

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of Town Council

From: Kristin Read, Assistant Town Manager

Through: David L. Corliss, Town Manager

Title: Briefing: 2021 Community Survey Results

The 2021 community survey – which included scientific and open resident surveys and a scientific business survey – was completed in February/March 2021. An online focus group of resident survey respondents will continue through May to discuss topics of interest.

A full presentation of the scientific resident survey results is planned for Council's April 20 meeting. The full results report for all three surveys is anticipated to be posted online by the end of April, and a report on the focus group is expected to be delivered in June.

Ahead of Council's initial formal review and discussion of the survey results, staff provides this brief summary to highlight the findings of the scientific resident survey.

This year's scientific survey was the most responded to among the four most recent surveys, with a total of 751 respondents, compared to the previous high of 720. (The business survey was also the most responded to among these surveys, with 239 responses, compared to the previous high of 206.)

Overall, the results from the scientific resident survey are encouraging in most areas. The Town maintained its 3.5-Star rating on ComEngage's 5-Star rating system. All performance-rating questions scored a 5 or higher on a 0-10-point scale for the first time since 2015. 36 of the performance measures could be trended to the Town's last survey. Of those, seven showed statistically significant improvements, while only one saw a statistically significant decrease, as summarized in the below table. The remaining 28 remained comparable to 2019.

Improved items:	2021	2019	Declined items:	2021	2019
Town as a place to retire	6.74	6.27	Informing on Water items	6.83	7.33
Town as a place to work	6.40	5.76			
Animal services/Animal Control	8.19	7.53			
Value for Water rates paid	6.35	5.85			
Convenience/accessibility of roads	7.34	6.39			
Traffic signal timing	6.01	5.49			
Level of congestion on Town streets	5.03	4.41			

While not overall statistically significant, respondents' perceptions regarding the direction the Town is headed showed positive trending. There was a statistically significant shift from those saying "wrong direction" (15% in 2021 compared to 24% in 2019) to the more positive categories of "neutral," "right direction" or "very right direction" (77% combined in 2021 compared to 66% in 2019).

The survey indicated strong community support for the Town's six strategic priorities – with an average of 90% of respondents in support across the six items, and actual support levels per priority ranging from 97% to 72%. "Enhancing our transportation" was on the low end of the ratings; open-ended responses indicated a lack of support for the Town pursuing public transit as the reason for the relatively lower level of support compared to the other priorities. 29% of respondents believed

the Town was missing priorities; when asked for specifics, the most common answer – cited by 51 respondents, or roughly 7% of respondents overall – was “control growth.”

As in past surveys, residents were asked what they think is the most important issue facing the Town in the next five years. “Growing too fast” continued to be the top sentiment expressed, by 45% of respondents. Overcrowding concerns overtook what had historically been the second-most-cited concern, traffic, for the No. 2 spot in 2021. (13% of respondents cited overcrowding, compared to 12% citing traffic.) Of note is that traffic concerns have continually fallen from their high of 36% in the 2015 survey. The overall list of top concerns for 2021 is comparable to the 2019 iteration, as detailed in **Attachment A**.

Again in 2021, respondents were asked about their support for implementing a lodging tax in Town. Past above-average support (7.22 in 2019) for this potential alternative revenue source may be waning, as support in 2021 had moved closer to average, at 6.05. A new alternative revenue question in this survey explored support for increasing the Town’s property tax mill levy from \$3/month to \$15/month, to help fund needed public safety personnel. That prospect received below-average support of 4.5/10. Time-limiting the increase did not change opinions overall. To fund these needs, the greatest percentage of respondents said the Town should manage existing funds better (15%). 13% said they weren’t sure how the needs should be funded; 13% said additional public safety funding isn’t needed; 10% said the Town should ask for a smaller-scale property tax increase; and 10% said new development should be taxed to generate the revenue needed to fund public safety.

Also new in this survey was a question about changes in the Town’s distinct identity since becoming a resident. Respondents were somewhat split on this issue, with 46% believing the identity had gotten stronger, 23% neutral and 31% believing identity had been lost. The differences in opinion become more apparent when comparing answers from the Town’s newest and longest-term residents. Of those who’ve lived in Town five years or less, 52% thought the Town’s identity had gotten stronger, 32% were neutral, and 15% thought identity had been lost. Among those who’ve lived here 20 or more years, those comparable percentages were 41% stronger, 15% neutral and 45% perceiving identity loss.

Another new question with interesting findings involved the percentage of time residents work from home. Prior to the pandemic, respondents reported working from home 25% of the time. At the time of the survey, respondents were working from home 51% of the time. By early 2022, respondents indicated they expect to be working from home 41% of the time – a marked increase from the pre-pandemic percentage. This shift could have implications on a number of Town services and economic development goals.

Staff and the consultant continue to work on finalizing the full report on the survey, which will include further information on the community’s thoughts about growth, which continues as the top-of-mind issue among residents. Recognizing this concern, the Town should feel good about the overall survey results, which show a number of positive trends, with opportunities for improvements.

Attachment

Attachment A: 2021 resident survey summary



2021 resident survey summary

Full results of the 2021 community survey, including business survey and open resident survey results, will be posted soon at CRgov.com/2021survey.



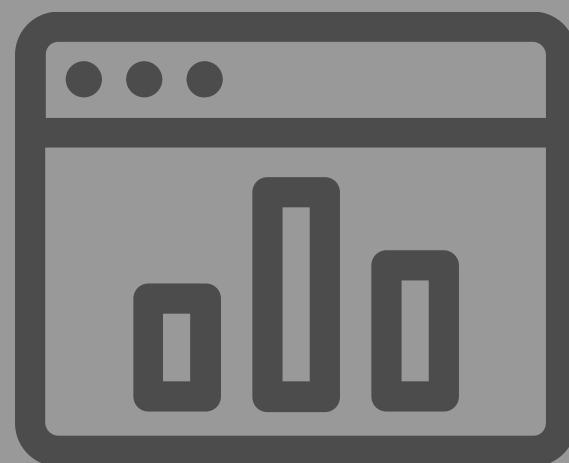
751

residents responded to the survey from Feb. 10-March 10, 2021.



90%

Average level of respondents' support for the Town's current six priorities. Support for individual priorities ranged from 97% (Ensuring outstanding public safety) to 72% (Enhancing our transportation).



5 or higher

The survey included 49 performance questions. Respondents rated all of these items 5 or higher on a 0-10 scale for the first time since 2015.



7



28



1

trends

36 performance measures could be compared to past surveys. seven of those ratings showed improvement and one decreased; the other 28 remained comparable.



25% pre pandemic



51% early 2021



41% expected 2022

w@h

Respondents indicated they are working from home an increased percentage of time and expect that practice to continue into the future.



9/10

residents said the quality of life in Castle Rock exceeds or greatly exceeds expectations.

Significantly more said "greatly exceeds" in 2021 than in 2019.



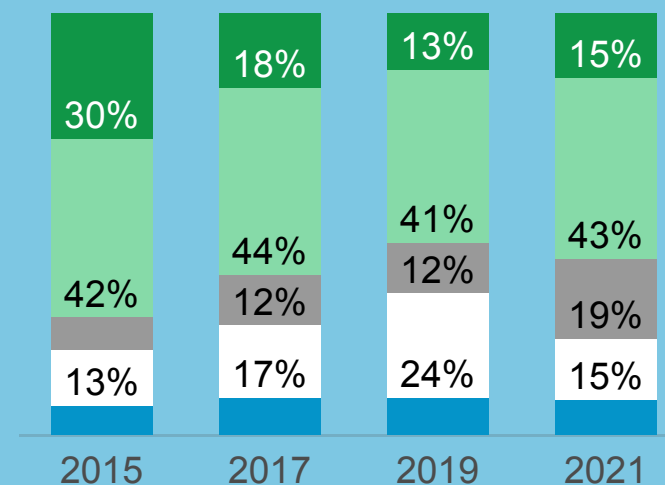
4/5

residents said the quality of Town services exceeds or greatly exceeds expectations. This is consistent with past performance.



9/10

residents said they believe Castle Rock is a better place to live than other communities. This is consistent with past performance.



going up

2021 showed improvement from 2019 for the direction the Town is headed, with a significant shift from "wrong direction" (white) to neutral (gray).



72%

of respondents believe they are getting their money's worth for their tax dollars – this is another upward trend.

most important Town issue over time

2021



45%



13%



12%



9%



7%



6%



6%



4%



2%

2019



42%



18%



13%



12%



12%



10%



5%



4%



4%

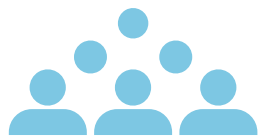
2017



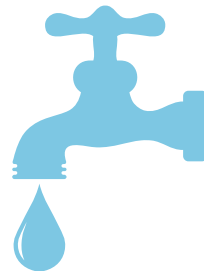
38%



26%



13%



8%



7%



7%



2%

2015



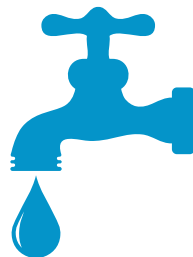
58%



36%



9%



8%



6%



5%

In each survey since 2015, residents have been asked what they see as the most important issue facing the Town in the next five years.

As in past surveys, "Growing too fast," was the top sentiment expressed for this question in 2021. Overcrowding concerns overtook second place from traffic concerns, which have been steadily decreasing since 2015.

Notes: Not every issue was mentioned every year. Annual totals sum to more than 100%, as some respondents mentioned more than one issue.

Key:



Growing too fast



Overcrowding



Traffic



Water



Infrastructure needs



Road maintenance



Managed growth



Loss of community



Need more amenities