

Date: 20/02/2025

To: Chair and Directors, Finance/Budget Committee

And To: Murray Daly, Chief Administrative Officer

From: Gerald Pinchbeck, Manager of Communications

Date of Meeting: Finance-Budget Committee_Feb27_2025

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Short Summary:

2025 Budget Consultation Results

Background:

An online budget feedback survey was made available from January 29, 2025 to February 19, 2025 to satisfy the CRD's legal requirement to engage in a form of public consultation prior to adopting a financial plan. Awareness of the survey was promoted through print advertisements, social media posts and advertisements, interviews with regional media, flyer-mail to households in electoral areas, EA Director newsletters, and business cards for Directors to handout.

A total of 327 people completed the survey to varying degrees, compared to 377 in 2024 and 26 the year prior. Over two-thirds of participants were recruited through social media. The second most effective method was the CRD's mailout (12.64%). As part of the responses, 138 written responses were provided by survey participants.

Beyond demographic information, survey respondents were asked these questions:

5. Please select the five most important regional district services for you
Fire Protection (77.41%), Recreation (62.96%), Emergency Programs (56.67%), Economic Development (41.48%), and Land Use Planning & Development Regulation (40.37%) were the top five choices.

6. Please rate your satisfaction with the level of service available in your area for the following services: (listed – values exclude “N/A” responses)

The top five service areas for satisfaction rating were:

- 1. Solid Waste (60.1%)***
- 2. Structural Fire Protection (59.8%)***
- 3. Libraries & Literacy Programs (58.8%)***
- 4. Emergency Programs (48.5%)***
- 5. Building Inspection (44.5%)***

The top five service areas for dissatisfaction rating were:

- 1. Recreation & Community Halls (41.8%)***
- 2. Economic Development (41.4%)***
- 3. Invasive Plants (33.5%)***
- 4. Access to Information & Public Engagement (29.2%)***
- 5. Arts, Culture, and Heritage (26.5%)***

7. Should the CRD increase, decrease, or maintain existing levels of service for the following functions? (list and note provided – values exclude “N/A” responses)

The top three services for increasing service levels were:

- 1. Recreation & Community Halls (55.9%)***
- 2. Economic Development (53.5%)***
- 3. Structural Fire Protection (49.4%)***

No services received a 15% or higher rating for decreasing levels of service. Refer to the summary data in the attachments for further information.

The CRD has satisfied the “Consult” obligation under the IAP2 Public Participation framework: to obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives, and/or decisions. This goal comes with the promise to “Keep the public informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.” Follow up communications about the budget will include any changes made to the financial plan since its release to consultation in January.

Attachments:

2025 Budget Feedback Survey Results reports – All jurisdictions, sub-regions, and Electoral Areas