



Engagement Summary Report Update

March 8, 2021. 5:23 p.m.

Proposed 2021 Budget

As of March 8, public engagement has been open almost six weeks.

The public Question & Answer feature on the website was closed February 9 so that staff could prepare the engagement summary report that is attached as appendix B.

However, that did not mean the engagement was closed. Staff continued to answer questions and receive input by email.

Between February 10 and today, another 240 emails were received.

This is in addition to the 154 emails received by February 9. (for a total of 394)

A petition from the West Vancouver Community Stakeholders containing 245 emails was also received. (bringing the total to 639)

Staff updated the key themes of the budget engagement that includes both the Engagement Summary Report and the inputs received between February 10 and March 8.

As concluded in the Engagement Summary Report, The highest number of mentions is still “Do not support tax increase and feel taxes are already too high”, and the other themes have not changed significantly.

While still a minority position, the level of support expressed by writers increased in the second phase (February 10 to March 8).

Those comments support the proposed budget and its objectives overall, or specifically mentioned the Arts & Culture Centre, or the proposed new FTEs to support environmental initiatives.

It should be noted that the majority, although not all, of letters of opposition were generated by form letters with the same subject line.

Staff are also aware of some duplicate letters, defined as a person submitting more than one letter reiterating opposition to the proposed tax increase.

After reviewing the input received since publishing the Engagement Summary Report, staff confirm that the recommendations in that report remain the same.

Theme	Total mentions of each theme
Do not support tax increase & feel taxes are already high	368
Focus on core services	219
Requests to cut staff	190
Use of same email subject ("How I feel about 2021 Property Tax Increase of 5.2%") and/or pre-scripted content	155
Belief that municipal costs should go down when the population goes down	150
Use of same email subject ("2021 Budget should not exceed 1% Inflation rate") and instructional prompts in email body for sender to add contact details	107
Opposition to adding more staffing	93
Creation of an arts centre - negative	70
Support for proposed budget	50
Misunderstanding of what the increase is	30
Creation of an arts centre - positive	29
Use of email form and pre-scripted content	16
Expression of support for letter from Ambleside & Dunderave Residents Association and/or "Heather Mersey"	14
support for environmental positions	14