



Press Release

SURVEY SAYS: PORT COQUITLAM TAXPAYERS GENERALLY SATISFIED

Port Coquitlam, BC – January 27, 2009... A City of Port Coquitlam survey suggests that most residents are generally satisfied with how their municipal tax dollars are being spent.

Some 220 people took part in an online survey that collected public input on Port Coquitlam's 2009-2013 Financial Plan, which will set out expenditures and revenues for the next five years. The survey was the City's most successful public-input vehicle to date on financial planning issues.

Of note is that 98 per cent of survey respondents said that overall City services in Port Coquitlam are either very good value or fair value. When asked to rate each individual City service, between 70 to 100 per cent of respondents said they are very or somewhat satisfied with all services. In addition, 70 to 98 per cent of respondents rated each individual City service as being either very or somewhat important.

"Council is thrilled with the community response to the survey and we are giving it serious thought as we consider our Financial Plan," Port Coquitlam Mayor Greg Moore said. "It's interesting that the survey identified transportation and safety as the two key issues facing our community. These two issues come up again and again whenever we consult with the public, and Council is taking action to address these issues with measures that include constructing the Coast Meridian Overpass and investing in a stronger police presence on our streets."

The survey asked respondents to rate the wide variety of City services; to identify the most important issue facing the community; and to indicate how they would like to see Council balance taxation with the provision of City services.

Respondents identified transportation as the most important issue facing the community, with 37 responses, followed closely by public safety, with 32 responses. Also high on the list were development and managing growth (25 responses) and homelessness (21), followed by recreation facilities (12) and economic development (10).

In terms of satisfaction levels, the top marks went to the City's provision of parks and recreation services, firefighting, fire prevention, emergency preparedness, pest control, water and sewer services, storm drainage, street sweeping, waste collection (garbage, recycling, green waste and kitchen waste), online services, environmental monitoring and financial stability (maintaining reserves). Ninety per cent or more of respondents are very or somewhat satisfied with these services.

As for taxation, 61.7 per cent of respondents are willing to pay for a tax increase in order to either maintain (37.7 per cent) or increase (24 per cent) service levels. Twenty-three per cent wish to see services cut in order to maintain the current tax level, and 3.8% wish to see services reduced in order to cut taxes.

“The extremely positive number of responses demonstrates the desire for residents to participate and help lead our community,” Moore commented. “We will continue to work on new ways to engage our residents to participate in their community.”

After discussing the survey results at its Financial and Intergovernmental Committee meeting Thursday night, Port Coquitlam Council asked City staff to bring back options that included maintaining the proposed seven per cent tax increase for 2009 but with additional funding for policing. Several Council members referenced the survey results in the discussion about spending more on policing.

Detailed survey results are available at www.portcoquitlam.ca/budget. Port Coquitlam citizens who want to ensure they hear about future online surveys can sign up for the City’s free *E-Update* email newsletter through links at www.portcoquitlam.ca. All *E-Update* subscribers are automatically informed of public input opportunities, in addition to receiving monthly newsletters and special bulletins in their email inboxes.

- 30 -

MEDIA CONTACT:

Kathleen Vincent, Director
Legislative & Administrative Services
City of Port Coquitlam
Tel 604.927.5335
Email vincentk@portcoquitlam.ca
www.portcoquitlam.ca