

SURVEY RESULTS

In February of 2013, the Planning Board mailed 8,500 surveys to Westport Residents. The survey questions were developed with the help of SRPEDD, Town Planner, Sarah Raposa and Planning Board Members, Elaine Ostroff and David Cole. Respondents were invited to complete the survey online or by hand and mailed to the Planning Board. Of the 8,500 surveys that were distributed through the mail, 1,473 or approximately 17 % of the surveys were completed and returned for analysis. The survey is just one of the many methods that will be used to gather input from town residents on issues the town may be facing.

Average Respondent Characteristics

The typical respondent was a year-round resident who has lived in town for more than 10 years, is over the age of 45 (Figure 1), and does not have school age children. Results showed that more than 78% of the respondents did not have school age children. Of the 22% that did only 62% attended Westport Schools.

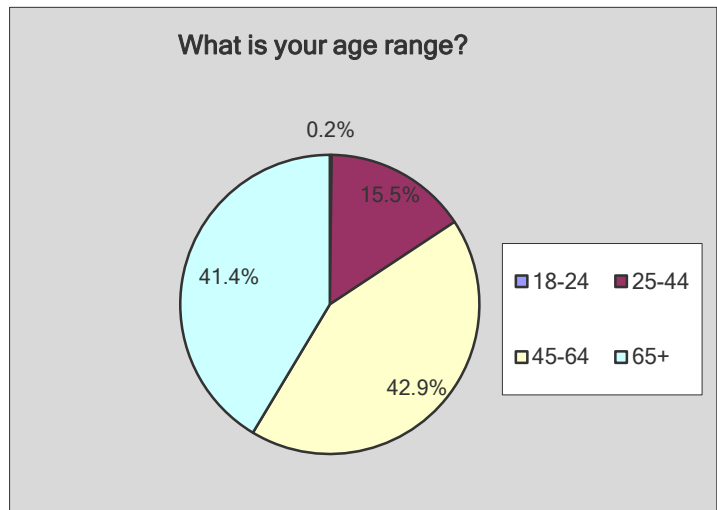
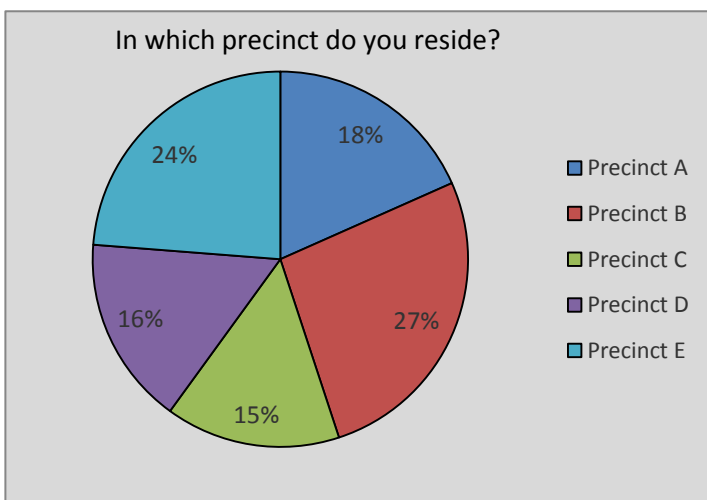


Figure 1. Age of Survey Respondents



Precincts

The response rate from the community was fairly well dispersed with the five precincts responding at rates between 15% for Precinct C and 27% for Precinct B (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Survey Respondents by Precinct

Growth and Development

Residents were asked to indicate their level of concern with regard to specific types of growth in Town (Figure 3). In general, more than half of the respondents were either somewhat or very concerned about the various impacts of growth on the community.

Answer Options	Not At All Concerned	Not Very Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Very Concerned	No Opinion
An increase in school enrollment	13.6%	26.0%	33.4%	22.9%	4.2%
An increase in traffic	7.4%	24.3%	35.5%	31.5%	1.4%
Access to beaches and recreational facilities	10.3%	25.7%	33.5%	28.8%	1.8%
The size & scale of commercial development	9.0%	23.8%	32.3%	33.0%	1.9%

Figure 3. Survey Respondents' Feelings about Impacts of Growth

Just over half of Westport's residents feel that Westport's growth rate is "about right;" almost 1/3 feel that Westport is growing too fast; and 7% feel that Westport is growing too slow (Figure 4).

In looking at what type of development the respondents would like to see, development patterns that were favored the most included low density and single family residential development. High density and mixed use-residential/commercial development were the most strongly opposed types of development (Figure 5).

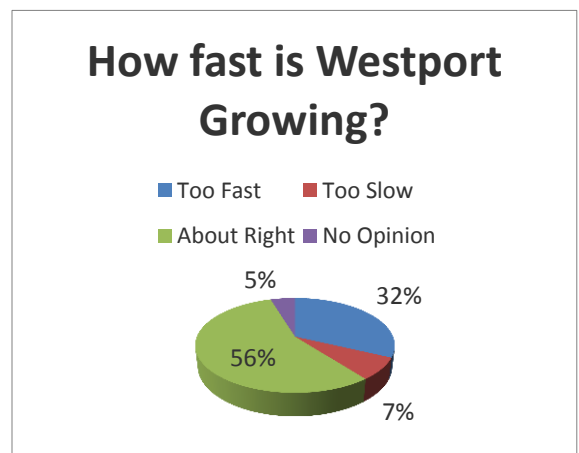


Figure 4. Survey Respondents' Feelings on Westport's Growth Rate

Please tell us how you feel about the following types of development that could occur within Westport.						
Answer Options	Strongly Favor	Favor	Neutral	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No Opinion
Low density residential-1 ½ acre or larger lots (~ 60,000 sq. ft.)	39.6%	29.7%	17.6%	6.6%	4.4%	2.1%
Medium density residential-1 acre or larger lots (~ 40,000 sq. ft.)	9.0%	26.9%	24.0%	19.0%	16.4%	4.6%
High density residential- 1/2 acre or larger lots (~ 20,000 sq. ft.)	3.1%	8.8%	14.6%	20.5%	43.6%	9.4%
Mixed use-residential and commercial that is on the same lot	3.9%	14.2%	28.3%	22.7%	24.4%	6.4%
Commercial retail	8.6%	31.5%	31.7%	14.3%	10.2%	3.7%
Commercial office	9.1%	33.0%	33.4%	12.6%	8.9%	3.1%
Single family residences	34.1%	41.5%	18.2%	3.2%	1.8%	1.2%
Multifamily residences (apartments, condos, townhouses)	4.9%	16.7%	23.5%	26.0%	23.7%	5.2%
Accessory Apartments	6.3%	18.9%	32.2%	20.5%	15.6%	6.4%
Age restricted housing that is for adults 55 years and older	13.8%	36.4%	33.5%	8.7%	5.4%	2.1%
Affordable housing: housing affordable to a family earning less than 80% of the area median income. This is \$57,500 per year for family of 4.	8.5%	21.3%	27.4%	18.6%	19.9%	4.3%

Figure 5. Survey Respondents' Feelings on Development Types

Is Westport Doing Enough

Residents were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with current efforts by the town (Figure 6). Approximately 45 - 68% of survey respondents felt that the Town was handling the needs of the Town about right, depending on the service in question while 26 – 46% believed the Town was not doing enough. Those areas where respondents felt town services were lacking included addressing water, wastewater and storm water problems and the provision of educational opportunities.

Please indicate your level of satisfaction with current efforts by the town in the following areas:				
Answer Options	Too Much	About Right	Not Enough	No Opinion
Expansion of commercial opportunities	15.5%	51.0%	28.6%	5.0%
Protection of Town's natural resources	7.6%	55.3%	35.2%	1.9%
Implementation of nitrogen reduction measures to protect the health of the Westport River	6.6%	50.9%	36.7%	5.9%
Addressing water, wastewater and stormwater problems in locations with critical problems	4.6%	44.8%	45.7%	4.9%
Provision of educational opportunities	2.3%	45.3%	45.0%	7.3%
Provision of library services	2.2%	67.6%	25.5%	4.7%
Provision of recreational facilities and services such as parks & playgrounds	2.0%	59.2%	34.5%	4.2%

Figure 6. Survey Respondents' Feelings on Existing Town Services

Property Taxes & Town Improvements

The greatest proportion of survey respondents favored public services, such as schools, open space, capital improvements and recreation, without higher taxes. However, a large portion of respondents favored the provision of services even if it meant higher taxes, particularly services related to improving school facilities and education standards (Figure 7).

Please indicate if you favor or oppose the following activities in Westport and if yes, are you willing to pay higher property taxes.				
Answer Options	Oppose, not needed	Favor, but not for higher taxes	Favor even if higher taxes	No Opinion
Improving school facilities and education standards	10.6%	45.3%	41.2%	2.9%
Purchase open space for conservation	18.0%	47.9%	29.1%	5.0%
Maintenance and capital improvements for town buildings	7.3%	61.1%	29.1%	2.6%
Improving recreation activities	16.3%	55.1%	24.0%	4.6%

Figure 7. Survey Respondents' Feelings on Public Services and Investments