

# Garden Suite Study



## Community Survey #3 Results

May 2019

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## Survey results

In May 2019 a total of 536 surveys were completed online and in hard copy. The results of this survey are summarized in the pages below. For open-ended questions, key themes and related sample comments are outlined to highlight topics where the most responses were received.

### Overview of what we heard

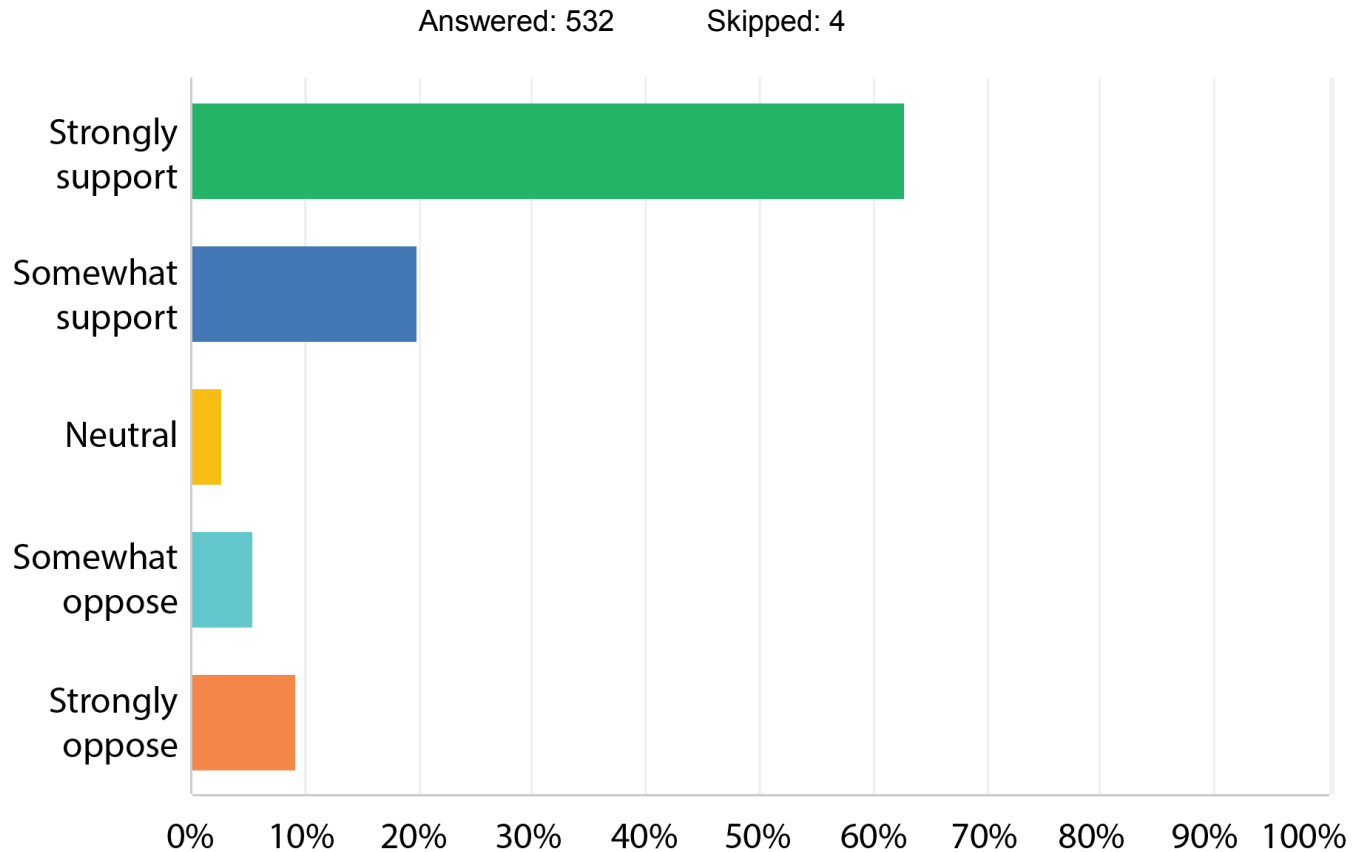
Survey responses indicated the following:

- Strong support for the proposed regulations for garden suites
- Overall support for the proposed sizes for garden suites on small, medium and large lots
- Strong support for garden suites up to two storeys on large lots

### How input will be used

The information gathered through public consultation has informed refinements to the proposed regulations for garden suites. The full regulatory framework will be considered by Council in July 2019.

## Q1: Overall, how supportive are you of the proposed garden suite regulations?



Answer choices	Responses	
Strongly support	62.78%	334
Somewhat support	19.92%	106
Neutral (neither support or opposed)	2.63%	14
Somewhat oppose	5.45%	29
Strongly oppose	9.21%	49
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>532</b>

### Q2: Which element(s) of the proposed garden suite regulations would you change (if any)?

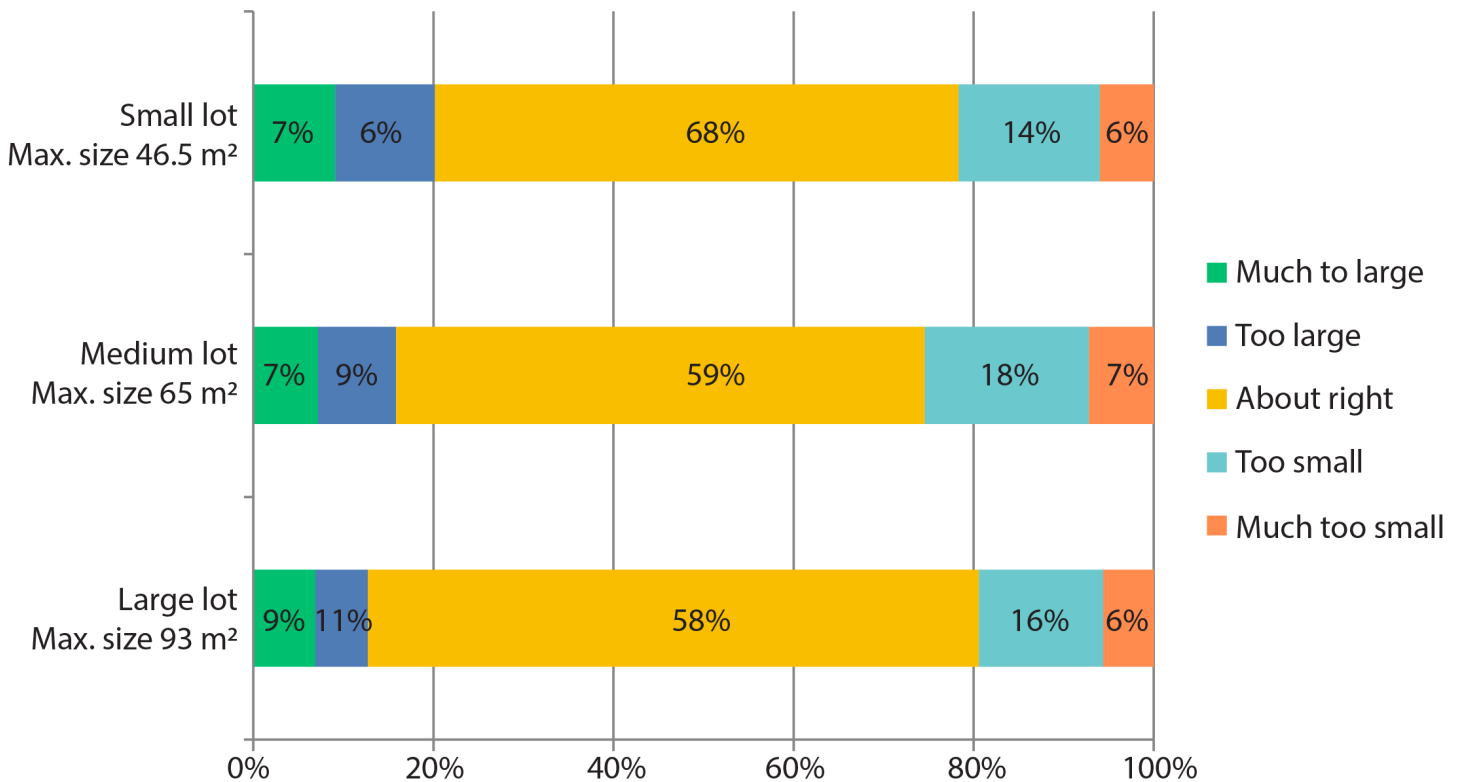
Common themes that emerged from the survey respondents' comments included:

- Regulations should allow garden suites and secondary suites on the same lot.
- Garden suites should be permitted in Rural Saanich (outside the Urban Containment Boundary).
- The requirement for owner occupation should be removed or revised.
- There needs to be more recognition of unique site conditions and there should be flexibility for garden suites to be located in front or side yards.
- The requirement for maximum gross floor area should be removed.
- The proposed setbacks for garden suites should be changed.

Comments that highlight these themes are outlined below.

- *"I would allow owners to have a secondary suite and garden suite. Looking at the cost of housing for both owners and renters, we need multiple options. Especially in parts of Saanich that are already densely populated (e.g. Saanich Core)."*
- *"I like the idea of larger suites for larger properties, however I would like the potential for garden suites to be expanded to rural Saanich."*
- *"There needs to be a way for people to apply to live off site for a period of time (away from the primary residence for a period of time for employment purposes)."*
- *"I feel every property should be granted permission to include a garden suite whether or not [it is] owner occupied."*
- *"To allow garden suites in front yards where the lot deems this necessary. We have a waterfront lot with the main house on the water side, and a large unused area on the road access side which we have our driveway."*
- *"The maximum floor area. Why not allow the maximum floor area to be the same as the maximum lot coverage?"*
- *"Larger rear and interior and exterior setbacks. I still believe this can be located too close to a neighbour's property and all of the impacts should be borne by the owner building the suite."*
- *"Reduce the setback to the primary dwelling to 3 m"*

**Q3: The proposed regulations seek to limit the maximum size of a garden suite based on three lot size categories (small, medium, large). What do you think about the proposed regulations for maximum size?**



	Small Lot	Medium Lot	Large Lot
Much Too Large	6.90%	7.20%	9.13%
Too Large	5.82%	8.69%	11.04%
About Right	67.89%	58.69%	58.17%
Too Small	13.79%	18.22%	15.71%
Much Too Small	5.60%	7.20%	5.94%
<b>Total</b>	<b>464</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>471</b>

## Q4: Suggested change to maximum size (if any):

When asked to suggest changes to the proposed maximum sizes for garden suites, survey respondents' recommended sizes that were more, less or equal to the proposed sizes of 500 ft<sup>2</sup> (small lot) 700 ft<sup>2</sup> (medium lot) and 1000 ft<sup>2</sup> (large lot). To help with interpretation, the recommended sizes for small, medium and large lots have been organized into ranges (e.g. between 501 ft<sup>2</sup> and 600 ft<sup>2</sup>). The ranges that include the actual proposed sizes are highlighted in green.

It is important to note that only one-hundred twenty-eight people responded to this question, as compared to four hundred eighty people who responded to Question 3, which was also about size.

### SMALL LOTS

Size Range (ft <sup>2</sup> )	Response Frequency (Approx.)
201-300	6
301-400	1
401-500	10
501-600	1
601-700	20
701-800	11

### MEDIUM LOTS

Size Range (ft <sup>2</sup> )	Response Frequency (Approx.)
201-300	1
301-400	3
401-500	19
501-600	5
601-700	2
701-800	5
801-900	0
901-1000	2

## Q4: Suggested change to maximum size (if any):

### LARGE LOTS

Size Range (ft <sup>2</sup> )	Response Frequency (Approx.)
401-500	8
501-600	2
601-700	9
701-800	11
801-900	8
901-1000	2
1001-2000	44



### Q5: Do you have any comments on the proposed regulations for size?

Common themes that emerged from the survey respondents' comments included:

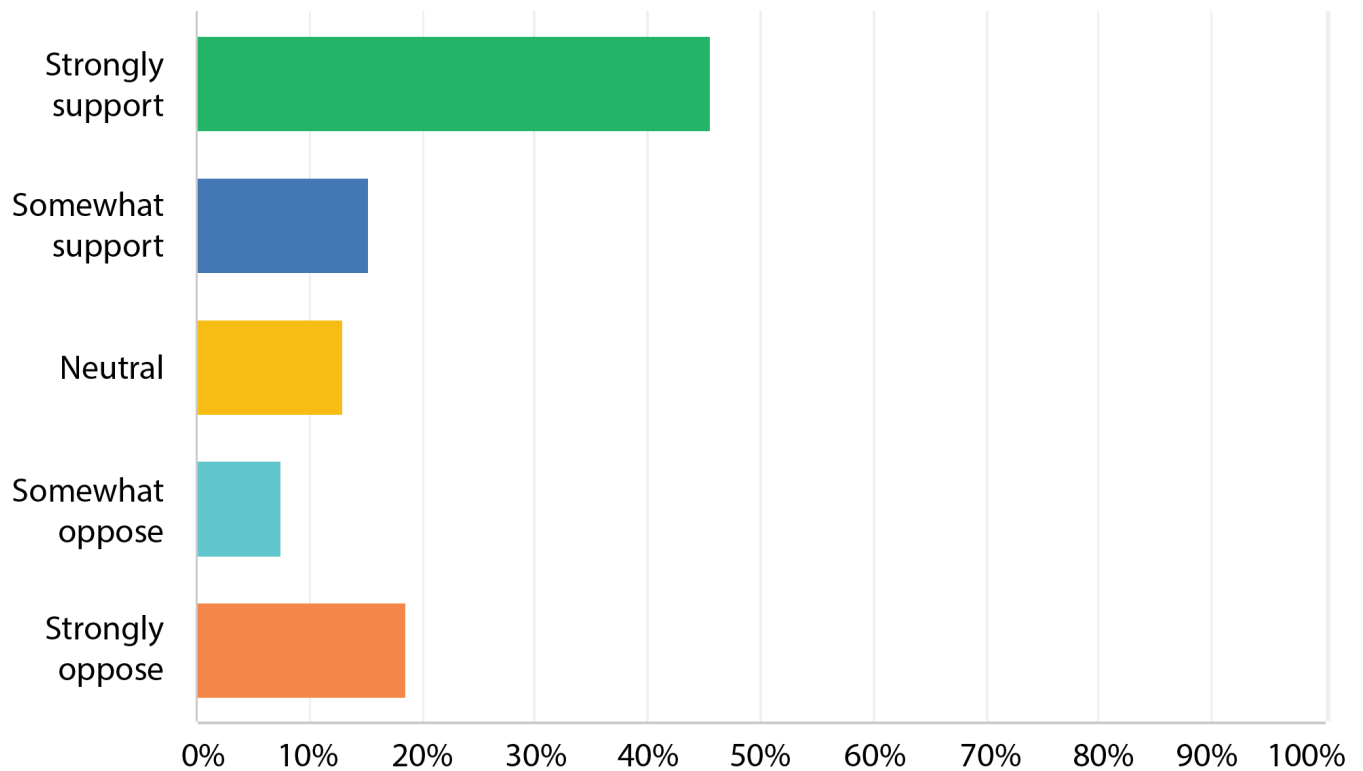
- A desire to allow larger garden suites. The proposed sizes are too small.
- A desire to restrict the size of garden suites. The proposed sizes are too big and could result in a loss of green space and/or trees. If garden suites are in backyards, they should be smaller.
- The size of the garden suite should be a percentage of lot size.
- The size of the garden suite should take into consideration unique site conditions. For example, corner lots should be treated differently.
- A desire to see garden suites built to accommodate families.

Comments that highlight some of these themes are outlined below.

- *"For all the expense and effort to build, it would be desirable to be able to have slightly larger maximum sizes."*
- *"Smaller suites are better in my mind (400-700 sq. ft.) Larger square footage means more land covered in concrete and less green space."*
- *"Acreages maybe for 1000 sq ft, but not for normal city lots. These are accessory suites not full size houses. Most apartments aren't 1000 sq ft."*
- *"Square footage should be based on percentage of the lot size."*
- *"Corner lots could have different requirements."*
- *"Current regulations are too small for a family so would only provide additional space for couples and singles who are already well served by condos."*

**Q6: The proposed regulations seek to limit the maximum height of a garden suite based on three lot size categories (small, medium, large). On small and medium lots the height of a garden suite would be limited to one storey. On large lots two storey garden suite would be permitted. How supportive are you of allowing garden suites up to two storeys on large lots.**

Answered: 491 Skipped: 45



Answer choices	Responses	
Strongly support	45.62%	224
Somewhat support	15.27%	75
Neutral (neither support or oppose)	13.03%	64
Somewhat oppose	7.54%	37
Strongly oppose	18.53%	91
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>491</b>

### Q7: Do you have any comments on the proposed regulations for height?

Common themes that emerged from the survey respondents' comments included:

- Allow two storey garden suites on medium lots, and even small lots where the site conditions are conducive and it can be shown that there is no impact on neighbours.
- Two storey garden suites will have a smaller footprint and would take up less space on a property. This would allow more green space and room for trees.
- Two storeys would provide owners with more flexibility for the design and layout of their garden suite.
- Concern that two storeys is too high and will have a negative impact on neighbours.
- The regulations should allow one and a half storeys for garden suites.

Comments that highlight these themes are outlined below:

- *"The regulations do not allow any flexibility on behalf of the owner, contractor or municipality. There may be cases where 2 stories would be perfectly fine on a small or medium lot."*
- *"I feel a smaller footprint could be achieved by allowing two-story garden suites on all sized lots. This could also provide for office or business space on main floor of garden suite - medium sized lots in Saanich are still 'big' lots compared to much of Victoria."*
- *"Two stories would cause neighbours to have less line of sight, less sun, feeling of being cramped, one story isn't as imposing on neighbours."*
- *"I like the Idea of loft style garden suites on any size of lot. I think it allows for a lot more flexibility in design while minimising the footprint of the building."*

## Q8: Do you have any other comments on the proposed regulations for garden suites?

Common themes that emerged from the survey respondents' comments included:

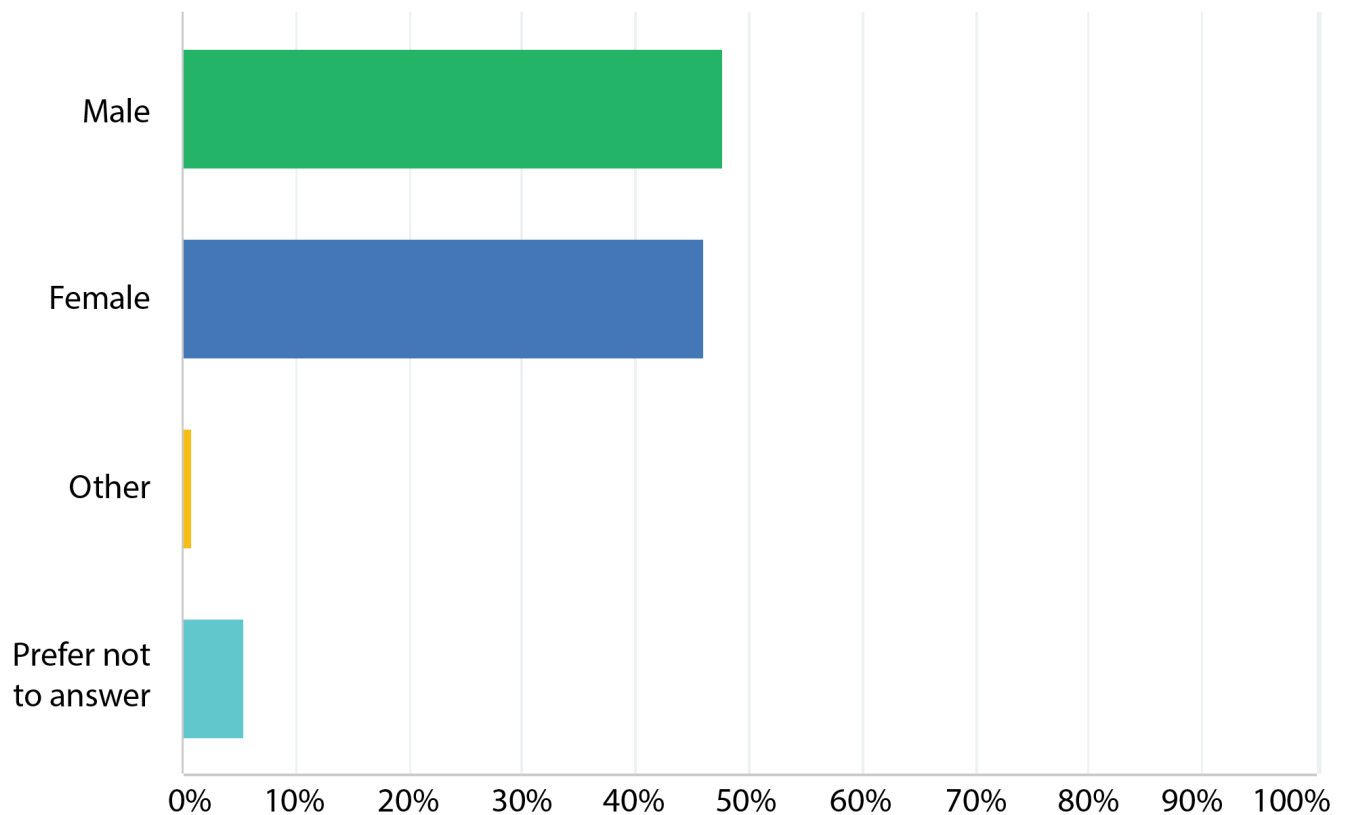
- Overall support for the proposed regulations for garden suites.
- Ongoing concerns about impacts on neighbours including light pollution, noise, loss of privacy and crowding.
- Desire to have a fast approval process for garden suites.
- Ongoing concern about enforcement and a fear that Saanich will not enforce the regulations for garden suites.
- Parking requirements are important and they must be enforced.
- A desire to allow garden suites in Rural Saanich (outside the Urban Containment Boundary).

Comments that highlight these themes are outlined below.

- *“Established neighbourhoods will be negatively affected by excess population pressure and loss of healthy borders of space and privacy; increased traffic and on-street parking negatively affect the neighbourhood.”*
- *“Garden suites are a great alternative housing option and are important for our community. Please do not over complicate the process or make the timeline to long. By doing this not as many residences will be able to take advantage.”*
- *“Requires a strong commitment from council in the form of funding and staffing in relation to bylaw enforcement. Multiple illegal suites are already a problem not effectively addressed by bylaw enforcement. Put some teeth into ongoing enforcement.”*
- *“Rural Saanich A1 zones properties not in ALR should be included in the proposed regulation changes. A lot of these properties have detached suites and Saanich has the opportunity to make them legal and allow them to be rented as of right now they stay empty.”*

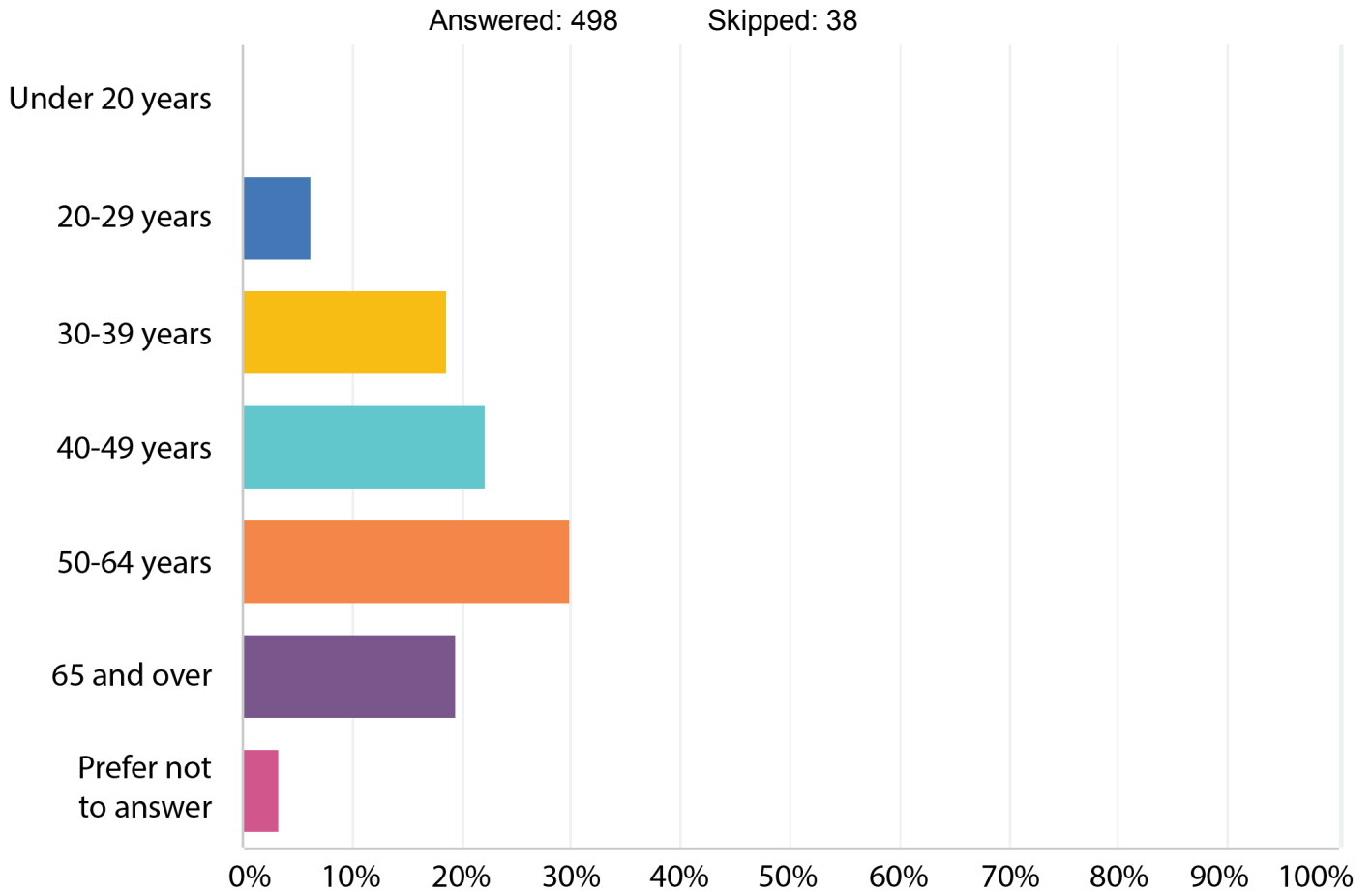
### Gender

Answered: 426      Skipped: 110



Answer choices	Responses	
a) Male	47.65%	203
b) Female	46.01%	196
c) Other	0.94%	4
d) Prefer not to answer	5.40%	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>426</b>

### Age

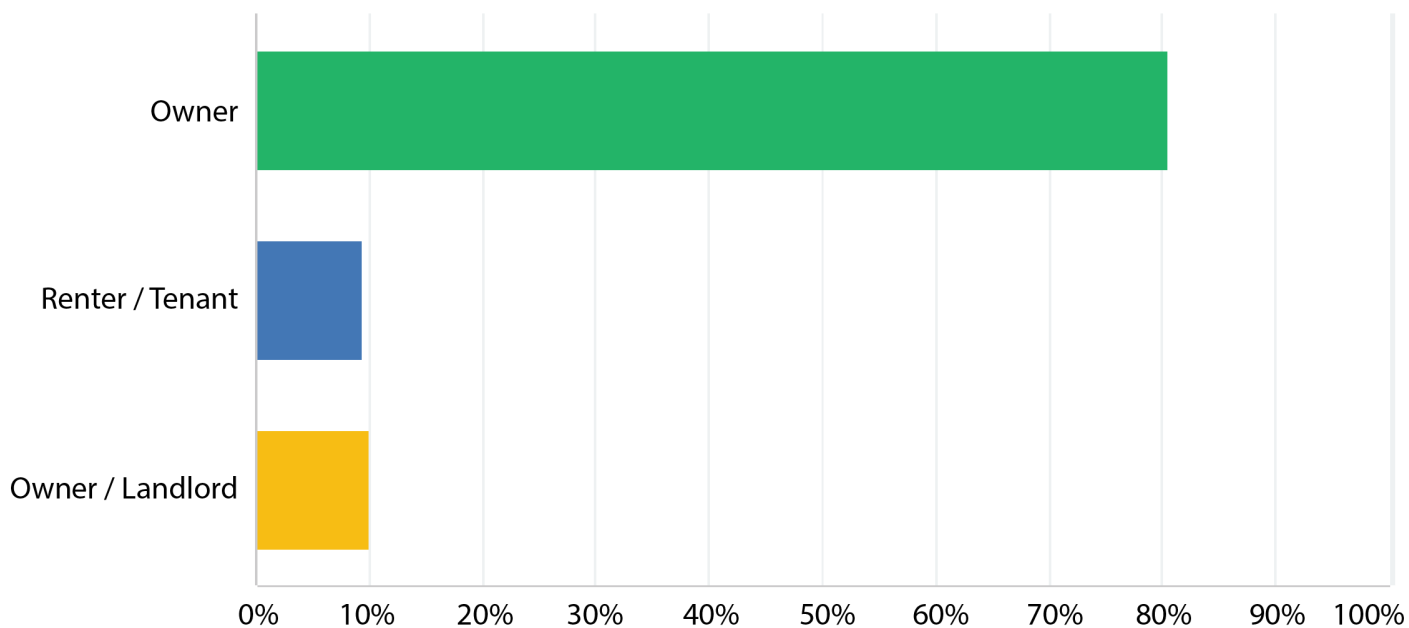


Answer choices	Responses	
a) Under 20 years	0.20%	1
b) 20-29 years	6.22%	31
c) 30-39 years	18.67%	93
d) 40-49 years	22.09%	110
e) 50-64 years	29.92%	149
f) 65 and over	19.48%	97
Prefer not to answer	3.41%	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>498</b>

### Housing situation of respondents

Answered: 499

Skipped: 37



Answer choices	Responses	
Owner	80.56%	402
Renter / tenant	9.42%	47
Owner / Landlord	10.02%	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>499</b>

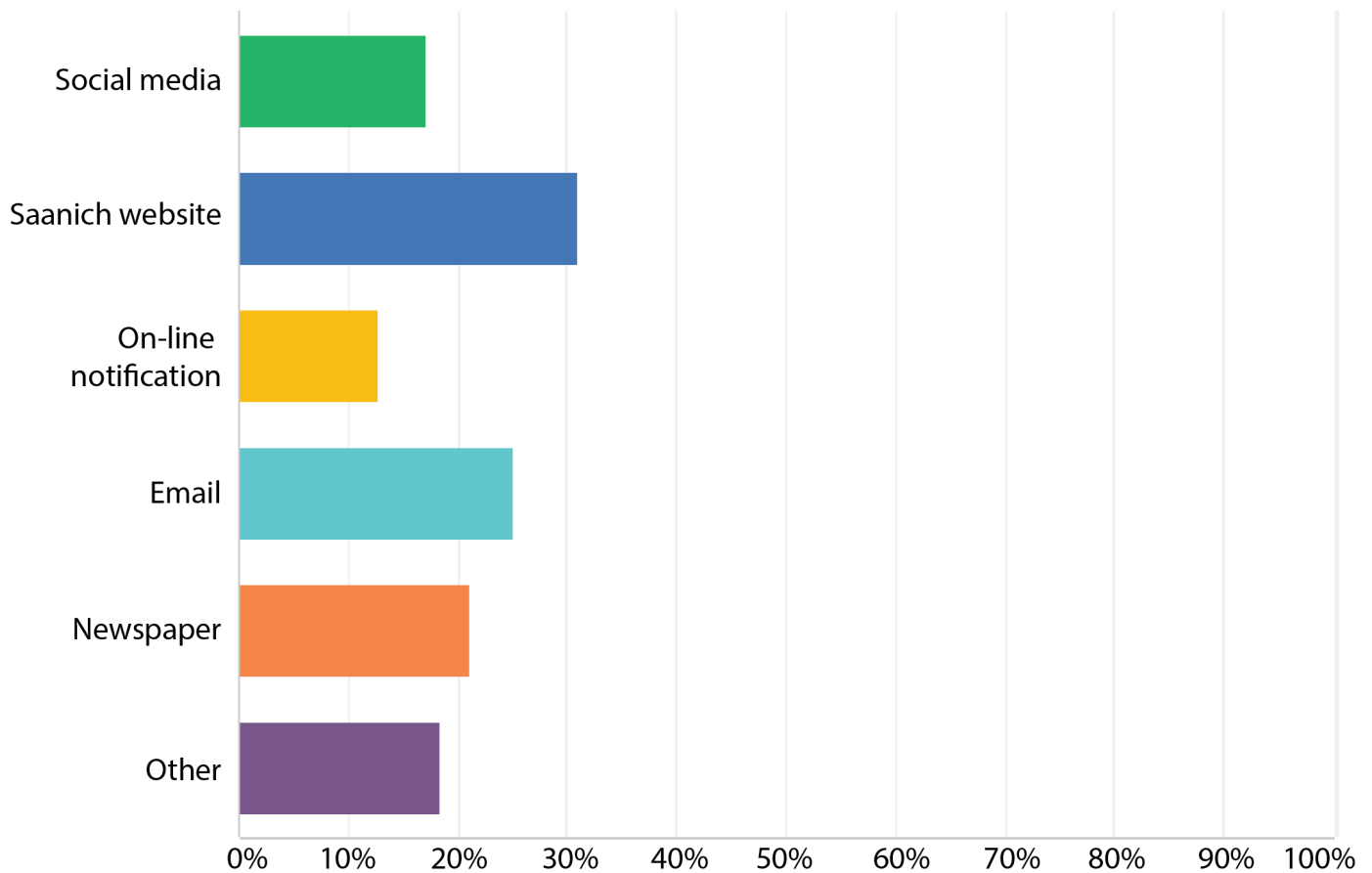


### How residents heard about this public engagement

\*Choose all that apply from the list below?

Answered: 498

Skipped: 38



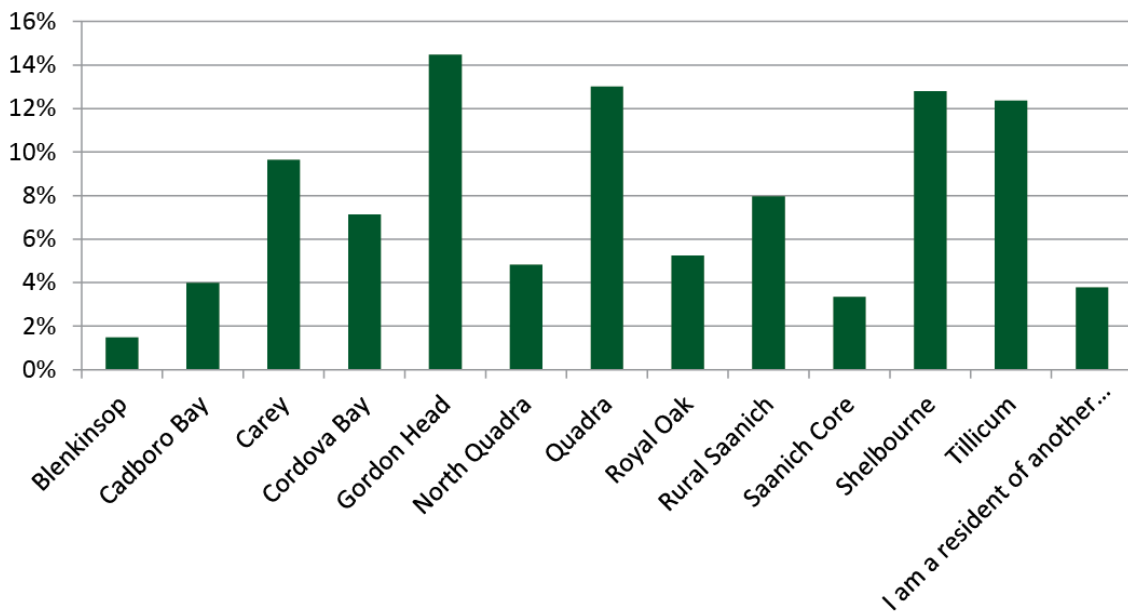
Answer choices	Responses	
Social media (Facebook or Twitter)	17.07%	85
Saanich website	30.92%	154
On-line notification	12.85%	64
Email	25.10%	125
Newspaper	21.08%	105
Other	18.47%	92
<b>Total</b>		<b>498</b>



### Housing location of respondents

Answered: 477      Skipped: 59

Which neighbourhood do you live in?



Answer choices	Responses	
Blenkinsop	1.47%	7
Cadboro Bay	3.98%	19
Carey	9.64%	46
Cordova Bay	7.13%	34
Gordon Head	14.47%	69
North Quadra	4.82%	23
Quadra	13.00%	62
Royal Oak	5.24%	25
Rural Saanich	7.97%	38
Saanich Core	3.35%	16
Shelbourne	12.79%	61
Tillicum	12.37%	59
I am a resident of another municipality	3.77%	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>477</b>