



Better Together COLLINGWOOD

community. caring. clarity. communication.

Introduction

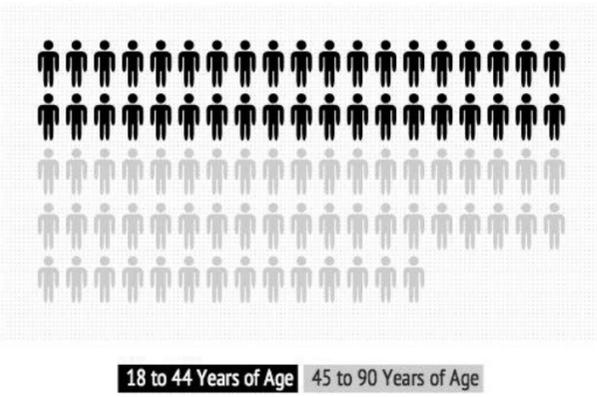
Better Together Collingwood is a citizen's group that advocates for honest and open leadership in our local government. Our approach is to look at "First in Class" practices to see what can be achieved in Collingwood. A critical first step in this process is to find out what Collingwood residents think is important and work together to achieve these priorities. To start this process we administered a community wide survey in June and July that was open to all residents. The survey consisted of 10 questions designed to identify the strengths and challenges of our community, gauge the level of awareness of local issues and levels of satisfaction with local government. To be representative of our community, we needed to receive 377 surveys and are pleased to announce that we received over 460 surveys. The vast majority (97%) of respondents would like to see positive change to the effectiveness of our local governance.

We offer you this summary of results with confidence in the hope that we can improve the future of Collingwood; together, we can do better.

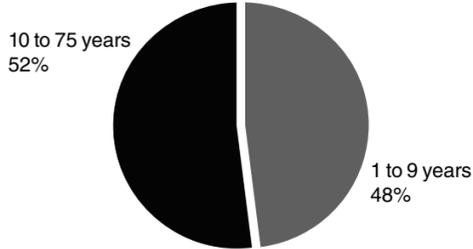
Demographics

The first two questions asked how long survey respondents had lived in Collingwood and the age of the respondents. We were pleased to see that we engaged a solid cross section of residents of all ages (reflective of the census data percentages) and that the views expressed are from short, medium and long term residents alike.

Age of Respondents



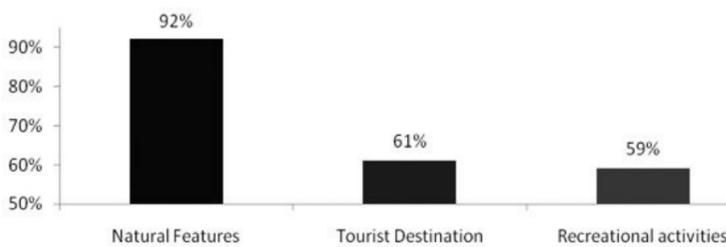
Length of Residency of Respondents in Collingwood



Strengths in Collingwood

There is a strong appreciation for Collingwood's natural features, the small town feeling, a sense of pride around the history of our community and the health, education and social support systems. Many respondents felt that the ability to lead a balanced lifestyle remains a longstanding attraction to living here.

The top three strengths in Collingwood are:

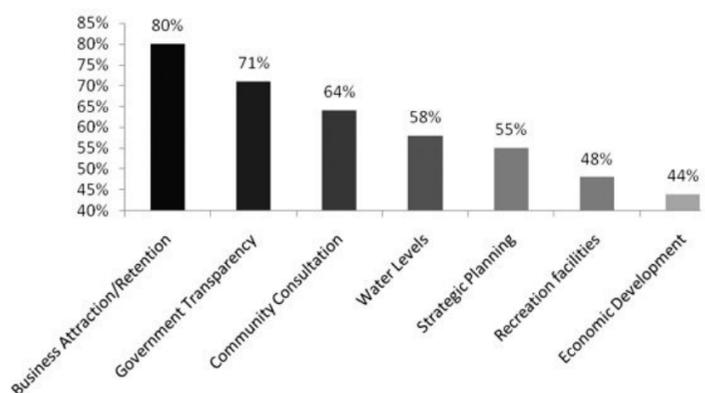


Challenges Facing Collingwood

Respondents feel that Collingwood's ability to attract and retain business is its greatest challenge and that this issue has an impact on employment rates, poverty rates, the number of people relying on social assistance and the sustainability of the community over time.

Local government transparency rated second among the greatest issues facing our community and many respondents went on to describe what policies and practices they would like to see in place. These include but are not limited to:

- Strengthen the "Conflict of Interest Policy" to include any family member both direct and indirect that may benefit monetarily from working with the Town
- A review of the Procurement Policy so that all purchases (other than expenditures required to respond to emergencies and natural disasters) are openly tendered or receive competitive bids
- Meaningful consultation for all significant projects and initiatives
- Much stronger and accountable communications
- A Lobbyist Registry whereby all lobbyists must be registered and that the Town provides an open listing of what firms are lobbying which staff and Council members for what projects
- The integration of an Integrity Commissioner into all municipal practises



Level of Satisfaction with Our Local Government

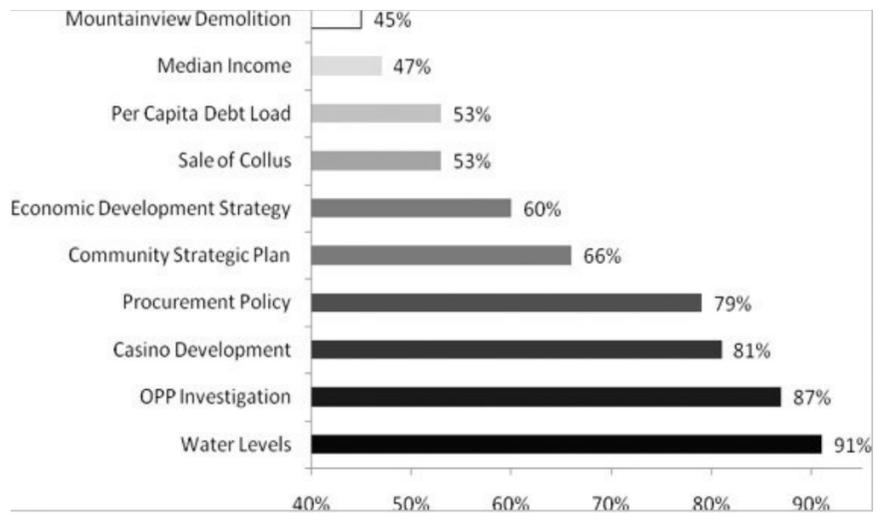
The results speak very clearly on this question on satisfaction with our local government. A significant percentage of Collingwood respondents are unsatisfied to very unsatisfied with the current Council.

How satisfied are you with the current Council?	% of Respondents
Unsatisfied to Very Unsatisfied	74%
Neutral	16%
Satisfied to Very Satisfied	10%

Awareness of Issues

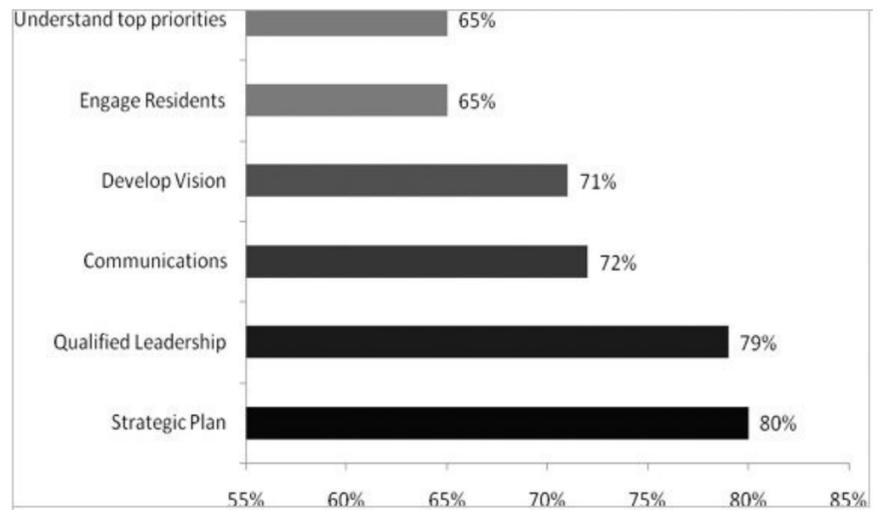
The survey asked respondent's about their level of awareness of current issues facing the Town of Collingwood. The findings show that residents are very aware of local issues and there is a high level of interest in effective local governance.

Respondents listed two additional issues that require attention and they are the removal of the large unsightly/unsafe holes left at two major development sites and the value that tax payers are receiving for tax dollars paid.



Opportunities for Building a Better Future Together

Survey respondents were asked to rate a number of actions that could strengthen Collingwood. The significant number of responses and numerous additional comments focussed on the need for leadership and transparency in local government.



Where Should We Go From Here?

The vast majority of the respondents demonstrated a high level of interest in advocating for Council to adopt the options indicated in the survey to improve our local government processes. Over 70% of the respondents offered to act and assist where possible.

Our Message to Council

The quantified data from the community survey has a tremendous amount of value in identifying and addressing the critical issues that our community is facing. As Town Council is entrusted with the health and well-being of our community, there is much to be done to respond to these issues. Residents require proactive and accountable leadership to develop the sustainability of a healthy, vibrant, growing community. As a community advocacy group, BTC will continue to work to educate and advocate for the necessary changes to facilitate these results. It is for this reason, that we respectfully encourage this Council to listen to the wishes of the Collingwood residents and to address the following key messages from the survey:

1. Demonstrate a strong level of commitment to a more sustainable future for our community (fiscal, social and environmental sustainability);
2. Demonstrate greater transparency, openness and accountability in local government;
3. Demonstrate an aggressive commitment to attracting and retaining a greater number of businesses and more employment opportunities;
4. Engage the residents in a community driven strategic planning process; and,
5. Demonstrate a commitment to better, open, effective and accountable communications with the residents of Collingwood.