. Traffic woes, not having a medical centre and lack of shopping and restaurant options take away from it. Public dumping is also an issue.
- Access to green spaces, but wish there were more local businesses.
- Traffic and too many people moving here who want city things.
- Small town feeling adds to quality of life. The homeless and traffic take away from it.
- The traffic is horrendous and there are no solid long-term plans to deal with it. Developers seem to be in charge and they are mowing down every tree and blasting every rock just to jam in more cookie-cutter houses. There is no place for future shops to cater to all the people moving here nor for business to set up and employ people in Sooke.
- Access to parks and outdoor spaces improves life. Having to consider traffic flow into Sooke before going up to shop and do errands detracts.
- Small town atmosphere. Very little access to waterfront.
- Lack of dining experiences, lack of medical care options, lack of structure, ongoing issues with traffic. More and more people coming and not enough infrastructure.
- The outdoor spaces, the people. Lack of walking paths to connect outdoor attractions with the CBD. However, we are making progress. Really appreciate the Stickleback Trail and looking forward to the Sunriver connector. How can we connect the CBD with Whiffen Spit Park and the harbour? That would be awesome. The Bluff Forest needs protecting—an appeal for outside funding.
- Adds to QOL: I like living rural. Takes away from QOL: needing to drive to Victoria for so many errands and activities for my kids (better parks, splash pads, better lake access, Mother Goose, kid-friendly museums, Butchart, Butterfly Gardens, petting zoo, etc.).
- Lucky to work in Sooke. Having to drive Sooke Rd for reasonably priced groceries and any entertainment.
- Nature adds; traffic congestion takes away from it.
- Family adds to Sooke quality of life, but Sooke Rd traffic gridlock forces us to head to Langford instead of going into Sooke for dining or shopping (we are in North Sooke).

- Nature adds to my quality of life; the emphasis on building houses that are too big and require cutting down our trees and which are filled only by people from the prairies detracts.
- Adds: climate and recreational opportunities, quiet neighbourhoods. Detracts: limited active transportation infrastructure and public transport service.
- Better local services make things better. Poor traffic flow takes away from it. I end up going to Langford because of the traffic issues.
- Adds: the small community feel and top-notch eateries. Subtracts: traffic during rush hour and summer weekends.
- Quiet neighbourhoods; close proximity to stores and restaurants are positive. Increased traffic and multistory apartment buildings take away from it.
- Sports. Street people.
- Adds: trusted neighbours, temperate climate to grow food, Strait of Juan de Fuca, reasonably close proximity to Langford & Victoria. Takes away: poor financial decisions by municipality, outrageous property taxes, lack of sufficient medical care, lack of green spaces & parks, noise pollution, out-of-control development, Brailsford-Ella Creek environmental disaster, diminishing rural areas, fewer birds & pollinators, population growth without infrastructure.
- We need more doctors in the area. Colwood has created incentives for doctors to relocate; we should follow that model (municipally run family-medicine clinic).
- What would add to my quality of life (which is currently lacking): better medical services, more waterfront access (e.g., vacant lot near Maple could be community use), and fixing the traffic nightmare getting in and out of Sooke during peak hours.
- I wish there were more restaurants and a nightlife of some kind.
- Great pickleball group! Tax base is too small, and residents don't want to pay fair share of taxes. Encourage carpooling. Too many commuters; work where you live.
- Adds: parks, medical offices, Café Vosino, Island Tarts, Terrier Books, Artisan's Garden. Takes away: no family doctor; I don't eat at local restaurants regularly; I shop in Langford for better prices and selection. I miss Barking Dog!
- The immense lack of municipal infrastructure maintenance (roads, water & sewers) atop exceptionally high property taxes negatively impacts my quality of life and wallet. Still on wells with high costs, frequent outages, while new subdivisions get amenities. Street full of potholes; taxes up ~\$1400 over two years.
- ADDS TO: being close to nature and great businesses. TAKES AWAY: people who have chosen to be on drugs and wander around.

- The friendliness of the community and the outdoor space—wilderness and beachness and quiet of my home. Homelessness takes away from it and lack of more cultural events and dining experiences.
- Easy access to family recreation. The city shuts down at 6 pm; few options for food and zero options for entertainment.
- The outdoor activities and the local community events—hiking, swimming, camping, and fishing. Gross amount of development creates higher traffic. Need more local activities to educate and support all ages.
- Take away from QOL: lack of medical facilities and shopping. Add to QOL: nature and trails.
- Community involvement. Minimal entertainment and shopping.
- Things that take away: lack of connecting trails from my neighborhood to others and the town core; lack of close, walkable grocery stores; high land taxes; SEAPARC gym doesn't open early enough.
- Semi-rural living, friendly people, performing arts add. Traffic issues, vagrancy, condition of parks from drug users detract.
- Adds: friendly people / small-town feel / active community life / surrounded by nature / most daily needs met locally, with larger services 30+ minutes away. Takes away: have to use car to safely access local trails; walkability lacking; little pedestrian safety; lack of parking; no visual beauty in town core; views aren't valued.
- Quality of life impacted by the unavailability of medical doctors and road access to Sooke. Traffic back-ups deter buyers and visitors. Need an additional access road/bypass for safety and congestion.
- Adds: access to nearby beaches and the Goose; smallish town vibe. Takes away: inadequate healthcare; minimal public waterfront access (need boardwalk); lack of sidewalks; chronic noise from nearby development (blasting, trucks).
- We desperately need a larger grocery store. Additional sidewalks down Grant Road; protected walking/biking lanes on main arteries; speeding on Grant Road is a concern.
- Not enough sidewalks.
- Proximity to the natural environment and small-town atmosphere adds to quality. Noise and traffic, drug users and people with mental health issues take away from quality of life.
- Wish people would not pollute so much; frequent litter on walks. Support a dark-sky policy and smart street lighting to reduce light pollution and energy use while maintaining safety; make biking safe a priority with innovative tech.

- Transportation.
- Adds: Nature, the people, and sidewalks. Takes away: negative attitudes, the Barry Marine sign.
- Clean air, walking trails and small-town feel are good. Negatives: schools along the main road and slowdowns; one two-lane highway in and out (especially in emergencies); lack of shopping and sit-down restaurants.
- Adds: Saturday Farmers Market, small businesses like Artisan's Garden and Wild Mountain, access to waterfront via the Spit and the boardwalk. Takes away: lack of space for independent shops and restaurants; lack of a central town core with character/appeal/community feel.
- Take aways: traffic congestion; lack of retail shopping; continued delays by council on already surveyed projects; need to clean up the basin & bay beaches; lack of medical facility. Adds: peace and quiet; air quality; access to multiple trails and parks; relative safety and security; wildlife.
- Not enough commercial business; have to go to Langford too much for stuff.
- Being close to nature, the outdoors, and the beauty Sooke has to offer brings a high quality of life. The requirement to drive to access services, stores, shopping, etc., takes away from it.
- The abundance of nature. Too many people.
- My own personal hope for reform keeps me here. Ongoing squatter camps, public drug use, little quality access to waterfront, increasing crime, property vandalism and theft, municipal requests for residents to maintain city property in their neighbourhoods.
- Adds: ability to get outdoors pretty easily. Takes away: trying to use parks closer to the core and worrying about needles or human waste—improving but still a concern; avoid certain areas with family and dog.
- Adds: seaside beauty and trees. Takes away: poor control of pets—wandering and feces.
- Love the small town and community of Sooke. Disheartening to see homeless people causing issues in the town centre.
- The people of Sooke, proximity to parks, and some great commercial establishments add. The one road to town with frequent delays, limited direct bus routes, and needing to shop outside Sooke take away.
- The peacefulness and environment add, but the drive in and out takes away.
- Increased green space increases QOL. Large-scale development takes away QOL.
- Free or low-cost events add. Eroding green space detracts. (This should be two questions.)

- What adds is nature and views. What takes away is lack of main sewer in Kaltasin (on the beach), lack of road pathways and lighting for safety, limited restaurant choices, OCP delays with unrealistic visions; too many surveys and wasted dollars.
- There need to be more lights and sidewalks to make it safer to get around in the community. Not enough businesses; have to drive to Westshore.
- Small seaside town businesses and tourism add. Construction of condos creating more traffic with no road upgrades or increased services takes away; huge increase in population and traffic.
- Only negative for me is Hwy 14 being the only access, and over capacity—especially during rush hour.
- The amazing sense of community adds; lack of access to health care and lack of a secondary road in and out of Sooke take away.
- Traffic, lack of transportation options (very poor bus service!), lack of road maintenance.
- Once you are in Sooke, it's quiet, safe, beautiful. Getting to and from here can be incredibly frustrating. Too much strictly residential development without mixed-use; town core needs redevelopment; no safe walkways from town to shoreline; poor communication about local happenings; hard to integrate as a newcomer.
- Better walkability throughout Sooke core.
- Access to nature and a friendly community are good, with local businesses to support rather than chains. Traffic, big jump in property taxes, small business community challenges, and lack of a community-focused waterfront park are unfortunate.
- Adds: overall small town oceanside ambiance. Takes away: worsening traffic on Highway 14; impossible to get from Saseenos to town after 2:00 pm on weekdays.
- Friendly community adds. Lack of public transport, no continuous footpaths/sidewalks to access downtown safely, poor street lighting, inadequate crosswalks and speeds near parks, limited quality restaurants detract.
- Better biking trails will add to my quality of life. Safer connection to the Goose (avoid tight, scary bridge) would be amazing.
- Natural environment adds. Poor design of new development, lack of amenities, focus on big box/franchise rather than supporting current businesses, and lack of bylaw enforcement and traffic policing take away.
- Adds: access to Galloping Goose trail, Potholes. Takes away: too much traffic; close calls while walking on Sooke River Road.

- We moved here for the small town feel and lifestyle and want that preserved. We no longer travel into town after 2:30 pm due to unreasonable traffic; better to go to Langford.
- The friendliness of the community and access to parks are great. Access to the ocean is very restricted; lack of doctors is another negative.
- Nature, community organizations, and stores and restaurants add. Lack of sidewalks and multi-use trails detract; dangerous to ride bikes or walk on most roads.
- Adds: being close to nature. Takes away: traffic to the city and lack of direct public transit to Victoria.
- Traffic and homelessness take away. Issues seem sourced in adversarial relationships between levels of government; lots of finger-pointing over responsibility.
- The community 9-hole golf course at DeMamiel adds—great for youth and seniors. Needs: splash park, another ice sheet and curling rink, more recreation facilities (bowling/arcade/indoor sports), more commercial space, overall beautification, more sidewalks/crosswalks/roundabouts/bike lanes. Traffic is an issue.
- Having to drive to Langford to get supplies is a pain. No real crime is a bonus.
- Sidewalk safety along Highway 14 is appalling; large areas need sidewalks (especially from Buffy's to the Prestige Hotel). We need more police as the town grows to deal with drug problems and crime. Positive thoughts: thanks for trying to do a good job.
- I stay out of Sooke core and enjoy my home sanctuary, which road "improvements" are about to destroy. Traffic and increased crime and drug addiction in parks and streets take away from the tranquil community I loved.
- A sense of community adds. Homelessness, destitution, drug addiction, and lack of resources to help alleviate societal numbness take away.
- Adds: nature—Sooke is breathtaking! Takes away: local business opportunities and community plazas; excited for waterfront pedestrian-only plazas like in Europe.
- Working locally is good. Driving for shopping because there is nowhere local is bad.
- Concerned over poor condition of Sooke River Road pavement: many potholes patched poorly; several unrepaired; high traffic volume due to the park.

Appendix B: Priority Areas – Other Comments

- Improved road conditions and a reduction in traffic congestion
- Create incentives for doctors/nurse practitioners to live and work in Sooke (e.g., build a facility, offer property tax breaks)
- Acquisition of the waterfront from Ed Macgregor Park to Church Road for a continuous, walkable waterfront similar to Sidney’s
- Planning for the massive expansion happening in Sooke; better coordination between building approvals and infrastructure capacity
- Bike lanes are a terrible idea—Highway 14 is not wide or safe enough for them; need a hospital and larger affordable stores (e.g., Superstore, Walmart)
- Yard waste removal, snow removal
- Sport fields
- Playgrounds, sports fields, yard waste removal
- Local streets and roadways
- Housing choices
- Business attraction, retention, and commercial development
- Sport fields (repeated mention)
- Urgent care services
- Yard waste removal (multiple mentions)
- Playgrounds and amenities for children and youth
- Transportation to support vehicle traffic movement
- Local streets and roadways (repeated mention)
- Housing choices (repeated mention)
- Park maintenance and beautification
- Housing choices, park maintenance, and beautification
- Need another road in/out of Sooke
- BC Ambulance and mandatory recycling and composting
- Yard waste removal (repeated)
- Main sewer in Kaltasin Road—stated as “the time is now” over 2 years ago
- Parking
- Housing choices, yard waste removal
- Park maintenance and beautification, housing choices
- Playgrounds and splash park
- Public transportation, yard waste removal
- Playgrounds, snow removal, yard waste removal

- Yard waste removal, sports fields
- Yard waste removal (repeated)
- Road improvement/access—alternate road to Sooke centre
- Housing choices, sports fields
- Parking, splash park
- Parks and housing choices
- Playgrounds, splash parks, and sports fields
- Road maintenance and cell service on Sooke River Road
- Parking and yard waste removal
- Housing choices, sports fields (repeated)
- Residential rebates on home energy shift

Appendix C: Land for Future Community Needs - If you feel the District should buy land now for future community needs, are there specific types of land or areas the District should prioritize?

- Land that would otherwise have buildings that impair views—near the water, ensure low-rise structures.
- The rate of growth means we have to plan now for the community and spaces we need and want.
- Focus on downtown commercial core lands and lands on or adjacent to the waterfront.
- Town centre waterfront parcel for a future view park and expanded boardwalk access; land for future community housing; parkland.
- Don't buy land now—too many other projects require funding and taxes are already high.
- Create an environmental land reserve to support climate objectives; prioritize preservation of urban forests.
- We need more police presence.
- A new RCMP detachment building.
- Land for utility expansion to increase options to hook up to all utilities.
- There aren't enough parks in Sooke.
- Maintain or build trail connectivity to get people out of vehicles; create gathering spaces and waterfront access.
- Design and purchase land suitable for light rail connecting to Langford, Victoria, the airport, and the ferry to alleviate congestion.
- Road connecting is important and should be a priority.
- Parks.
- Future land acquisitions should be for parkland/conservation purposes.
- Waterfront, if at all possible.
- No.
- Utilize waterfront property along the Basin for public use; Sooke feels like a coastal town where residents can't see the water.
- Land for tiny home communities; buying land for affordable living would make many people happy.
- Acquire forested lands to remain natural (minimal maintenance) and earmark already impacted lands for development.

- Buy waterfront land in the town core to create a destination wharf/tourism/business area.
- Acquire marine/waterfront land to attract a west-coast resort-style community; set aside land for heavy industry outside the centre.
- Parks and recreational facilities in or near the town centre.
- Land for roads to add connection points and reduce reliance on Highway 14.
- Land to build a full bypass around Sooke, not just cut-throughs.
- Already enough parks and trails.
- Secure a future bypass corridor with multiple access points to keep traffic out of the downtown.
- More green spaces/parkland.
- Land for an urgent care centre, splash pad, outdoor track, more accessible public waterfront; revisit disc golf from the 2009 plan.
- Land for more road access ways.
- Prioritize buying land for trails/active transportation corridors and access to waterfront/major facilities; acquire easements/rights-of-way.
- Prioritize road allocations and better connections for peak flow; sell small low-value pocket parks and focus on larger ones.
- Prioritize land for parks and wildlife habitat.
- Purchase land next to Fred Milne Park to expand it.
- Parks.
- Purchase the lot across from Wild Mountain for waterfront access; revitalize government dock; consider Sun River parcel to extend trail system to Sooke River.
- Land along the river to enable a future second bridge.
- Recreational lands and forests to develop walking trails.
- Lands dedicated to improving neglected traffic flow.
- All good.
- Land for road connectors and commercial space for businesses and arts gatherings.
- Plan for future community common places.
- Land should benefit all residents and visitors.
- Waterfront.
- Parks and recreation.
- Redesign the waterfront for mixed use with a long-term walkable waterfront; use strict development rules rather than public purchase.

- Secure public parks/playground in the core; create a community centre and neighbourhood houses (daycares, meeting rooms, arts).
- Land for improving road infrastructure.
- Waterfront land for a boardwalk; (note on survey: consider 3% vs 1% tax example).
- Improve transportation networks; fund roads via higher Development Cost Charges rather than taxes.
- Roads.
- Waterfront properties; non-ALR land suitable for food production.
- Think of trails—pursue a pathway from West Coast Rd through to Kemp Lake (e.g., with Butler Concrete lands).
- No.
- Set aside funds regularly to purchase land; support a dedicated tax increase for this.
- Land for a community hall with parking and oceanfront near the centre to preserve views/access.
- Bypass roads are strongly needed.
- Land for community gardens and waterfront access similar to Ladysmith’s Transfer Beach Park.
- Sites for a second bridge, a hospital, and a second wastewater treatment plant.
- Land to improve transportation (e.g., Sooke Rd & Church Rd turning lane).
- Land in the Town Centre for water access/large park; corridors/ROW for trail connectivity.
- Natural dedicated parkland/greenspace.
- Give the waterfront back to the people.
- Land for a combined emergency services building; plan for a larger recreation centre in the future.
- Preserve shoreline for boardwalks; healthcare.
- Acquire land to expand Sooke Road capacity; the corridor serves areas west to Port Renfrew.
- Increase land purchases for greenspace/protection; avoid becoming a “concrete jungle.”
- Developers should be paying these costs.
- Parks and trails.
- Waterfront—purchase strips to create a connected walkway; avoid more single-use residential developments.
- Create a waterfront park in the core as both visitor attraction and local amenity.

- Preserve forests/green spaces for cooling and biodiversity; adopt a tree bylaw.
- Purchase land in the town centre for parking; highway shoulder parking is unsafe and will worsen with densification.
- Land for covered community gathering areas, forest trails, and urban land for affordable/ revenue-generating housing.
- Ensure First Nations involvement.
- Start a senior services building near the library; secure land for sidewalks.
- Park space should be allocated during development; park improvements should reflect local need and be locally funded.
- Protect wildlife corridors, create/maintain food forests, and provide multi-use trails separating modes.
- Land for a larger, accessible multipurpose community centre with ample parking.
- Outdoor space already exceeds community size; ensure new subdivisions include adequate parks/greenspace.
- Acquire “up Sooke” waterfront and properties adjacent to downtown to beautify the core.
- Waterfront walkways for all; secure land for potential road corridor to ease congestion.
- Parks and green space to support events and food trucks—vital for a community with more apartments/condos.
- Keep streams and waterways undeveloped; protect ecosystems and wildlife corridors; District (not corporations) should own these lands.
- The District is land-poor—set aside funds and consider a tax increase for acquisitions.
- Waterfront public plazas (potentially via developer contributions).
- Park and greenspace acquisition; boat-trailer parking; waterfront/public access.

Appendix D - What topics would you like covered to help you make an informed decision – Other responses

- Another main road in and out of Sooke is needed with population growth.
- No biking or sidewalks at this time - make development pay for it later.
- Explain clearly to the public why the cost of this project is so high; disclose any relationships between contractors and staff or council.
- Ensure total transparency on planning, vendor selection, budget, and bidding details.
- Reduce the cost - the project is too expensive.
- Include a roundabout at Phillips Road and Highway 14, not another light.
- The connector may not make a noticeable difference; traffic already backs up past Charters Road.
- More pedestrian and cycling safety on Sooke River Road to the Potholes; add maps and signage for visitors.
- Protect or replace existing recreation facilities near the project area (pump track, ball diamond, golf course, skate park).
- Reconsider whether the Phillips–Thrup Road Connector is truly needed to solve congestion.
- Consider adding an HOV lane to move buses and carpoolers more efficiently.
- Address inconsistent sidewalks and bike lanes — current sections start and stop abruptly.
- Ensure the project does not use up capacity for other needed infrastructure projects.
- Clarify how long the proposed \$300/year cost would continue for taxpayers.
- How will homeowners be compensated for property disruption or decreased value due to construction?
- Provide pedestrian/bike bridge access across the Sooke River to connect with the Galloping Goose Trail.
- Prioritize transparency and communication about environmental protection and wildlife crossings.

Appendix E - Do you have any additional comments you would like to share with the District?

- Work needs to be done to alleviate traffic congestion. More businesses, government offices, post-secondary buildings, and better health care availability are needed.
- Please consider sewer service in the Billings Spit area. Health services are also a huge priority.
- Sooke is doing an amazing job—keep up the good work.
- Thank you for these surveys and your work.
- Before new projects move forward, existing problems like homelessness, addiction, and public safety need to be addressed. Resources for detox, rehabilitation, and more police presence are needed.
- Replace traffic lights with traffic circles to save costs on the Connector.
- Fix the road beside Deerlepe Park; trim trees and cut grass along Deerlepe Road west.
- Invest more in the RCMP to match population growth. We need more officers and a school resource officer to ensure community safety.
- Property taxes are becoming unaffordable and need better management.
- There are too few police officers on shift to cover Sooke to Port Renfrew—response times and safety are concerns.
- Support RCMP officers—they are overworked. Address the growing traffic problem.
- The commute can be awful; homelessness, addiction, and lack of services reduce safety and livability. Beaches are overcrowded and need more parking. More police investment is needed.
- More police enforcement is needed at the shelter.
- Property taxes should increase to maintain services and address crime, drugs, and impaired driving.
- Increase the number of police officers and create a major crime section. Find ways to reduce traffic to West Shore.
- Concerns about the bus depot on Wadams—better site planning is needed to prevent negative impacts on green spaces and safety.
- Reduce bureaucracy and consider automation to improve efficiency.
- Eliminate duplicate garbage services; unnecessary costs and traffic.
- Thank you for taking emergency planning, fire, policing, and Indigenous reconciliation seriously. Continue improving schools, childcare, and healthcare.

- Make a new main road in and out of Sooke a top priority. Improve consistency in bylaw enforcement.
- Spending is out of control—residents are not unlimited sources of revenue.
- Create more activities for residents beyond seniors and children.
- Preserve Sooke’s diversity and friendliness by improving housing affordability, including tiny home communities.
- Focus on long-term planning and green technologies (solar, geothermal, stormwater management). Invest in public and active transportation rather than wider roads.
- Plan ahead for growth—roads, water, sewer, shopping, and schools need to be built before capacity is exceeded.
- Develop a marine theme for Sooke to attract business and make the town more bike-friendly.
- Bring community-owned assets under District control instead of funding private operators.
- Missed opportunity to purchase Mariners Village for public benefit; protect scenic vistas.
- Develop Sooke as a destination like Sidney, with boutique shops and beautification programs.
- Enforce leash laws and stop jaywalking; improve traffic flow.
- Reduce urban sprawl, prioritize density downtown, and coordinate better with BC Transit to improve connections.
- Whiffin Spit should be a leash-required park to ensure public safety and wildlife protection.
- Address ongoing traffic concerns and lack of infrastructure.
- Add more sidewalks, especially for accessibility.
- Thanks for the work—it’s complex!
- Review spending on public consultation; invest in community amenities instead.
- Encourage employment opportunities and business investment in Sooke to reduce commuting and diversify the tax base.
- Extend sewer and water infrastructure as promised; plan for managed growth.
- Build a hospital and attract businesses to reduce commuting; improve public transit.
- Complete the new OCP and Town Centre Plan with public green space and trail connections.

- Make Sooke a destination; sell unused pocket parks and reinvest in high-value public spaces.
- Focus on parks, trails, and policing—not unnecessary environmental spending.
- Stop spending on CO₂ reduction; prioritize safety and traffic improvements.
- Control costs—compare service levels with other municipalities.
- Show fiscal responsibility; current spending and tax increases are too high.
- Keep Sooke’s small-town charm; no big box stores.
- Build a second access point to Sun River and another bridge over the Sooke River.
- Plan ahead for future growth and climate resilience.
- Cut costs for policing and fire services.
- Long-term taxpayers are not getting equal service levels; roads and utilities need maintenance.
- Repave Sooke River Road—it’s overdue.
- Plan for long-term, sustainable development; focus on commercial growth.
- Improve proactive planning—current traffic solutions are short-term.
- Make developers pay their fair share for infrastructure and housing growth.
- The OCP fails to address traffic and infrastructure issues; development lacks coordination.
- Keep up good public communication and transparency.
- Thanks for the survey opportunity.
- Accept that taxes must rise if funds are spent wisely; build more sidewalks and infrastructure.
- Ensure infrastructure is in place before approving new developments.
- Prioritize thoughtful, high-quality development over rapid growth; retain Sooke’s small-town identity.
- Stop procrastinating—move projects like healthcare and wastewater forward.
- Open up the waterfront for community and tourism; promote Sooke as a destination.
- Collect more taxes from commercial and large residential developers.
- Keep up the good work.
- No more roundabouts or bike lanes.
- Preserve greenspace and control growth; avoid becoming another Langford.
- Show visible progress on community improvements.
- Fix Deerlepe Road properly—it’s been neglected for years.
- Slow growth until infrastructure can support it; address climate risks.
- Plan for the future, not just today—invest wisely.

- Continue doing great work; increase funding where possible.
- Improve emergency coordination and public communication.
- Reduce tax increases; seek new revenue sources beyond residents.
- Use creative, low-cost solutions to improve traffic and walkability.
- Ensure tax dollars are distributed fairly across neighbourhoods.
- Scrap the Phillips–Throup Connector; protect Demamiel Creek golf course and add recreation amenities.
- Act decisively—set deadlines and move projects forward.
- Develop mindfully with green space, gardens, and food security; focus on quality over quantity.
- Link the Ed MacGregor boardwalk to new waterfront developments; promote mixed-use, walkable design.
- Add yard waste pickup, better sidewalks, double-decker buses, improved park paths, and more waterfront access.
- Push the Province to build sidewalks and bike paths along Highway 14—it’s unsafe.
- Reduce support for the Sooke Shelter Society; improve safety and lighting along Otter Point Road.
- Fix traffic congestion on Sooke Road—it’s hurting property values and deterring businesses.
- Build bypass routes, widen bridges, and connect roads to improve access.
- Provide more condo and flat-land housing options for seniors.
- Highway 14 is unsafe—widen roads and improve visibility.
- Enforce e-bike and e-scooter safety; reduce illegal signage; lower school zone speed limits.
- Support nonprofits and prioritize medical access and practical infrastructure.
- Remove foreign buyer bans and speculation taxes to attract investment.
- Deposit any budget surpluses to generate interest income.
- Add more affordable retail and restaurant options.
- Cut staff spending; focus on core infrastructure like sewers and roads.
- Maintain roadsides and walkways for pedestrian safety.
- Maintain nature and livability; Sooke is losing its beauty and affordability.
- Improve parking at Whiffin Spit; maintain parks and trails.
- Improve school access and parking; expand government services in Sooke.
- Protect wildlife corridors in the Throup area; enforce garbage bylaws and add wildlife signage.
- Fix traffic congestion; preserve green space and stop overbuilding.

- Explore elevated rail along the Galloping Goose Trail.
- Relocate the town centre off the highway; expand marine economy and local neighbourhood hubs.
- Develop industry and retail to reduce commuting and pollution.
- Widen Highway 14 toward the Malahat for safety and business access.
- Improve public transit and build new roadways to ease congestion.
- Fix aging bridges and infrastructure before starting new projects.
- Avoid unnecessary bike lanes; focus on sidewalks, garbage control, and new routes.
- Expand the tax base through business growth, not just residential increases.
- Invest in roads, healthcare, and local clinics.
- Support community groups and sustainable development.
- Upgrade hydro, water, and sewer systems.
- Add a third reversible lane on Sooke Road for rush-hour flow; improve emergency evacuation routes.
- Stop the Throup Road Connector; preserve green space and prevent overdevelopment.
- Improve cell service on Sooke River Road for emergency communication.
- Avoid borrowing to fund land or greenspace purchases.
- Focus on industry incentives and beautification, not higher taxes.
- Invest more in commercial development and healthcare access.
- Address safety concerns on buses; prioritize wetland protection.
- Build a hospital or urgent care facility in Sooke.
- Offer yard waste collection year-round; improve sidewalks and park maintenance.
- Require green space and wildlife corridors in all new developments.
- Support programs for seniors, cyclists, and active transportation.
- Expand healthcare teams to include nurse practitioners and create alternate evacuation routes.