

BRIDGTON CONDUCTS COMMUNITY SERVICES SURVEY

Bridgton wants to know what its citizens have to say about the services that are provided to the community and supported by the local property taxes. The *Community Services Survey* gives all citizens that opportunity and the Town wants to hear from you!

The survey takes only a few minutes and covers areas such as public safety, public works, recreation and general government. According to Bridgton Town Manager Mitch Berkowitz, the idea of a survey started in January 2010. "By giving the survey out now, we get to hear from citizens, both year round and seasonal." Once compiled, the answers will help guide the development of the next budget for fiscal year 2012. There is only so much we can expect our taxpayers to support said Berkowitz and when it comes to modifying the services, we would like to hear from those who use them.

The surveys do not ask for a person's name, address or contact. Rather the general information asked helps us to look at the age groups of those who participate. The survey is available online at www.Bridgtonmaine.org, the Town's website. Print off a copy or pick one up at the local libraries, Community Center or the Town Office. You can mail your completed survey to the Town Office 3 Chase Street-Suite #1, Bridgton Maine, 04009 or drop them off at the Town Offices.

Once we tabulate the responses we will make them available on line so everyone can view the results. We will provide them to the Select Board and the Budget Advisory Committee as well. This is your chance to be heard and we encourage everyone to fill out the survey.

Mitchell A. Berkowitz
Town Manager

**COMMUNITY
SURVEY**

To: Residents and Property Owners of the Town of Bridgton
From: Mitchell A. Berkowitz, Town Manager
Re: Community Services and Priorities for Budgeting

As we will be engaged in the development of the FY 2012 budget for the year beginning July 1, 2011, the state of the economy is felt at all levels. Our fiscal efforts to balance a budget is extremely challenging since some revenue categories have significant reductions. We know that your expectations for services helps to guide the budget development. This survey was developed to determine what your expectations of your local government are and what you believe is important to you and the community for services. We will examine the answers the community provides and share them with the Select Board, Budget Advisory Committee and you: Bridgton's property owners and residents. We hope that you will take a few minutes to answer this survey, make your comments and help us understand what your priorities are for the Bridgton Community. Please complete this survey and return it to the Town Offices off Chase Street by August 31, 2010. ***We want to hear you clearly.....***

General Government: This area represents the administrative functions of town government including the Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, tax collections, vital records, elections, assessing, code enforcement and Community and Economic Development. It also represents 19% of the total budget.

G1. Do the town office hours, currently Monday through Friday 8 AM to 4 PM and on the last Saturday morning in April, May and, June from 8 AM to 11:30 AM meet the majority of your needs? ___Yes ___No
If no, how can the schedule be improved?_____

G2. We will be adjusting the time that the Assessor is available to meeting with tax payers from four Tuesdays per month to two Tuesdays per month. In addition, we will still have the Assessing Clerk available during regular business hours. This saves the Town \$3,000 per year. Will this schedule meet the majority of your needs. ___Yes ___No?
If no, how can we improve the schedule yet reduce the costs?_____.

G3. Bridgton is approaching that time where it must update its Comprehensive Plan. We propose to do all of the work in-house with a chosen committee. We estimate a savings of between \$20-\$30,000 though there may be a small expense for finalization and legal review. Do you believe this is the best way to address this important task? ___Yes ___No
If no, can you suggest a more cost effective way to update the Comprehensive Plan so this it complies with State law?_____.

G4. Over the past year, the Town has aggressively worked towards a strategy for the downtown, surrounding neighborhoods and the future of business and employment opportunities. Completion of the sewer fields was a major success and now we need to encourage building improvements. Do you believe the Town should continue to encourage re-development using federal funds (CDBG) in addition to the tax increment financing district funds that are generated for those purposes annually? ___Yes ___No

G5. Would you support an increase in property tax if it becomes necessary to maintain the town services as they exist today? ___Yes ___No

Public Safety: This area represents the costs of our police and dispatch department, animal control, fire, ambulance contract, health and emergency management. Excluding any reserves or debt service, this represents 26% of the total budget.

Note: We are already underway with a review of the law enforcement related services and costs and upon completion the recommendations will be available to the public and to the people involved in the budget development.

S1. In FY 2010 the Select Board was able to reduce the number of street lights by about 5%. Do you want the Select Board to continue their efforts leaving only the critical intersection street lights and high priority areas related to safety? ___Yes ___No
If yes, what areas do you recommend further lights be turned off?_____.

S2. The Town just completed the acquisition of a replacement ladder truck with a combination unit. Over the next few years, the fire department has indicated the need to replace the water tanker truck with a unit that will improve the response time initially and during a fire outside of the hydrant district. Do you want the Town to look at purchasing a new or used vehicle or to make that decision based upon the estimated cost per year over the life of the vehicle (30 years) even if we have to borrow money to buy this unit?
New:___Yes ___No Used:___Yes ___No

Any suggestions would be appreciated_____.

Public Works: This area represents public works, parks, cemeteries, vehicle maintenance, and transfer station. The sewer system is a separately funded area with only a part timer person responsible for its operations. It also represents 34% of the total budget.

P1. There are discussions as to whether the Town should own all future roads built in Bridgton so long as they meet a minimum construction standard. Do you recommend that the town should own all future roads built to these standards ? ___Yes ___No

P2. The town currently has 60 miles of publicly owned roads which means 120 lane miles that are maintained including plowing. To complete this work, the Town buys one plow vehicle per year at a cost between \$135,000 and \$170,000 and we operate this for 10 years before trading it in. Are you willing to support the need for possibly expanding the fleet of trucks to meet the additional miles of new roads? ___Yes ___No

P3. The Town has already hired a consulting firm to review, compare costs and make recommendations as to the most cost effective approach to providing law enforcement services to the community. Do you recommend the town do the same kind of study for the public works services provided? ___Yes ___No

P4. The Transfer Station annual operations cost are about \$630,000. This includes hauling and disposal costs for all items brought to the station. Do you feel that we should charge non-profit groups, entities and agencies when they bring in trash and recyclables for the use of the Transfer Station based upon the actual weight brought in while property tax paying entities are

Town Office Hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assessors Hours Weekly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Downtown Redevelopment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire Tanker Truck	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Street Lights	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Own all roads in Town	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Minimum Road standards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trash disposal Fee-non profits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Current Transfer Station Schedule	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Five days/week Only at Transfer Station	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fee for All Programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Waive fees for some Recreation Programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Overall how do you feel about your local government and the services provided?

Very Satisfied Satisfied Mixed feelings Dissatisfied Very Dissatisfied

Tells us about yourself please:

Property Owner? Yes No
 Year-round resident? Yes No
 Renter? Yes No

Parent/guardian of school age students? Yes No
 Retired? Yes No

Caretaker of parents? Yes No

Do you currently volunteer for the Town? Yes No

Do you regularly attend Town Meetings? Yes No

Are you a registered voter? ___Yes ___No

Are you connected to the Internet? ___Yes ___No

How do you hear about the issues and services facing the town?

___Local News Paper ___Town Website ___LTRV Local Access Channel ___Other

If you are a tax payer, do you like the idea of receiving the Transfer Station Punch Card as part of your annual tax bill? ___Yes ___No

Additional comments are welcomed: _____

_____.

Please return this survey to the Town Offices by August 27, 2010. We appreciate your time and interest in helping guide the budget development process for FY 2012.

Thank You....

Mitchell A. Berkowitz
Town Manager

Bridgton Board of Selectmen