

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING
Re: 2022 Community Strategic Plan Survey
Results Presentation
Cape Charles Civic Center
February 2, 2023
6:30 PM

At approximately 6:30 p.m. Mayor Adam Charney announced that the originally scheduled Town Council Special Meeting was cancelled due to lack of a quorum physically in attendance this evening. However, Town Manager John Hozey would provide a presentation summarizing the 2022 Community Strategic Plan Survey results.

John Hozey stated that the action item on the special meeting agenda would be rescheduled for the February 16, 2023 Town Council Regular Meeting. There was no longer a sense of urgency regarding the short term rental legislation as the Virginia Senate tabled the bill for this year and referred it to the Housing Committee for a study.

John Hozey welcomed everyone in attendance adding that this was the second year for the survey. There were 442 respondents last year and the Town received 452 responses for this year's survey, which was significant for a Town with a population of about 1,000.

John Hozey proceeded to review the presentation and comments, adding that the Town Council had a full set of the comments which they would be reviewing for next week's work session. The full set of comments had not been posted on the website but were available to the public by request. The public was welcome to attend that session as well. We want to provide the public adequate time to review the results and provide input. A public input session was scheduled for March 2nd and would entail back and forth discussion between the members of the public in attendance, Council and staff. Council would have the option to adopt the Community Strategic Plan and Town Priorities that night based on the comments received. Staff needed the adopted priorities in order to prepare the fiscal year 2023-2024 budget. (Please see attached.)

Vice Mayor Bennett stated that he had quickly reviewed the comments and it seemed that there was a fair amount of misunderstanding and a lot of the comments made were based on misinformation. It would take some work, but he suggested that staff address the common misconceptions to clarify the items and provide answers to the general public.

John Hozey responded that he had discussions with staff regarding addressing some of the common misconceptions as points of education and something would be developed and published in the Gazette.

The floor was opened to questions.

Ms. Susan Hudson, a resident of Bay Creek, asked that since the item regarding short term rentals would not be discussed this evening, when did the Town Council plan to revisit this issue? Some of the residents of Bay Creek had formed a committee for short term rentals and wanted to work together with the Town regarding the issue.

John Hozey responded that, as he had mentioned at the beginning of this meeting, the short term rental item was being deferred to the February 16 regular meeting. Once the Town Council set the priorities, and he assumed that the short term rental issue would be high on the list, there would be discussion. His recommendation was to form a working group comprised of members of the Town Council, Planning Commission, homeowners' associations, etc. to work together to develop a plan.

The plan would then be presented to the Planning Commission to review and make a recommendation to the Town Council. There was a lot involved in the process.

Councilman Buchholz added that the Cape Charles Vacation Rental Association was also working on something and should be included in the working group. John Hozey responded that he met with the group and they were working proactively on a plan to self-regulate.

There were no more questions from the audience nor the Council.

Councilman Buchholz announced that the Knight Family Foundation was inviting everyone to the Palace Theatre for three showings of *King Richard*, which was inspired by Serena and Venus Williams. The showings were on February 3rd at 7:00 p.m., and February 4th at 3:00 and 7:00 p.m. The showings were to commemorate Black History Month with proceeds going to the Cape Charles Rosenwald School Restoration Initiative and another non-profit organization. Admission was a \$10.00 donation at the door.

The public information meeting concluded at 7:02 p.m.

Town Clerk

**October 6, 2022 Public Forum
Community Survey Presentation Information**

Community Strategic Plan Citizen Survey - 2022



Community Strategic Plan Citizen Survey - 2022

1. Please choose the closest one that applies to you:

- ☐ Full-time resident living within the corporate limits of Cape Charles
- ☐ Full-time resident within the town limits, who also owns additional property within the town limits
- ☐ Resides in Northampton County but outside the corporate limits of Cape Charles
- ☐ Owns property within the corporate limits of Cape Charles but maintains a primary residence outside of the town
- ☐ Resides outside Northampton County but a frequent visitor to Cape Charles

2. How long have you lived or owned property in Cape Charles? _____ N/A

3. Do you own a business in Cape Charles? Yes ☐ No ☐

4. Are you employed? Circle the closest one that applies:

Full time part time retired between jobs prefer not to answer

5. Is your employment based primarily from your home? Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

6. Do you think town public services are appropriate for a community of our size?

Yes ☐ No ☐ (Please feel free to attach comments)

7. Are you satisfied with the quality of town public services?

Yes ☐ No ☐ (Please feel free to attach comments)

8. Do you feel the Town has maintained or improved its small-town character in recent years?

Yes ☐ No ☐ (Please feel free to attach comments)

9. For a small town, Cape Charles has many priorities on its plate; more than we can do at one time. Please help prioritize the following, with 1 being the highest priority and 5 being the lowest:

- ☐ Develop beachfront master plan (beach, dunes, boardwalk, LOVE sign area, bathhouse, etc.)
- ☐ Develop harbor/railroad area conceptual master plan & design guidelines for future development
- ☐ Develop parking strategies/regs in the historic/commercial districts (including boats, trailers, etc.)
- ☐ Develop short-term rental regulations/ordinances
- ☐ Other: _____

10. The Town Council believes that Cape Charles should strive to have a healthy mix of economic sectors, which include tourism related businesses, commercial/service-oriented businesses, manufacturing/light industrial type of businesses, and other businesses associated with a working harbor. As we begin to update our master planning/zoning for the old railroad areas, the Town Council wishes to be sensitive to implications future development might have on our existing working harbor. For example, high-end residential or tourism related uses too near the harbor could potentially drive out our traditional harbor uses (like watermen), eroding economic diversity.

Do you agree with the Council's view regarding maintenance of economic diversity?

Yes _____ No _____ (Please feel free to attach comments)

11. **Should the town acquire the resources to fund new capital projects, please help prioritize the following possibilities, with 1 being the highest priority and 5 being the lowest:**

_____ Renovate the beachfront/Bay Ave (beach, dunes, boardwalk, LOVE sign area, bathhouse, etc.)
_____ Create a new recreational park (sports fields, pavilion, picnic areas, restrooms, etc.)
_____ Assist with sidewalk infill in the historic district (where appropriate) and develop/enforce sidewalk regulations to promote private installations
_____ New harbor amenities (aesthetic upgrades, shaded gathering areas, vendor space, etc.)
_____ Other: _____

12. **What tools do you use to stay in touch with town happenings?** Circle all that apply:

Facebook posts Gazette Nixle Town website Weekly staff reports Word of mouth

Watch meetings on Facebook Newspapers CC Happenings Mirror

Other _____

13. **Your Name:** _____

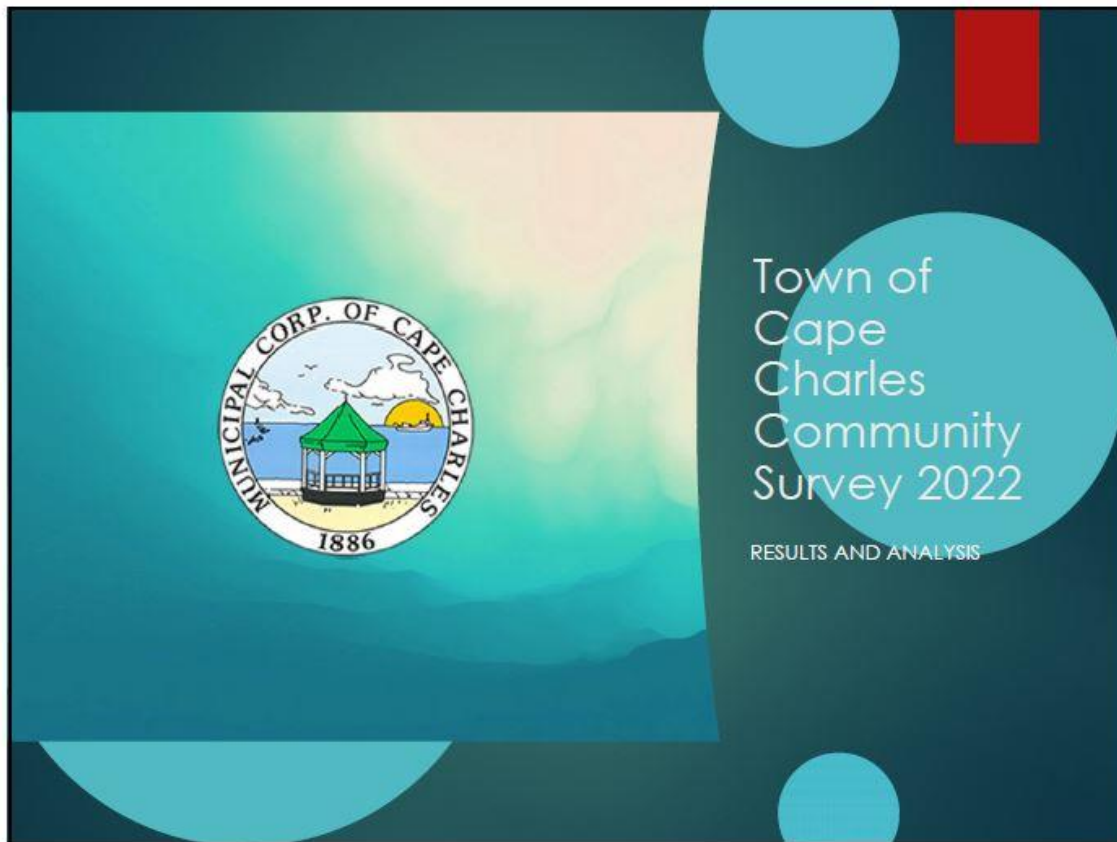
Street Address: _____

Email Address: _____

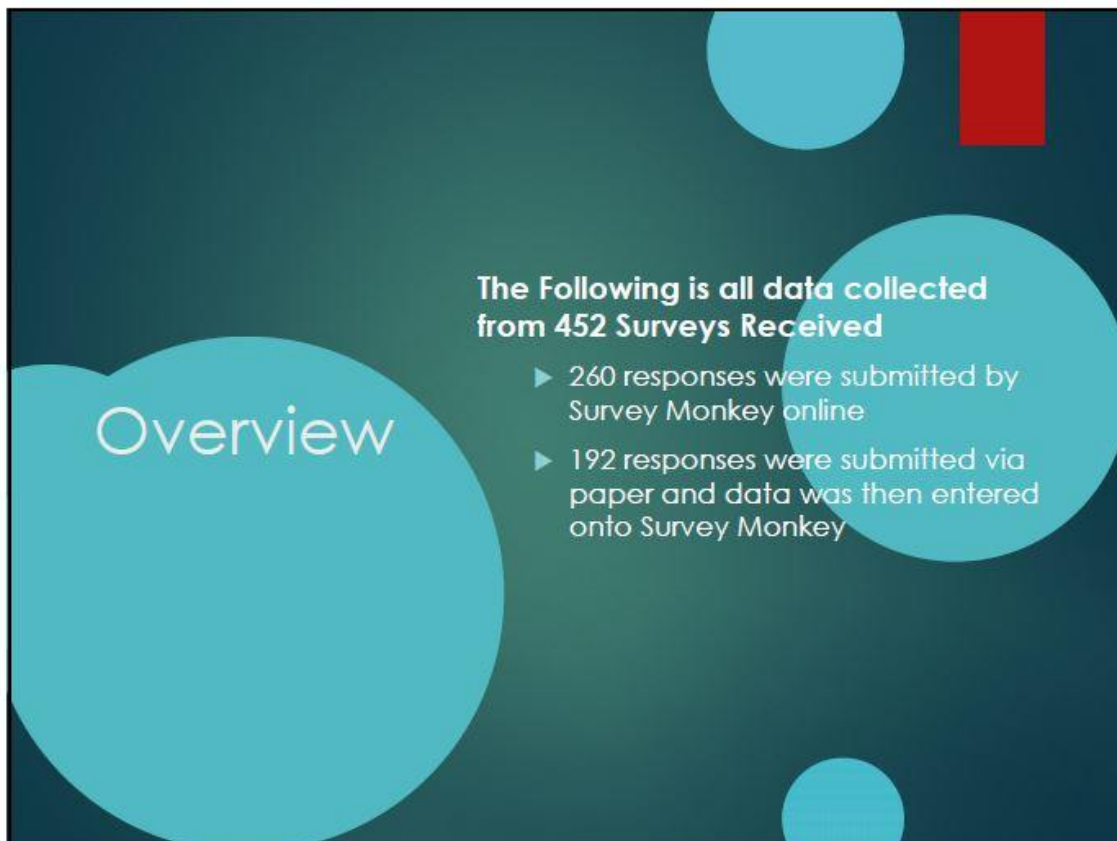
Note: anonymous surveys cannot be counted

May we contact you regarding this survey? Yes _____ No _____

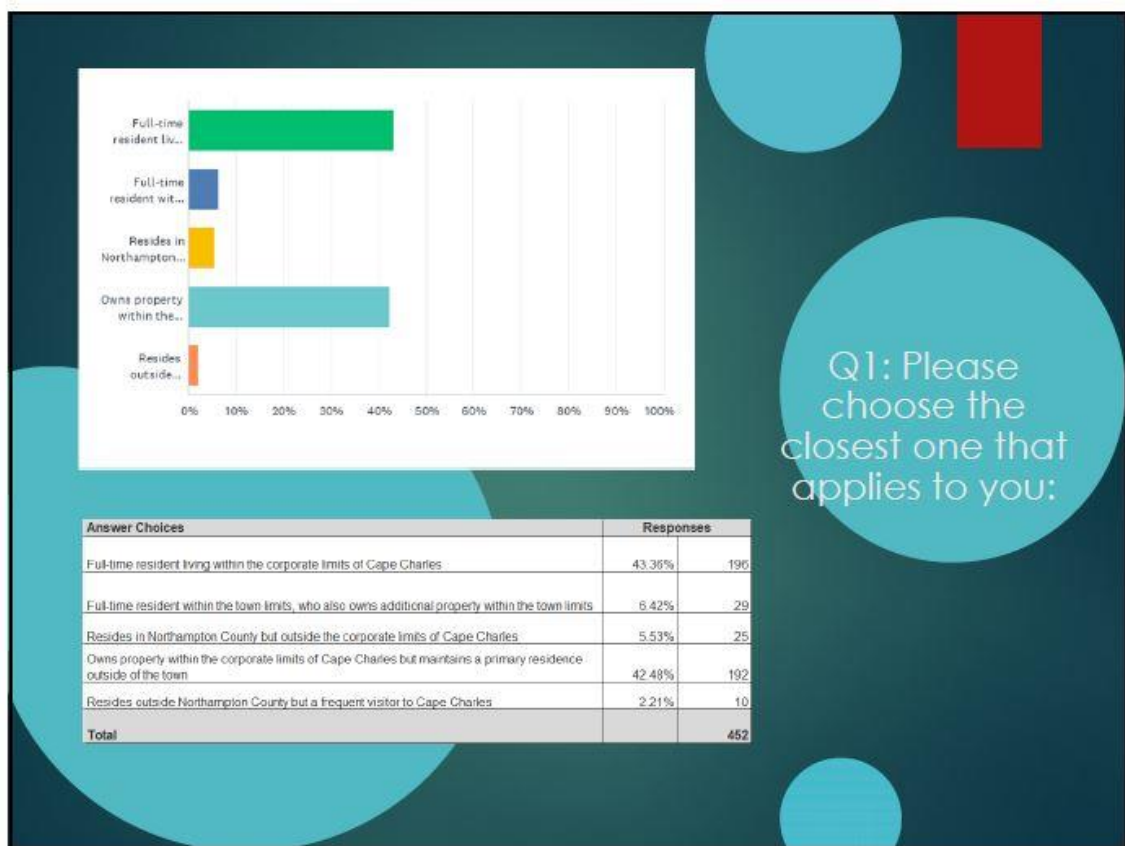
Responses are due back to Town Hall no later than 2:00 pm, January 13, 2023
Surveys may be dropped off, mailed (2 Plum St), or scanned and emailed to Clerk@capecharles.org
An [electronic version](#) of this survey is also available on the Town's website



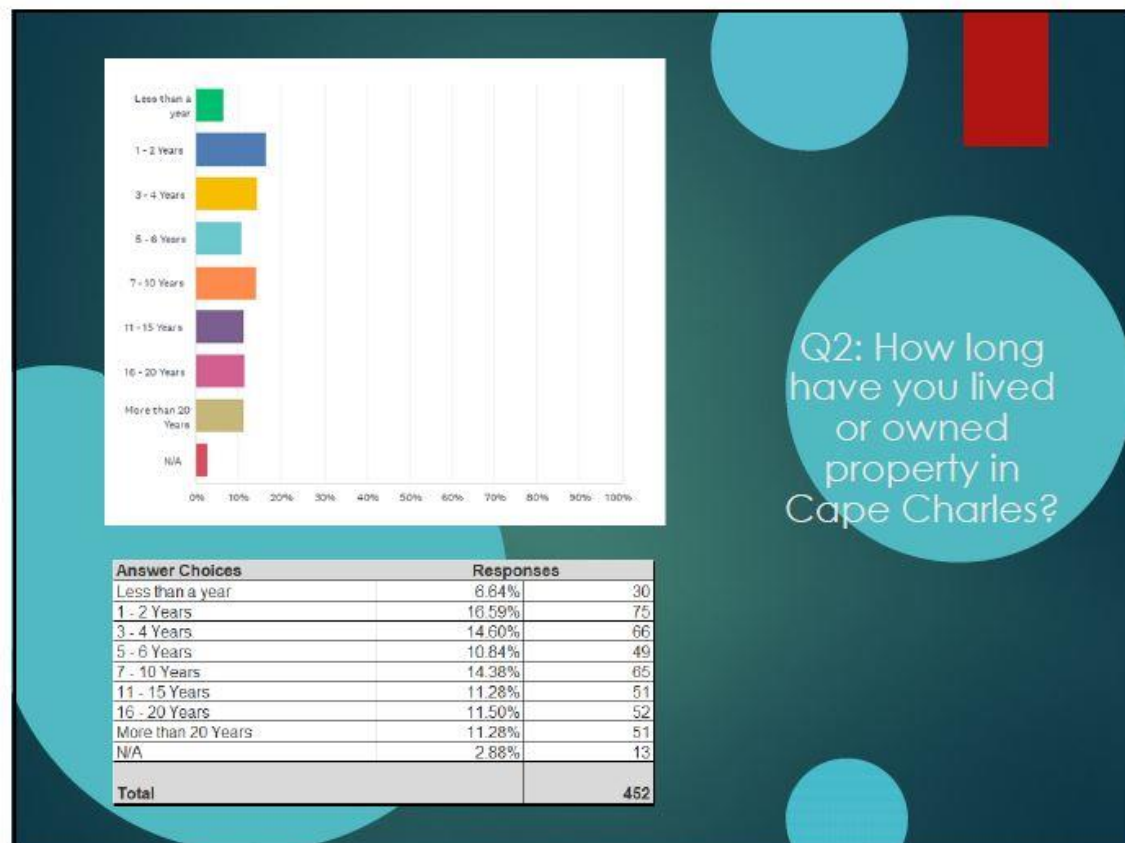
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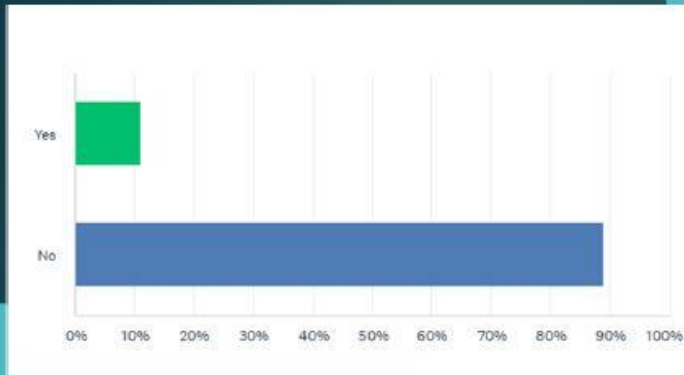
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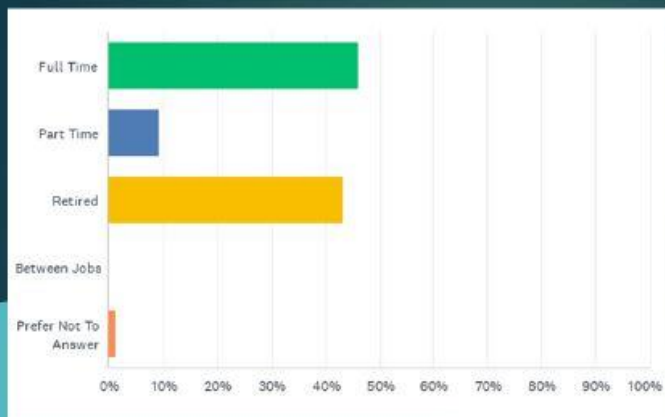
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3: Do you own a business in Cape Charles?

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	11.09% 50
No	88.91% 401
Total	451

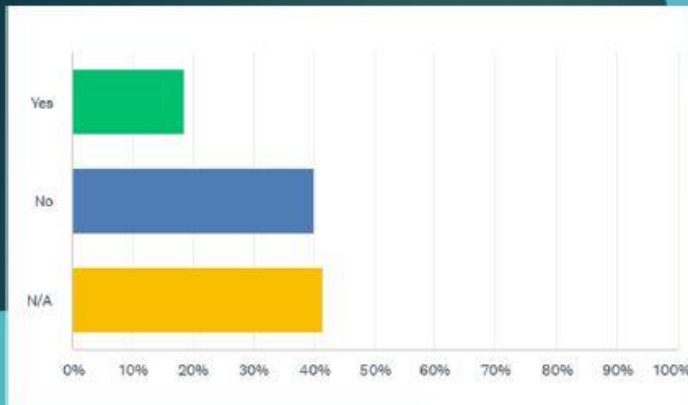
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Q4: Are you employed? Select the closest that applies:

Answer Choices	Responses
Full Time	46.00% 207
Part Time	9.11% 41
Retired	43.33% 195
Between Jobs	0.00% 0
Prefer Not To Answer	1.56% 7
Total	450

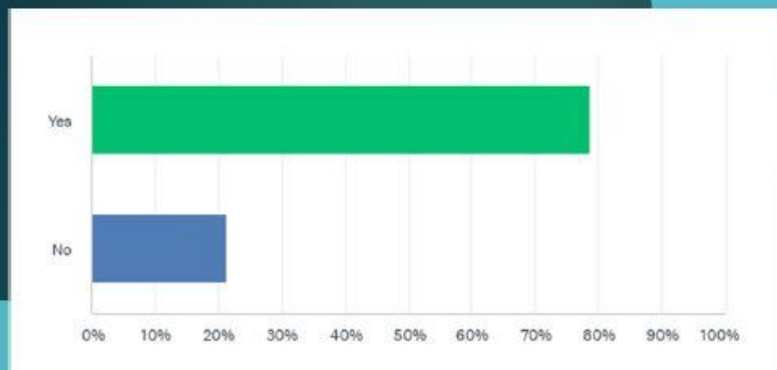
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Q5: Is your employment based primarily from your home?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	18.44%	83
No	40.00%	180
N/A	41.56%	187
Total		450

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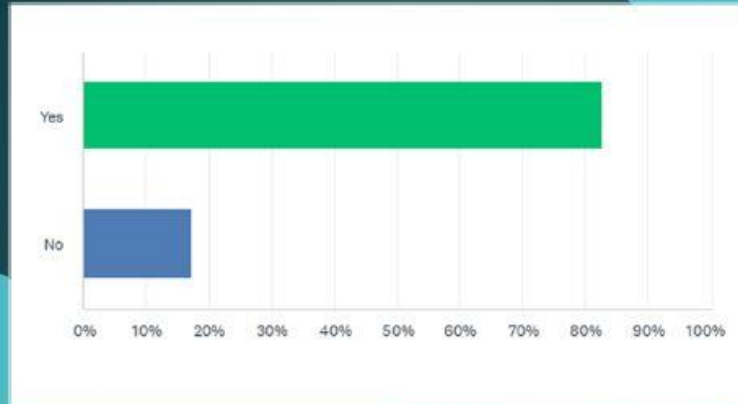


Q6: Do you think town public services are appropriate for a community of our size?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	78.76%	356
No	21.24%	96
Total		452

The most common comments included the need for better recycling options and the need to increase town staff to keep up with growth

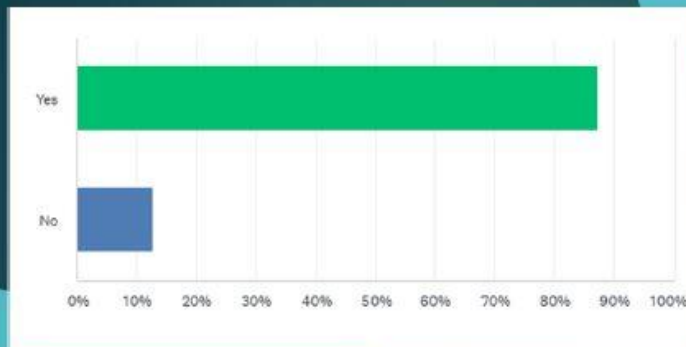
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Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	82.63% 371
No	17.37% 78
Total	449

Q7: Are you satisfied with the quality of town public services?

9

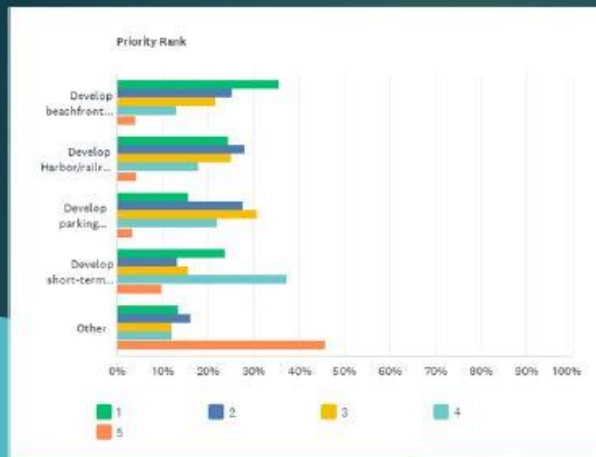


Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	87.14% 393
No	12.86% 58
Total	451

Q8: Do you feel the town has maintained or improved its small-town character in recent years?

Although most felt we have maintained or improved our character, many respondents noted that we are close to losing that charm due to an over emphasis on tourism and the impacts associated with short-term rentals

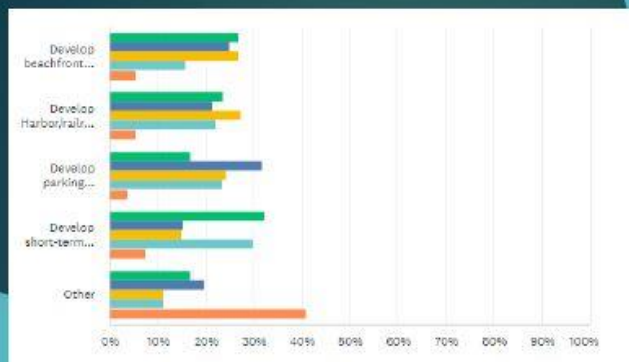
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Q9*: For a small town, Cape Charles has many priorities on its plate; more than we can do at one time. Please help prioritize the following, with 1 being the highest priority and 5 being the lowest:

	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL
▼ Develop beachfront master plan (beach, dunes, boardwalk, LOVE sign area, bathhouse, etc.)	35.55% 155	25.46% 111	21.79% 95	13.07% 57	4.13% 18	436
▼ Develop Harbor/railroad area conceptual master plan & design guidelines for future development	24.54% 106	28.24% 122	25.23% 109	17.82% 77	4.17% 18	432
▼ Develop parking strategies/regs in the historic/commercial districts (including boats, trailers, etc.)	15.69% 67	27.63% 116	30.91% 132	22.25% 95	3.51% 15	427
▼ Develop short-term rental regulations/ordinances	23.82% 101	13.21% 56	15.80% 67	37.26% 159	9.91% 42	424
▼ Other	13.81% 20	16.22% 24	12.16% 19	12.16% 18	45.95% 68	149

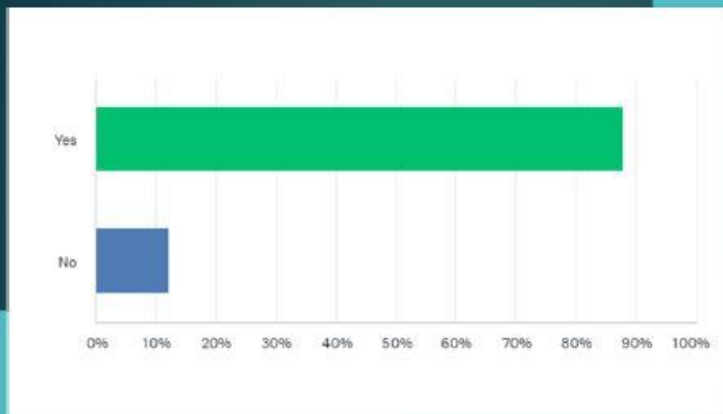
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*Note: if only full-time resident responses are referenced for Question 9 the priority shifts

	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL
▼ Develop beachfront master plan (beach, dunes, boardwalk, LOVE sign area, bathhouse, etc.)	26.95% 38	25.00% 34	28.85% 38	15.74% 34	5.56% 12	216
▼ Develop Harbor/railroad area conceptual master plan & design guidelines for future development	23.61% 61	21.30% 46	27.31% 59	22.22% 48	5.56% 12	216
▼ Develop parking strategies/regs in the historic/commercial districts (including boats, trailers, etc.)	16.82% 26	31.78% 69	24.30% 52	23.36% 50	3.74% 9	214
▼ Develop short-term rental regulations/ordinances	32.24% 69	15.42% 23	14.95% 32	29.91% 64	7.48% 16	214
▼ Other	16.90% 12	19.72% 14	11.27% 8	11.27% 8	40.85% 29	71

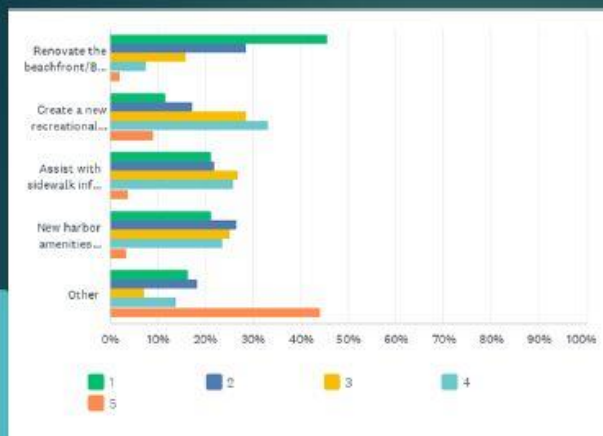
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Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	87.78%	395
No	12.22%	55
Total		450

Q10: Do you agree with the council's view regarding maintenance of economic diversity?

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Q11: Should the town acquire the resources to fund new capital projects, please help prioritize the following possibilities, with 1 being the highest priority and 5 being the lowest:

Priority	1	2	3	4	5
Renovate the beachfront/Bay Ave (beach, dunes, boardwalk, LOVE sign area, bathhouse, etc.)	45.54%	28.60%	16.02%	7.78%	2.06%
Create a new recreational park (sports fields, pavilion, picnic areas, restrooms, etc.)	11.64%	17.34%	28.50%	33.25%	9.26%
Assist with sidewalk infill in the historic district (where appropriate) and develop/enforce sidewalk regulations to promote private installations	21.41%	21.88%	26.82%	26.12%	3.70%
New harbor amenities (aesthetic upgrades, shaded gathering areas, vendor space, etc.)	21.28%	26.71%	25.06%	23.64%	3.31%
Other	10.51%	18.30%	7.34%	13.76%	44.04%

Note: referencing responses from only full-time residents does not change this priority

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Summary of Comment Trends



Community Strategic Plan Citizen Survey - 2022

Summary of Comment Trends (452 surveys)

The following is offered as an overview of general trends only and is not meant to capture every comment. Note: Questions 1 - 5, 12, and 13 were straightforward and did not generate significant comment

Question 6: Are Public Services appropriate for a community our size – 79% responded Yes

Comments were fairly broad and generally supportive of the Town. Several comments indicated that service levels are adequate now, but will need to increase as the Town grows. It was also noted that general satisfaction is greater off season when there is not as much demand for services. However, the two most common comments were:

- Desire to develop better recycling options in town (23 responses)
- More town staff is needed to keep up with demand (17 responses)

Question 7: Is the quality of Town Public Services Satisfactory – 83% responded Yes

Comments here were also very supportive of the Town, with similar sentiments to those in question 6. While there was an overall satisfaction with the quality of public services, the two most common comments regarding dissatisfaction were:

- Water quality (16 responses)
- Better beach maintenance (8 responses)

Question 8: Has the Town maintained its small-town character – 87% responded Yes

This question generated a wide range of opinions. Most felt that we have maintained or improved this character, while some felt that we have, or are about to, lose this character. Focusing too much on tourism was a general concern, but the single most common threat to our small-town character mentioned in the comments was the number of short-term rentals in town (17 responses)

Question 9: Prioritize Town workload (time spent)

Of the choices offered, the top priorities were as follows:

1. Develop beachfront master plan
2. Develop harbor/railroad area master plan
3. Develop short-term rental regulations
4. Develop parking strategies

Interestingly however, if only the surveys from full-time residents are referenced, developing short-term rental regulations moves to the top priority as follows:

1. Develop short-term rental regulations
2. Develop beachfront master plan
3. Develop harbor/railroad area master plan
4. Develop parking strategies

Regarding the “Other” category, there were many broad ideas offered, though little consensus, with many not being town functions. However, ideas offered with the most consensus were:*

- Develop workforce housing (14 responses)
- Develop better restrooms (5 responses)
- Develop new townhall (4 responses)

*Note: The Town is already moving forward with all three of these

Question 10: Do you agree with the Council’s view regarding Economic Diversity – 88% responded Yes

Most comments indicated a very strong support for the Council’s position. However, among the pushback offered was the following:

- Disagreed with the premise that tourism/residential related development would hurt a working harbor (11 responses)
- Agreed generally, but expressed caution that future development in support of a working harbor must also be compatible with existing residential and tourism related uses (9 responses)

Question 11: Prioritize Town Capital Projects (dollars spent)

This question was similar to question 9 and may have resulted in some confusion. Some comments offered under question 9 would have been better suited here, while some of the comment here would have been better suited under question 9. That said, overall priority of the choices offered were as follows:

1. Renovate the beachfront/Bay Avenue
2. Assist with sidewalk infill
3. Install new harbor amenities
4. Create a new recreational park

Note: the priority does not change when referencing only full-time resident surveys

Regarding the “Other” category, there were again many broad ideas offered, with little consensus. However, the ideas with the most consensus were:

- Develop additional parking (7 responses)
- Develop better restrooms (3 responses)
- Improve appearance of entrance corridor - Stone Road (3 responses)
- Develop a dog park (3 responses)

Note: All comments have been provided verbatim to the Mayor and Town Council