



The Alberni Valley

**Peoples' Voice:
A Local Government Satisfaction Survey**



Final Report



MALASPINA
UNIVERSITY-COLLEGE

Malaspina University College

Preface to Report:

Peoples' Voice: A Local Government Satisfaction Survey

This report was a collaborative effort from 1) Recreation and Tourism Research Institute at Malaspina University – College 2) City of Port Alberni and 3) AV Safety Net.

The research team at Malaspina University was lead by Dr. Nicole Vaugeois. Malaspina University – College was responsible for the findings and methodology section of the final report lead by Research Coordinator Richard Giele and involved numerous student researchers at the Recreation and Tourism Research Institute. Special thanks go out to student researchers Lea Thuot, Eva Chen, Scott Bastion, and Tracy Simpson who worked tirelessly over the past two months to ensure that the survey data entered was accurate and timely. Additional thanks to others that assisted with the mail out of the survey including Carolyn Lepper, Miesha Breiter, Kenton Olsen, Andrew Scherck, Brad Goodwin and Cameron Strachen.

Members of AV SafetyNet John Rampanen, Carol Hanson and Brent Ronning played a vital role in the planning, and delivery of the survey. This fine group of individuals was also responsible for the introduction and background section of the final report.

Theresa Kingston, Manager of Human Resources for the City of Port Alberni was instrumental in the creation and implementation of the survey. It was her hard work and dedication that saw this project get off the ground.

And finally, a big thank you to all of the residents of Port Alberni who took the time to fill out the survey and to ensure that their voices were heard in this very important local process.

Additional questions on the study methods can be directed towards:

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Additional copies of this report are available at Port Alberni City Hall (4850 Argyle Street) and on the City's website (www.portalberni.ca).

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1. Introduction

In the spring of 2007, a study was conducted in the Alberni Valley to determine the quality of life of residents. Based on the findings of this study, it was evident that residents hold strong opinions about the services and infrastructure provided by the municipal government in the City of Port Alberni. The local government plays a key role in enhancing the quality of life of residents. Therefore, this survey was used to gather input from residents on how satisfied they are with the services provided by the City of Port Alberni.

The Peoples' Voice: Local Government Satisfaction survey intends to open up a dialogue between Alberni Valley residents and the municipal government of the City of Port Alberni, allowing for opinions to be voiced, priorities to be set, and collaboration to occur. This survey was funded by the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) Health Promotion Fund and is intended to assist Mayor, Council and City Staff to determine long-term strategies for the community.

2. Background

2.1. Background

The Alberni Valley struggles with many serious issues that have a negative impact on the wellness of individuals. Thirty years ago, Port Alberni had the highest per capita income in all of Canada. Today, poverty rates hover around 25%; domestic violence is a serious and rising concern; homelessness as well as new issues such as the sexual exploitation of children and youth are becoming more serious, too. Research (BC Stats) indicates that the Alberni Valley (as part of the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District, ACRD), consistently ranks among the most troubled in the province in relation to specific crime-related problems. Consultations with key stakeholders indicate that they believe that the Alberni Valley experiences:

- fractured, depleted community responses to social, economic and health issues, and that these responses are almost completely intervention-oriented;
- a tendency for the community to focus on deficits rather than using a strength- or asset-based approach;
- a lack of neighbourhood connectedness; although there are times when the broader community pulls together;
- tolerance of negative social values, including racism, and an acceptance or tolerance of negative behaviours including drug use, prostitution, alcoholism, and crime; and
- a high number of individuals living on the margins, without adequate resources, support and capacity.

Despite the preceding sobering analysis, there are other circumstances taking place in the Alberni Valley that support the idea of innovative community initiatives.

- The Alberni Valley is potentially at the forefront of community development in transitioning from an exclusively resource-based economy to a more diverse economy, potentially with a large tourism component. This economic shift impacts the social wellness of the community. Therefore, it could prove to be very beneficial to measure and learn about social conditions throughout this transitional phase to contribute towards a healthy redevelopment for the community.
- There are many social service providers, networks and organizations throughout the Alberni Valley that are recognizing the need for collaboration and integrated action in the community to effect positive change, and there is much support for in-depth and complex assessment of quality of life in the community.

In 2006, through Alberni Community and Women's Services Society (ACAWS) and with the support of the City of Port Alberni, our community received funding from the National Crime Prevention Centre (Public Safety Canada) to develop a Comprehensive Community Safety Initiative (CCSI) in the Alberni Valley. This project has been named AV SafetyNet where AV represents the "Alberni Valley" and identifies that the project speaks to the entire valley (the City of Port Alberni, as well as the regional electoral areas of Beaufort, Beaver Creek, Cherry Creek and Sproat Lake), and distinguishes it from other electoral areas in Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District that are not contained within the Alberni Valley. "SafetyNet" reminds the community that this is a community safety project with the positive connotations of the term, and moreover, that it also is a comprehensive community project ("Net"). The crucial first step of this project was to develop and implement a Quality of Life Survey, specifically directed towards measuring root causes of crime and victimization in the Alberni Valley, as well as identifying key strengths that exist here that may be used as focal points to build upon in the future.

During the same time period that the AV SafetyNet project was taking shape, an opportunity arose for the City of Port Alberni to receive funding from the UBCM (Union of BC Municipalities) Community Health Promotion Fund for a health and wellness study. Hence, it made sense to explore the possibility of collaborating together to expand the scope of the Quality of Life survey to include the broad spectrum of indicators that address health and wellness and to increase the number of people surveyed to include a large portion of the residents of the City of Port Alberni. Moreover, this expanded Quality of Life survey would also specifically focus on delivery of municipal services as they contribute to health and wellness of our citizens.

Unfortunately, the draft survey proved to be too long and onerous to be viable, so it was decided that the survey would be divided into two more manageable and distinct pieces that could still complement each other. The Quality of Life survey kept its focus on measuring risk factors and protective factors within the individuals and groups in the Alberni Valley, and the survey that ultimately became "Peoples' Voice: A Local Government Satisfaction Survey" took on the task of engaging respondents in their satisfaction with and the direction of municipal government and services.

2.2. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to provide residents of the Alberni Valley with an opportunity to provide input on the quality and quantity of municipal services by undertaking a community wide mail survey in the fall of 2007.

Study objectives were:

1. To determine satisfaction with current services and infrastructure offered by the City of Port Alberni
2. To obtain feedback on service levels and improvements needed in customer service
3. To gather resident opinions and comments on the future look and feel of the Alberni Valley

3. Methodology

3.1. Context

This study was conducted using a community-based research method whereby a team of researchers from Malaspina University-College worked with Theresa Kingston, Director of Human Resources, from the City of Port Alberni and representatives from the AV Safety Net Project to design and implement the research process. The research team determined the purpose and objectives of the study and selected the methods to be used (mail out to households).

3.2 Survey instrument

The research team collaborated to develop a survey that would allow for the measurement satisfaction of residents with respect to local government services. This survey instrument was developed based on the type of information that the City of Port Alberni needed to acquire. Early in the process, meetings and conference calls were conducted between researchers at Malaspina University – College, the City of Port Alberni and AV Safety Net to provide input on areas that city staff and local government needed to know about.

It should be noted that survey response rates have decreased as people become saturated with surveys in daily life. Gaining a good response rate to the survey required the following steps:

- a) Using a large initial sample of 3,000 households;
- b) Providing the opportunity for residents to pick up surveys at different locations around town;
- c) Sending out a reminder postcard 10 days after the initial survey was sent, and;
- d) Using promotional tools in local newspaper and radio to let residents know the study was taking place.

Questions for the survey were developed based on: a) a scan of the literature and other studies, b) input from the City of Port Alberni management and c) feedback from the Malaspina research team.

The questionnaire was pilot tested on 10 individuals to test for clarity, readability and utility. Feedback was used to fine tune the survey before it was sent. The resulting questionnaire was eight pages in length (Appendix C) and included questions about municipal services, administration, and local government.

The research design was approved by the Malaspina University-College Human Subjects Review Committee. All data was handled and kept at Malaspina University-College to ensure confidentiality for participants.

The survey was sent to 3000 households that were randomly selected from the Yellow Pages. Surveys were also available for residents that may not have a fixed address and therefore have no opportunity to participate in the study. A total of 21 surveys were picked-up at different locations around Port Alberni. The combined total sample therefore was 3021 residents in the Alberni Valley.

3.3 Mail out assembly

When the survey instrument was complete, it was printed by the City of Port Alberni and sent to Malaspina University-College along with copies of the consent forms/cover letter for packaging. When the mailing addresses were obtained, Malaspina researchers printed off labels, assembled the mail outs and sent out the completed survey package (Appendix D) which included a) a cover letter indicating how data was to be treated, b) the survey c) incentive sheet and d) a self addressed return envelop complete with postage.

3.4 Reminder postcard

A reminder postcard (Appendix E) was sent 10 days after the initial mailing by the researchers at Malaspina. The postcard was sent out to all households that did not return surveys.

3.5 Data entry

Once surveys were received at Malaspina University – College, upper level research students were hired and trained at Malaspina to open, record and enter data that came in from the surveys. Data was entered into a password protected computer and hard copies of the surveys were kept in a locked file cabinet in the research centre without identifiers to those who completed them. Surveys will remain in a locked research space for a period of one year before they are destroyed.

3.6 Analysis

All data was analysed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and tables were created in Excel. Basic descriptive statistics were done (percentages, averages etc) and put into tables. The data was analyzed further to produce cross-tabulations for satisfaction and importance with the City's services by some demographic variables (resident/non-resident, age, gender, length of time in Port Alberni, rent/own residence) providing more detailed information for those specific variables.

Initial results were shared with the staff from the AV Safety Net and the City of Port Alberni. Clarification and additional analysis was requested in the final report of the data. The final report was a collective effort whereby staff from the City of Port Alberni introduced the project and facilitated discussion for the recommendations and the Malaspina team provided the analysis. The findings from the survey are intended to assist the City of Port Alberni to better assess resident satisfaction and to provide direction for the future of Port Alberni and to plan for services to meet present and future needs of residents.

3.7 Research Limitations

This research design has some limitations which should be noted upon review and use of the results. Mail surveys are not an effective way of reaching marginalized populations that do not have a fixed address therefore the results may understate their responses. While efforts were made to reach these groups by making surveys available for pick-up at a variety of locations around Port Alberni, these were not done on a random basis therefore cannot be used to generalize to the entire population. Similarly, there is no way to control who in the household completes the survey therefore the results may have a systemic bias whereby head of households are over represented in the data.

4. Findings

Stats Canada shows the 2006 population in the Port Alberni area was 25,297. In order to obtain results that had a 95% confidence level with this population size, 379 surveys needed to be returned complete. For a 99% confidence level, 647 surveys needed to be returned.

The research design resulted in a total of 744 completed surveys being returned which represents a 25.4% response rate. The method used produced a large enough sample size that provided the researchers with statistically valid findings.

Basic frequency results are summarized in this section (Section 4.). Further cross-tabulation analyses for key questions by select variables are provided in Section 5.

4.1 Respondent Information

Before addressing the results of the individual questions of the study, it is important to understand who responded to the survey in the Alberni Valley.

An important piece of the survey delivery was to ensure that residents of the City of Port Alberni and the electoral areas of Beaver Creek, Cherry Creek, Sproat Lake and Beaufort were all given the opportunity to express concerns and give input. Figure 1 shows that 73% of respondents were residents of the City of Port Alberni while 27% of respondents resided in one of the four electoral areas.

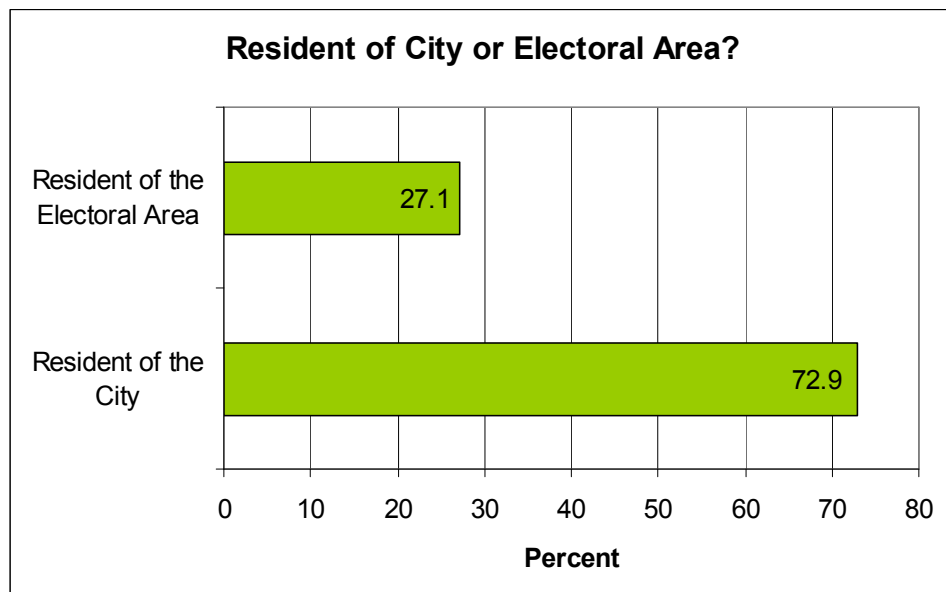


Figure 1: Resident of City or Electoral Areas

The gender distribution of survey respondents was 59% male and 41% female as shown in Figure 2. Statistics Canada census data for 2006 showed that the gender split to be 50% male (n = 12,655) and 50% female (n = 12,640) (www.statscan.ca). This indicates a slight gender bias in the data collected for this survey.

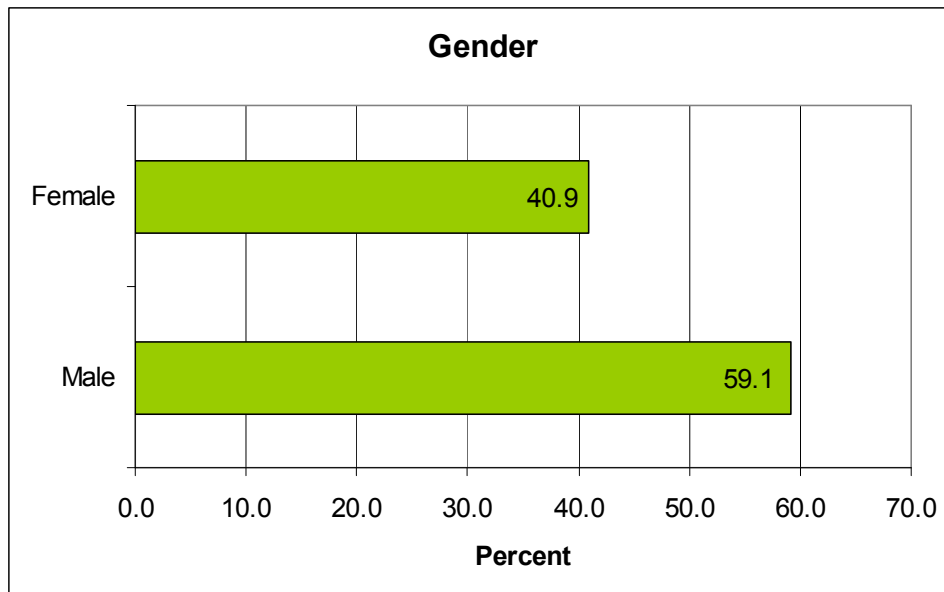


Figure 2: Gender

With regards to age of respondents, there was a good cross-section of age groups that responded to the survey. Figure 3 illustrates that 16% of total surveys received were completed by residents aged 25-44. 21% were people aged 45-54. A further 28% were completed by residents 55-64. The age group 65-74 was responsible for another 19%, and the remaining 15% of surveys were completed by residents aged 75 or older.

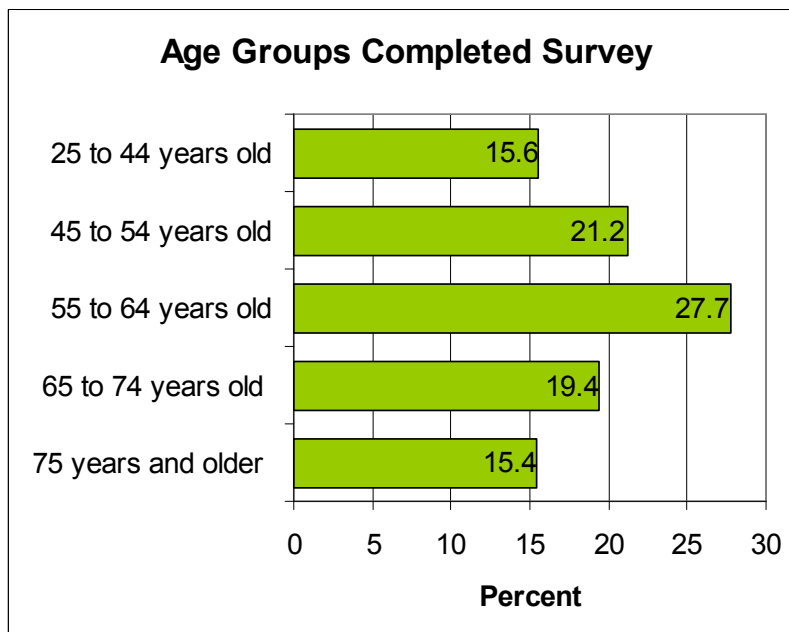


Figure 3: Age Groups Completed Survey

When respondents were asked were asked approximately how long they lived in the Alberni Valley the responses showed that in general, respondents lived in the Alberni Valley for a long period of time as shown in Figure 4. 55% lived in the Alberni Valley over five years. While 33% indicated that they lived in Port Alberni their entire lives. A further 10% have lived in the valley for one to five years and 2% less than one year.

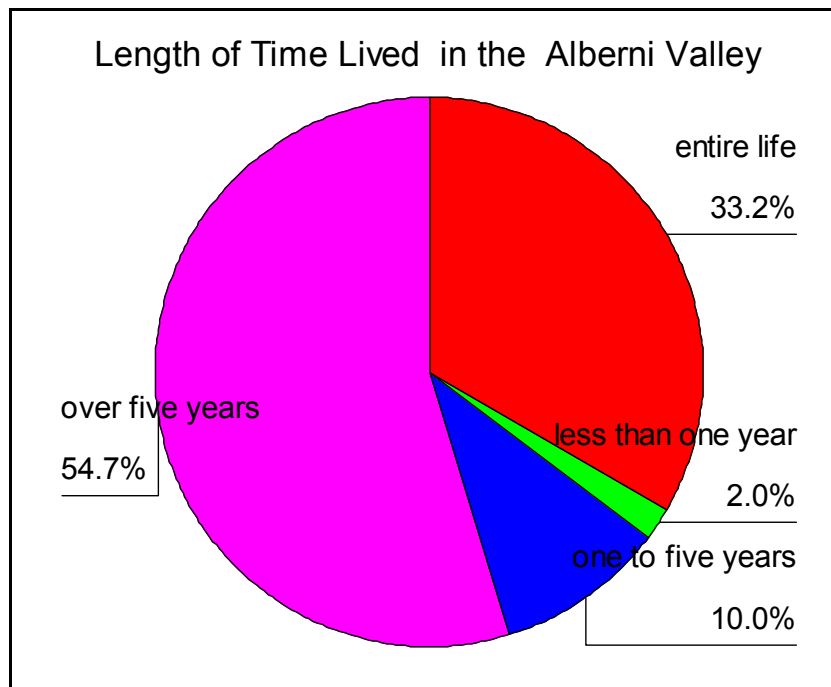


Figure 4. Length of Time Lived in the Alberni Valley

Figure 5 shows the results of respondents when asked about describing their personal financial situation. 41% of respondents stated that they were financially stable while 49% said that they had little discretionary income. A final 5% were unable to provide basic necessities.

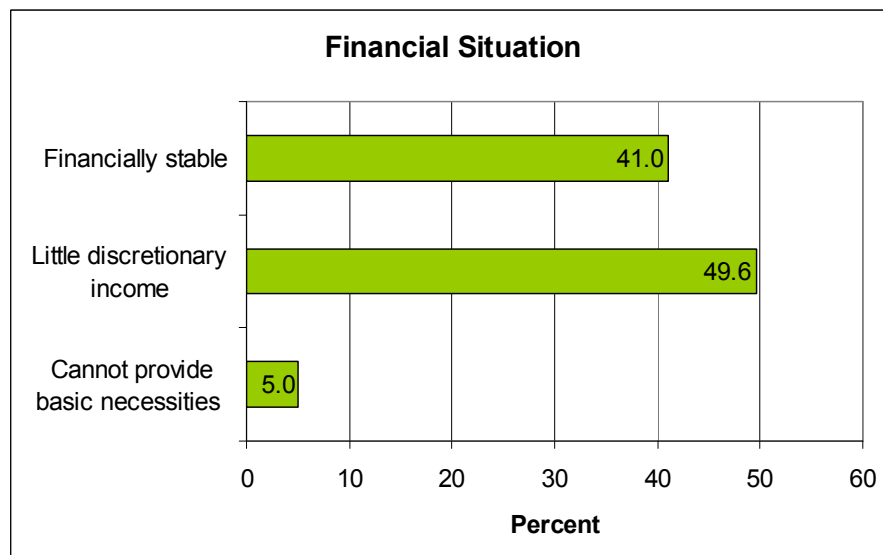


Figure 5: Financial Situation

Individual respondents were also asked to provide information on whether they owned or rented their residence. Figure 6 shows that 89% of respondents were homeowners, while the remaining 11% rented their residences.

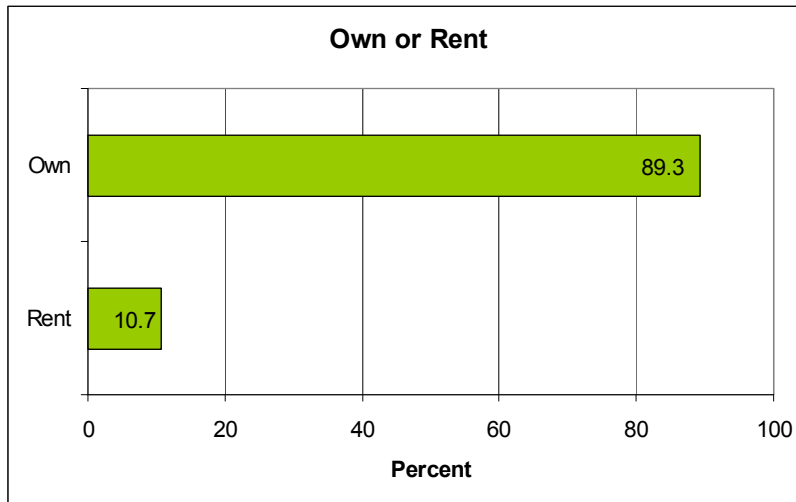


Figure 6: Housing ownership

Another question regarding homeownership was posed to electoral area residents only. Individuals in electoral areas were asked whether or not they owned property in the City of Port Alberni. Figure 7 indicates that 67% of electoral area residents do not own property in the City of Port Alberni while the remaining 33% of respondents indicated that they did own property in the City of Port Alberni.

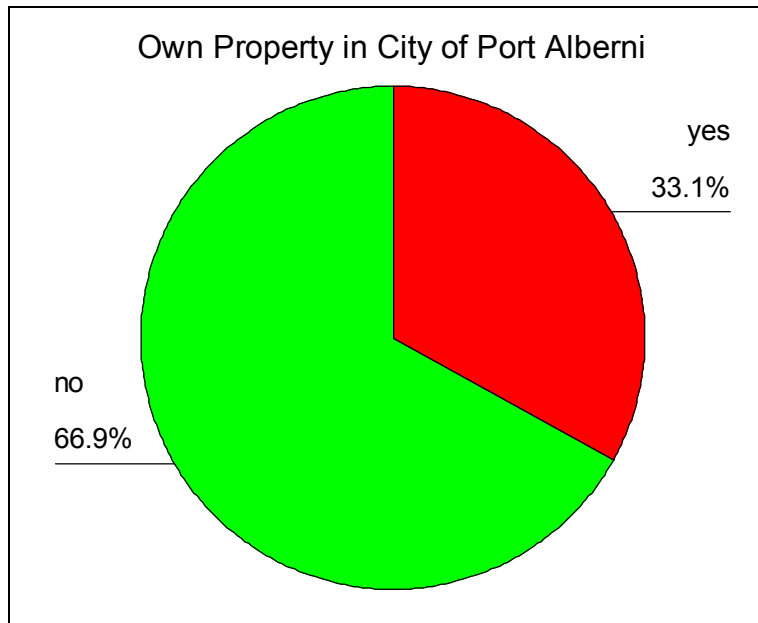


Figure 7: Electoral Area resident ownership of property in City of Port Alberni

4.2 Satisfaction Level - City of Port Alberni Services

One of the most important outcomes from this study was to determine the overall satisfaction of services offered by the City of Port Alberni. In most cases, the percentages shown are based on 744 responses. The number of responses may vary by question, as in some cases respondents preferred not to answer a particular question and in other cases were given the opportunity to provide more than one response.

Most questions gave respondents the opportunity to offer additional comments to each question. Some of the more popular themes that emerged from the additional comments are summarized

here in section 4.2 of the report. A complete list of all additional comment responses can be found in Appendix A.

Respondents were asked to provide feedback on satisfaction levels regarding the overall quality of services offered by the City of Port Alberni. As shown in Figure 8, the highest levels of satisfaction were found in 1) quality of Parks and Recreation services (89%), 2) quality of customer service (88%), and overall quality of services (86%).

The services provided by the City of Port Alberni that had the highest level of dissatisfaction among survey respondents include 1) quality of local planning (45%) 2) quality of governance (39%) and 3) quality of local waste collection services (31%)

Open ended responses that were given by respondents mirrored the results provided above. A total of 145 respondents commented further on satisfaction with services provided by the City. Of these, 75 respondents mentioned the issue of recycling, while a further 30 mentioned administration, and 19 more discussed a second crossing in Port Alberni (See Appendix A for a complete list of comments).

Note: Each item found in this question will be discussed and elaborated upon later in the report.

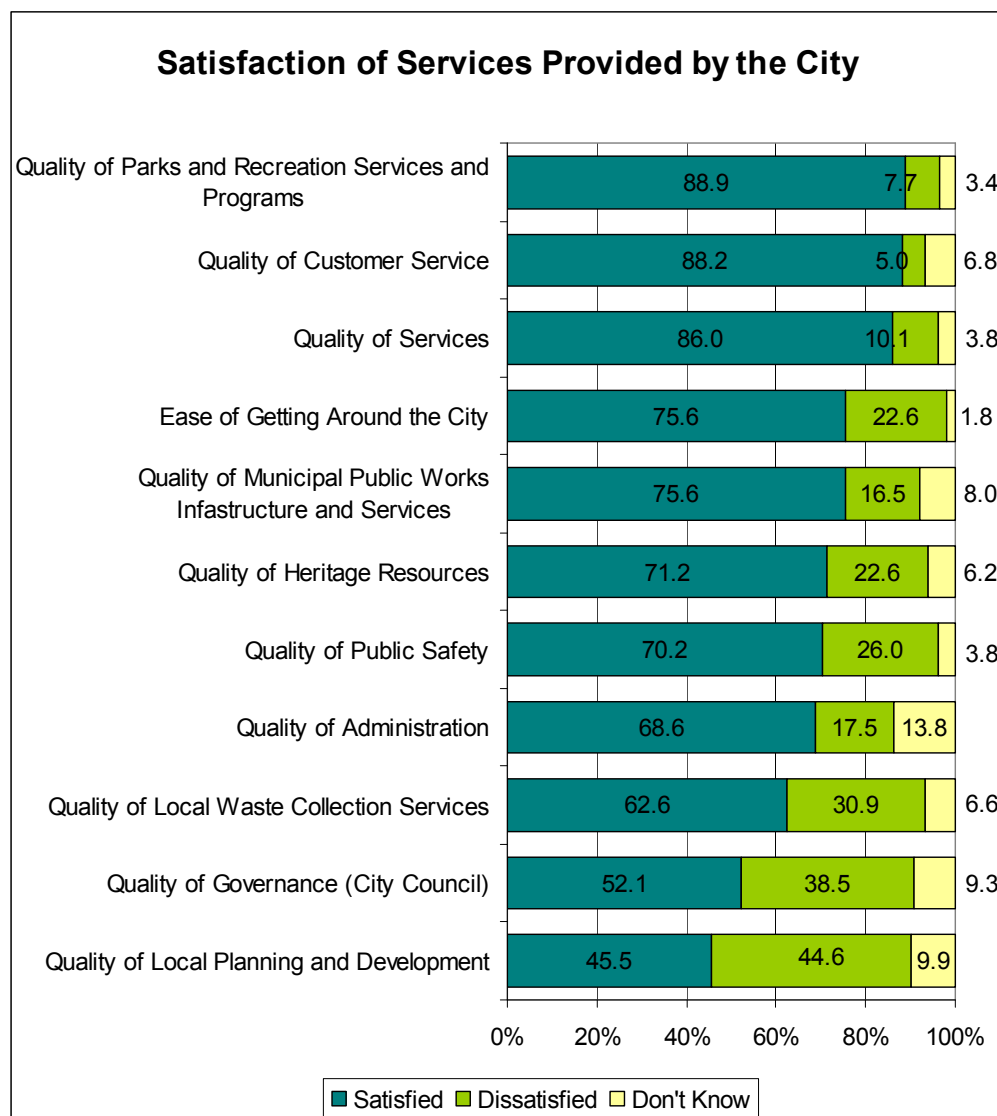


Figure 8 – Satisfaction of Services Provided by the City of Port Alberni

Survey respondents were asked how satisfied they were with issues associated with getting around the community. Figure 9 illustrates that 91% of respondents were satisfied with the accessibility to public buildings while a further 85% were satisfied with the ease of travel by car. 80% of individuals were satisfied with the ease of pedestrian travel. 80% of individuals were satisfied with the ease of pedestrian travel.

Table 8 also indicates that 28% of respondents are dissatisfied with the ease of bicycle travel in the City of Port Alberni and a further 21% are dissatisfied with overall signage within the community.

There were a total of 126 open ended responses regarding getting around the community. Of these, 35 individuals mentioned the issue of a second crossing between North and South Port, 31 more mentioned public transit and 15 others mentioned signage within the community.

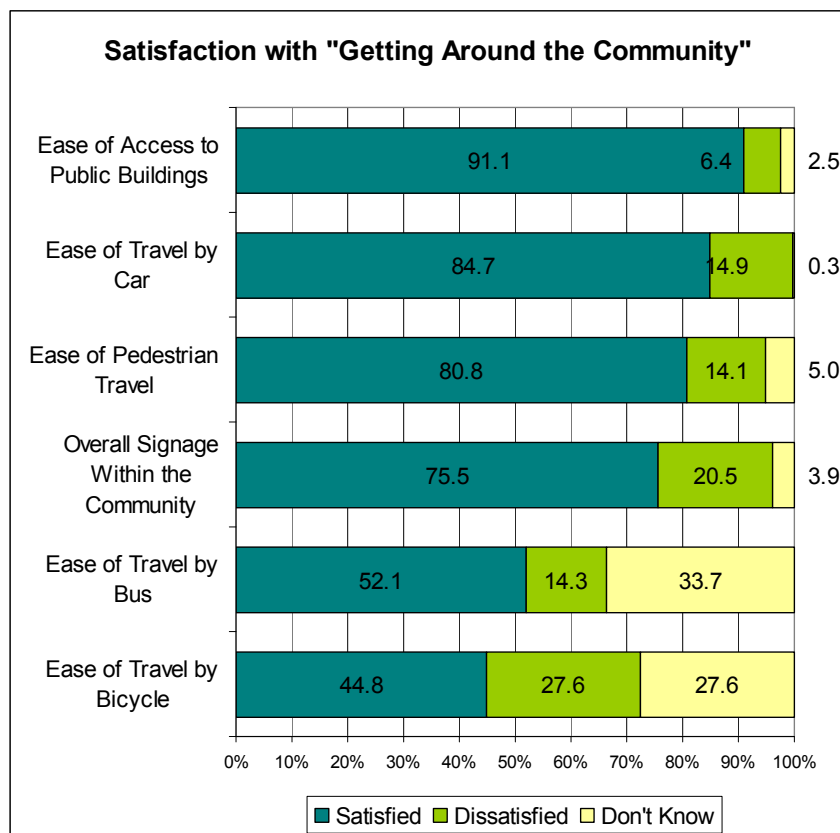


Figure 9: Getting around the community

Figure 10 illustrates individual satisfaction level of categories associated with Parks and Recreation services. Some of the categories that received the highest level of satisfaction include Echo Centre (93%), the public library (90%), and the Multiplex (85%)

Categories associated with Parks and Recreation that showed the highest level of dissatisfaction included programs for the economically challenged (21%), landscaping/floral displays (14%), and park/boulevard maintenance (14%).

It should also be noted that there were numerous categories that respondents were unfamiliar with. 52% indicated that they were unfamiliar with programs for the disabled, a further 47% were unfamiliar with programming for youth, and 46% were not familiar with programs for the economically challenged.

A total of 123 additional comments were provided regarding Parks and Recreation. Some major themes that emerged were 1) programming (N = 30), 2) landscaping (N = 24), and 3) Echo Centre (N = 18).

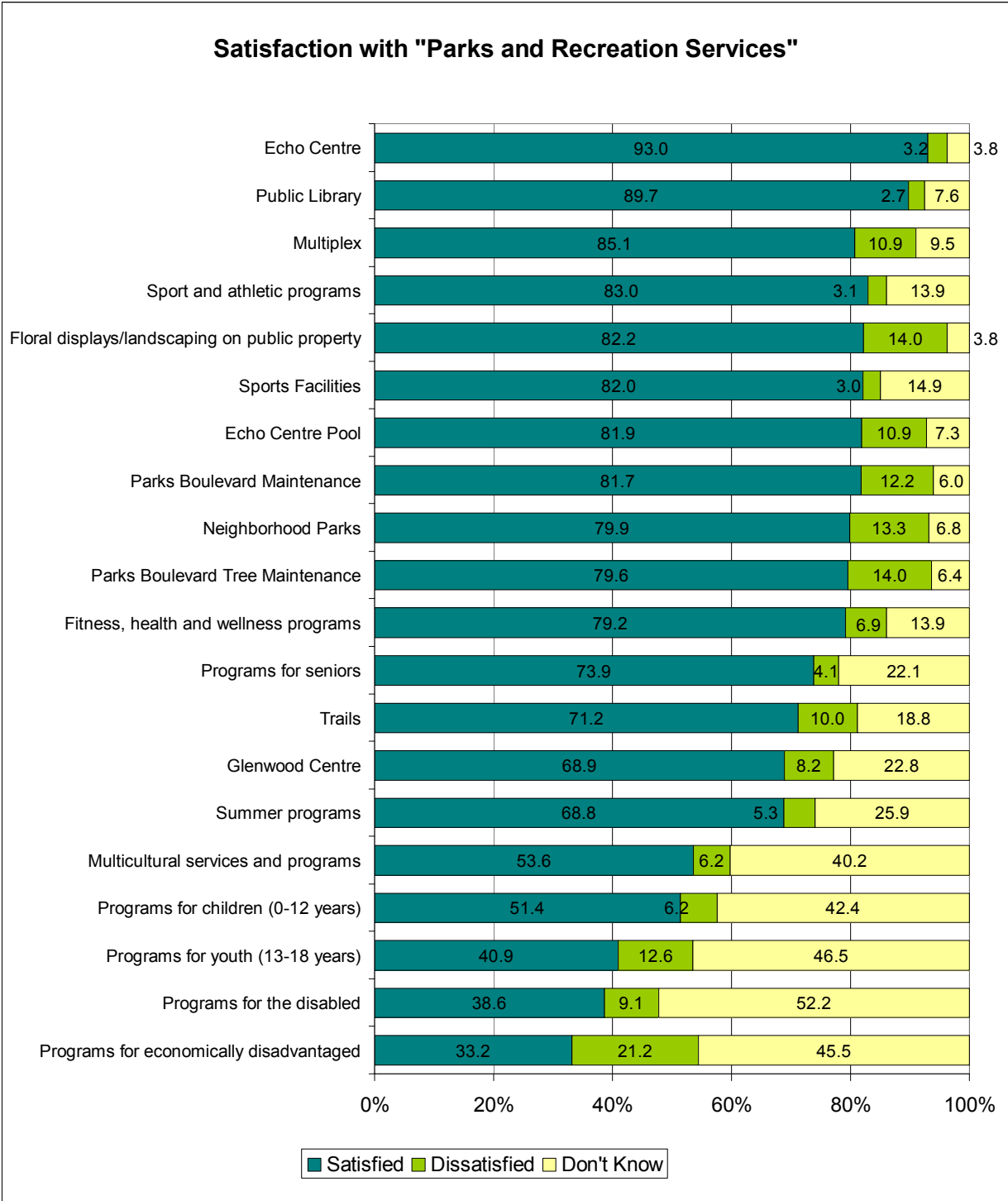


Figure 10: Satisfaction with Parks and Recreation

Individuals were asked to rate their level of satisfaction on a variety of aspects associated with Heritage Resources. Figure 11 shows that 81% indicated satisfaction with permanent displays and 78% satisfied with temporary displays at the Museum. Additionally, 77% of individuals were satisfied with the Alberni Pacific Steam Railway.

Aspects associated with Heritage Resources that had the highest level of dissatisfaction were McLean Mill National Historic Site (28%), preservation of community heritage (17%), and the Alberni Pacific Steam Railway (12%). It should also be mentioned that 45% of survey respondents were unfamiliar with programs for school classes.

In terms of open ended responses, there were a total of 103 comments made. Of these comments, the most apparent themes were 1) spending (N = 41), 2) McLean Mill (N = 41) and 3) programming (N = 11).

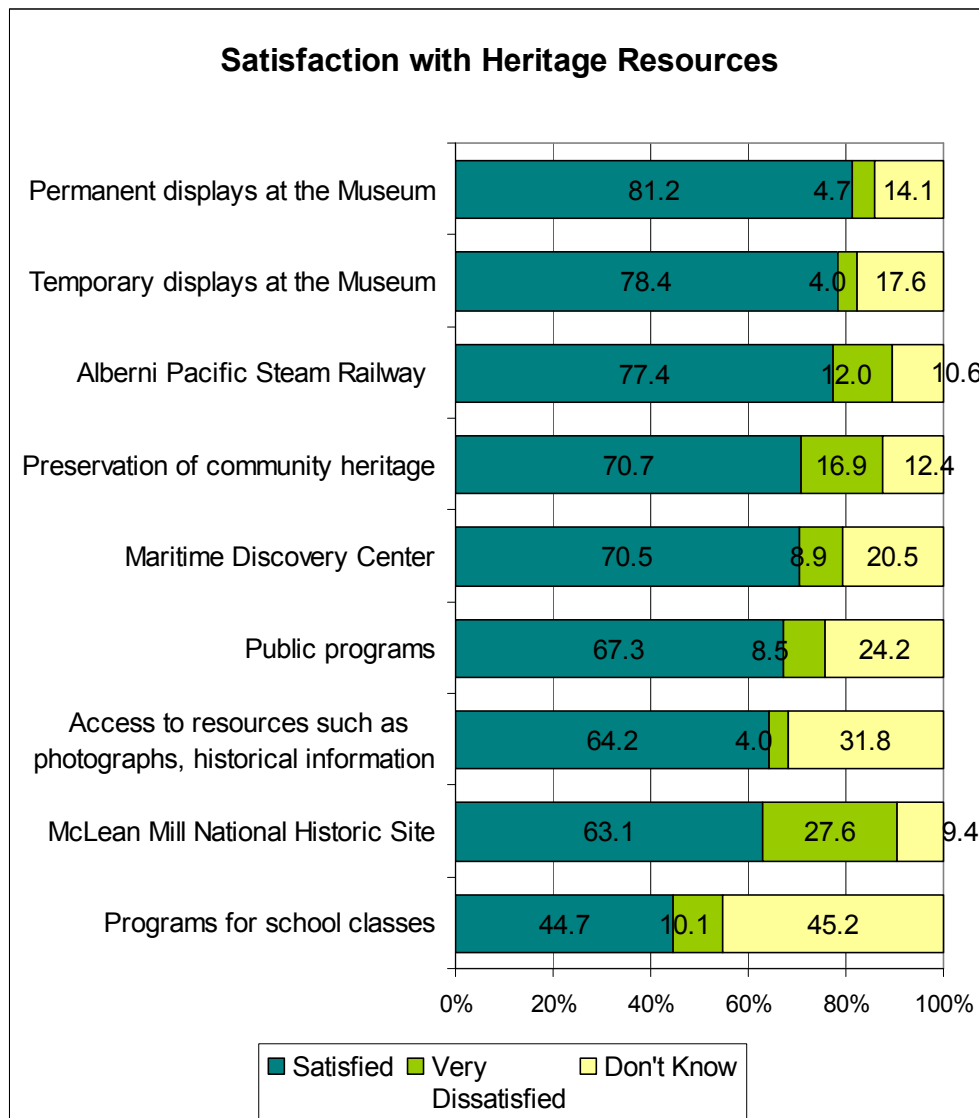


Figure 11: Satisfaction With Heritage Resources

Satisfaction levels for categories related to public safety are shown in Figure 12. Fire fighting services received the highest level of satisfaction (91%), followed by fire prevention education (83%), and the emergency preparedness program (75%).

Respondents showed relatively high levels of dissatisfaction with some issues associated with public safety. For example, 47% of respondents claimed to be dissatisfied with crime prevention, while 38% were dissatisfied with police presence and visibility, A further 35% were dissatisfied with law enforcement.

Of the 131 open ended responses received there were numerous themes that emerged. The theme of policing was the most evident (N = 47), followed by emergency response (N = 22) and animal/wildlife control (N = 22).

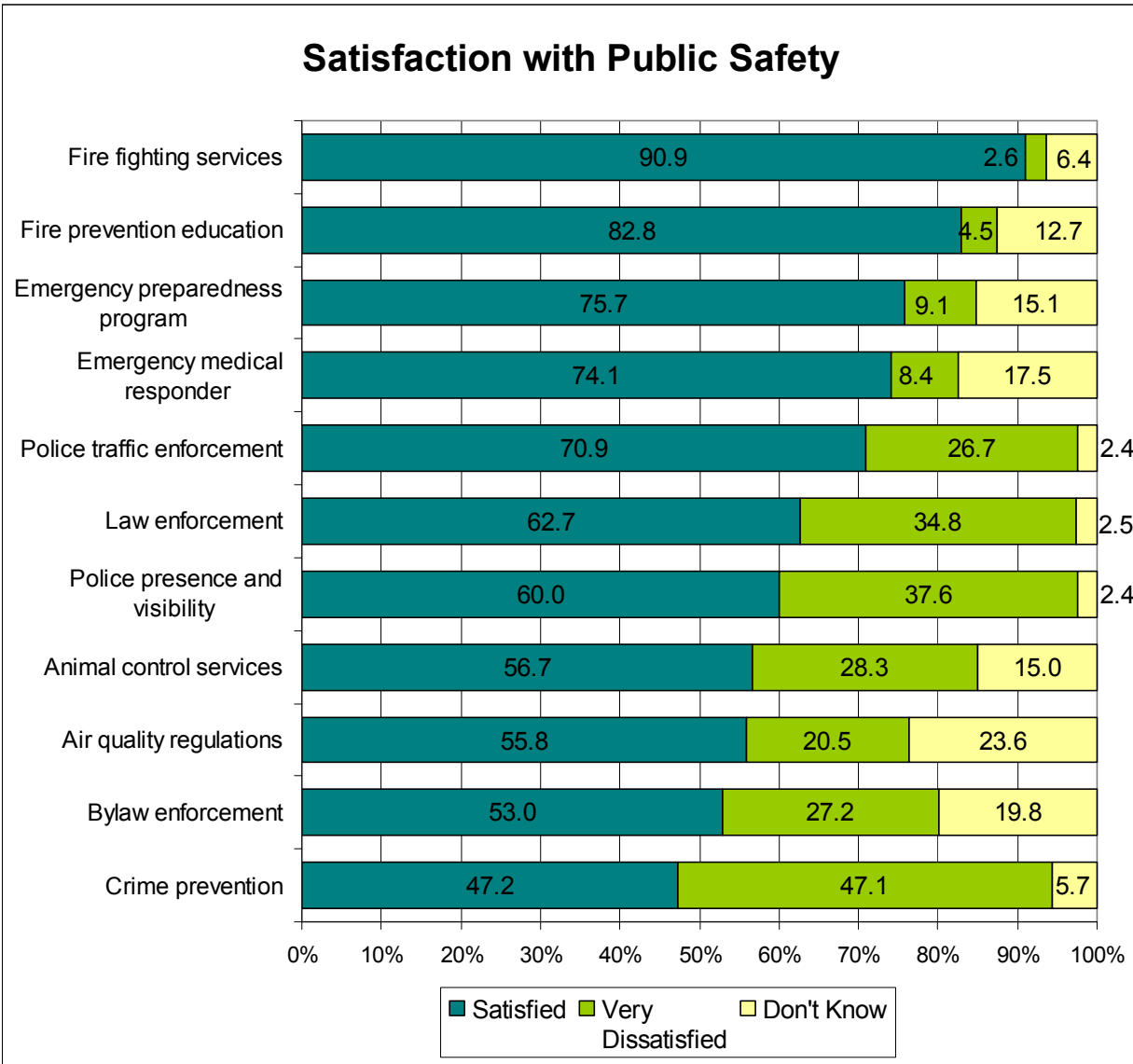


Figure 12: Satisfaction With Public Safety

Respondents were asked how satisfied they were with categories associated with Planning and Development in Port Alberni. As shown in Figure 13, 66% of individuals were satisfied with tourism promotion while a further 61% were satisfied with the protection of the natural environment. 52% were satisfied with the maintenance of neighbourhood character.

Figure 13 also illustrates that 59% of respondents were dissatisfied with the revitalization of South Port while 42% more were dissatisfied with waterfront revitalization. Another 36% of individuals also indicated that they were dissatisfied with land use planning.

There were a proportionally high percentage of individuals that were unfamiliar with both business licensing (55%) and building inspection/permits (48%).

Of the 85 open ended responses received regarding planning and development there were emerging themes that mirror items showing the highest level of dissatisfaction. The themes that emerged were waterfront (N = 18), South Port revitalization (N = 16). A third theme that also emerged was tourism promotion (N = 11)

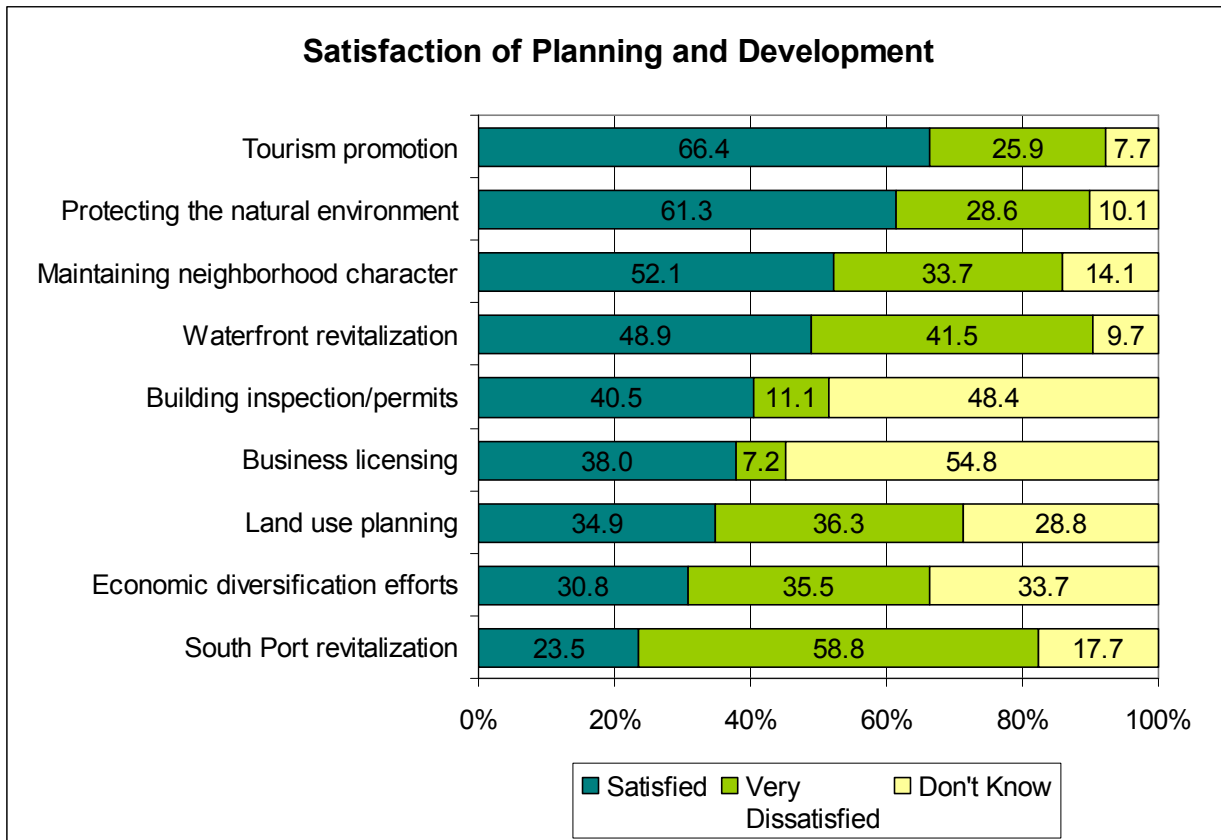


Figure 13 Satisfaction with Planning and Development

Satisfaction levels on categories associated with Public Works and Engineering were also commented on by respondents. Figure 14 indicates that 93% of individuals were satisfied with residential garbage collection and 84% of people were satisfied with the drinking water in Port Alberni. 84% of people were also satisfied with street cleaning.

The item that respondents were most dissatisfied with was recycling with 73% of respondents expressing dissatisfaction with the issue of recycling. 52% of individuals surveyed stated that they were dissatisfied with road repair and the condition of roads. A further 29% of individuals were dissatisfied with storm water drainage and flood control.

A total of 100 open ended responses were collected regarding public works and engineering. The majority of comments were related to recycling (N = 49), followed by roads/sidewalks (N = 31) and water related issues (N = 13).

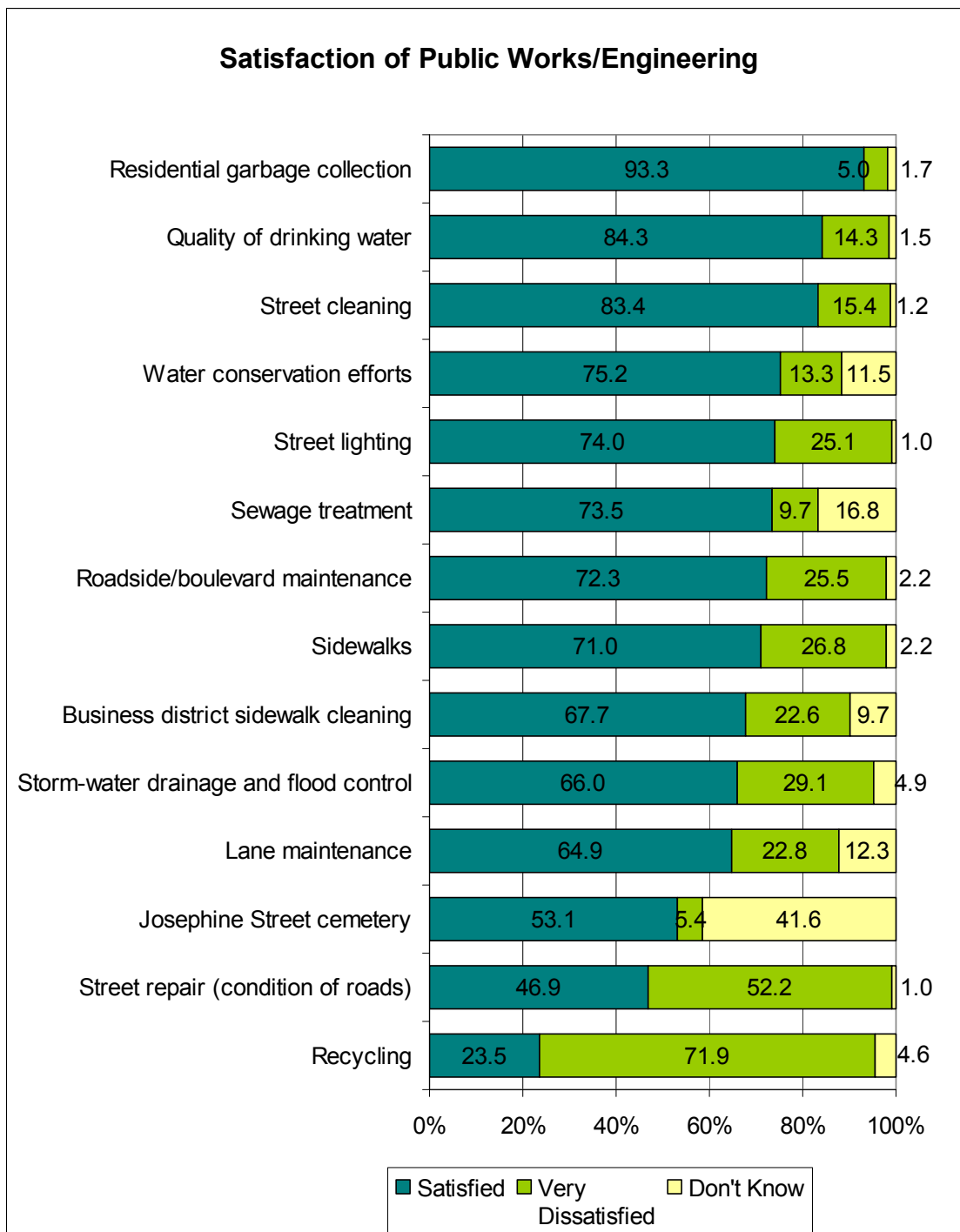


Figure 14: Public Works/Engineering

4.3 City of Port Alberni Governance and Administration

Another important component of the survey was to understand if residents of the Alberni Valley were happy with the level of service that they were receiving from City staff and local government officials. To this end, the survey asked about frequency of contact with city employees and overall indicators of customer service.

Respondents were asked whether or not they have contacted or dealt with the City of Port Alberni or one of its employees in the past 12 months. Figure 15 illustrates that the majority of individuals (67%) have had contact with City employees in the past 12 months while the remaining 33% of respondents have not.

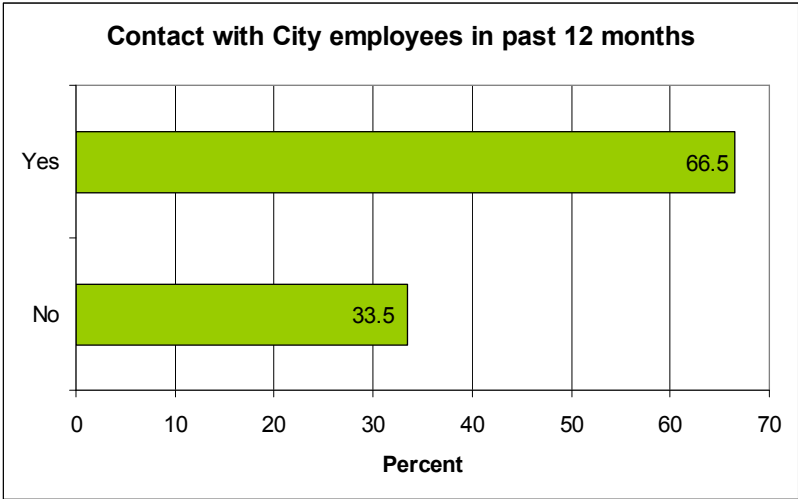


Figure 15: Contact with City Employees in Past 12 Months

Respondents were asked which sources of information they use to learn about city issues, services, and events. Please note that respondents were allowed to check off multiple sources of information that they use which allowed for a total percentage greater than 100% on this question. As highlighted in Figure 16, newspapers were the largest source of information for respondents (84%), followed by local television (48%) and radio (47%).

Sources of information that are currently being used the least are the City website (19%), mail (28.6%), and newsletters (29%).

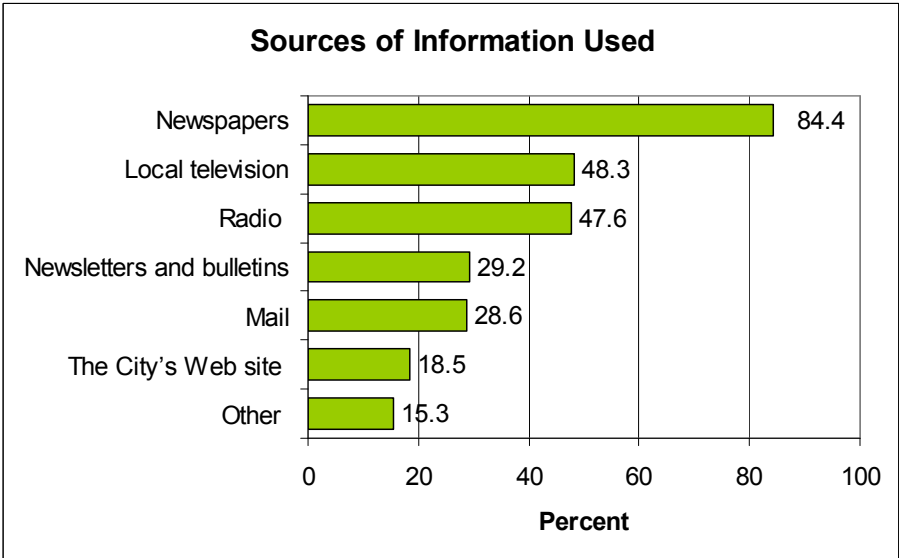


Figure 16: Sources of Information Used

Respondents were asked to respond to whether they agreed or disagreed with the statements regarding local government shown in Figure 17. The figure shows that 88% of respondents agreed that City staff is courteous and polite. 70% also agreed that they received prompt,

accurate and complete answers from City staff. 64% of individuals agreed that the city government welcomes citizen involvement.

44% of respondents disagreed with the statement that they (residents) are pleased with the overall direction of the City. 43% also disagreed with the statement that the City government listens to its citizens. A further 40% indicated that they disagree with the comment that they (residents) receive good value for municipal taxes paid.

Figure 17 also shows that 61% of individuals responded that they did not know whether or not online services provided by the City are helpful. A further 58% of respondents did not know whether the municipal website is useful for information/resources.

138 additional comments were also recorded by the research team. The top themes that emerged regarding local government were governance (N = 29), public input (N = 24) and spending (N = 23).

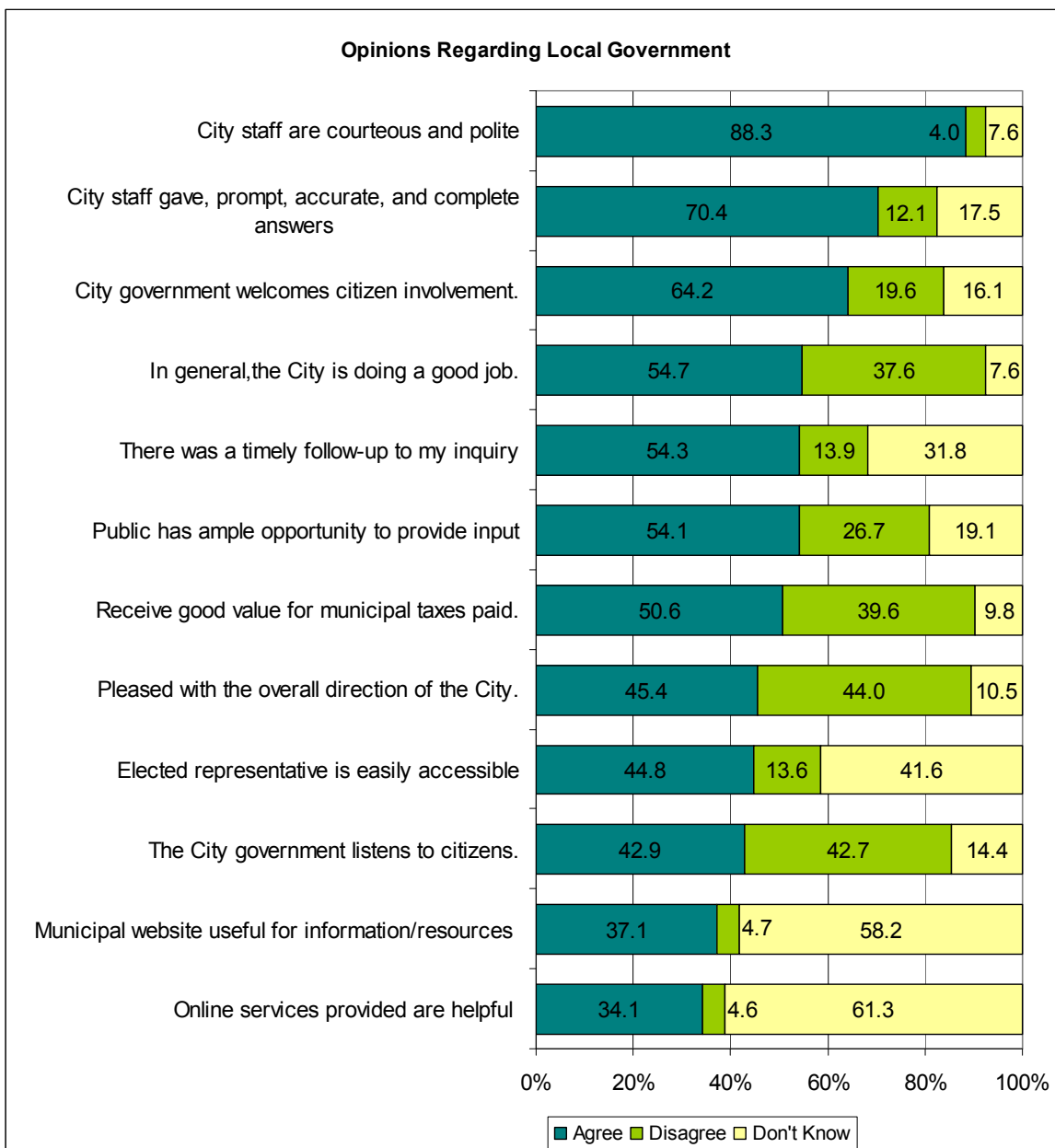


Table 17: Opinions regarding Local Government

4.4 Finance/Recycling

Survey respondents were asked how they would prefer the City of Port Alberni to pay for service improvements. Figure 18 shows the preferences given by individuals where the results are indicated from highest to lowest with highest being the most preferred way to pay for service improvements and the lowest being the least preferred way to pay for service improvements. The question was based on a scale of one to five. To compile results, researchers eliminated any response that was ranked third to show highest and lowest preferences only. Hence, the totals in Figure 18 do not equal 100%

Looking at Figure 18 it is evident that that 59% of respondents prefer increasing user fees as a way to pay for service improvements followed by 55% of individuals preferring the reduction of spending on capital projects or facilities.

The lowest preferences to pay for service improvements given by respondents were increasing property taxes (61%) and increasing borrowing (59%)

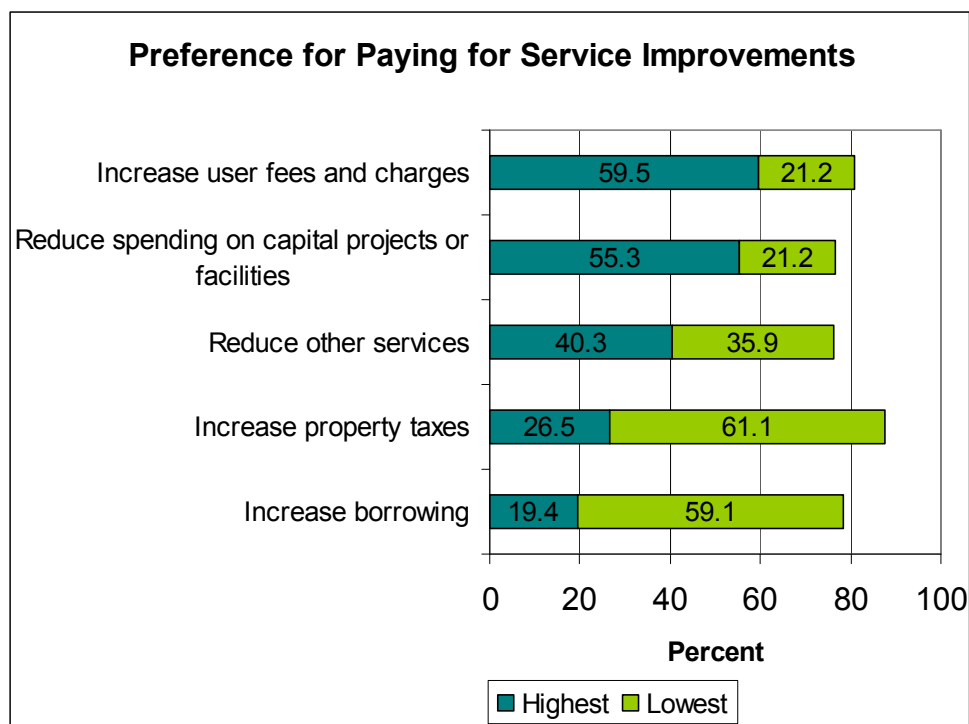


Figure 18: Preference for Paying for Service Improvements

Another question was posed to respondents regarding finance where people were asked how they (residents) would prefer the City of Port Alberni to address the issues of a budget shortfall. Once again the results shown are from highest to lowest with highest being the most preferred way to address a budget shortfall and the lowest being the least preferred way.

Figure 19 illustrates that 59% of respondents prefer increasing user fees as a way to address a budget shortfall, followed by 56% of individuals preferring the reduction of spending on capital projects or facilities.

The lowest preferences to address a budget shortfall given by respondents were increasing property taxes (63%) and increasing borrowing (59%)

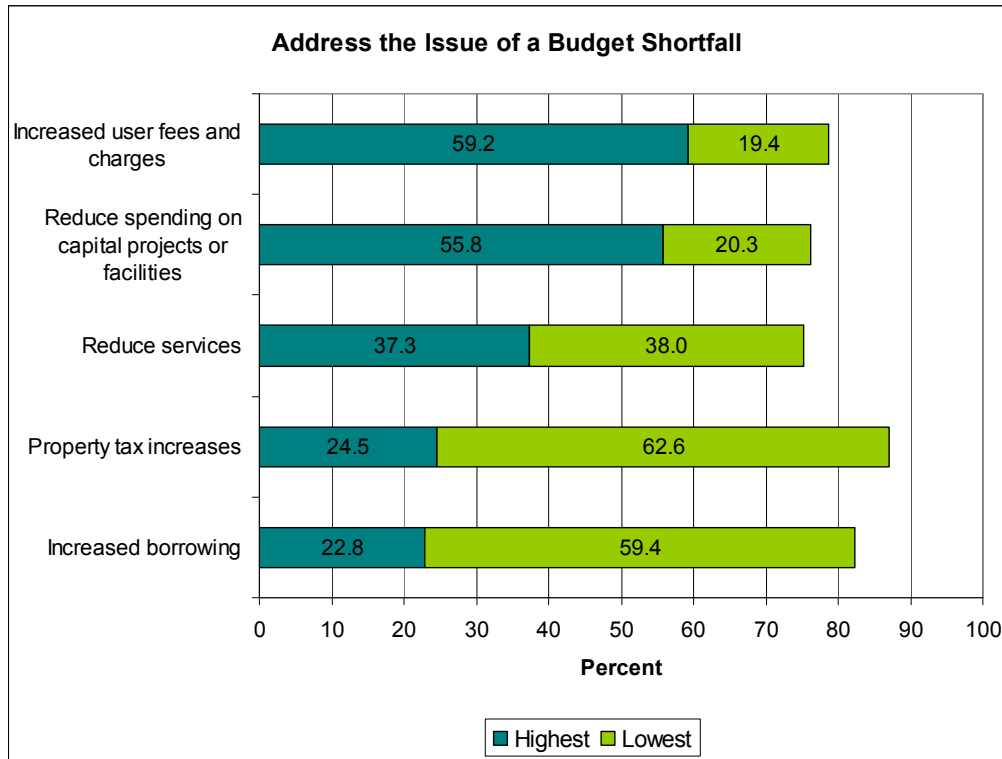


Figure 19: Address the Issue of a Budget Shortfall

Respondents were asked to indicate what level of recycling they thought should be available in the City of Port Alberni. Figure 20 shows that 36% of individuals thought that there should be a recycling depot only, 34% of respondents indicated that there should be curbside pickup of recyclables, while a further 29% responded that there should be curbside pickup plus compostable materials. Only 1% of respondents stated that there should be no recycling.

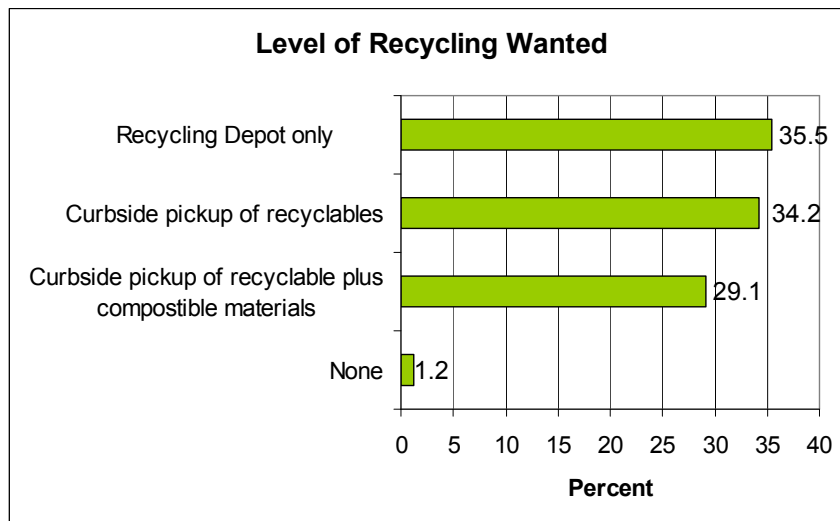


Figure 20: Level of recycling that should be provided by the City

Another question related to recycling was how much residents of the Alberni Valley would be willing pay for a recycling service. Figure 21 highlights that 39% of respondents would pay \$50 per year while 39% of individuals would pay nothing for a recycling service. 19% of respondents would pay \$100 per year and a final 4% would pay \$200 per year for a recycling service.

A total of 135 respondents gave additional comments regarding recycling and finance. Themes that emerged from the comments given include cost (N = 29), recycling depot (N = 21) and self-sustaining recycling (N = 18).

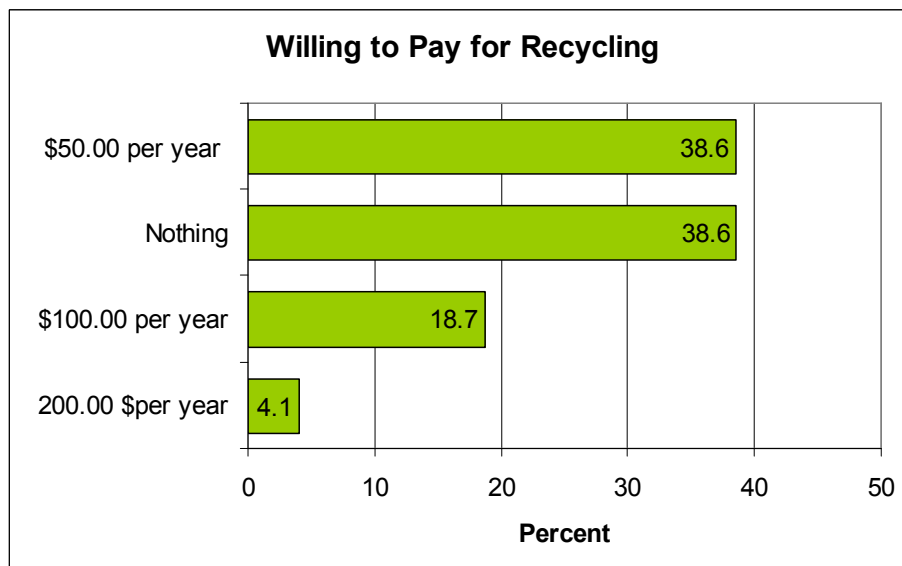


Figure 21: Willingness to Pay for Recycling

Section 4.5 – Future Direction of Port Alberni

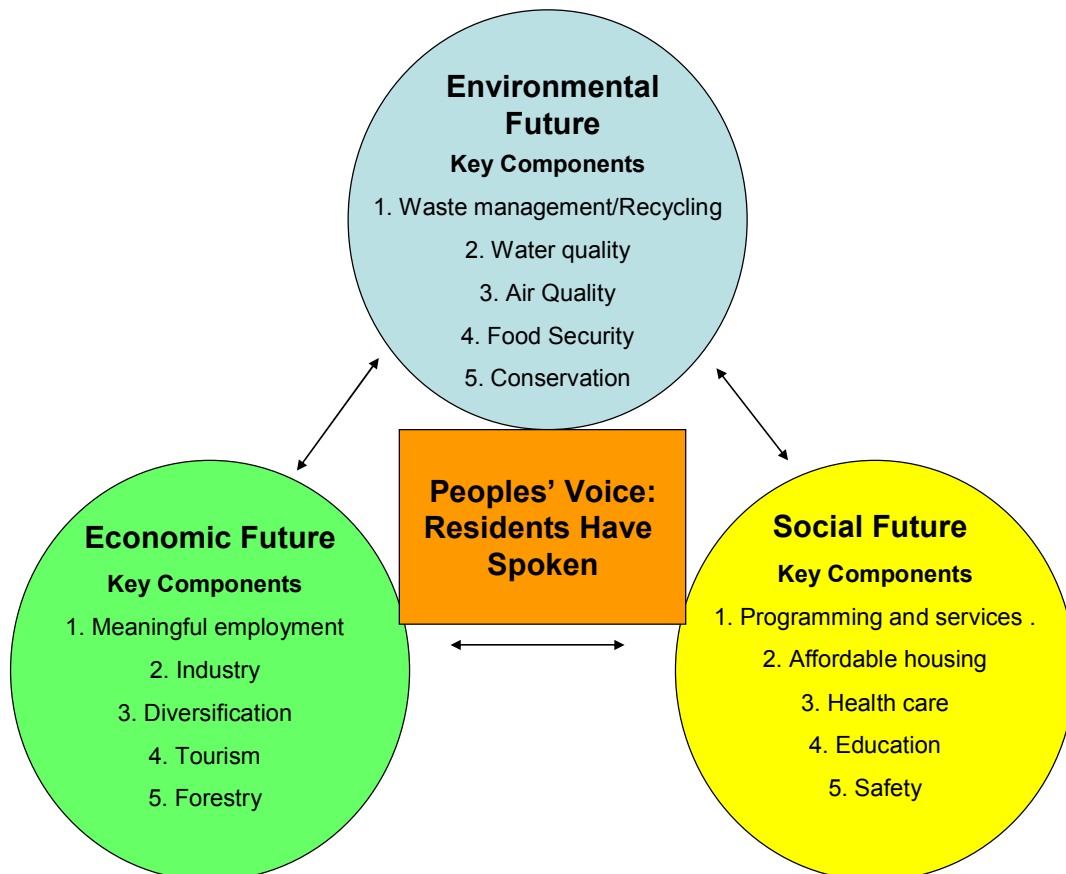
Question 16 of the Peoples Voice: A Local Government Satisfaction Survey highlighted the future direction of the Alberni Valley. The question focused on three key components of life often referred to as the Triple Bottom Line. The triple bottom line includes the following components:

1. **Social well being** which includes issues such as recreation, health, safety, and education.
2. **Economic well being** which includes issues such as employment, income, and industry.
3. **Environmental well being** which includes issues such as air and water quality, food supply and waste reduction.

Respondents were asked to think ten years ahead and give examples of what they would like to see take place to enhance the social, economic and environmental well-being of the City of Port Alberni.

Respondents were given room to provide open ended responses to each component of the triple bottom line. The research team compiled a complete list of all comments made and themed each comment (Appendix B). Some distinct themes emerged and are highlighted in Figure 22.

Triple Bottom Line – Key Findings



Environmental Future

A total of 481 residents gave valuable comments and input regarding the environmental future of Port Alberni.

When residents of Port Alberni were asked to provide insights into the environmental future of Port Alberni, 206 survey respondents considered the need for a comprehensive waste management strategy that includes recycling to be the most important aspect of Port Alberni's environmental future. Issues around waste management that were mentioned included:

- curbside recycling pick-up
- composting
- the creation of a recycling depot and
- reducing the amount of waste created

Water quality was also one of the most pressing issues mentioned by survey respondents (N = 162). Issues surrounding water quality included the following:

- preserving the quality of Port Alberni's drinking water supply
- protect local watersheds from logging
- promoting water conservation
- finding alternative water sources

Air quality (N = 101) issues mentioned by individuals included:

- the need to improve air quality in the future
- banning the use of wood stoves during winter months
- regulating vehicle emissions and
- limiting the pollution from the pulp mill

Another key concern mentioned regarding the environmental future of Port Alberni was food security (N = 54). Items mentioned regarding this issue include:

- encouraging small local farm production
- expanding the farmers market
- focusing on organic foods and
- ensuring that Port Alberni has a local food supply

Conservation was also mentioned at length as a key component to the environmental future of Port Alberni (N = 37). Respondents mentioned the following issues, as well as many others, regarding the issue of future conservation in Port Alberni:

- Protecting and preserving our forests
- Conserving water
- Conserving our fish stocks and
- Preserving parks and green space

Economic Future

A total of 473 respondents offered comments regarding the economic future of the Alberni Valley.

The most popular theme that emerged regarding the economic future of Port Alberni was that of employment (N = 128). Some of the key issues addressed include:

- Increasing minimum wage
- Increasing local employment opportunities
- Having a lower rate of unemployment and
- Creating more industry employment

Another key theme that emerged in the open ended responses was that of industry (N = 88). The responses given in this area were very diverse and represented differing opinions regarding industry in Port Alberni. Some of the issues mentioned were:

- Welcoming and encouraging industry
- Creating of new industries other than forestry
- Steering away from industry and focusing on tourism
- Creating value added industry to local forestry industry

Diversification was a third theme that emerged (N = 79). Areas of focus regarding this issue mentioned in open ended responses by survey respondents include:

- Creating broad based economic opportunity
- More emphasis on small business
- Attracting more business to provide fuller employment
- Shifting from environmental resource industries to human resources and service industries

Tourism (N = 76) was a fourth theme that respondents mentioned in the open ended responses regarding the economic future of Port Alberni. Themes that emerged within tourism included:

- Focusing on tourism as an employment generator
- Revitalizing our waterfront to increase tourism opportunities
- Creating new businesses associated with tourism
- Promoting the Alberni Valley and attracting more visitors

The issue of forestry was mentioned 55 times by respondents that took part in the survey. Items addressed by individuals include:

- Continuing to support our logging industry
- Monitoring the forestry industry
- Banning the export of raw logs
- Creating smaller, value added jobs in the forest industry

Social Future

Open ended responses recorded by researchers at Malaspina University – College regarding the social future of Port Alberni totaled 481.

Programming and services (N = 131) was one of the most dominant themes that was extrapolated from the responses given by survey respondents. Some highlights regarding programming and services include:

- Creating more recreational opportunities for children and youth
- Making sure that economically disadvantaged have access to programs and services
- Providing meaningful opportunities for seniors
- Improving existing facilities

Housing (N = 110) was another theme that emerged from open ended responses regarding the social future of Port Alberni. Issues related to housing that were mentioned include:

- Ensuring future low cost housing
- Addressing homelessness
- Increasing the amount of seniors housing
- Ensuring proper housing for marginalized populations

Respondents also mentioned Health care (N = 109) as an important issue regarding the social future of Port Alberni. Respondent areas of concern included:

- Creating a medical walk-in clinic for local residents
- Enticing more doctors to the Alberni Valley
- Increasing and expanding local health care services
- Improving services offered to mental health and addictions

Education was mentioned by respondents a total of 97 times with themes being created around issues such as

- Creating a better education system
- Establishing more job training
- Creating smaller classroom sizes
- Increasing the high school graduation rate

Safety (N = 90) was another key theme that emerged during analysis of open ended responses. Issues associated with safety include:

- Creating a safer South Port
- Increasing police presence
- Ensuring a safe community for children
- Addressing the issues of drugs and prostitution

This concludes the reporting of responses for the individual questions in the survey. While general frequencies are useful to understand the results of the survey, they are limited in that they contain responses from a wide range of people and do not allow comparisons that may be useful for program development and future decision making. The next section provides some comparison tables that allow for observation of differences between different categories including gender, dwelling location, age and others.

4.6. Summary Tables

While it is useful to know the results from the entire set of respondents that replied to the survey, there is sometimes more utility to know if there are differences between groups in terms of how they responded to questions. To shed more light on the data, the researchers did additional analysis to compare the answers to survey questions among:

- a) People in different financial situations
- b) People who lived in the City and in the electoral areas, and
- c) People who had and did not have contact with City employees
- d) People who either rented or owned their residence.
- e) Different age groups

Summary tables are provided for each of these comparisons. When scanning the tables, it may be helpful to look at the column titled “statistically significant”. This column identifies with an asterisk, items that were substantially or statistically different between the groups. This also means that the differences between groups are not likely explained by chance or error. These may be areas that allow the City to better understand the respondents to this survey.

When looking at the satisfaction level of services offered by local government the responses offered can often vary in accordance to financial income. Respondents were asked to provide their relative financial status as opposed to their income as is done in most surveys. Overall, the respondents were split into three groups; 1) cannot provide basic necessities 2) little discretionary income and 3) financially stable.

Table 1 shows us that when comparing the financial situation of respondents in the Alberni Valley there are differences in the satisfaction levels in the services provided by local government. Respondents that rated that they could not provide basic necessities were more dissatisfied with issues regarding getting around the community, parks and recreation services, and issues surrounding public safety. Likewise, individuals that stated they were financially stable were more satisfied with issues surrounding planning/development and heritage resources.

Table 1:

Summary Table Comparing Financial Situation

	Cannot Provide Basic Necessities	Little Discretionary Income	Financially Stable	Statistically Significant
	Percent of Satisfied and Very Satisfied			
Q.2 Satisfaction of Services				
Quality of Local Planning and Development	41.6	44.4	48.3	
Quality of Governance (City Council)	51.5	49.5	56.7	*
Quality of Local Waste Collection Services	62.8	60.6	64.8	
Quality of Administration	60.0	68.5	70.3	
Quality of Public Safety	69.4	67.8	73.1	
Quality of Heritage Resources	71.4	67.2	77.2	
Quality of Municipal Public Works Infrastructure and	65.7	75.8	77.5	

Services				
Ease of Getting Around the City	63.9	72.8	80.9	*
Quality of Services	88.6	83.9	88.7	
Quality of Customer Service	72.2	87.7	90.3	*
Quality of Parks and Recreation Services and Programs	82.8	85.3	94	*
Q.3 Satisfaction of Getting Around the Community				
Ease of Travel by Bicycle	44.4	46.9	42.5	
Ease of Travel by Bus	55.6	52.7	49.1	*
Overall Signage Within the Community	72.2	76.3	75.7	
Ease of Pedestrian Travel	66.6	80.4	83.7	*
Ease of Travel by Car	86.2	83.8	85.4	
Ease of Access to Public Buildings	88.9	91.1	92.4	
Q.4 Satisfaction of Parks and Recreation Services				
Programs for economically disadvantaged	25	32.8	32.4	*
Programs for the disabled	28.6	40.7	36.1	
Programs for youth (13-18 years)	41.7	40.8	40.3	
Programs for children (0-12 years)	50	51.5	50.3	*
Multicultural services and programs	62.9	56.5	48.1	*
Summer programs	57.1	69.4	68.9	
Glenwood Centre	71.4	66.6	70.8	
Trails	60	71.6	71.9	
Programs for seniors	63.9	70.8	78.4	*
Fitness, health and wellness programs	74.3	77.9	80.9	
Parks Boulevard Tree Maintenance	60	80.4	80.9	*
Neighbourhood Parks	68.6	79.9	81	
Parks Boulevard Maintenance	64.7	81.1	84.5	*
Echo Centre Pool	65.7	81.1	85.8	*
Sports Facilities	60	82.2	85.1	*
Floral displays/landscaping on public property	62.8	85.1	81.1	*
Sport and athletic programs	65.8	84.5	83.4	*
Multiplex	65.8	85.3	88.1	*
Public Library	77.1	90.6	90.5	
Echo Centre	74.3	94.1	94.6	*
Q.5 Satisfaction of Heritage Resources				
Programs for school classes	54	46.7	41	
McLean Mill National Historic Site	58.3	58	70.2	*
Access to resources such as photographs, historical information	54	65.2	64.4	
Public programs	62.2	65.4	70.9	
Maritime Discovery Centre	64.9	68.5	73.7	
Preservation of community heritage	59.5	72.8	69.4	
Alberni Pacific Steam Railway	70.3	73.7	83.4	*
Temporary displays at the Museum	66.7	77.4	81.6	
Permanent displays at the Museum	73	79.7	84.5	*
Q.6 Satisfaction of Public Safety				
Crime prevention	40.5	49	46.9	
Bylaw enforcement	52.7	55	50.1	
Air quality regulations	51.5	58	53.3	
Animal control services	41.7	57.4	57.2	
Police presence and visibility	43.2	57.7	64.3	*
Law enforcement	54	57.6	67.2	
Police traffic enforcement	45.7	69.8	74.2	*
Emergency medical responder	65.7	73.6	75	
Emergency preparedness program	70.3	73.6	78	

Fire prevention education	65.7	84.8	82.3	
Fire fighting services	82.8	90.8	91.6	*
Percent Agree and Strongly Agree				
Q.9 Opinions Regarding Local Government				
Online services provided are helpful	37.8	32.4	36.4	
Municipal website useful for information/resources	40.5	35.3	40.2	
The City government listens to citizens.	22.2	40.2	49.7	*
Elected representative is easily accessible	37.8	43.1	48.6	
Pleased with the overall direction of the City.	47.2	43	49.3	*
Receive good value for municipal taxes paid.	51.5	49.1	52.8	
Public has ample opportunity to provide input	48.6	50.9	60.4	
There was a timely follow-up to my inquiry	37.8	53.3	58.2	
In general, the City is doing a good job.	51.3	52.2	59.2	
City government welcomes citizen involvement.	51.3	64.6	66.5	
City staff gave, prompt, accurate, and complete answers	54	69.6	74.4	*
City staff are courteous and polite	86.5	87.7	88.8	
Percent of Satisfied and Very Satisfied				
Q.10 Satisfaction of Planning and Development				
South Port revitalization	16.7	23.6	23.7	
Economic diversification efforts	25	30	32.9	
Land use planning	22.9	34.2	38	
Business licensing	37.2	41.8	33.7	
Building inspection/permits	32.4	41.8	39.8	
Waterfront revitalization	54.3	48	49.5	
Maintaining neighbourhood character	33.3	52.4	54.1	*
Protecting the natural environment	51.4	61	63.4	
Tourism promotion	62.9	66.3	68	

* Statistically significant indicates that the differences between the groups are significantly different than what would normally be expected and is based on a statistical test (chi square analysis where p value was greater than .05).

When looking at level of satisfaction regarding local services, an important cross tabulation is one that compares residents of the City of Port Alberni and residents of electoral areas, Table 2 highlights these comparisons. Table 2 shows that when comparing these groups overall, City residents were more satisfied with the services offered by the City of Port Alberni. Individuals in electoral areas were less satisfied in areas including 1) overall satisfaction with services, 2) issues surrounding local governance and 3) recreational services. However, it should be noted that electoral area respondents were more satisfied with the level of safety.

Table 2:

Summary Table Comparing Area of Residence

	City Resident	Electoral Area Resident	
	Percent of Satisfied and Very Satisfied		Statistically Significant
Q.2 Satisfaction of Services			
Quality of Local Planning and Development	45.4	42.1	
Quality of Governance (City Council)	53.6	45.8	
Quality of Local Waste Collection Services	67.5	47.1	*
Quality of Administration	71	62.7	*
Quality of Public Safety	70.5	70.7	
Quality of Heritage Resources	66.6	80.2	*
Quality of Municipal Public Works Infrastructure and Services	75.7	68.6	*
Ease of Getting Around the City	76.3	75.2	
Quality of Services	87.7	81.9	*
Quality of Customer Service	90.3	80.1	*
Quality of Parks and Recreation Services and Programs	87.6	91	
Q.3 Satisfaction of Getting Around the Community			
Ease of Travel by Bicycle	46.7	40.4	
Ease of Travel by Bus	53	44.8	
Overall Signage Within the Community	75.6	74.7	
Ease of Pedestrian Travel	80.9	80.4	
Ease of Travel by Car	84.6	84.2	
Ease of Access to Public Buildings	90.8	92.1	
Q.4 Satisfaction of Parks and Recreation Services			
Programs for economically disadvantaged	31.1	36.8	
Programs for the disabled	35.1	43.1	
Programs for youth (13-18 years)	36.7	48.6	*
Programs for children (0-12 years)	49.1	56.9	
Multicultural services and programs	51	55.9	
Summer programs	66.3	72.1	
Glenwood Centre	67	70.4	
Trails	69.9	69.7	
Programs for seniors	74.3	79.7	
Fitness, health and wellness programs	78.5	79.7	
Parks Boulevard Tree Maintenance	75.7	88.5	*
Neighbourhood Parks	79.2	78.8	
Parks Boulevard Maintenance	79	88.3	
Echo Centre Pool	79.4	87	*
Sports Facilities	80.7	84.4	
Floral displays/landscaping on public property	81.4	85.8	
Sport and athletic programs	82.2	84.1	
Multiplex	84.5	90.8	
Public Library	89	89.7	
Echo Centre	92.3	96.1	

Q.5 Satisfaction of Heritage Resources			
Programs for school classes	40.8	51.7	
McLean Mill National Historic Site	61.4	66.5	*
Access to resources such as photographs, historical information	61.4	69.3	
Public programs	65.6	68.4	
Maritime Discovery Centre	66.1	79.6	*
Preservation of community heritage	70	71.7	
Alberni Pacific Steam Railway	74.9	80.6	
Temporary displays at the Museum	76.6	82.8	
Permanent displays at the Museum	80.7	83	
Q.6 Satisfaction of Public Safety			
Crime prevention	47.7	46.5	
Bylaw enforcement	52.7	51.3	
Air quality regulations	55.2	57.9	
Animal control services	54.4	55.2	*
Police presence and visibility	59.5	66.8	
Law enforcement	64.1	63.1	
Police traffic enforcement	68.4	79.1	*
Emergency medical responder	74.2	78.4	*
Emergency preparedness program	74	78.7	
Fire prevention education	83.2	83.9	
Fire fighting services	92.4	89.1	
		Percent Agree and Strongly Agree	
Q.9 Opinions Regarding Local Government			
Online services provided are helpful	33.3	32	
Municipal website useful for information/resources	36.6	33.5	
The City government listens to citizens.	42.4	42.4	
Elected representative is easily accessible	47.6	44.4	
Pleased with the overall direction of the City.	47.5	39.2	
Receive good value for municipal taxes paid.	54.5	42	*
Public has ample opportunity to provide input	56.1	48.7	
There was a timely follow-up to my inquiry	57.5	45.3	*
In general, the City is doing a good job.	56.8	51	
City government welcomes citizen involvement.	62.3	66.6	
City staff gave, prompt, accurate, and complete answers	72.2	61.4	*
City staff are courteous and polite	91	82	*
		Percent of Satisfied and Very Satisfied	
Q.10 Satisfaction of Planning and Development			
South Port revitalization	22.9	22.8	
Economic diversification efforts	31.5	27.5	
Land use planning	36.5	36.1	
Business licensing	40.1	38.4	
Building inspection/permits	42.1	36.9	
Waterfront revitalization	51.5	40.8	
Maintaining neighbourhood character	51.9	52.1	
Protecting the natural environment	64.9	59.9	
Tourism promotion	69.1	62.9	

Q.14 Level of Recycling Wanted		
None	1.2	1.9
Curbside pickup of recyclable plus compostable materials	28.9	28
Curbside pickup of recyclables	35.8	29.9
Recycling Depot only	34.1	40.1
Q.15 Willing to Pay for Recycling		
200.00 \$per year	3.7	5.8
\$100.00 per year	18.8	21.3
Nothing	39.1	33.5
\$50.00 per year	38.4	39.4

* Statistically significant indicates that the differences between the groups are significantly different than what would normally be expected and is based on a statistical test (chi square analysis where p value was greater than .05).

Whether a respondent has been in contact with the City of Port Alberni could be an important factor in determining the level of satisfaction of each respondent. To this end, survey respondents were grouped according to 1) those that had been in contact with a city employee in the last 12 months and 2) those that had no contact with a city employee over that same amount of time.

Cross tabulations shown in Table 3 indicate that there were significant differences between the two groups. Most notable was the result that showed that residents that had contact with City employees were more satisfied with a vast majority of all services provided by the City including 1) parks and recreation 2) local government and 3) planning and development.

Table 3: Summary Table Comparing 'Have' or 'Have Not' Had Contact with a City Employee

	Yes, Have Had Contact	No, Have Not Had Contact	Statistically Significant
	Percent of Satisfied and Very Satisfied		
Q.2 Satisfaction of Services			
Quality of Local Planning and Development	47.9	40.3	*
Quality of Governance (City Council)	53.7	48.5	*
Quality of Local Waste Collection Services	63.4	61.3	*
Quality of Administration	72.7	61.1	*
Quality of Public Safety	70.8	70.1	*
Quality of Heritage Resources	73.2	68.5	
Quality of Municipal Public Works Infrastructure and Services	79.5	68.1	*
Ease of Getting Around the City	74.7	77.1	
Quality of Services	87.4	83.6	*
Quality of Customer Service	91.9	80.4	*
Quality of Parks and Recreation Services and Programs	90.6	85.3	
Q.3 Satisfaction of Getting Around the Community			
Ease of Travel by Bicycle	46.8	41.1	
Ease of Travel by Bus	50.7	54.6	
Overall Signage Within the Community	74.9	77.2	*
Ease of Pedestrian Travel	80.3	82.1	
Ease of Travel by Car	84.3	85.5	
Ease of Access to Public Buildings	92.4	89.4	

Q.4 Satisfaction of Parks and Recreation Services			
Programs for economically disadvantaged	35.9	27.3	
Programs for the disabled	39.3	36.4	
Programs for youth (13-18 years)	42.7	36.4	
Programs for children (0-12 years)	54.3	44.9	
Multicultural services and programs	55.3	50.2	
Summer programs	73.4	57.9	*
Glenwood Centre	70.5	64.2	
Trails	74.2	65.1	*
Programs for seniors	73.7	73.2	*
Fitness, health and wellness programs	80.3	76.4	
Parks Boulevard Tree Maintenance	79.9	78.8	*
Neighbourhood Parks	79.3	80.1	*
Parks Boulevard Maintenance	83.8	78	*
Echo Centre Pool	81.5	81	*
Sports Facilities	84.9	75.6	*
Floral displays/landscaping on public property	82.8	81.5	*
Sport and athletic programs	85.9	77	*
Multiplex	88.5	78.1	*
Public Library	91.4	86.5	*
Echo Centre	95.1	88.2	*
Q.5 Satisfaction of Heritage Resources			
Programs for school classes	47.4	39.7	
McLean Mill National Historic Site	64.6	61	*
Access to resources such as photographs, historical information	64.4	62.5	
Public programs	70.7	61.1	
Maritime Discovery Centre	74.5	62.2	*
Preservation of community heritage	72.6	66.6	
Alberni Pacific Steam Railway	81.7	69	*
Temporary displays at the Museum	80.6	73.4	*
Permanent displays at the Museum	83.3	76.8	*
Q.6 Satisfaction of Public Safety			
Crime prevention	45.6	50.4	
Bylaw enforcement	54	51.3	*
Air quality regulations	54.8	58.3	
Animal control services	58.1	55.2	
Police presence and visibility	58	62.1	
Law enforcement	62.7	61.3	*
Police traffic enforcement	69	73.8	*
Emergency medical responder	73.6	74.8	
Emergency preparedness program	78.3	70.1	*
Fire prevention education	84	80.2	
Fire fighting services	90.9	90.6	
Q.9 Opinions Regarding Local Government			
	Percent Agree and Strongly Agree		
Online services provided are helpful	36.9	27.7	*
Municipal website useful for information/resources	39.7	30.8	*
The City government listens to citizens.	44.6	39.3	*
Elected representative is easily accessible	46.6	40.9	
Pleased with the overall direction of the City.	43.9	48.7	
Receive good value for municipal taxes paid.	52	48.4	*
Public has ample opportunity to provide input	54.8	52.6	*
There was a timely follow-up to my inquiry	64.3	33.4	*
In general, the City is doing a good job.	54.7	54.1	

City government welcomes citizen involvement.	66.9	58.8	*
City staff gave, prompt, accurate, and complete answers	78.9	51.8	*
City staff are courteous and polite	93.1	78.4	*
	Percent of Satisfied and Very Satisfied		
Q.10 Satisfaction of Planning and Development			
South Port revitalization	26.1	18.6	*
Economic diversification efforts	33.8	23.9	*
Land use planning	38.9	26.8	*
Business licensing	42.4	29	*
Building inspection/permits	45.6	30.4	*
Waterfront revitalization	47.3	50.9	*
Maintaining neighbourhood character	52.3	52.7	*
Protecting the natural environment	62.9	58.9	*
Tourism promotion	66	67.6	*

* Statistically significant indicates that the differences between the groups are significantly different than what would normally be expected and is based on a statistical test (chi square analysis where p value was greater than .05).

A comparison was also done to observe the differences in response between 1) individuals who rent their residence as compared to 2) individuals who own their residence.

Analyzing the data shown in Table 4 showed that there were significant differences in the overall satisfaction of services. Those who rent their residence tended to be less satisfied than those who owned their residences. The same was true for issues surrounding local government. It should be noted that there was very little significant difference between the two groups when looking at issues surrounding 1) parks and recreation services 2) heritage resources and 3) public safety

Table 4: Summary Table Comparing Renters and Owners

	Rent	Own	Statistically Significant
	Percent of Satisfied and Very Satisfied		
Q.2 Satisfaction of Services			
Quality of Local Planning and Development	40	46.6	*
Quality of Governance (City Council)	56	51.5	*
Quality of Local Waste Collection Services	59.4	63.3	
Quality of Administration	56.9	69.9	
Quality of Public Safety	61.4	71.3	
Quality of Heritage Resources	71.6	71.4	
Quality of Municipal Public Works Infrastructure and Services	64	77.3	*
Ease of Getting Around the City	79.7	75.2	
Quality of Services	82.4	86.8	
Quality of Customer Service	81.3	88.9	*
Quality of Parks and Recreation Services and Programs	84	89.4	
Q.3 Satisfaction of Getting Around the Community			
Ease of Travel by Bicycle	44.9	45	*
Ease of Travel by Bus	53.5	51.6	*
Overall Signage Within the Community	74	75.8	*
Ease of Pedestrian Travel	74.3	81.8	
Ease of Travel by Car	88.9	84.3	
Ease of Access to Public Buildings	86.5	91.7	*

Q.4 Satisfaction of Parks and Recreation Services			
Programs for economically disadvantaged	29.7	33.2	
Programs for the disabled	37	38.8	
Programs for youth (13-18 years)	28.4	42.5	
Programs for children (0-12 years)	43.2	52.6	
Multicultural services and programs	54.8	53.6	
Summer programs	58.1	69.9	
Glenwood Centre	57.3	70.1	
Trails	65.3	71.6	
Programs for seniors	64.8	74.8	
Fitness, health and wellness programs	82.2	78.7	
Parks Boulevard Tree Maintenance	78.6	79.8	
Neighbourhood Parks	74.3	80.5	
Parks Boulevard Maintenance	77.1	82.4	
Echo Centre Pool	82.7	81.7	
Sports Facilities	69.4	83.7	*
Floral displays/landscaping on public property	78.6	82.6	
Sport and athletic programs	77.3	83.5	
Multiplex	82.6	86	
Public Library	82.7	90.6	
Echo Centre	90.6	93.5	
Q.5 Satisfaction of Heritage Resources			
Programs for school classes	45.2	44.9	
McLean Mill National Historic Site	60.3	63.4	
Access to resources such as photographs, historical information	59.4	64.9	
Public programs	62	68.1	
Maritime Discovery Centre	56.9	72.5	*
Preservation of community heritage	68.5	70.8	
Alberni Pacific Steam Railway	65.2	79.2	*
Temporary displays at the Museum	67.6	79.9	
Permanent displays at the Museum	74.4	82.1	
Q.6 Satisfaction of Public Safety			
Crime prevention	44	47.9	
Bylaw enforcement	45.9	53.8	
Air quality regulations	48.7	57.2	
Animal control services	56.8	56.6	
Police presence and visibility	59.2	60.2	*
Law enforcement	54	63.8	
Police traffic enforcement	68	71.2	
Emergency medical responder	68.5	75.6	
Emergency preparedness program	68	76.4	
Fire prevention education	77.6	83.3	
Fire fighting services	86.8	91.4	

Q.9 Opinions Regarding Local Government	Percent Agree and Strongly Agree		
Online services provided are helpful	31.5	34.7	
Municipal website useful for information/resources	35.6	37.4	
The City government listens to citizens.	32.5	44.4	
Elected representative is easily accessible	36.5	46	
Pleased with the overall direction of the City.	44.6	45.9	
Receive good value for municipal taxes paid.	40	52.1	*
Public has ample opportunity to provide input	36.5	56.1	*
There was a timely follow-up to my inquiry	38.3	56	*
In general, the City is doing a good job.	57.3	54.4	
City government welcomes citizen involvement.	61.6	64.6	
City staff gave, prompt, accurate, and complete answers	57.6	71.9	
City staff are courteous and polite	80	89.3	
	Percent of Satisfied and Very Satisfied		
Q.10 Satisfaction of Planning and Development			
South Port revitalization	31.1	22.6	*
Economic diversification efforts	33.8	30.7	
Land use planning	32	35.5	
Business licensing	38.8	37.7	
Building inspection/permits	37.5	40.8	
Waterfront revitalization	49.3	48.9	
Maintaining neighbourhood character	52.1	52.3	*
Protecting the natural environment	45.2	63.6	*
Tourism promotion	61.4	66.6	

* Statistically significant indicates that the differences between the groups are significantly different than what would normally be expected and is based on a statistical test (chi square analysis where p value was greater than .05).

Analysis was also conducted comparing responses by the length of time an individual lived in the Alberni Valley was also used. The three groups that were formed were 1) 0-5 years 2) 5+ years and 3) Entire life.

There were numerous issues that showed a significant difference between the three groups. Two of the most significant differences were that people who have lived in the Alberni Valley for less than 5 years were more dissatisfied with 1) the level of parks and recreation services and 2) public safety than those people that had lived in the area for 5 or more years. The same can be said for issue regarding 1) getting around the community and 2) planning and development.

Table 5:

Summary Table Comparing Length of Time Living in Alberni Valley

	0 - 5 Years	5+ Years	Entire Life	
	Percent of Satisfied and Very Satisfied			Statistically Significant
Q.2 Satisfaction of Services				
Quality of Local Planning and Development	37.7	46.7	46.6	*
Quality of Governance (City Council)	55.9	53	49.6	*
Quality of Local Waste Collection Services	55.6	55.6	63.1	
Quality of Administration	63.5	68	71.2	
Quality of Public Safety	61.2	69.4	74.6	*
Quality of Heritage Resources	86.9	70.5	66.9	*
Quality of Municipal Public Works Infrastructure and Services	72.3	76.4	75.3	
Ease of Getting Around the City	71.7	75.6	76.9	
Quality of Services	86.8	85.8	87	
Quality of Customer Service	86.2	88.9	87.7	
Quality of Parks and Recreation Services and Programs	90.3	88.5	89.2	
Q.3 Satisfaction of Getting Around the Community				
Ease of Travel by Bicycle	44.6	41.2	50.5	*
Ease of Travel by Bus	33.7	49.2	62.9	*
Overall Signage Within the Community	65.5	78.1	75.3	*
Ease of Pedestrian Travel	81.2	80.1	81.8	*
Ease of Travel by Car	85.4	85.6	83.2	
Ease of Access to Public Buildings	89.3	93.2	88.4	
Q.4 Satisfaction of Parks and Recreation Services				
Programs for economically disadvantaged	24.1	30	41.3	*
Programs for the disabled	22.2	37.3	46.4	*
Programs for youth (13-18 years)	28.9	38.5	48.8	*
Programs for children (0-12 years)	34.5	49.9	60	*
Multicultural services and programs	46.3	52.4	58.4	
Summer programs	57.9	67.9	74	
Glenwood Centre	46.5	70.8	73.7	*
Trails	70.2	70.1	73.1	
Programs for seniors	57.7	78.1	73.2	*
Fitness, health and wellness programs	73.8	80.8	78.3	
Parks Boulevard Tree Maintenance	73.5	80.4	80.8	
Neighbourhood Parks	84.5	79.2	72.7	
Parks Boulevard Maintenance	74.7	82.2	82.4	
Echo Centre Pool	76.2	86.1	77.3	
Sports Facilities	65.1	84.9	83.5	*
Floral displays/landscaping on public property	75	85	80.5	
Sport and athletic programs	74.1	83.7	84.7	*
Multiplex	79.3	85.4	87.1	*
Public Library	85.9	90.2	90.4	
Echo Centre	91.6	95.6	89.7	*

Q.5 Satisfaction of Heritage Resources

Programs for school classes	30.5	41.9	53.2	*
McLean Mill National Historic Site	76.2	61.9	60	*
Access to resources such as photographs, historical information	50.6	65.7	66.5	
Public programs	59.5	67.1	70.5	
Maritime Discovery Centre	59.5	72.3	71.5	*
Preservation of community heritage	68.3	73.4	67	*
Alberni Pacific Steam Railway	79.8	75.9	78.9	*
Temporary displays at the Museum	67.8	79.1	81.3	*
Permanent displays at the Museum	69.9	83.2	81.8	*

Q.6 Satisfaction of Public Safety

Crime prevention	31.4	48.7	50.6	*
Bylaw enforcement	47	49.9	59.8	*
Air quality regulations	45.8	54.6	61.5	*
Animal control services	39.7	57.4	61.2	*
Police presence and visibility	50.6	59.9	63.7	*
Law enforcement	56.6	63.4	63.7	*
Police traffic enforcement	66.7	69.4	74.6	*
Emergency medical responder	62.7	73.5	79.4	*
Emergency preparedness program	65.1	74.9	80.8	
Fire prevention education	63.9	84.7	86.3	*
Fire fighting services	74.7	92.5	93.8	*

Percent Agree and Strongly Agree

Q.9 Opinions Regarding Local Government

Online services provided are helpful	42.8	31.5	35.6	
Municipal website useful for information/resources	48.3	34.4	37.8	
The City government listens to citizens.	34.9	44.6	43.2	*
Elected representative is easily accessible	29.4	46.1	48.8	*
Pleased with the overall direction of the City.	50.6	46.5	42	*
Receive good value for municipal taxes paid.	59	53.3	43.3	*
Public has ample opportunity to provide input	43	56.2	55.1	*
There was a timely follow-up to my inquiry	55.3	54.9	53.4	
In general, the City is doing a good job.	53.5	55.9	53.4	*
City government welcomes citizen involvement.	59.5	63.1	68	*
City staff gave, prompt, accurate, and complete answers	72	71.5	67.9	
City staff are courteous and polite	82.8	90.5	87	*

Percent of Satisfied and Very Satisfied

Q.10 Satisfaction of Planning and Development

South Port revitalization	22.3	25.8	20.3	*
Economic diversification efforts	26.5	30.1	33.6	
Land use planning	26.5	34	39.6	*
Business licensing	28.4	37.3	42.6	*
Building inspection/permits	32.5	39.1	46	
Waterfront revitalization	45.1	51	47	
Maintaining neighbourhood character	43.9	52.2	55.1	
Protecting the natural environment	50.6	63	62.6	*
Tourism promotion	53.6	67.3	69.4	*

* Statistically significant indicates that the differences between the groups are significantly different than what would normally be expected and is based on a statistical test (chi square analysis where p value was greater than .05).

The respondents of the survey were classified into different age groups (shown below in Table 6) The age groups used were a) 25-44 b) 45-54 c) 55-64 d) 65-74) and e) 75+

Overall, there tends to be a significant difference between responses given to questions from individuals from different age groups. For example, Parks and Recreation receive that highest level of satisfaction from respondents aged 25-44 and the lowest from individuals aged 75+. Additionally, there is a significant difference in the level of satisfaction of getting around the community where different age groups identified differing levels of satisfaction on each individual item. For example, respondents aged 25-44 had the highest level of satisfaction regarding the ease of getting around town by bicycle but were the most dissatisfied with the ease of bus travel when compared to the other age groups. The same significant differences can be found for issues surrounding public safety.

Table 6

Summary Table Comparing Age Groups

	25 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 64	65 - 74	75+ Yrs	Statistically Significant
	Yrs	Yrs	Yrs	Yrs		
Q.2 Satisfaction of Services						
Quality of Local Planning and Development	42.8	47.7	49.3	41.8	44.8	*
Quality of Governance (City Council)	50.9	51.4	54.5	47.7	55.4	
Quality of Local Waste Collection Services	52.7	60.7	66	61.7	69.5	
Quality of Administration	60.9	77.5	73.2	62.1	64.1	*
Quality of Public Safety	61.4	68.4	71.9	70.6	78.1	
Quality of Heritage Resources	76.5	73.4	72.3	71.7	60	
Quality of Municipal Public Works Infrastructure and Services	74.1	79.5	78.4	70.5	73.6	
Ease of Getting Around the City	77.9	73.2	75.5	75.2	79.7	
Quality of Services	81.8	89.7	90.9	85.1	90	
Quality of Customer Service	88.5	91.4	88	88.2	85.9	
Quality of Parks and Recreation Services and Programs	87.6	90.1	91	91.1	82.8	*
Q.3 Satisfaction of Getting Around the Community						
Ease of Travel by Bicycle	50.5	51	46.5	40.3	29.5	*
Ease of Travel by Bus	41.1	55.3	52.5	59.1	47	*
Overall Signage Within the Community	75	76.8	73.4	77.2	77.2	*
Ease of Pedestrian Travel	76.4	80.3	81.8	86.3	77.4	*
Ease of Travel by Car	85.9	78.2	86	84	93	
Ease of Access to Public Buildings	92.8	88.7	90.4	97	86.4	

Q.4 Satisfaction of Parks and Recreation Services						
Programs for economically disadvantaged	34.5	42.4	33.4	31.3	19.8	
Programs for the disabled	32.4	40.9	40.4	37.2	40.4	
Programs for youth (13-18 years)	49.1	46.8	39.2	38.9	26.5	*
Programs for children (0-12 years)	64.3	57.5	51	46.6	35	*
Multicultural services and programs	53.6	63.4	54.6	47.4	44.2	*
Summer programs	77.4	71.6	69.1	69.7	53.5	*
Glenwood Centre	66.9	77.8	68	72.1	57.8	*
Trails	75.1	75.6	68.8	74.8	59.8	*
Programs for seniors	52.7	63.6	75.6	91.9	88	*
Fitness, health and wellness programs						
Parks Boulevard Tree Maintenance	81.2	76.6	80.9	80.7	78.6	
Neighbourhood Parks	77	77.6	80.3	82.9	82.1	*
Parks Boulevard Maintenance	83	80.2	84.4	79.4	81.5	
Echo Centre Pool	72.6	84.3	84	87.4	77.7	*
Sports Facilities	78.3	88.8	84.6	80.9	74.1	*
Floral displays/landscaping on public property	75.7	81.6	82	85.2	86.5	
Sport and athletic programs	83.2	87.7	86.9	83.5	68.4	*
Multiplex	91.1	91.5	81.9	87.1	73.7	*
Public Library	85.5	91.5	91.9	91.1	86.6	
Echo Centre	88.3	93.5	94	97.8	90.1	*
Q.5 Satisfaction of Heritage Resources						
Programs for school classes	45.5	52.4	47.8	39.2	32	*
McLean Mill National Historic Site	65.7	60	67.3	64.1	53.8	
Access to resources such as photographs, historical information	54	65.8	69.7	68.4	56.8	*
Public programs	66.7	73.9	65.9	68.2	59.2	*
Maritime Discovery Centre	63.7	68.4	73.9	76.1	66.6	
Preservation of community heritage	73.6	69.2	71.3	69.6	70.2	
Alberni Pacific Steam Railway	80.2	78.8	80.3	73.7	72.7	*
Temporary displays at the Museum	80.2	78.4	83.4	74.1	73.5	
Permanent displays at the Museum	78.4	80.7	85.4	79.7	79.4	

Q.6 Satisfaction of Public Safety

Crime prevention	39.8	47.7	47.2	49.3	52	*
Bylaw enforcement	54	58.4	58.7	48.2	40.4	*
Air quality regulations	45.9	58.7	59.6	60.4	51.9	
Animal control services	56.2	62.8	53.2	53.3	57.7	
Police presence and visibility	55.7	61	56.6	61.2	67.3	*
Law enforcement	61.4	61.7	64.3	62	63.4	
Police traffic enforcement	72.4	69.3	71.2	63.4	79.6	*
Emergency medical responder	68.7	78.6	73.7	77	70.1	
Emergency preparedness program	68.2	77.2	81.9	79.2	65.3	*
Fire prevention education	84.8	86.6	83.4	81.2	78.1	
Fire fighting services	90.3	92	91.5	91.9	88.6	

Percent Agree and Strongly Agree

Q.9 Opinions Regarding Local Government

Online services provided are helpful	46.5	40.7	36.9	25	16.1	*
Municipal website useful for information/resources	49.6	44.3	39.7	28.9	18.4	
The City government listens to citizens.	38.4	48.3	44.3	36.3	46.5	
Elected representative is easily accessible	38.6	48	47.7	46.3	40.6	
Pleased with the overall direction of the City.	42	41.5	45.6	46	54.4	
Receive good value for municipal taxes paid.	44.7	48	50.8	51.4	60.5	
Public has ample opportunity to provide input	47.8	59.1	59.9	446	55.4	
There was a timely follow-up to my inquiry	54.4	58.9	60.7	49.3	42.7	*
In general, the City is doing a good job.	51.8	53.6	54.3	53.5	61.6	
City government welcomes citizen involvement.	61.4	73.7	67	58.7	57	
City staff gave, prompt, accurate, and complete answers	51.8	76.2	73.3	71.2	57	
City staff are courteous and polite	83.3	93.4	89.9	86.3	86.4	*

Percent of Satisfied and Very Satisfied

Q.10 Satisfaction of Planning and Development

South Port revitalization	18.8	27	20.7	23.5	29.6	*
Economic diversification efforts	33.6	36.6	29.8	29	22.9	*
Land use planning	37.6	40.4	35.3	30.3	29.5	*
Business licensing	42.7	45	44.9	26.4	21.3	*
Building inspection/permits	41.4	47	43	37.7	28.3	
Waterfront revitalization	40.5	42.5	51.5	53.8	55.1	*
Maintaining neighbourhood character	43.8	52	51.5	61.6	50.5	*
Protecting the natural environment	56.4	62.9	64.8	57.4	65.6	*
Tourism promotion	54	66.4	72.3	65.7	71	*

5. Next Steps

The Vision of the City of Port Alberni is to become **the most vibrant, healthy and united community in British Columbia** and this project works directly towards this Vision. The Quality of Life survey and the Peoples' Voice survey have gathered base-line data about the current state of health and wellness in the City of Port Alberni, and this data will be used by Mayor and Council, City Staff, and other levels of local governance, our citizens and our community partners, to evaluate our progress toward reaching our Vision. Moreover, it helps to identify the key areas where we must focus our attention in order to improve the health and wellness of our community. Gathering base-line data, through the development, delivery, and analysis of the Peoples' Voice survey and the Quality of Life Survey, is an important first step in assisting Mayor, Council and City Staff in their day-to-day work and in their long term planning.

In addition the surveys provide us with information on the assets currently held by the community. With our assets better understood, we will be better equipped to build capacity in these areas and direct resources to the areas that need the most attention. An asset-based approach that develops plans and projects to address health promotion priorities and health of the citizenry will be sustainable and effective in the long term. These surveys are just the first step in a long term approach to the issues that face the Alberni Valley. The project team believes that the complex problems that the Alberni Valley faces require a comprehensive response; short-term, fractured responses will not achieve the goals of addressing them. By combining our resources in a collaborative way, we plan to identify the links between our complex issues, and be able to better identify the leverage points where we can best direct our energies to affect positive changes in the health and wellness of our community.

A facilitated meeting between the research team and Mayor, Council and Senior City Staff is planned to review the information, develop a recommendation plan, and incorporate findings into the City's Strategic Plan. There is commitment from the City to utilize information from the survey for future decision making.

6. Appendices

Appendix A – Open Ended Responses Complete List

Appendix B – Open Ended Responses “Themed” Complete List

Appendix C – Survey Instrument

Appendix D – Survey Package

Appendix E – Reminder Postcard