



Memorandum

To: Vail Town Council

From: Greg Clifton, Town Manager
Suzanne Silverthorn, Communications Director

Date: February 20, 2018

Subject: Final Review of 2018 Community Survey

I. **BACKGROUND**

The Town of Vail Community Survey has been used to probe public policy issues and solicit feedback on additional topics of community interest. It has also been used to measure the town's operational performance as compared with previous years. The most recent surveys were conducted in 2014 and 2016. A 2018 survey has been budgeted to coincide with the new Town Council term and to benchmark municipal service levels. At the February 6, 2018 work session, the Town Council reviewed a working draft of the survey questions, proposed methodology and identified additional topics to probe. The purpose of this work session is to review the updated survey draft and provide any additional direction in preparation for the survey's distribution in the March-April time frame.

II. **TOWN COUNCIL TOPICS & THEMES**

Following the February 6 work session, the 2018 draft survey has been modified to include the following topics and themes identified by Town Council:

- Transit – Q. 16 – Potential for increased bus ridership with increased frequency
- Community Issues & Opportunities – Q. 27 contains an introduction that identifies Council prioritization of “careful budgeting” and “economic vitality.” The survey question (Q. 27) asks respondents to prioritize areas of focus. It has been modified to reflect input from Council and staff. The bank of questions also asks about the level of support for a dedicated funding source for Events, as well as a funding source for Deed Restricted Housing. These questions could be asked in terms of a “tax increase subject to voter approval,” or as shown in the survey draft it could not specify what the source of the funding would be. Note: This topic has been flagged for additional discussion with Town Council.
- Planning-Related Programs – Q. 28 – includes the addition of “optimizing the use of developed town-owned lands and facilities for the long-term needs of the community.”
- Financial Prioritizing – Q. 29 – Includes revised description, re: “new indoor event space,” a revised description for parking management and new transportation (bus) categories.
- Deed Restricted Housing – Q. 30 – revised to reflect current housing efforts by the town.
- The Environment – Q. 32 – presents two alternative questions related to the environment.
- Emergency Preparedness – Q. 35 – has been added, re: resiliency suggestion. The question provides an introduction to acquaint the respondent with the topic. It then asks

about awareness of hazards related to multiple event types – wildfire, flood or hazardous materials.

- Parking & Transportation – Q. 37 and Q. 38 – has been added, re: bike share and car share programs
- Ownership and Property Rental Information – Q. 45 – has been added, re: neighborhood character/quality of life impacts
- Participation incentives – To increase participation in the survey, staff proposes promotion of 10 drawings (up from 5 drawings in 2016) from March 12 through April 9 with survey-takers eligible to win \$100 each in the 10 separate drawings. We would call out the first drawing that would occur based on the first 100 surveys received, adding some incentive to responding promptly.

III. COMMUNITY SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The proposed methodology for the 2018 survey would use two techniques: 1) A “statistically valid” survey distributed to a random sampling of approximately 4,500 households (2,500 residents and 2,000 part-time residents) using an initial postcard mailing inviting recipients to enter a password to complete the survey online. (Note, as in the past, two passwords per household would be provided to encourage broad participation). This mailing would be followed by a second postcard reminder to encourage further response. RRC has used this two-card mailing technique with success in other communities. 2) Promotion of an open invitation to complete the survey online without a password restriction. In addition, staff recommends the return of an incentive program implemented at Council’s suggestion in 2016 in which a weekly drawing is promoted for one of 10 \$100 Visa gift cards to encourage participation.

The initial postcard invitation mailing would be based on a list of Vail households to be obtained through the Town or other sources. In addition, paper copies of the survey would be made available upon request as an alternative to the on-line survey; this would be described on the postcard invitation. Additionally, the survey would be available for distribution in Town of Vail buildings as a mail-back option. These techniques have been used successfully in the past in Vail. The proposed methods will permit comparability to past research and represent an inclusive outreach to citizens with several different types of invitations to participate. The results will provide a proven tool for understanding community sentiment.

IV. TIMELINE

A proposed schedule for the 2018 survey project is as follows:

Feb. 6 Afternoon Session	Review of draft survey and discussion of community issues/topics by Town Council
Feb. 20 Evening Session	Survey review and refinement by Town Council
Week of Feb. 27	Finalization of survey
Week of March 5	Mailing postcards to Vail households to invite participation (includes a sampling of second homeowners and business representatives). Reminder postcards to be sent approximately March 21.
March 26	Promotion of survey to enlist participation by all interested parties using open link address

March 26 to April 16	Distribution of paper copies in municipal facilities for mail-back
April 18	Last day for survey participation
June	Presentation of report

V. ACTION REQUESTED OF TOWN COUNCIL

Staff is seeking direction from the Town Council regarding finalization of the 2018 Community Survey questions, schedule and methodology.

VI. ATTACHMENTS

2018 Revised Survey Draft
2016 Survey Results