
12/12/2013

Interim Survey Handout

This document contains the first portion of the Executive Summary of the Community Survey and the Survey Methods and Procedures. The document is being distributed as an accompaniment to the Community Survey presentation to OPAC and Council on December 16, 2013.

The entire Community Survey report is undergoing editing for accuracy and formatting, and it will be available in January 2014.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Survey Overview

The District of Oak Bay, B.C. borders the City of Victoria and is one of 13 municipalities and electoral districts of the Capital Regional District on southern Vancouver Island. The community's Official Community Plan (OCP) was first developed in 1981, and there have been amendments along the way including an update in 1997. In 2013, Oak Bay embarked on a renewal process of its OCP. A comprehensive public engagement plan is a key component of the renewal process and included a statistically valid community-wide survey.

Invitations to participate in the survey were mailed to all residential addresses in the District. The letter provided basic information on the OCP renewal process and invited residents to participate in the survey. Residents were provided with two options for participating, either online or a mailed printed questionnaire with return envelope could be requested using a toll-free request line.

The final survey sample was 2,650. The participation rate was 33.3% of households in Oak Bay. A sample of 2,650 yields highly reliable survey results that can be expected to be accurate at least plus or minus 1.76 percentage points 19 times out of 20.

Highlight Summary of Survey Results

All surveys are conducted at a particular time in the history of a community and within the prevailing context of recent events, the current concerns of ordinary citizens and opinion leaders, and community politics. As such, the results of a survey are not the “last word” on an issue, but uncover how the populace is feeling and reasoning about certain topics at a particular moment. The results of this survey provide a starting point for understanding the often delicate balance between change and the desire to preserve the features that define Oak Bay.

Supported by a majority. Strategies and Options that were selected as important or agreed to by more than half of the total sample can be regarded as having the support of a majority of the community. The following numbers indicate the percent of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with the strategy, or the percent who selected the option as a top priority from a list of potential strategies.

- 84% Allow live / work units above businesses in designated commercial areas
- 84% Encourage maintenance, upgrading, and retrofitting of older and heritage homes
- 78% Regulate secondary suites and set standards related to health and safety, fees, parking, owner occupancy, etc.
- 77% Link increases in density with the provision of community amenities by developers such as public parking, public green space, etc
- 76% Repair and replace water and sewer lines as a high priority
- 74% Allow existing retail and service businesses to expand at existing locations, e.g., more seating for cafes
- 73% Encourage more housing for seniors and those with disabilities in areas with existing multi-family housing
- 70% Expand and upgrade the trail / path system, including public trails along the shoreline
- 69% Regulated secondary suites in existing homes
- 68% Encourage more long-term care units / beds
- 64% Inclusion of duplexes (2 units in one building) in existing single-family residential areas
- 63% Update policies for home-based businesses to increase options
- 61% Allow more "street corner" neighbourhood commercial establishments
- 61% Allow Bed and Breakfasts
- 60% Protect and manage the shoreline
- 60% Expand community facilities, programs and services for older adults, seniors and people with disabilities
- 59% Design and operate roads as "complete streets" with all users in mind, including cyclists, transit, motor scooters, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities
- 57% Inclusion of townhouses / row houses in existing single-family residential areas
- 56% (If multi-family housing units were increased) expand the extent of multi-family areas in locations such as along arterial roads, near transit, and near commercial and recreation services
- 56% Reconsider parking requirements where there is good access to public transit and where residents tend to use alternative modes such as walking, biking and public transit
- 56% Inclusion of laneway / carriage homes / garden suites (detached, ground-oriented homes located in the backyard of a property with a single-family home as its primary use) in existing single-family residential areas
- 55% Begin the long-term process of moving utility wires underground
- 54% Include affordable and mixed income housing in multi-family developments
- 54% Encourage green building technologies such as solar panels, solar hot water, rainwater collection, recycling of materials from demolished buildings
- 53% Integrate environmental considerations into planning and design

- 53% Distribute festivals, events and street closures throughout Oak Bay
- 52% Improve sidewalks for better accessibility, e.g., smoother and wider sidewalks, more ramps

Least acceptable options. Because of its importance to the community, the survey explored housing options in more detail than other topics. The following list of housing options received the largest disagreement percentages, indicating those who disagreed or strongly disagreed with each option. To produce this list, the cut-off criterion was 40% or more in disagreement.

- 62% Allow building height increases for new homes in single family residential areas
- 49% Allow very small units (such as 300 square feet) to allow for more units in a building
- 46% Inclusion of fourplexes (4 units in one building) in existing single-family residential areas
- 43% Larger one-level accessible homes on smaller lots
- 40% Inclusion of triplexes (3 units in one building) in existing single-family residential areas

SURVEY METHOD AND PROCEDURES

Survey Design and Questionnaire Development

The survey was originally intended as a standard random sample design. District Council decided to change the approach from a random sample to a full community survey, inviting an adult householder from every residential address to participate in the survey. Five areas of the District were defined for area analysis of results (see map), and District staff compiled a spreadsheet of all residential addresses divided into the five areas. The number of addresses in the original address file was 8,084; however, five new addresses were identified while the survey was in progress, thus, the total number of addresses that were mailed a survey invitation letter was 8,089. Reminder letters were mailed to 6,649 non-respondents two and a half weeks after residents received their invitation letter. A unique identifier (PIN) attached to each address permitted the tracking of non-responder addresses.

Both the survey invitation letters and the reminder letters were from the Mayor and carried his signature. The letters told residents that the District was in the process of renewing its Official Community Plan (OCP) and invited them to participate in a survey of Oak Bay residents. Two options for answering the survey questions were offered. The resident could access a web-based survey from the District website using the unique PIN printed in their letter or, alternatively, a printed questionnaire could be requested by phoning a toll-free request line. Mailed questionnaires were requested by 509 residents, and postage-paid return envelopes were included. The survey was supported by various publicity initiatives including a press release and a notice on the home page of the District of Oak Bay website. No incentive was offered to encourage participation in the survey.

The questionnaire, survey invitation letter and reminder letter were developed by the consultants, with significant input from OPAC and a subgroup of OPAC who volunteered to work closely with the consultants and staff on the questionnaire. The survey instrument and its online format and presentation, survey methods, letters, milestone timing, and invitation and reminder letters were supported by OPAC and approved by District Council.

The mailing date for the survey notification letters was Friday, September 20th, 2013, and the reminder letters were mailed Friday, October 9th and 10th, 2013. The deadline for completion of the survey was Wednesday, October 30th, 2013, although both web and print questionnaires were accepted after that date.

Sample Size, Participation Rate, Data Analysis

The sample of 2,650 consisted of 2,284 respondents who completed online, 365 who completed mailed printed questionnaires, and one telephone survey carried out with a visually impaired resident. Actually, 372 printed questionnaires were returned; however, two were too incomplete to use and five arrived too late to include. The comments of the five additional paper questionnaires returned too late to be included in the quantitative data were included in the qualitative data of the survey.

A total of 142 survey invitation letters were returned by Canada Post as undeliverable mail in the first month following mail-out. These “undeliverables” were mostly due to incorrect or incomplete addresses or vacant premises. The correct addresses of an additional 40 addresses that were incomplete or incorrect were identified while the survey was in progress, and invitation letters were mailed to the corrected addresses. The majority of respondents who completed the survey online required 22 to 25 minutes to answer the questions and write comments, although some required over 30 minutes.

The survey participation rate is 33.3% ($2650 \div 7947$ delivered survey letters). A sample of 2,650 yields highly reliable results that can be expected to be accurate at least plus or minus 1.76 percentage points 19 times out of 20. Results for demographic sub-groups will be less reliable.

The data of returned printed questionnaires were entered into the survey database. The data were weighted on four variables to more closely approximate the community profile. These variables were area, type of dwelling (single- or multi-family), home owned or rented, and age bracket (under 45, 45 to 64 and 65 and older). A “spot check” to compare weighted and unweighted results on key Housing and Business and Commerce questions showed that the results for the total sample varied very little due to weighting – mostly one or two percentage points. The largest variation resulting from weighting found was four percentage points. Cross-tabulations were run by area, type of dwelling, home owner or home renter, children or no children in the household, age bracket, and gender. Other statistics and cross-tabulations were computed as needed to aid analysis and interpretation of the findings.

Respondent comments were wide ranging, strayed off-topic frequently, but provide valuable information toward a better understanding of the quantitative results. As such, comments were usually treated as qualitative data that illuminates and points the way to a more complete understanding of the quantitative results. In some instances, comments were quantified. Some examples of quantified comments are “none of

these strategies are important to me”, and “all of these strategies are important to me”.

Sample Characteristics

Following are the characteristics of survey respondents prior to weighting data for analysis.

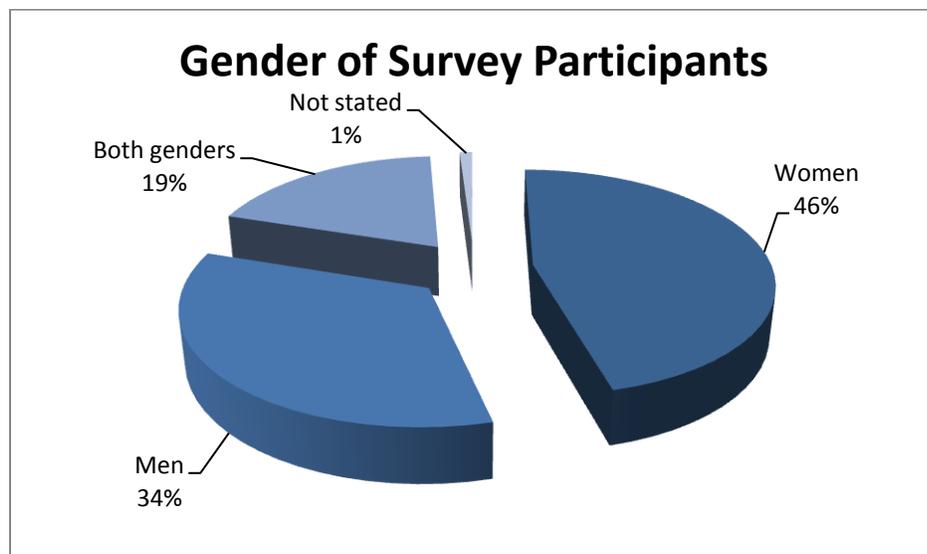
23a. Did only one person answer the survey questions or more than one person?

23b. Were the survey questions answered by a male or female?

23c. Were the survey questions answered by males, females or by both genders?

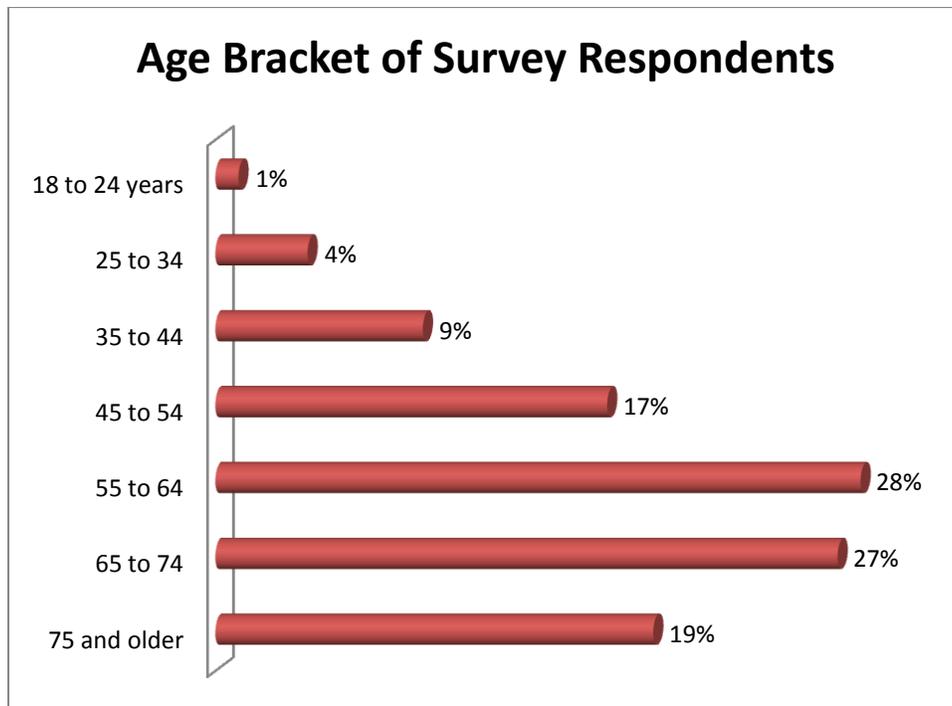
Nearly one in five survey participants answered the survey questions with another household member. Most were probably married or common law couples, but some respondents mentioned answering the questions with their children.

A third of the survey participants were men who answered the questions independently, and 46% were women who answered the questions independently.



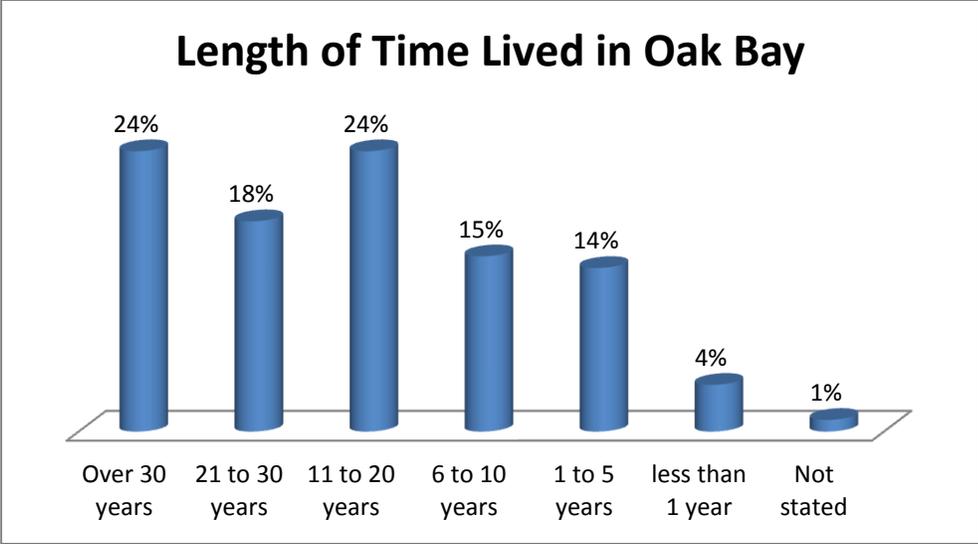
24. What is your age bracket, or the age brackets of all adults who answered the survey questions? *Select all brackets that apply.*

Only 5% of the survey respondents were under 34 years of age. Just over a quarter (26%) were between 35 and 54 years, 28% were 55 to 64, 27% were 65 to 74, and 19% were 75 or older.



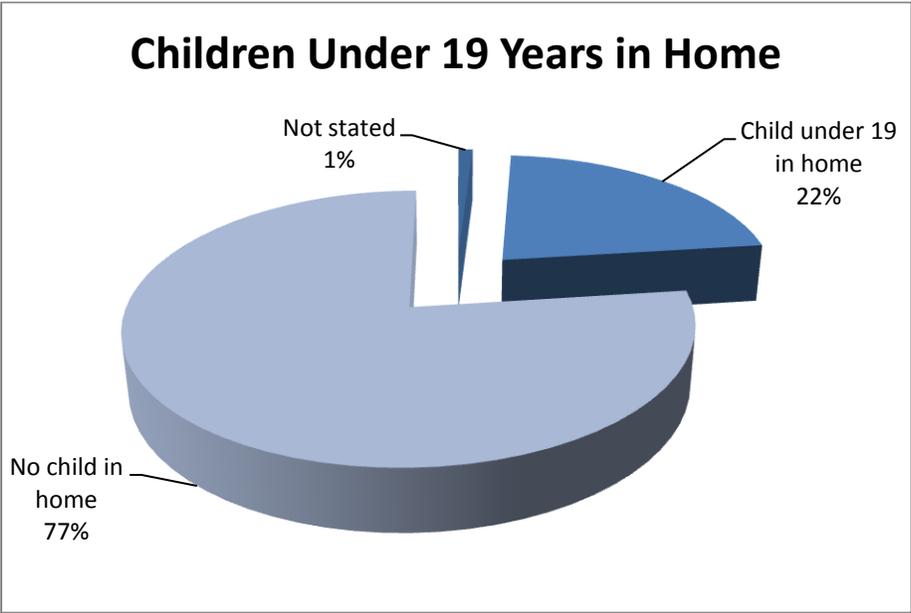
25. How long have you lived in Oak Bay?

There were some very recent residents of Oak Bay who participated in the survey. 4% had lived in the community for less than one year, and 18% for less than six years. Two in five (42%) were long-term residents of at least 21 years.



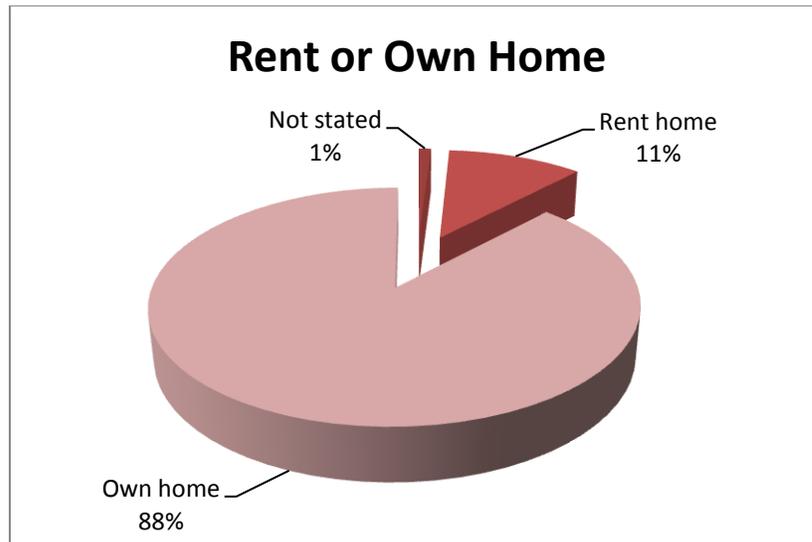
26. Do you have any children 18 years and younger living in your home? Include boarders and occupants of a secondary suite.

Less than a quarter of survey respondents (22%) had at least one child 18 years or younger living in the home. 29% of those with children, 6% of the sample, have one or more young children under six years of age. 47% of those with children, 10% of the sample, have one or more children 6 to 12 years living in the home, and 52% of those with children, 12% of the sample, have one or more children 13 to 18 years living in the home.



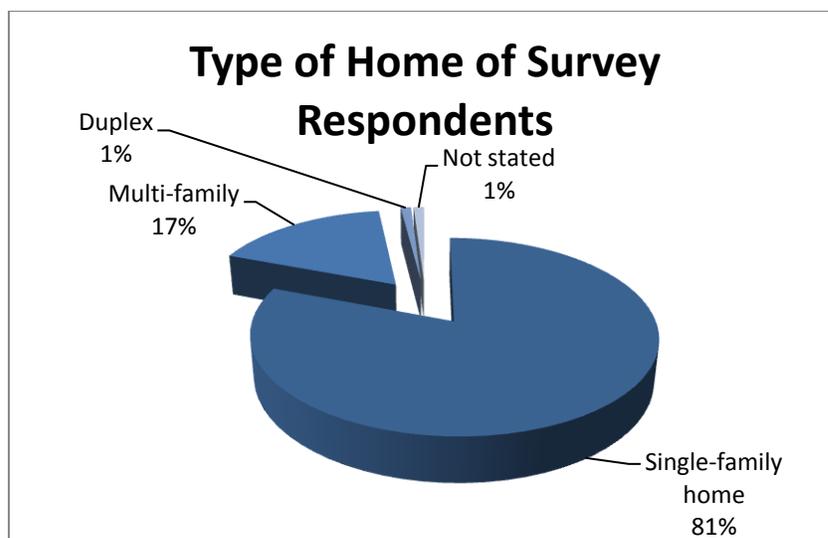
27. Do you own or rent your home?

The majority of survey respondents (88%) owned their home.



28. In what type of home do you live?

Four in five survey respondents (80%) said they live in a single-family home, and 17% live in multi-family buildings.



29. Do you occupy a secondary suite or do you board in a single-family home?

Eleven survey respondents, 0.4% of the sample live in a secondary suite, and six, 0.2% of the sample, said they board. Twenty-four people did not answer the question.

30. Do you currently have boarders or a secondary suite at your residence? *Select all that apply.*

190 survey respondents, 7% of those who are not boarders or occupants of secondary suites, said they have boarders or secondary suites in their homes. A few commented that their relatives lived with them. Twelve people did not answer the question.