

February 24, 2010

Community Services Survey Results Highlights Announced

The City of Campbell River received 532 responses to its Community Services Survey.

"We greatly appreciate the time people took to respond," says Mayor Charlie Cornfield. "This feedback will help Council deliver the type of budget people in our community want."

"The survey was designed to provide general public input as a first step in a process to formally gather public feedback," adds City Manager George Paul. "The City's 2010-2014 draft financial plan includes a provision for \$22,000 to conduct a professionally-produced statistically-valid Core Services Review Poll in the 2010 fiscal year," he adds.

The City Manager's Report to Council outlining the Community Services Survey Results, which includes detailed results data, has been posted on the City's website under *What's New*.

While the survey results are not considered representative, and individual survey results are to be kept completely confidential, the City can share the following highlights.

In answer to Question 2 (*Please rate the importance of each of the following City services*), the following services were the only ones rated by the largest percentage of respondents as "extremely important":

- fire services: 59.8%
- domestic water supply: 55.2%
- police services: 53.3%
- environmental protection programs for clean water: 37.9%
- sanitary sewer: 35.5%
- environmental protection programs for clean air: 26.6%

In answer to Question 2, "business development" was the only service rated as "very important" by the largest percentage of respondents.

In answer to Question 2, the following services were the top five rated by the largest percentage of respondents as "important":

- sidewalk maintenance: 41.8%
- roads maintenance: 41.3%
- bylaw enforcement: 37.2%
- storm drainage: 34.8%
- transit: 34.7%

Question 3 asked: *Please rate these City services according to how important it is to maintain them at current levels*. Only "grants to community groups" and "tax exemptions for various organizations" were rated by the largest percentage of respondents as "not at all important" to maintain at current levels (31.3% and 35.3%, respectively).



In answer to Question 4 (*Please rate the following City services according to which should be reduced*), the largest percentage of respondents rated most services as “do not reduce at all.” Some services were rated by the largest percentage of respondents as “reduce somewhat” (none by more than 50% of respondents).

In answer to Question 5 (*How much of a tax increase would you be willing to incur so the City could provide the following services?*), “no tax increase” was the choice of the largest percentage of respondents (all more than 50% and some as high as 79.4%).

In answer to the “other” section in Question 5, “tax increase according to need” was the choice of the largest percentage of respondents. In this section, people could name the service they would like to see expanded. Fire (33 instances, often referring to Willow Point) and police (15 instances) as well as other protective public safety and bylaw (10 instances) services were the most often cited in this section. Business development / enhancement was cited five times. Various recreational suggestions were also noted. Six comments were received about staffing levels.

In answer to Question 6 (*Should the City continue to reduce major industry taxation?*), the largest percentage of respondents (46.2%) did not support further reduction of major industry taxation (versus 36.9% in favour).

In answer to Question 7 (*Which direction would you like City Council to take over the next year?*), the largest percentage of respondents (49.4%) wanted Council to maintain current service levels.

In answer to Question 8 (*How satisfied are you with the following City services?*), the largest percentage of respondents indicated they were “somewhat satisfied” with most services. The services the largest percentages of respondents indicated they were “very satisfied” with were:

- fire services (58.4%)
- garbage collection (54.2%)
- domestic water (53.3%)
- police services (52.1%)
- curbside recycling (38.7%)

Most responses to Question 9 (*What are the three most important issues facing Campbell River?*) corresponded with the strategic responsibilities named in Council’s most recent Strategic Plan. The most frequently named items in this section of the survey related to financial sustainability.

At its Oct. 6, 2009 meeting, Council directed “that a user friendly Core Services Review Survey be published on the City’s website to provide Council with public input.” The staff-produced survey was published on the City’s webpage (www.campbellriver.ca) under *What’s New*. The survey was also printed as a full-page advertisement in the two local newspapers on February 5. The nine-question Community Services Survey was designed to provide public feedback to inform Council’s upcoming budget deliberations and future taxation.