



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF COURTENAY

BRIEFING NOTE

To: Council
From: Director of Corporate Services
Subject: 2023 Resident Survey – Your Courtenay, Your Voice

File No.: 4710-00
Date: June 14, 2023

PURPOSE: To provide Council with an overview of the 2023 Resident Survey, *“Your Courtenay, Your Voice”*.

BACKGROUND:

The last City of Courtenay Citizen Survey was conducted in 2013 using the following methodology:

- 300 telephone interviews conducted with a randomly selected representative sample of Courtenay residents aged 18 years or older.
- Final data was weighted to ensure that age/gender distribution reflects that of the actual population in Courtenay.
- Overall results were accurate to within +/-5.7 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.
- Where comparable, the City of Courtenay’s results were compared to other BC municipal norms to provide additional context, insight, and benchmarks.

In 2013, 98% of residents rated their overall quality of life as good or very good, and the following as “Top of Mind Community Issues”:

- Transportation 17%
- Municipal Government Services 9%
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- Growth and Development 8%
- Healthcare 8%
- Taxation/Municipal Government 9%
- Education 5%
- Parks, recreation, and cultural facilities or programs 5%
- Social 7%
- Spending 7%

DISCUSSION:

Council identified a resident community survey as a strategic priority for 2023/2024, as soliciting feedback and input from residents is important and provides a better understanding of community perspectives and experiences. With this valuable information, the City can prioritize policy development, identify areas of concern, and ensure the City is meeting service expectations.

A lot has changed over the past ten (10) years, with a more dramatic shift in recent years due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Citizen survey results for North Cowichan and Kamloops conducted in 2022 unsurprisingly identified “homelessness” as the most important issue for their residents; homelessness/poverty, crime, cost of living (housing and rentals), drugs, and healthcare were key factors influencing quality of life ratings in both communities. Similarly, to North Cowichan and Kamloops, housing and homelessness were two of the most predominant policy issues raised during the 2022 Courtenay municipal election, and it is therefore anticipated that City of Courtenay 2023 survey’s results will reflect a change in “top-of-mind” community issues.

The 2023 resident survey, “*Your Courtenay, Your Voice*” will be conducted via a statistically valid phone survey, and an online survey with self-selected resident participation. The statically valid phone survey will utilize both land and cell phone numbers and will seek 300 respondents (n=300) (MoE+/- 5.66% at a 95% confidence level). In order to ensure the age and gender distribution of respondents reflects the actual population in Courtenay, the final data will be weighted based on the most recent Census data. The phone survey will take approximately fifteen minutes to complete and will include standardized survey questions relevant to local government and some “unique to the City of Courtenay” questions. A report recommending “unique to the City of Courtenay” questions will be provided to Council for consideration. The number of unique questions will represent 25% of the survey time (5 minutes). The resident survey will be conducted in July and August of 2023 and the statistically valid results will be presented to Council in September, in advance of the 2024 budget process. Due to self-selection biases, online survey results will be provided for information only.

In the absence of annual data, and to gain a broader contextual understanding of challenges, opportunities, and trends experienced by local governments, cross municipal benchmarking of Courtenay’s survey results will provide an understanding of what challenges and opportunities are common or unique relative to others local governments. Benchmarking can help local governments identify best practices for certain service areas, allowing them to learn from other successful municipalities and develop strategies to replicate similar success. By engaging in cross-municipal survey result benchmarking, local governments can better serve their residents by providing efficient and improved services.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The 2023 Resident Survey, *Your Courtenay, Your Voice* will cost approximately \$30,000 and funding is included in the 2023 Corporate Services budget.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS:

The survey development will be led by Forum Research Inc. a research firm that has extensive experience in public opinion polling, and citizen satisfaction surveys. Benchmark and unique survey question selection will be informed by all City departments and Council.

External communications will be primarily conducted by the survey company, supported by Corporate Communications through distribution on the City website and social media channels.

All activities are part of the 2023 Corporate Services workplan.

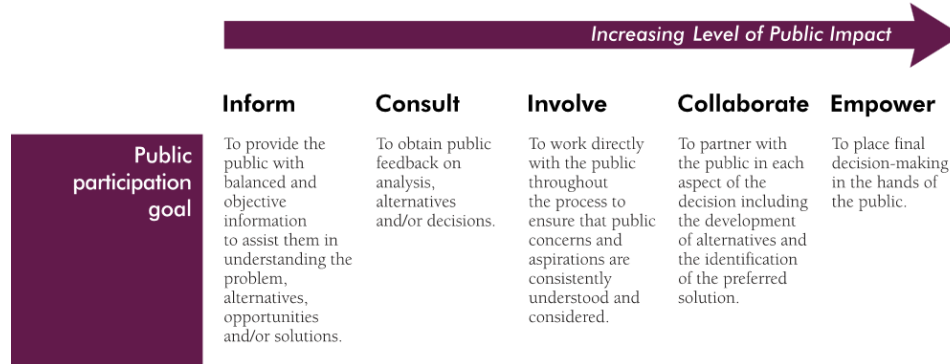
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES REFERENCE:

This initiative addresses the following strategic priorities:

- Good Governance - Increase community engagement for all segments of the community: complete communication strategy, community survey, and community engagement strategy

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Staff would inform, consult, and involve the public based on the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation:



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The contracted survey provider will:

- Develop and support a coordinated communications strategy to raise awareness among community members,
- Leverage social and traditional media to raise awareness for the survey with different populations,
- Develop an infographic on the survey results that can be shared with all residents/businesses through media channels upon conclusion of the survey.

OPTIONS:

1. THAT Council receive the Resident Survey Report for information.
2. THAT Council provide alternative direction to staff.

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