

1. Executive Summary

On October 26, 2012, the District of Lantzville mailed an invitation to participate in the 2012 Citizen Satisfaction Survey to all District residential property owners, for a total of 1,533 mailed invitations. The purpose of the survey was to invite respondents to share their opinions, ideas and feedback about Lantzville as a community, and the District of Lantzville as their municipal government.

Respondents had the option of completing the survey electronically (online) or by obtaining a print copy from the Municipal Hall. Of the 1,533 mailed invitations, 8 were returned as undeliverable. The total number of valid survey recipients was therefore 1,525. By the November 23, 2012 response deadline, 456 valid responses had been received, providing a good response rate of 29.9%.

The survey, itself, was adapted from an instrument originally developed by the District of Saanich in 2003. This report includes a discussion of the results in each of the key sections, followed by a series of more detailed appendices, including respondent characteristics, statistical tables, full-text responses to the open-ended questions and a copy of the survey instrument.

The most significant results from each of the key sections in the survey are briefly summarized here:

Quality of Life

- The majority (61%) of respondents describe the quality of life in Lantzville as good or very good;
- 54% of respondents said that Lantzville is a good or very good place to raise children, and 51% gave the community a rating of good or very good as a place to retire;
- The top three aspects of Lantzville that are most enjoyed by respondents include the community's proximity to the ocean/beaches; the quiet, rural atmosphere; and the friendliness of a small town;

- The current state of water/sewer infrastructure, concerns regarding municipal governance / leadership and enforcement of bylaws (lack of or inconsistent) topped respondents' list of dislikes.

District Services

- Firefighting services received the highest satisfaction rating, followed by ease of travel by vehicle within the community and the cleanliness of District parks;
- The services that ranked as most important included road repair, firefighting and garbage collection;
- The majority of respondents reported that the 'never' or 'rarely' visit City of Nanaimo parks, sports fields, the ice arena, swimming pool and Port Theatre – this is somewhat surprising given that “proximity to the City / amenities” ranked as one of the Top 5 things that respondents like about living in Lantzville;
- 28% of respondents expressed support for an expansion to the District's Community Water System, while 38% were opposed;
- Policy ideas that received the highest levels of support for inclusion in an updated Official Community Plan included zoning to allow residential units above commercial properties, downtown beautification and higher density development.

District Finances

- In general, respondents felt that the District should rely the same or more on property taxation, user fees and reserves or savings, and the same or less on government grants and borrowing;
- 48% of respondents want Council to improve municipal services with higher levels of property taxation, while 40% prefer to maintain the current levels of property taxation while offering the same or reduced levels of municipal services;
- Respondents' top three priorities for the next 5 years include improvements to the drinking water system / infrastructure; improvements to the sewer system; and improvements to bylaws / consistent enforcement practices;

Customer Service:

- 33% of respondents reported they agree or strongly agree the District of Lantzville is doing a good job;
- District employees received positive ratings for customer service – respondents rated several aspects of service during their most recent contact with municipal staff. Over 60% agreed or strongly agreed that the employees were helpful, clear / easy to understand, responsive, easy to reach, knowledgeable and polite;
- Newsletters, newspaper ads and meetings (community/neighbourhood) ranked as the top three ways in which respondents prefer to be engaged in municipal matters.