At its November 14 meeting, the Town Council directed staff to prepare and circulate a community opinion survey as part of the initial public outreach for the Comprehensive Plan update. Draft survey questions were discussed by the Town Council on December 12, with concurrence on a final version on January 9. The issued version is provided as Attachment A. To achieve the broadest possible dissemination, surveys were mailed with utility bills in January, provided to manufactured home parks and multifamily residents who may not receive a Town utility bill, and made available in public venues such as Town Hall and the library. Respondents were asked to return the completed surveys by February 28.

To date, 135 surveys have been received. Staff sincerely appreciates the time and thoughtfulness that went into these responses. This is yet another indication of the care that Coupeville residents have for their community. It is important to note that this is not, nor was it intended to be, a scientific survey. Respondents self-selected and therefore the opinions contained in the survey may not represent the entire community or even a majority of residents. Further, it is apparent that some surveys were received from residents of the greater Coupeville community outside the Town’s corporate boundaries. However, the intent was not to achieve a statistically significant representation of Coupeville residents but to solicit ideas, concerns, and direction from those who wished to share their perspectives. And perspectives were freely shared.

Clearly, the respondents did not speak with one voice. Opinions varied appreciably although certain themes recurred within the body of responses.

1) We live in this community because Coupeville is special. What are the top five reasons you live here?

This first question was intended to encourage respondents to consider what attributes of the community they particularly value. Responses covered a wide range of topics, with small town as the most common response, followed by the people and the natural beauty as the next most prevalent responses. Respondents also wrote about access to public facilities, access to outdoor recreation, association with the area’s history and Ebey’s Landing National Historical Reserve, walkability, public safety and low crime, local agriculture, and community events, among other reasons they chose to live in Coupeville. Responses to Question 1 are provided in Attachment B.

2) The Town of Coupeville provides the following primary services to its residents, businesses, and property owners. Please indicate your level of satisfaction with each and rank them 1 through 11, with 1 being the highest priority.

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of the services listed under Question 2 as well as their level of satisfaction with each service. For priority, responses identified drinking water treatment and conveyance as the most important service, followed, somewhat distantly, by
police, sewer, and administrative services. Services rated lowest in priority were stormwater, trash removal, and finally support for public events. Some care should be taken in considering what these data represent or any implicit direction for future decisions, as one quarter of surveys did not provide a response to this question, many others only addressed a small number of the services, and some appear to use the priority ranking to emphasize concerns about the highlighted services. Other responses indicate that Town’s approaches to stormwater management and trash and recycling programs do, in fact, significantly concern a number of respondents. Finally, priority ranking is intended to address the importance of one service relative to another rather than the degree to which a service is important, although some respondents used the priority system to creatively communicate the level of significance. One respondent noted that all services are important and questioned the reason for assigning a relative value. Other respondents indicated that enforcement of public nuisances should have been included as a service.

Clearly, drinking water quality, in terms of both aesthetic and contamination issues, and source capacity are topics of significance to the community and therefore rated highly in terms of priority. It is notable that the service with the lowest satisfaction rating, land use regulation, is in the lower half of the priority ranking.

**Figure 1. Town Services by Priority of Importance**

As evident in Figure 2, below, respondents generally indicated a high satisfaction rate for most Town services. Although the lowest priority for importance, respondents rated support for public events as the service with which they were most satisfied. Land use regulation and design review had the fewest satisfied and the most somewhat satisfied responses. Drinking water treatment and conveyance had the greatest dissatisfied response rate, although a greater satisfied rate than land use regulation. Respondent’s comments clarifying and augmenting their responses to satisfaction and priority are provided as Attachment C.
3) The Town provides a variety of parks, open spaces and recreational opportunities. What would you like to see added, expanded, or improved in the Town’s park and open space system.

The following preferences were provided for the listed facilities, with trails, access to the beach, and wildlife viewing facilities as the most commonly identified improvements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recreational facility</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Off-road trails and connections to larger trail networks</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Penn Cove</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife habitat areas and bird-watching facilities</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boat launch</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog park</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kayak storage at Captain Coupe Park</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toddler playground</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor fitness equipment</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pickleball court</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disc golf course</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3. Preferences for Recreational Improvements

In addition, respondents identified a variety of other facilities and recreational programs, as listed in Attachment D.

4) With the understanding the Town has a limited annual budget, apart from recreational facilities, what new service or facilities would you like to see the Town provide?

Responders’ requests and suggestions for new services and facilities are provided as Attachment E. Responses cover a wide variety of topics including new and improved infrastructure, new and enhanced programs, new private businesses and services, regulation, nuisances, economic development, and general opinions. Many of the responses echo comments provided under other questions.
5) “Walkability,” meaning a well-connected pedestrian network, is a Town policy priority. Where would you like to see new pedestrian paths in the Town?

Responders’ requests and suggestions for new services and facilities are provided as Attachment F. Responses included recommendations within the town limits and throughout adjacent areas. Some respondents stated that new pedestrian facilities are not a priority. Others encouraged consideration of maintenance over new construction and sidewalks over gravel trails for ease of use.

6) Evidence suggests there isn’t enough available affordable housing in Coupeville for middle- and low-income households. Which of the following approaches to increasing the availability of affordable housing do you favor?

About one-fifth of respondents do not believe any action is necessary or appropriate to foster additional affordable housing opportunities for lower income households. Of those who believe certain measures are preferred, there was little unanimity on approach. The measure supported by almost half of respondents is relaxation of restrictions on accessory dwelling units (ADUs). Apart from removing the owner-occupancy provision and allowing both the main residence and the ADU to be rented, options include relaxing the size and zoning restrictions on detached ADUs and increasing the allowed size of ADUs. The second most common preference is to allow smaller single-family lot sizes in certain zones. Currently, the minimum single-family lot size is 9,600 square feet in any residential zone.

**Figure 4: Affordable Housing Strategies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relaxing restrictions on accessory dwelling units</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowing smaller lot sizes for single-family homes in...</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxing restrictions on duplexes in single-family</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prohibiting vacation rentals in residential zones</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing the areas of the Town zoned for townhouse</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowing increased densities for affordable multi-family</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsidizing permit and utility fee for new permanent</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing affordable housing options are adequate</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Associated comments are provided as Attachment G. Responses addressed support for and opposition to a variety potential measures to address affordable housing. A number of responses encouraged consideration of “tiny houses.” Tiny houses on foundations are not restricted under currently regulations in that they are treated the same as any other site-built or manufactured home. Wheeled tiny homes that do not have a permanent foundation would be regulated the same as a travel trailer. Staff understands the tiny house issue as one of lot area requirements and land costs rather than restrictions on the building type. Again, the minimum lot size in a residential zone is 9,600 square feet which may be considered inconsistent with the scale of a tiny house. The Town Code currently does not allow multiple single-family homes on one lot, irrespective of size, except for cottage housing developments. Comments also addressed inclusionary zoning, which would require a share of new units in any development to be affordable by moderate- or low-income households, or the provision of incentives, e.g., density
bonuses, to maintain a portion of units as affordable. These measures may be worth further analysis but it is likely that allowed densities, relatively low land costs, and development site sizes are not sufficient to make inclusionary zoning or incentives financially feasible. A number of respondents expressed opposition to any measures that would increase density or residential capacity.

7) Environmental sustainability and climate change are priority issues for many citizens. The Town has made capital investments, adopted regulations, and supported programs to promote sustainability such as curbside recycling, stormwater treatment, LED street lights, and fuel efficient Town vehicles. What else should the Town do?

Extensive comments were provided on sustainability measures, as shown in Attachment H. The most common suggestions were curbside glass and yard waste recycling, electric vehicle charging stations, and promotion or facilitation of the use of solar panels on buildings. Many respondents encouraged public education initiatives. Not all respondents expressed support for using additional Town resources to promote sustainability.

8) The Town uses various methods to inform and involve citizens regarding events, issues, meetings, and other information of interest to the community. Please check all of the ways you currently get your Town news.

Figure 5 below displays the sources used by respondents to receive Town news. As most respondents identified more than one news source, the chart displays the number times the source was listed rather than the number of respondents who rely solely on any source. Clearly, the Town newsletter and newspaper are the most common avenues for the respondents to receive Town news.

**Figure 5: Relative Use of Town News Sources**

- Press releases
- Cable Channel 10
- Town Council meetings
- Posted notices
- Town email list
- Newspaper
- Town newsletter (in utility bill)
- Town website

Respondents were also asked to identify other ways they would like to receive news. Responses are provided as Attachment I. Respondents suggested improvements to the website and a Facebook presence. Some asked how to subscribe to the email list, indicating that they were not aware of the service. The Town may wish to provide additional outreach to facilitate
subscriptions. Other ideas include a semi-annual newsletter, neighborhood meetings with the Mayor or one or more Councilmembers, mailed information, and better use of signage.

Who returned surveys?
The average respondent is in his/her mid-60s (21 to 84 years), has lived in Coupeville for 16 (0.25 to 84) years, owns their home (94 percent), with a household of two (one to five) persons.
The Town extends its appreciation to all of those residents who invested time and thought into the survey responses.

**Recommendation**
Information only. No action required.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

A. Final 2018 Coupeville Community Survey
B. Question 1 written responses
C. Question 2 written responses
D. Question 3 written responses
E. Question 4 written responses
F. Question 5 written responses
G. Question 6 written responses
H. Question 7 written responses
I. Question 8 written responses
J. Comment letters and documents attached to surveys