

**SULTAN CITY COUNCIL  
AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET**

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**ITEM NO:** D-3

**DATE:** August 27, 2009

**SUBJECT:** Public Involvement/Community Opinion Survey

**CONTACT PERSON:** Robert Martin, Community Development Director

**ISSUE:**

At its August 13 Meeting, the Council reviewed a Staff draft of the Survey Questionnaire for the Statistically Valid Survey of Community Opinions and Interests. The Survey is part of the City's Public Participation Process for the 2011 Comprehensive Plan Update (Discussion Agenda Item D-3 of the August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2009 Meeting can be reviewed for further background if desired).

The Council was asked to reduce the number of questions by focusing on areas of particular interest and discarding areas of less interest. Council's input was that the questions focusing on the options for the Comprehensive Plan Update were of prime importance and that the questionnaire should be as brief as possible to insure the best rate of response.

To that end, Staff has prepared a revised version of the questionnaire. All but one of the "City Service" questions and all but one of the "Communication" questions were removed. Two policy questions were added; one dealing with Climate Change Mandates; and one dealing with Housing.

Input from our Consultant indicates that the length of the questionnaire presented in this draft is well within their experience for successful surveys. Subject to input by the Council at this meeting, the Consultant will be responsible for finalizing the number and format of the questions and responses.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

1. Review the draft questions prepared by City Staff; and
2. Provide input on fine tuning of the draft prior to submittal to the Consultant for their professional formatting.

**SUMMARY:**

Next Steps

1. After receiving Council feedback at this meeting, a test questionnaire will be developed by the Consultant.
2. Pre-testing will follow with the Survey being conducted approximately in the third week of September.
3. The Community Planning Focus Groups are scheduled to be appointed by the Council in September.
4. The results of the study will be available for work by the Planning Board and Planning Focus Groups by the time that they are ready for that information in October.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Revise the Scope-of Work for the Survey.
2. Develop some other approach to begin the required Community Involvement Process for the 2011 Comprehensive Plan Update.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. Review the draft questions prepared by City Staff and the Consultants.
2. Provide input prior to transfer of the basic questionnaire to the Consultant for language and format work.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

**ATTACHMENT A:** Second Draft of Survey Questions

## Draft Survey Questions

### Demographic

1. How many years have you lived in Sultan?
2. What age group are you in?
3. What's your gender?
4. How many people in your household?
5. What is your highest education level?
6. Where do you work?
7. What is your household income?
8. How do you get to work? SOV, bus, carpool, telecommute, bike, other
9. Do you own or rent your home?

### City Services

10. Have you had a phone or in-person contact with City employee(s) in the last 12 months? How would you rate your experience?

***(This is recommended to be an open-ended question. The bullet point items below will be on the screen of the survey taker so that they can enter the information quickly if one of these items is mentioned.)***

- Courtesy
- Making you feel valued as a citizen/customer
- Willingness to help
- Promptness
- Knowledge
- Professionalism
- Accuracy

### Communication

11. Where do you go for information regarding City issues, service and programs? Please identify primary, secondary, or not a source of information for you.

***(This is recommended to be an open-ended question. The bullet point items below will be on the screen of the survey taker so that they can enter the information quickly if one of these items is mentioned.)***

- Attending council meetings
- Cable channel
- City's website
- Other website or blog

- Utility bill
- Newsletter
- Newspaper
  - Everett Herald
  - Monroe Monitor
- Word of mouth

### **Policy Questions**

12. The City of Sultan has a limited budget. Resources must be allocated to first meet State or Federal Government Mandates and then to issues that are important to the Community. The City Council is considering funding the following list of discretionary programs in the 2010 Budget. Please rank the programs in order of importance to you:

- Setting aside a percentage of property and sales tax revenues in an operating cash reserve.
- Setting aside \$2500 each month in a contingency/rainy-day fund
- Adding a full-time Animal Control Officer
- Adding a full-time Code Enforcement Officer
- Increasing funding for street repair and maintenance
- Fund an economic development plan to identify strategies and priorities to add jobs encourage commercial development
- Improve the City's permit process for housing and commercial development.

13. If you think the City should devote more financial resources and effort towards achieving any of these programs how do you think the city should pay for the effort?

- New or increased taxes
- New or increased fees
- Reduce efforts to achieve other goals

14. If you think the City should reduce efforts to achieve other goals please tell us which goals you think should receive less effort.

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- Improve the City's permit process to housing and commercial development.
15. New development in downtown is basically prohibited by new State and Federal Flood Management Laws. As an alternative, a new town center could be developed out of the floodplain on Hwy 2, in the area of Rice Rd. This could include shopping, apartments, and recreation areas. Do you think that the City should devote Staff time and public funds to pursue this project.
- Lead the effort
  - Support the effort but do not lead
  - Assist if requested
  - Do not be involved at all
16. The City is considering development of a park in the north east part of the City. The park could include sports fields, trails, picnic facilities, and open space. To accomplish this project, there would have to be a property tax of approximately xx cents per \$1,000 evaluation. Would you support or oppose this effort?
17. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "The City of Sultan should provide more funds to supplement State and Federal dollars for the construction and maintenance of roads, even if it means increased local taxes".
18. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "The City should use tax payer dollars to lower impact and connection fees paid by new developments in order to encourage growth of the community"?
19. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "The City should not allow annexations or major additional residential development within the Urban Growth Area until tax revenues are sufficient to support additional urban populations and services"?
20. The City is required to update the Comprehensive Plan to address Climate Change issues. The City can do this in a variety of ways. What do you think the City should do?
- The minimum necessary to meet the requirements
  - More than the minimum required
  - Do all that the City can do to address the problem of climate change
21. Residents of Sultan spend a higher than average percentage of their income on housing (mortgage or rent). Housing costs are typically reduced when housing is placed on smaller amounts of land. Examples of this are multi-story apartments, clustered condominiums, and small houses on small lots. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement: "I would be interested in smaller or more closely spaced housing as a way of reducing my housing costs. The City should do all that it can to reduce the cost of housing"?