



# 2023 Annual Questionnaire

Summary Report

OCTOBER 23, 2023

District of Oak Bay

---

# Overview

## Background

The District of Oak Bay continually seeks resident feedback to support the setting, reviewing, and revising of priorities.

The District's annual questionnaire is one of many ways residents can provide feedback.

## Topics Covered

The 2023 Annual Questionnaire asked residents to provide feedback on Council priority themes (Housing, Livability, Transportation, Climate Change & Environment, Diversity & Inclusion, Truth & Reconciliation), Council priority projects, potential additional Council priority projects, and preferred ways to receive information from/provide feedback to the District. The questionnaire also provided an opportunity for residents to provide general comments on District services.

## Timing

The 2023 budget questionnaire was launched through an online platform [www.connect.oakbay.ca](http://www.connect.oakbay.ca) on May 23, 2023 and closed on July 4, 2023. Paper copies were also available at District recreation centres.

## Responses

922 questionnaires were returned by the deadline. Of those, 846 were completed online and 76 were completed on paper. Responses to paper questionnaires were entered into the online data base by staff and are reflected in the detailed response report. Of the 76 completed paper questionnaires, five included one response (each) that could not be entered because respondents checked multiple responses where only one could be entered.

---

Returns were significantly higher than for the most recent (2021) budget questionnaire which garnered only 280 returns. The higher returns can likely be attributed to fewer COVID impacts this year and the timing of the questionnaire being revised to coincide with property tax season. The questionnaire was promoted in the mail-outs and at the property tax payment counter. 312 respondents indicated that they found out about the questionnaire through the property tax notice.

Questionnaire response rates compared very favourably to returns in other communities. The following responses were achieved through feedback opportunities available at the same time in other regional municipalities:

Community	Returns	Households (2021 Census)	Returns as % of Households
Victoria	685	49,225	1%
Saanich	350	48,045	1%
Central Saanich	355	7,105	5%
<b>Oak Bay</b>	<b>922</b>	<b>7,805</b>	<b>12%</b>

Forty-one responses were from people living outside Oak Bay. Those responses were removed from the analyzed data set, leaving a response sample of 881. There were 20 respondents who skipped answering the location of residence question. Those responses were not removed from the tabulation. Within Oak Bay, there was a relatively even distribution between North Oak Bay and South Oak Bay responses.

Questionnaire respondents differed somewhat from Oak Bay's population profile. Residents in the 45-74 age groups were over-represented while respondents in the under 34 age groups were under-represented. There were no responses from individuals under 18, and 31 responses from individuals who did not disclose their age. Questionnaires completed by these individuals were included in the data set but are not reflected in the comparison below.

Population Aged 18+	2021 Census	Questionnaire respondents
18-24	8%	1.1%
25-34	8%	2.7%
35-44	10%	9.9%
45-54	15%	17.1%
55-64	18%	22.9%
65-74	22%	30.1%
75+	19%	16.2%

66 percent of respondents have lived in Oak Bay for more than ten years.

Residents were invited to comment on as many or as few questions as they wanted, so response totals differed by question. Given questionnaire software limitations, respondent anonymity, and the nature of questionnaire, there was no mechanism to prevent individuals from responding more than once.

### **Statistical Significance**

The questionnaire is not a random-sample survey and cannot be considered statistically significant. The questionnaire does, however, provide an indication of the preferences of those who responded to the questionnaire.

### **Promotion**

The questionnaire was promoted through direct mailout to Oak Bay property owners (highlighted on the annual information brochure included with tax notices, six advertisements in Oak Bay News in the District’s weekly ad space, and on Facebook, Google and Instagram. The questionnaire was also promoted at the June Night Market, on the District’s website, via local school newsletters (including Camosun and UVic student associations), with social media posts, via newsletter to connect.oakbay.ca subscribers, with posters on community notice boards at Oak Bay recreation centres, and referenced in the Mayor’s remarks at Council meetings. The top three ways in which respondents found out about the questionnaire were the tax notice mailout, Facebook and the connect.oakbay.ca newsletter.

---

While the questionnaire was primarily answered online, paper copies were available at Oak Bay Recreation Centre, Henderson Recreation Centre, Monterey Recreation Centre and Municipal Hall.

## Highlights

### Council Priorities

Most priorities received majority acknowledgment as being important/very important. The one exception was Truth & Reconciliation which was deemed important/very important by 44.1% of respondents. Livability was the priority deemed important/very important by the greatest number of respondents (86.5%).

Council Priority	Very Unimportant	Unimportant	Neutral	Important	Very Important
Housing	13.5%	14.0%	17.1%	23.4%	32.1%
Livability	5.4%	1.0%	7.2%	33.6%	52.9%
Transportation	10.9%	13.1%	20.4%	31.5%	24.1%
Climate Change & Environment	10.8%	7.9%	15.2%	31.8%	34.2%
Diversity & Inclusion	12.4%	10.3%	24.1%	32.8%	20.3%
Truth & Reconciliation	16.5%	10.9%	28.6%	29.2%	14.9%

Council Priority	Very Unimportant and Unimportant (combined)	Neutral	Very Important and Important (combined)
Housing	27.5%	17.1%	55.5%
Livability	6.4%	7.2%	86.5%
Transportation	24.0%	20.4%	55.6%
Climate Change & Environment	18.7%	15.2%	66.0%
Diversity & Inclusion	22.7%	24.1%	53.1%
Truth & Reconciliation	27.4%	28.6%	44.1%

Respondents were provided with an opportunity to provide general comments on Council Priorities. Comments provided are captured verbatim (grouped by Council Priority but not further analysed) in a separate summary document.

### Council Priority Projects

Respondents were asked to indicate their overall level of support for the package of projects selected by Council to advance within each priority area.<sup>1</sup>

Projects under Livability and Climate Change & Environment received the highest levels of support, with 76.3% of respondents indicating they were supportive or very supportive of the projects listed under Livability, and 63.2% of respondents indicating they were supportive or very supportive of the projects listed under Climate Change & Environment. At 55.2%, Housing projects also received majority support. Some

---

<sup>1</sup> Projects for each priority area were listed with the survey questions. Limitations of the survey software constrained staff's ability to optimize the formatting of the project lists for readability and functionality. This limitation frustrated many respondents. Staff will explore options for obtaining improved software for future questionnaires.

respondents indicated that they supported some projects within the package but not others and found it difficult to provide an overall response.

	Very Unsupportive	Unsupportive	Neutral	Supportive	Very Supportive
Housing Projects	13.2%	11.2%	20.6%	29.9%	25.2%
Livability Projects	2.5%	3.3%	17.8%	44.5%	31.8%
Transportation Projects	8.2%	13.8%	28.8%	31.7%	17.5%
Climate Change & Environment Projects	7.1%	7.8%	21.8%	40.6%	22.6%
Diversity & Inclusion Projects	10.4%	13.4%	35.4%	29.8%	11.1%
Truth & Reconciliation Projects	15.3%	13.8%	26.6%	28.9%	15.4%

	Very Unsupportive & Unsupportive	Neutral	Very Supportive and Supportive
Housing Projects	24.4%	20.6%	55.1%
Livability Projects	5.8%	17.8%	76.3%
Transportation Projects	22.0%	28.8%	49.2%
Climate Change & Environment Projects	14.9%	21.8%	63.2%
Diversity & Inclusion Projects	23.8%	35.4%	40.9%
Truth & Reconciliation Projects	29.1%	26.6%	44.3%

---

Respondents were provided with an opportunity to provide general comments on Council Priority Projects. Comments provided are captured verbatim (grouped by Council Priority but not further analysed) in a separate summary document.

### **Potential Additional Council Priorities**

Respondents were informed that, early in 2023, Council identified a list of additional projects to consider for funding later in their (2022-2026) mandate. For each of the potential projects, respondents were asked how they would like Council to proceed – complete as soon as possible, schedule for later, leave for others to take action, or do not pursue.

The top three scoring projects within each category are as follows:

#### Highest levels of support to complete as soon as possible

1. Ensure service levels as they relate to sidewalks / walkways are restored to what they were 5+ years ago (69.7%)
2. Prepare for climate-related emergencies (60.4%)
3. Update Zoning Bylaw (55.5%)

*\*Note one other project in this category received support from a slight majority of respondents (51.7%) and that was Advance regional cooperation with regards to active transportation and transit.*

#### Highest levels of support to schedule for later

1. Review Memorial Bench program (49.2%)
2. Undertake light review of the Official Community Plan (41.5%)
3. Extend Bowker Creek walkway from Oak Bay High School to Bee Street (39.8%)

#### Highest support to leave for others (not the municipality) to take action

1. Explore ways to increase economic prosperity for First Nations (36.3%)
2. Encourage car share programs (22.7%)
3. Identify how to prevent or reduce building/infrastructure loss from earthquake, tsunami, sea level rise, etc. (20.4%)



Highest support to **not** pursue:

1. Update Dog-Use policies (29.9%)
2. Review Memorial Bench program (29.5% - note stronger support to schedule for later, as above)
3. Tie: Develop data collection system to monitor impact of deer on public safety AND Explore ways to increase economic prosperity for First Nations (28.5% - note stronger support for leaving the exploration of ways to increase economic prosperity for First Nations to others to take action, as above)

Potential Future Council Priority Project	Complete As Soon as Possible	Schedule for Later	Leave for Others (not the municipality) to take action	Do Not Pursue
Undertake Light Review of the OCP	39.3%	41.5%	6.1%	13.0%
Update Zoning Bylaw	55.5%	27.3%	3.8%	13.4%
Identify how to prevent or reduce building/infrastructure loss from earthquake, tsunami, sea level rise, etc.	43.4%	29.8%	20.4%	6.5%
Update Dog Policies	33.5%	32.5%	4.1%	29.9%
Identify options to improve solid waste management at Elgin Rd.	46.8%	38.4%	7.0%	7.8%
Data collection system to monitor impact of deer on public safety	32.4%	24.6%	14.5%	28.5%
Review Memorial Bench Program	11.6%	49.2%	9.7%	29.5%
Ensure service levels as they relate to sidewalks / walkways are restored to what they were 5+ years ago	69.7%	22.9%	1.8%	5.7%

Survey On Street Parking	41.8%	34.5%	4.2%	19.5%
Extend Bowker Creek Walkway from OB High School to Bee St	41.4%	39.8%	2.5%	16.3%
Advance regional cooperation with regards to active transportation and transit	51.7%	25.4%	11.4%	11.6%
Encourage car share programs	28.9%	21.5%	22.7%	26.9%
Expand bike parking	44.7%	23.7%	6.6%	25.0%
Develop Community Climate Action Plan	43.3%	23.7%	14.6%	18.4%
Develop Energy Plan for Municipal Operations	45.4%	35.8%	7.5%	11.3%
Expand Naturalization of Bowker Creek	43.8%	36.1%	8.5%	11.5%
Improve management of boat moorage in District's bays	33.3%	34.9%	18.2%	13.6%
Improve management of geese	36.2%	28.1%	16.6%	19.1%
Prepare for climate-related emergencies	60.4%	19.1%	12.7%	7.8%
Explore ways to increase economic prosperity for First Nations	19.7%	15.5%	36.3%	28.5%

Respondents were provided with an opportunity to provide general comments on potential future Council Priority projects. Comments provided are captured verbatim (grouped by Council Priority but not further analysed) in a separate summary document.

### **Interacting with the District**

At 62.9% and 56.7% respectively, interacting with District staff and responding to project specific surveys (other than the 2023 Annual Survey) stood out as the top two ways in which respondents interact with the District.

---

In terms of how they would prefer to receive information from the District, respondents strongly favoured email notifications through connect.oakbay.ca (69.8%) and newspaper articles (41.3%). Interestingly, direct mail notifications (at 23.4%) was the third most preferred method of receiving information, even though when asked how they found out about the Annual Survey, the highest percentage of respondents (36.3%) indicated through the direct mail tax notice. Facebook was the next most effective means of promotion, with 17.3% of respondents, followed by email notification through connect.oakbay.ca at 12.5%. Finally, in terms of how they prefer to provide input to Council, respondents favoured online surveys (71.3%), email or letter correspondence (56.1%) and voting in municipal elections (54%).

## **General Comments**

At the end of the survey, respondents were invited to provide general comments on District services they would like to share with Council. Comments provided are captured verbatim (grouped by related Council Priority) in a separate summary document.

## **Next Steps**

The upcoming Council Priority review process will provide an opportunity for Council to consider service adjustments to respond to community feedback.