



DISTRICT OF SAANICH

Results of the 2003

Citizen Survey

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OF THE DISTRICT
OF SAANICH**

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Executive Summary

On March 10, an 8 page survey was mailed to 1181 randomly selected Saanich residents, asking them to share their ideas and opinions about Saanich as a community, and the District of Saanich as their municipal government. By the April 4 response deadline, we had received 514 completed surveys, giving us a very high response rate of 43%, and low sampling error of $\pm 4\%$, 19 times out of 20. A similar survey mailed to Saanich businesses did not receive a sufficient response to be statistically reported, although the results will be used to guide focus groups planned for June.

The main body of this report contains a brief narrative analysis of each significant section of the survey, followed by selected figures and tables showing the most relevant or interesting segments of the available data. For all sections of the survey, more complete figures, **including results broken down into demographic sub-groups such as age or area**, are available in Appendix III. The actual wording and presentation of questions used in the original survey can be found in Appendix V.

The most significant results from each section of this report are briefly summarized here:

Vision & Values

- ✓ Several central themes – the most important concerns and priorities of residents – emerge from analysis of the entire survey:
 - the importance of quiet, safe, friendly neighbourhoods;
 - the priority on a clean, healthy environment and lifestyle;
 - worry over growth pressures;
 - transportation concerns; and
 - a desire for low taxes.
- ✓ When asked to list the three biggest challenges facing Saanich in the next five years, residents clearly identify growth pressures, transportation concerns, financial issues and environmental protection above all others.
- ✓ Over 69% of residents state that would prefer to see Saanich remain largely the same over the next 10 years, while only 31% say they would like to see it quite different.

Quality of Life

- ✓ Residents give very high ratings to quality of life measures, such as the rating of Saanich as a place to live, as a place to raise children, as a place to retire or as a place to work.
- ✓ Residents generally feel very safe and secure, although marginally less so at night or from home burglary.
- ✓ When asked to list things they like about Saanich, residents most frequently identify its central location, its quiet, friendly, safe neighbourhoods, its great parks and trails network and its outstanding municipal services.
- ✓ When asked to list things they dislike about Saanich, residents most frequently identify transportation issues such as congestion.

Service Delivery

- ✓ Of the 59 different local government services that residents were asked to rate, 43 of them, or 73% percent, met or exceeded citizen expectations.
- ✓ Residents give an overall score of 69 out of 100 to municipal government services.
- ✓ Residents give particularly high praise to Saanich's fire fighting, parks, trails, recreation facilities and programs, and landscaping of public property.
- ✓ Conversely, services that residents are the least satisfied with and most concerned about include sewage treatment, the management of growth, the protection of agricultural lands and sidewalk availability and repair.
- ✓ Over 70% of residents use Saanich recreation centres, libraries, parks or trails several times per year or more. The municipal website and the municipal golf course are used the least frequently of services listed.
- ✓ Residents give extremely high praise to the customer service provided by Saanich employees – an average score of over 78 out of 100. Fewer than 6% of residents give negative ratings to their interactions with Saanich employees – a very low proportion.

Local Government

- ✓ Residents strongly prefer low property taxes and limited or no increase in services, preferring instead that a greater percentage of revenue be raised through user fees.
- ✓ When asked to allot an imaginary \$100 to a selection of 10 capital projects, residents choose to allot the largest portion, \$14.34, to roads and traffic control, following closely by the municipal water system at \$13.74 and the municipal sewer and drains system at \$12.64.
- ✓ Saanich residents clearly value their community newspaper and their local daily newspaper as the two most important ways they access, and engage in, municipal decision making processes.
- ✓ Residents give scores ranging from 55 to 63 out of 100 to the openness and responsiveness of the District of Saanich to citizen involvement in municipal decision making processes.
- ✓ Saanich's e-government (or electronic-government) capability is not well received or rated by residents, who give very low scores to the existing municipal website.
- ✓ The potential for improvements to e-government at Saanich are strong given that 31% to 58% of Saanich residents under the age of 55 use the internet for intensive e-commerce activities such as on-line banking and on-line bill payment.
- ✓ When asked to give overall ratings of the performance and direction of the District of Saanich, residents give generally high marks, with less than 6% to 12% giving negative responses.

Introduction: Background, Objectives & Methodology

Near the end of 2002, the District of Saanich embarked on an energetic process to renew its strategic direction. The Mayor, Council and staff recognized the importance of citizen and business input to this process. At the same time, Council and staff were also very interested in increasing the amount and diversity of feedback they receive from residents on the quality and importance of services provided and on budget planning – information that is used to improve services and provide input to the budget process.

So, in early 2003, the Administrator launched the 2003 Citizen Survey as a pilot project. Working with support from the BC Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services, and the Center for Public Sector Studies at the University of Victoria, the municipality sought to design and implement a first-class survey of its citizens based upon prevailing standards in local government survey methodology. It is intended that this survey process become an annual or biannual activity of the municipality.

In addition to this Citizen Survey, a survey was distributed to a random selection of Saanich businesses; however the response rate (24%) and subsequent sample size (57) were not high enough to provide statistically meaningful results. The results obtained from the business survey will be used to inform the planning for, and resultant report from, a series of citizen and business focus groups scheduled for early summer 2003.

Survey Objectives

1. Obtain a statistical assessment of citizen and business-owner perceptions of service delivery availability and quality.
2. Provide citizen and business-owner input to the municipal financial planning.
3. Gather citizen and business-owner feedback on municipal public involvement processes.
4. Provide citizen and business-owner input to the municipality's recently launched corporate planning project.

Methodology

The 2003 Citizen Survey was mailed to 1250 randomly selected Saanich residences on March 10, 2003. Of those surveys mailed out, 39 were returned by recipients who did not live within the boundaries of Saanich, 9 were returned as undeliverable, and a further 15 were not completed due to physical disabilities preventing the recipient from completing the survey, giving us a total of 1187 valid survey recipients. Responses were due by April 4, at which time 514 completed surveys had been returned, translating to a 43.3% response rate. Response rates for citizen surveys of this kind are typically between 25% to 40%.

Based on a sample size of 514, our sampling error (also called "margin of error") is plus or minus 4%, 19 times out of 20, which means that 95% of the time, our survey results will vary $\pm 4\%$ from the results obtained if every individual in the District of Saanich were surveyed.

Subgroups like age groups, place of residence or gender can be analyzed, although because they contain fewer respondents than the total, the size of the sampling error may increase.

Although responses to many of the evaluative questions were made on a 5 point scale with 5 representing the best rating and 1 the worst, most of the results in this summary are reported on a common scale where 0 is the worst possible rating and 100 is the best possible rating.

No statistical reweighing of results was done to precisely match the demographic characteristics of survey respondents with those of the population. Demographic differences between the sample and the population were judged to be not significant enough to warrant the additional time and expense required for statistical reweighing. In almost all questions, results are provided for each demographic group, allowing survey readers to make their own judgements on the differences present between sub-groups. The sample is underrepresented by respondents under the age of 44, and by respondents who are renters. **See Appendix I for demographic data.**

For more information on methodology, see Appendix II.

Presentation of Results

The main body of this report contains a brief narrative analysis of each section of the survey, followed by selected figures and tables showing the most relevant or interesting segments of the available data. For all sections of the survey, more complete figures, including results broken down by demographic data, are available in Appendix III. The actual wording and presentation of questions used in the original survey can be found in Appendix V.

Acknowledgements

The 2003 Citizen Survey would not have been successfully completed without the special efforts and gratefully received assistance from:

- District of Saanich staff, especially members of the Corporate Plan Project Team, Wayne Regan in the Print Shop, and Wendy Chang and Tanya Boone during data entry
- Dr. Pierre-Olivier Pineau from the School of Public Administration at the University of Victoria
- Jim Zaffino at the City of Penticton
- Andrew Tucker and Lenore Mitchell at the City of Kamloops
- and most importantly, those citizens and businesses who took the time to carefully complete and return their surveys.

Survey Design & Report Author

Mike Buda, a Masters student at the School of Public Administration at the University of Victoria working temporarily at the District of Saanich, guided the Citizen Survey project in collaboration with representatives from every municipal department, and with the expert advice of researchers at the University of Victoria and at other BC municipalities.

SURVEY RESULTS

Survey results are presented within the following sections:

Quality of Life

Service Delivery

Local Government

Vision & Values

Quality of Life

Measuring quality of life is complex, and involves many different indicators. The three groupings of results presented below – “a place to live”, “safety and security” and “likes and dislikes” – provide a reasonable indication of the perceived quality of life in Saanich.

The responses to these three groupings of questions suggest a very positive perception of quality of life in Saanich. Residents are happy living here, generally feel safe, appreciate the amenities, environment and location, and plan to stay. When asked what they dislike most about Saanich, a significant percentage of residents cite traffic and transportation – a theme that runs throughout the survey. Clearly this issue is one which residents feel strongly about as a problem and its impact on quality of life.

A Place to Live (Question #1)

When asked their perceptions of quality of life in Saanich, survey respondents were very positive about Saanich as a community in which to live. These questions received some of the most positive ratings in the survey (see App. III for all data).

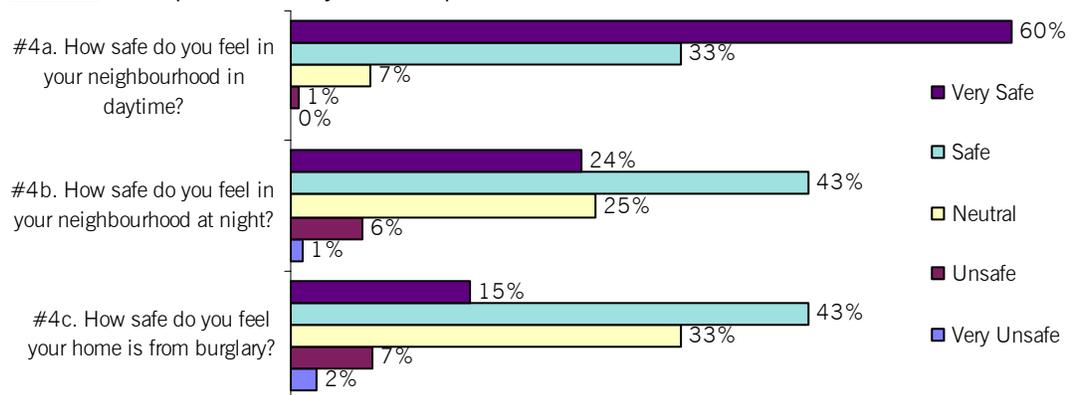
Figure 1: Quality of Life Ratings (average scores)



Safety & Security (Question #4)

Perceptions of safety and security scored lower on average than the other quality of life measures. Although daytime safety received an extremely high score (average: 88), safety at night, and perceived security from burglary were somewhat lower (but with still over 50% of respondents feeling “safe” or higher), with average scores of 71 and 66 respectively.

Figure 2: Perception of Safety (% of respondents)



Likes & Dislikes (Question #2 & #3)

Survey respondents were asked to list up to three things that they liked most about Saanich, and three things they dislike the most. Their responses were categorized into similar groupings or themes and are reported in aggregate form. Verbatim responses are available in Appendix IV.

The survey results indicate that residents place a high value on the municipality's central location, excellent amenities (shopping, hospitals, schools, etc.) and small-town feel with quiet, friendly neighbourhoods and close proximity to rural areas. The natural environment and recreation also figure prominently in the list of things citizens like most about Saanich.

When asked to name the two or three things they dislike most about Saanich, the largest proportion mention traffic congestion. Two other prominent issues mentioned that are particularly likely to impact on quality of life are growth pressures and the lack of sidewalks (especially noted by the residents of Shelbourne and Carey).

Figure 3: Like Most About Saanich (% of respondents)

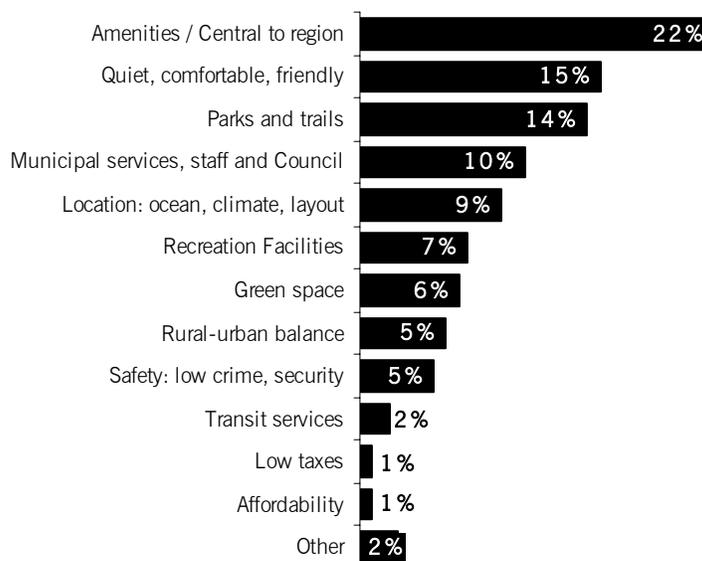
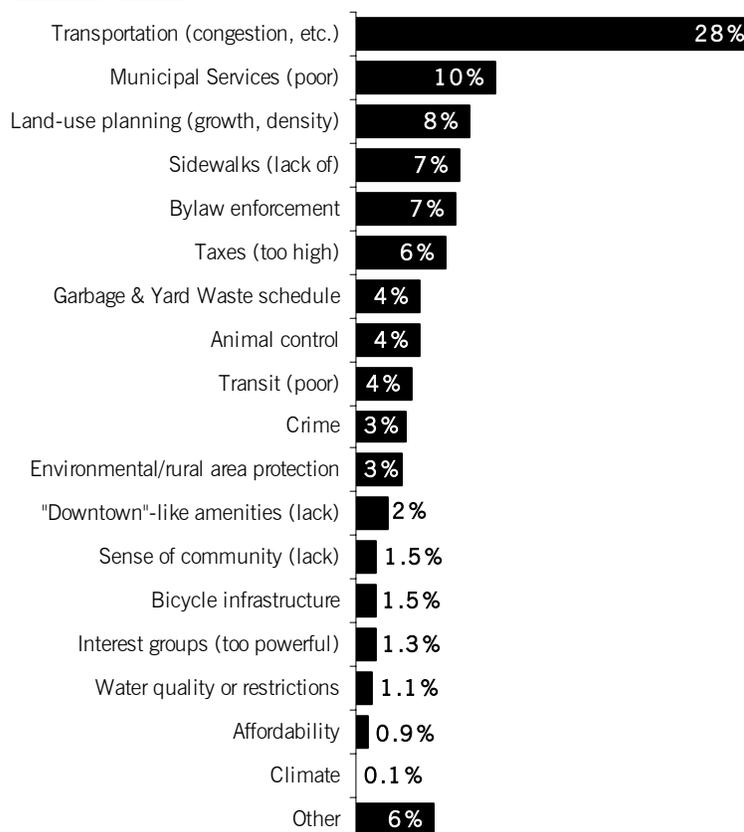


Figure 4: Dislike Most about Saanich (% of respondents)



Service Delivery

Several components are used to evaluate local government services: an assessment of the perceived quality and importance of a particular service; the citizen usage rate of a service; and finally a more general assessment of the customer service provided by Saanich employees. Results are generally very positive, although certainly exhibit a wide range, in all three components. Saanich residents value excellent local government services, and appear generally satisfied with the selection and quality of these services.

Quality vs. Importance of Local Government Services (Question #5)

The survey results provide a detailed assessment of 59 local government services. Traditionally, citizen surveys will ask respondents to rank either their level of satisfaction with a particular service, or less commonly, their rating of the importance of a service. Each question provides slightly different information, one on service quality, and the other on service availability and appropriate resource allocation.

The 2003 Citizen Survey, following the emerging citizen survey standard, asked respondents to rate each local government service by both satisfaction and importance. These two ratings can then be plotted onto a graph which shows four quadrants:

Quadrant #1 (lower left): Low Satisfaction – Low Importance: Services in this quadrant may suffer from low awareness of their availability or benefits by the general population, or may offer the opportunity for resource reallocation.

Quadrant #2 (lower right): High Satisfaction – Low Importance: These services may require little attention or may even offer an opportunity for resource reallocation.

Quadrant #3 (upper left): Low Satisfaction – High Importance: These services may require more municipal resources, better management of existing resources or a new approach to service delivery.

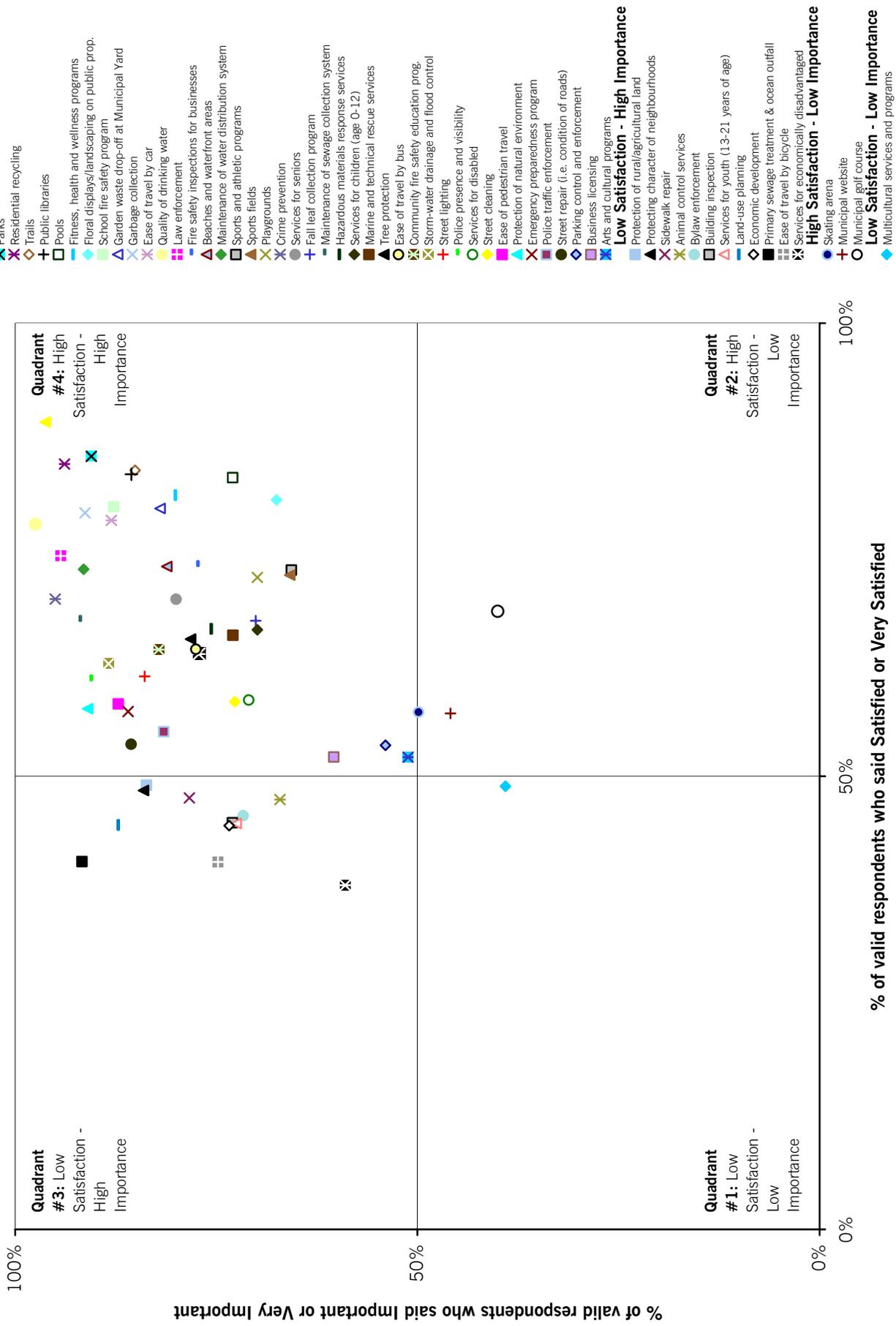
Quadrant #4 (upper right): High Satisfaction – High Importance: Services in this quadrant largely meet current taxpayer expectations, both in terms of quality and resource allocation.

Plotting the satisfaction and importance rating results from the local government services listed in the Saanich Citizen Survey, as has been done in Figure 5 on the next page, shows that 43 of the 59 (73%) listed services are in quadrant 4. The majority of local government services are meeting or exceeding taxpayer expectations.

The 12 services in quadrant 3 are most in need of individual examination to determine:

- how to improve their quality, or,
- whether to provide them at all, or whether to continue providing them at their existing service levels, or,
- whether other factors (such as a low awareness of the nature or benefits of a service) are influencing citizen perceptions.

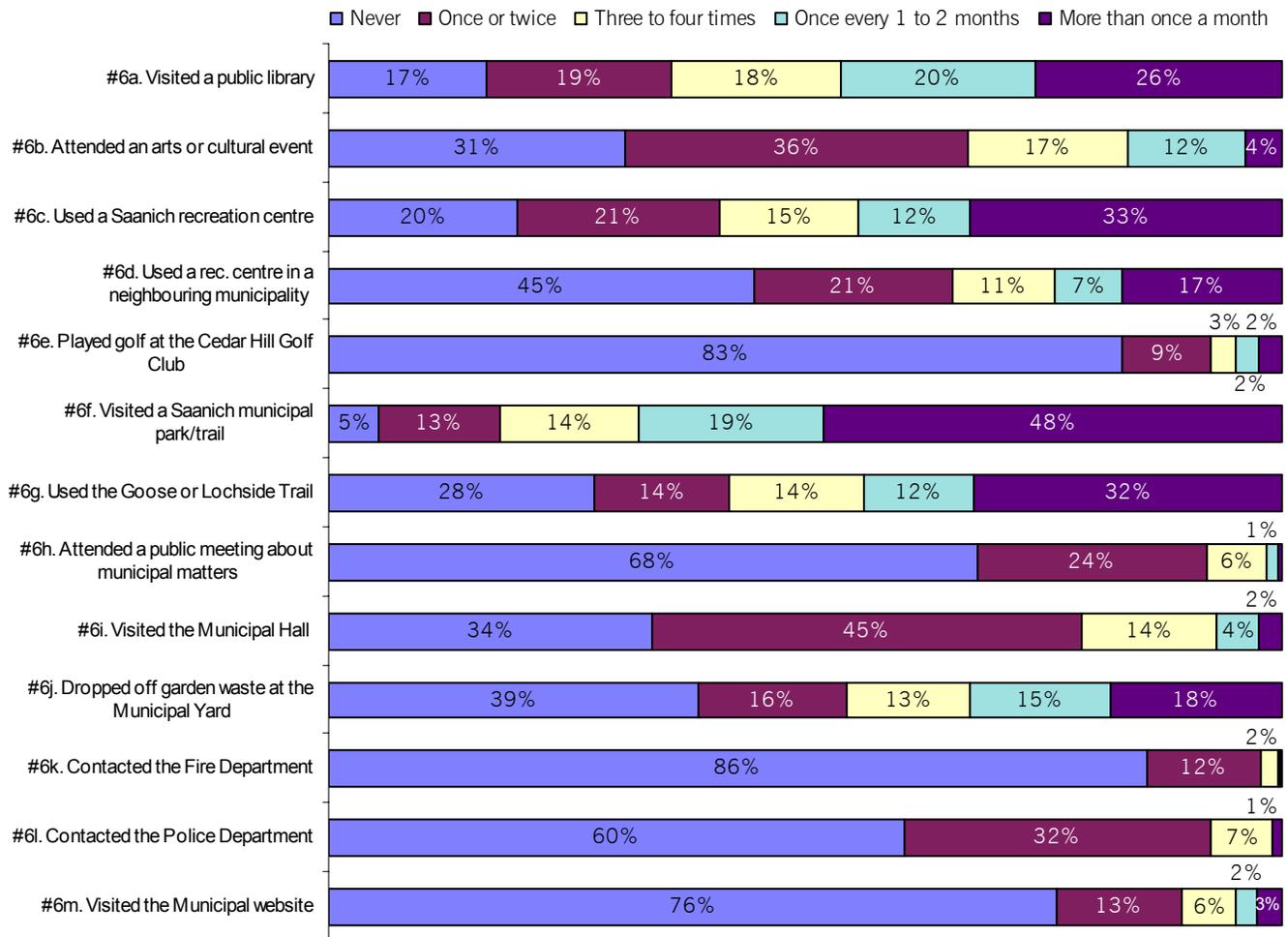
Figure 5: Satisfaction vs. Importance of Local Government Services



Citizen Usage Rates of Selected Services (Question #6)

Service usage rates vary tremendously. Not surprisingly, leisure-type activities are used at a significantly higher frequency than other services (the exception being the golf course). Over 70% of the population uses Saanich's recreation centres, libraries, parks and trails several times per year or more – an extremely high rate of use from such a large proportion of the population.

Figure 6: Frequency of use in the past 12 months



% of respondents, by how often in the past 12 months they have used each local gov't service

Customer service (Question #11-14)

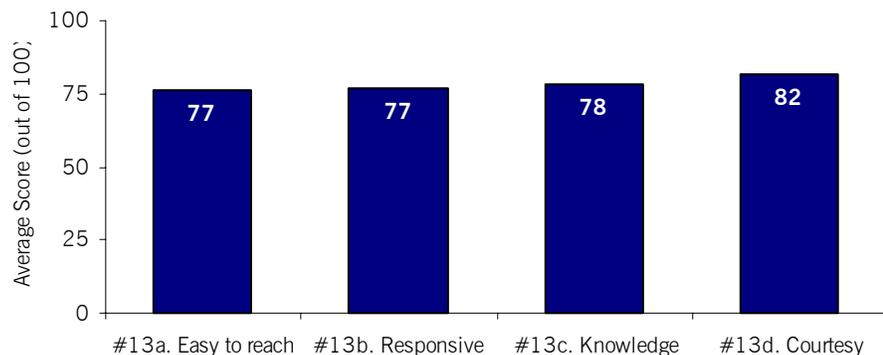
Over 66% of survey respondents report having had a personal contact with a Saanich employee in the past 12 months. The two most common ways to interact with Saanich employees are: by telephone (66% of all reporting interactions), and in person at the Municipal Hall (48%).

Those respondents who have had a personal contact with an employee were then asked to rate the customer service provided by that employee in four standard customer service evaluation criteria: how easy it is to reach the employee in question; their responsiveness; their knowledge of the service provided; and their courtesy.

Survey respondents report extremely high levels of satisfaction with the customer service provided by Saanich employees. Average scores of 77 to 82 are some of the highest in the survey. Of greater relevance to customer service evaluation are the percentage of respondents giving negative (“poor” or “very poor”) scores – it is these “upset” customers who are likely in greatest need of service. In this regard, the results are also very positive, with generally fewer than 6% of respondents giving negative rankings to customer service by Saanich employees.

Analysis of responses to these questions broken out by department can be found in Appendix III. Several departments stand out with negative scores much higher than the average: engineering, bylaw enforcement, building inspections and the police department. Customer service interactions in these areas may need to be examined in more detail to uncover the specific issues of concern (if any).

Figure 7: Customer impression of municipal employees



Local Government

Taxes & Spending (Question #7-8)

Results show that a majority of taxpayers are satisfied with the current level of services and appear unwilling to trade a tax increase for increased services. A plurality suggest that they are willing to support increased user fees. A large majority supports the same or decreased reliance on borrowing.

Figure 8a: What revenue sources should the municipality rely on?

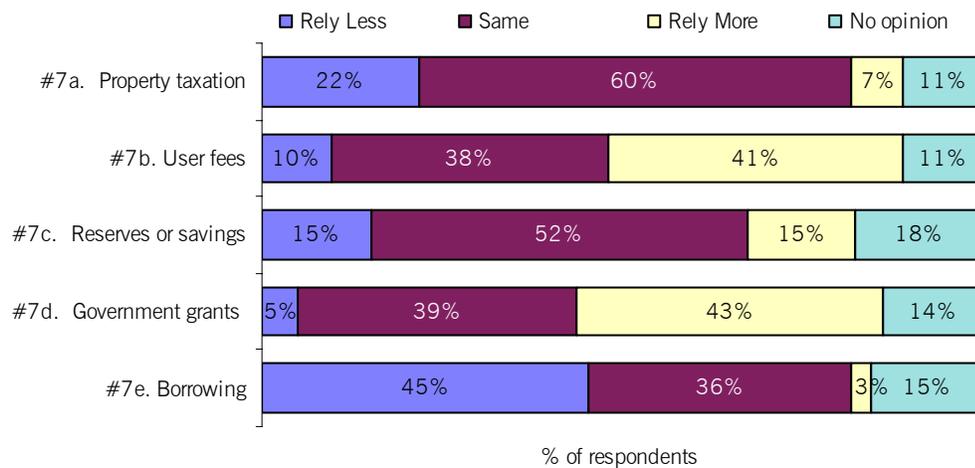
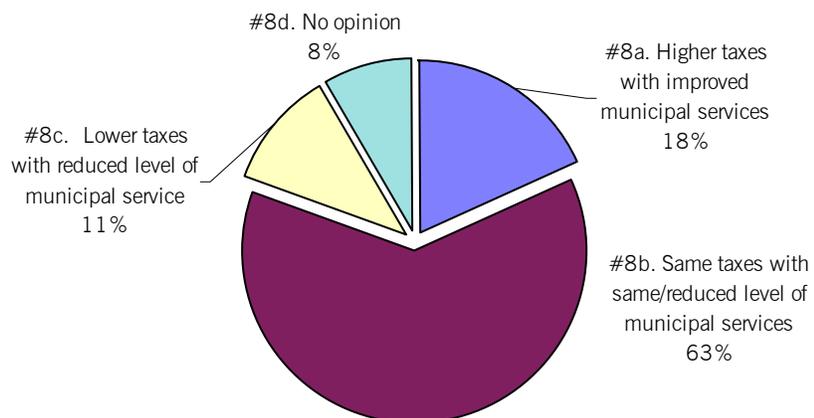


Figure 8b: If faced with the following choices, which would you prefer?



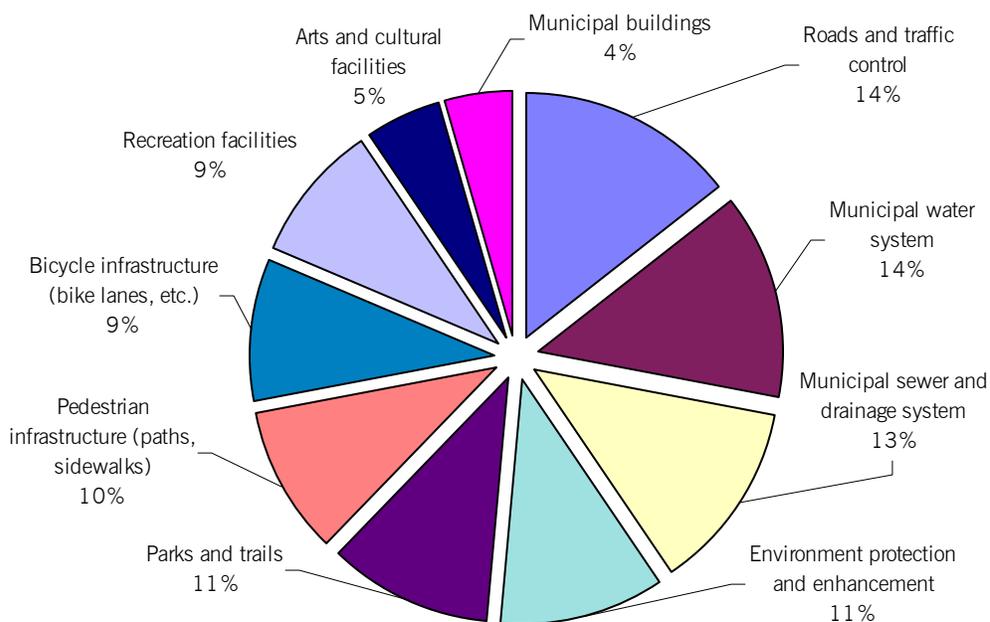
Capital Projects (Question #9)

When asked how they would spend \$100 on a list of capital projects, survey respondents say that they would spend the most on transportation infrastructure, mirroring concerns raised in earlier sections. Followed closely behind transportation are water and sewer systems, and then more distantly, environmental protection and parks and trails.

“Soft” recreation infrastructure such as parks and trails appears to be slightly more favoured than “hard” recreation infrastructure such as recreation or arts/cultural centres, again mirroring a previous question showing that citizens use parks and trails more often than other forms of municipally supplied leisure infrastructure.

Significantly, residents ages 18-24 spend almost twice the average (\$9.45 versus \$5.23) compared to all age groups on arts and cultural facilities, indicating potential unmet or unique demands from this age group.

Figure 9: Capital Projects (% of a "\$100 pie" of available resources)



Citizen engagement (Question #15-16)

The survey asked respondents about their existing and preferred methods of access to municipal information, how they would like to be involved in the decision making process, and finally how they perceive the District of Saanich to be receptive and responsive to citizen engagement.

Respondents identified the Saanich News (23% of respondents) and the Victoria Times-Colonist (18%) as the two most important ways they wish to access information about municipal issues. Word of mouth, TV and radio are the next most important, but lag the top two mediums

significantly. Municipal publications (such as brochures) and the Saanich website are favoured by only 4-5% of respondents. See Appendix III for complete list of responses.

When asked how they would like to be involved in municipal decision-making, respondents gave the highest average scores (out of 100) to community newspapers, mirroring the preference for community newspapers like the Saanich News as an important medium for accessing municipal information. See results table at right for complete list of responses.

How to get involved	Avg.
Community newspaper	71
Public meetings / hearings	67
Public opinion surveys	66
Community meetings	63
Community Association	57
Contact with municipal staff	57
Referenda	55
Council Meetings	51
Advisory Committees	50
Open-line radio/TV program	50
Internet discussion board	35

Finally, respondents were asked to rank the citizen engagement practices of the District of Saanich – how well does Saanich welcome and listen to citizen involvement. These rankings, shown below, are somewhat lower than most other sections of the survey. These results also show an unusually high percentage of “No opinion” responses, perhaps reflecting a limited understanding of the nature of citizen engagement.

Ranking of citizen engagement practices in Saanich	Avg. Score	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	No opinion
#10b. The District of Saanich government <u>welcomes</u> citizen involvement	63	1%	9%	25%	29%	11%	26%
#10c. The District of Saanich government <u>listens</u> to citizens	55	3%	14%	28%	23%	6%	26%

E-Government (Question #5, #6 & #25-26)

As has been discussed, citizen use, satisfaction with and perceived importance of the existing municipal website is low. Several survey questions asked respondents about their current internet usage behaviour to provide guidance to municipal website designers on citizen internet capabilities and preferences. See Appendix III for a complete summary of results to these questions.

Results show that 67% of residents have internet access at home. This figure is significantly higher for those under 55 (71% to 82%), than it is for those residents over the age of 55. When asked about how they actually use the internet, specifically about activities most related to interactive e-government, 39% of respondents report that they use it to conduct on-line banking, 23% have used it to purchase goods, and 37% have used it to pay bills.

Importantly, young people appear to use the internet for these activities at a much higher rate than these averages: 50-58% of those under the age of 55 conduct on-line banking; 31-37% of those under the age of 55 use the internet to purchase goods; and 55-56% of those under the age of 55 use the internet to pay bills.

Overall value (Question #10)

Respondents were asked three questions related to overall value and satisfaction with the governance of Saanich. The results are generally positive, although scored somewhat lower than other questions in the survey.

The local area of Cordova Bay returned averages well below the municipal average for all three of these questions; in particular, 12-20% of respondents from this area registered “disagree” or “strongly disagree” responses – much higher than in any other area of the municipality.

	Avg. Score	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	No opinion
#10a. I receive good value for the municipal taxes I pay	62	2%	10%	33%	35%	12%	9%
#10d. I am pleased with the overall direction that the District of Saanich is taking	64	2%	7%	33%	37%	12%	9%
#10e. In general, I believe the District of Saanich government is doing a good job	67	1%	5%	32%	40%	17%	4%

Vision & Values

A thematic analysis of the entire survey reveals a reasonable approximation of community vision and values. Several themes – issues or areas critical to residents – emerge from the survey:

- the importance of quiet, friendly, safe neighbourhoods;
- a clean, healthy environment and lifestyle;
- concern over the pressures of a growing population and economy;
- transportation issues such as congestion, public transit, sidewalks and bike paths; and,
- a desire for low taxes.

When asked to think ahead ten years, 69% of respondents said they would prefer to see Saanich much the same as it is now, while only 31% said they would like to see it quite different. Clearly, although Saanich residents have concerns over the present and future of the municipality, generally they are very satisfied with and clear about what Saanich means to them, what is important about it to them, and why they choose to live here.

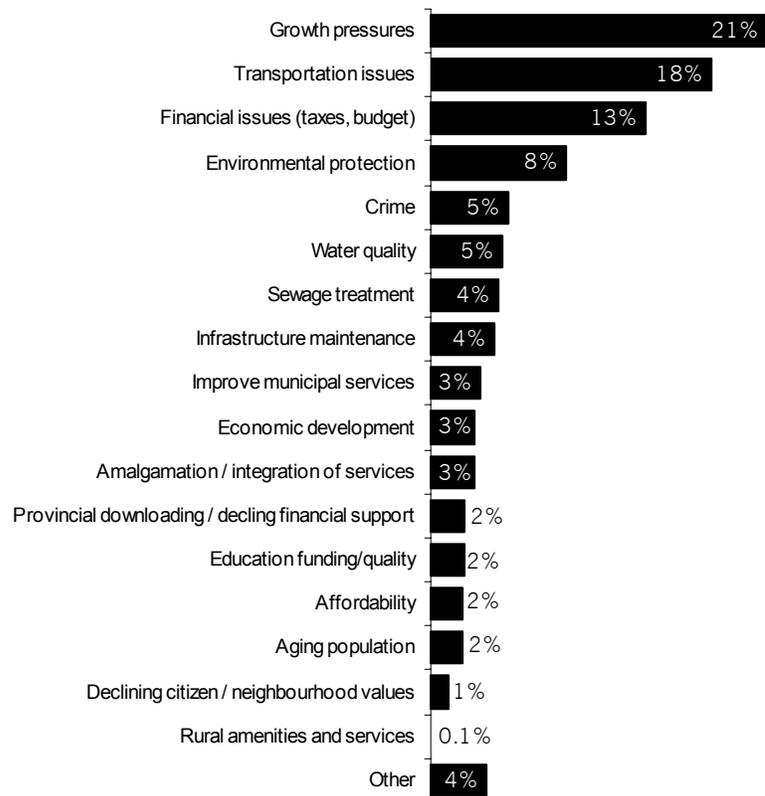
Biggest Challenges

Survey respondents were asked to list the three biggest challenges that they think Saanich will face in the next five years. The results confirm the emergent themes: growth pressures, and related transportation concerns clearly lead the list of challenges identified by citizens.

Following growth and transportation, respondents identify financial issues, especially the importance of maintaining existing taxation levels, and environmental protection including the protection of green spaces, rural and agricultural land and environmental quality as challenges facing the municipality.

In a third tier of responses somewhat below those already discussed comes issues such as crime, water quality, sewage treatment and infrastructure maintenance – all of which are related to the central themes identified above.

Figure 10: Biggest challenges to face (%of respondents)

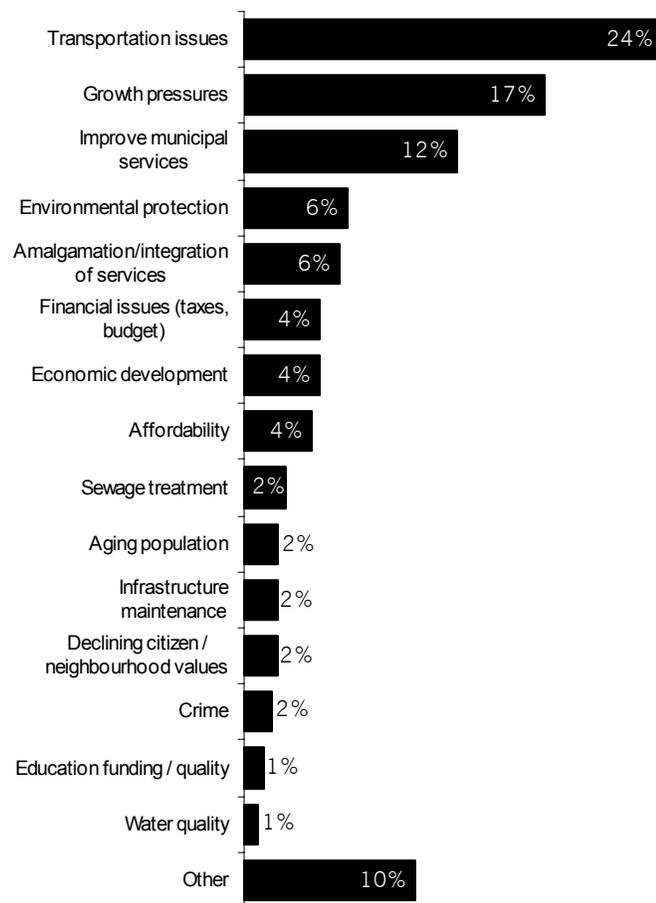


Changes to Saanich

Among the small number of residents who said they would like to see Saanich quite different in ten years, when asked what one or two changes they would most like to see, the responses appear quite similar to the list of the biggest challenges facing Saanich: growth pressures and transportation concerns. A desire to see improved municipal services received a significantly higher proportion of responses than the earlier question about the challenges Saanich faces.

It should be noted that although “amalgamation/integration of services” was identified by 6% of respondents, this issue received sustained, high profile media coverage through the survey process and as such, may have influenced the results here.

Figure 11: Changes most like to see (% of respondents)



APPENDICES

Appendix I: Respondent Characteristics

	Survey Sample (#s)	Survey Sample (%)	Actual Population ¹	Difference
Location Characteristics				
Cadboro Bay	35	6.9%	3.9%	3.0%
Gordon Head	95	18.7%	17.1%	1.6%
Shelbourne	58	11.4%	12.4%	-1.0%
Saanich Core	25	4.9%	5.0%	-0.1%
Quadra	51	10.0%	10.7%	-0.6%
North Quadra	24	4.7%	5.7%	-1.0%
Tillicum	44	8.7%	9.8%	-1.2%
Carey	48	9.4%	14.7%	-5.3%
Royal Oak	62	12.2%	7.1%	5.2%
Cordova Bay	35	6.9%	6.5%	0.4%
Rural Saanich	25	4.9%	3.0%	1.9%
<i>Not sure</i>	6	1.2%	n/a	n/a
<i>No response</i>	6			
Inside UCB	423	83.3%	n/a	n/a
Outside UCB	53	10.4%	n/a	n/a
<i>Not Sure</i>	32	6.3%	n/a	n/a
<i>No response</i>	6			
Owned residence	422	83.7%	73.7%	10.0%
Rented residence	82	16.3%	26.3%	-10.0%
<i>No response</i>	10			
Personal Characteristics				
Female	248	49.1%	53.1%	-3.9%
Male	257	50.9%	46.9%	3.9%
<i>No response</i>	9			
18 to 24 years old	22	4.4%	12.2%	-7.9%
25 to 44	115	22.8%	33.2%	-10.4%
45 to 54	108	21.4%	20.1%	1.4%
55 to 64	98	19.4%	12.6%	6.8%
65 to 74	82	16.3%	10.8%	5.5%
75 to 84	66	13.1%	8.5%	4.6%
85+ years old	13	2.6%	2.6%	-0.1%
<i>No response</i>	10			

¹ **Notes** – 2001 Census Results used for Personal Characteristics and Owned/Rented data;

Population data for Location Characteristics uses data available in Local Area Plans prepared by Saanich's Planning Department (note that population percentages for local areas do not total 100% due to inconsistencies in original data – these figures are approximate only).

Appendix II: Survey Methodology

Survey Development

The Centre for Public Sector Studies (CPSS) at the University of Victoria, Council, Saanich's Management Group and all municipal departments collaborated to design this survey. This combination of internal and external input to the survey design has provided us with both expert-level knowledge and objectivity from CPSS survey methodologists, as well as the richness in detail and focus that only Council and staff can provide. A final draft of the survey underwent a "pilot test", involving 29 test respondents from the community.

For the most part, the standards for local government citizen surveys established by the US-based International City/County Management Association (ICMA) in their resource manual, *Citizen Surveys*, were used in the development of this survey. Sections of the survey also adapted the guidelines for customer service measurement established in the Canadian Centre for Management Development's *Common Measurements Tool*.

Mike Buda, a Masters student at the School of Public Administration at the University of Victoria working temporarily at the District of Saanich, guided the Citizen Survey project.

Survey Administration

On March 10, 2003, citizen surveys were mailed to 1250 households in Saanich, accompanied by a cover letter signed by the Mayor and a postage-paid return envelope (see Appendix V for survey instrument). A reminder letter, again signed by the Mayor, was mailed to all recipients on March 21. Survey respondents were offered the opportunity to enter a draw to win one of 9 prizes (see Appendix V for sample of the draw prize information sheet).

Households were selected by the *Dominion/SuperPages List Services* company using the n^{th} select systematic sampling method and stratified by postal code area to ensure proportionate geographic distribution. The advantage of using addresses generated by *Dominion/SuperPages List Services* over those available from the municipal property tax database is that the *Dominion/SuperPages List Services* lists include both renters and owners, and are updated monthly.

Although surveys were addressed to individual household members – those in whose name the telephone account was registered – actual survey respondents within the household were selected through the unbiased "birthday method" sampling procedure. The birthday method requests that the respondent in the household be the adult (age 18 years old or older) who most recently had a birthday, irrespective of the year of birth.

Of the 1250 surveys mailed out, the following were received by invalid survey recipients:

- 39 were returned by recipients who did not live in Saanich (the mailing list boundaries slightly overlapped the boundaries of adjacent municipalities);

- 9 were returned as undeliverable; and
- a further 15 were not completed because physical disabilities prevented the recipients from completing the survey

Subtracting invalid survey recipients leaves a total of 1187 valid survey recipients. Responses were due by April 4, at which time 514 completed surveys had been returned, translating to a 43.3% response rate. Response rates for municipal surveys of this kind are typically between 25% and 40%.

Sampling Error & Statistical Reweighting

Sampling Error

Estimates of the sampling error in the 2003 Citizen Survey were derived from the 514 individuals who completed and returned a survey. Sampling error is a statistical estimate of how much the sample results are expected to differ from results obtained if every person in the municipality was sampled.

The overall maximum sampling error (sometimes called “margin of error”) for the 514 individuals who responded is **plus or minus 4 percent at a 95 percent confidence interval**. In other words, in 19 out of 20 such samples, survey results will differ by no more than 4% from results obtained if every individual in the District of Saanich were surveyed. Subgroups like age groups, place of residence or gender can be analyzed, although because they contain fewer respondents than the total, the size of the sampling error may increase.

Statistical Reweighting

No statistical reweighting of results was done to attempt to better match the demographic characteristics of survey respondents with those of the population. Demographic differences between the sample and the population were judged to be not significant enough to warrant the additional time and expense required for statistical reweighting. In almost all questions, results are provided for each demographic group, allowing survey readers to make their own judgements on the differences present. **The sample is underrepresented by respondents under the age of 44, and by respondents who are renters.** See *Appendix I for demographics*.

“No opinion” / “Not Sure” Responses

On many of the questions in the survey, respondents may answer “no opinion” or “not sure”. The proportion of respondents giving this reply are shown in the full set of responses included in Appendix I. However, these responses have been removed from the analyses presented in the body of the report. In other words, **most tables and graphs display only the responses from respondents who had an opinion.**

For several questions (#7, #10, #16), “no opinion / not sure” responses were not removed. These questions had unusually high rates of “no opinion / not sure” responses compared to other questions. It appeared that in these questions, a “no opinion / not sure” response may be relevant to a report reader.

Data Entry & Analysis

Responses from completed surveys were manually entered into a Microsoft Access database by a District of Saanich staff member. Survey data was exported into Microsoft Excel, where it was collated, analysed and formatted for this report.

Putting Evaluations onto a 100-Point Scale

Although responses to many of the evaluative questions were made on a 5 point scale with 5 representing the best rating and 1 the worst, many of the results in this summary are reported on a common scale where 0 is the worst possible rating and 100 is the best possible rating. If everyone reported “very good” then the result would be 100 on the 100-point scale. Likewise, if all respondents gave a “very poor” rating, the result would be 0 on the 100-point scale. If the average rating for quality of life was “good,” then the result would be 67 on a 100-point scale; “neutral” would be 50 on the 100-point scale; and, “poor” would be 33 on the 100-point scale.

