

What We Heard Report

Regional Water Supply 2025 Strategic Plan: Community Engagement (Phase 2)



Capital Regional District | May 2025

Background

The 2017 Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan set the overall direction and objectives for Infrastructure & Water Services for the past seven years. The 2017 Strategic Plan considered many of the trends, challenges and values that are still relevant today, such as providing high quality, safe drinking water, providing an adequate long-term supply of drinking water and providing an efficient, effective and innovative transmission system. At the same time, many things have changed in the region since the adoption of the 2017 Strategic Plan. For example, climate action and reconciliation with First Nations are key priorities of the CRD and need to be more robustly reflected in the 2025 Strategic Plan.

At the July 17, 2024, Regional Water Supply Commission (RWSC) meeting, staff proposed to undertake a two-stage public engagement process to gain feedback on the 2025 draft Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan. Phase 1 engagement ran from August to September 2024 and focused on informing the public about the planning framework, understanding community priorities and asking for feedback on preferred ways to participate (in person or virtual). For information on our Phase 1 engagement, check out our [What We Heard Report](#). Phase 2 engagement ran from February 18 to March 31, 2025, and focused on seeking feedback from interested parties regarding the proposed mission, commitments, priorities and actions in the draft Strategic Plan that will guide Infrastructure & Water Services over the next decade.

The CRD is committed to involving the public in the development of the Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan. The aim of the engagement process was to inform interested parties and the public about the Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan update process and to seek input and information from affected individuals and groups to assist the CRD with setting the future direction for the Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan. Other goals of the engagement process included information sharing, dialogue and discussion, building ongoing relationships, developing understanding and trust and producing a Strategic Plan that reflects organizational needs and public interests. The engagement process allowed interested individuals to actively contribute to the Strategic Plan ahead of a final draft to be brought forward later in 2025 for approval by the RWSC.

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The CRD is also committed to engaging and involving First Nations in the development of the Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan. First Nations engagement is underway and will be reported on separately from this report.

This report includes a summary of the engagement processes and responses received along with a Conclusion & Next Steps. Feedback received from the engagement process is highlighted in Appendix B.

Engagement Approach

Several tools and approaches were used to raise awareness about the Strategic Plan and invite participation, including:

- A series of pop-up information booths at SEAPARC, Panorama and Esquimalt Recreation Centres
- Participation in UVic's World Water Day event on March 20 to advertise the Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan and upcoming watershed tours
- A public information session via Zoom on March 6, 2025
- Print ads
- Social media
- [Interview](#) with Times Colonist Newspaper
- Media releases and email to Get Involved subscribers sent out on August 29, 2024 & February 18, 2025
- A [project web page](#) was established on the CRD's Get Involved online platform on August 29, 2024, with information and a survey for Phase 1 engagement that ran from August 29 – September 30, 2024. The page was subsequently updated on February 18, 2025, with additional information, the draft strategic plan and the Phase 2 survey that ran from February 18 – March 31, 2025
- Samples of engagement materials are provided in **Appendix A**

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Project Web Page & Survey

The project webpage includes an overview of the Regional Water Supply, a high-level overview of the Strategic Plan, our new mission statement, our commitments to customers, CRD staff contact information, frequently asked questions (FAQs) and key documents and videos informing the Strategic Plan update. Between February 18 and March 31, 2025, there were approximately 1,580 visitors to the Get Involved project page, of those who visited, 452 completed the survey.

The survey was open to all members of the public including residents, businesses, homeowners, tenants, farmers etc. The survey included 16 questions, with a mixture of quantitative and qualitative questions. Close-ended questions were measured through a five-point rating scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree or by offering pre-determined categories. Close-ended questions were used to reduce the response burden for participants. Open-ended questions were also included to allow respondents the option to offer additional comments and clarify their responses. Questions about participants' demographic characteristics such as age and what municipality they live in were also included in the questionnaire. For a detailed analysis of the survey results, please refer to Appendix B.

Community Pop-up Information Booths

A series of pop-up community information booths were held between February 18-27 CRD at SEAPARC, Panorama and Esquimalt Recreation Centres. Each recreation centre had two days of staffed booths where the public was able to engage with CRD staff ask questions about the Regional Water Supply, the Strategic Plan and the feedback survey. Between staffed times, the informational booths were left static with brochures and information about the Strategic Plan. Additionally, general water conservation information sheets and brochures were also available for the public to take.

To celebrate World Water Day on March 22, UVic reached out to the CRD to participate in their World Water Day Event. A community informational booth was set up at this one-day event on March 20 to advertise the Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan and upcoming watershed tours.

In total, the community informational booths reached approximately 130-200 people; this number does not include the number of passive engagements for recreation centre information booths. Passive engagements are defined as people visiting the information booth while it was unstaffed.

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Municipal Partners Information Session

On February 24, 2025, a municipal information session was held for regional engineers and Chief Administrative Officers. In total, 15 municipal staff attended the information session, with representation from Colwood, Langford, Highlands, Sidney, Esquimalt, Central Saanich, North Saanich, Saanich, Victoria, View Royal and Oak Bay. The information session consisted of an overview of the proposed 2025 Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan, a question-and-answer session and an opportunity to provide feedback. Generally, the participants were supportive of the proposed Strategic Plan, but highlighted the importance of engaging key partners in managing communications with the public regarding Master Plan investments.

Virtual Information Session

One online information session was held via Zoom on March 6, 2025. The one-hour information session provided an overview and context about the CRD Regional Water Supply Service, the proposed Strategic Plan and was followed by a question-and-answer session. A total of 5 participants attended the information session. The information session was recorded and posted to the Get Involved platform, for those unable to attend the information session.

Emails

A project email account was created for receiving comments and inquiries about the Strategic Plan update, waterplanning@crd.bc.ca and 2 emails were received from members of the public. Delegations and written submissions provided to the CRD Board are not included in this report.

Social Media

Weekly social media posts on CRD's Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn accounts were posted between February 18 and March 31, 2025, directing people to the project webpage and online survey. Two social media posts were boosted (paid ad spend) to generate greater reach. The boosted posts generated 56,665 reaches (unique viewers) and 253,677 impressions (total number of times the ads were seen). In addition, the municipalities of North Saanich and View Royal and the Quadra Cedar Hill Community Association created social media posts encouraging their residents to take the Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan survey.

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Advertising

A media release was issued by the CRD on February 18, 2025, to announce Phase 2 engagement opportunities for the Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan update and engagement process and encouraged the public to complete the online survey. Multiple news outlets received the media release and it was picked up by [Oak Bay News](#), [The District of Sooke](#) and [Township of View Royal](#). Additionally, the General Manager of Infrastructure & Water Services did an [interview](#) with the Times Colonist on March 20, 2025 to help raise awareness about the Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan engagement survey.

Print ads were published in all Black Press Newspapers and the Times Colonist Newspaper as per the publication chart below. The ads directed readers to the project webpage to complete the online survey via a QR code and URL.

Publication	Date
Times Colonist	February 22 & March 1, 2025
Saanich News	February 19 & 26, 2025
Victoria News	February 20 & 27, 2025
Goldstream Gazette	February 19 & 26, 2025
Sooke Mirror	February 20 & 27, 2025
Peninsula News Review	February 20 & 27, 2025

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Conclusion & Next Steps

Overall, public responses to both phases of engagement indicate strong public support for the strategic plan commitments. Responses received from phase one of engagement indicated strong public support for the commitments and helped shape engagement in phase two. Results of Phase 1 engagement are available on our [project web page](#) and a summary of findings from Phase 2 engagement are available in Appendix B of this report.

Feedback about the draft strategic plan in Phase 2 also indicates strong public support for investments in: clean, safe and reliable water, adaptation to climate change, watershed management and associated infrastructure investments, with most respondents indicating that the above investments or values were very important or important to them. Additionally, when considering the value, importance and benefit of clean, drinkable water, most respondents felt that their water rates were “just right” in terms of pricing.

Comments and responses also revealed key themes related to shared commitments to resilience, good governance and sustainable planning. A consistent message was the desire for continued engagement and transparent communication as initiatives related to the strategic plan move forward.

Public feedback from both phases of engagement along with the inputs from the First Nation consultation will be considered and incorporated in the final revisions of the 2025 Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan.

The final draft of the 2025 Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan will be presented to the Regional Water Supply Commission for review and approval later in 2025 and if approved, will be posted to the CRD website and Get Involved project page.

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Appendix A: Engagement Materials

CRD
Making a difference...together

Together we provide reliable, high-quality drinkable water to help ensure the health and sustainability of the growing communities we serve today and in the future.

[Flip over to learn more](#)

2025 Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan Update Overview

- 1 More than 430,000 people in the region rely on clean, drinkable water every day.
- 2 The CRD is updating a long-range strategic plan to ensure the delivery of safe, reliable high-quality water to the region for generations to come.
- 3 This plan will guide water-related decisions for the next 30 years. Your voice is important to us.

DID YOU KNOW?

50,500 MEGALITRES
treated on average per year

=

252 MILLION BATHTUBS

Don't take your drinking water for granted, have your say!

Join us for a virtual info session or take the online survey. Share your feedback by scanning the QR code or visiting getinvolved.crd.bc.ca/regional-water-supply-strategic-plan

Figure 1: Public Engagement Postcard

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Regional Water Supply 2025 Strategic Plan: Community Engagement (Phase 2)

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Mission Statement
"Together we provide reliable, high-quality drinkable water to help ensure the health and sustainability of the growing communities we serve today and in the future."

**Regional Water Supply
DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN**

Don't take your drinking water for granted, have your say!
Share your feedback by scanning the QR code or visiting getinvolved.crd.bc.ca/regional-water-supply-strategic-plan

Commitments and Priorities

COMMITMENT 1:
Provide high quality, safe drinkable water

PRIORITY 1
Protect and manage the watershed to ensure sustainable high-quality source water.

PRIORITY 2
Ensure drinking water quality with a multi-barrier risk-based approach.

PRIORITY 3
Advance our understanding of the water supply area and source water to prepare for the future.

COMMITMENT 2:
Provide an adequate, reliable, long-term supply of drinkable water

PRIORITY 1
Continuously plan and prepare for future water supply needs.

PRIORITY 2
Enhance public connection to, confidence in and responsibility for water supply and value of water.

PRIORITY 3
Optimize our available water supply through water conservation.

PRIORITY 4
Implement a sustainable and equitable long-term financial plan.

COMMITMENT 3:
Provide efficient, effective and innovative operations of our water system infrastructure

PRIORITY 1
Make evidence-based and community-responsive infrastructure decisions to ensure reliable system performance and sustainability.

PRIORITY 2
Assure sustainability and capacity of water management operations through sufficient resources, robust processes, strategic partnerships, effective tools, and continuous innovation.

PRIORITY 3
Enhance the security and sustainability of the water supply by effectively managing risks and enhancing emergency response capabilities.

PRIORITY 4
Attract, develop, and retain a diverse, knowledgeable and empowered workforce.

DID YOU KNOW?
50,500 = 252
MEGALITRES MILLION LITRES
(based on average 100% yield)

Don't take your drinking water for granted, have your say!
Share your feedback by scanning the QR code or visiting getinvolved.crd.bc.ca/regional-water-supply-strategic-plan

Figure 2: Public Engagement Trifold Brochure

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CRD REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

The draft plan outlines proposed strategic priorities that are intended to ensure the Regional Water Supply Service is responsive to challenges and opportunities facing the system while maintaining focus on the three long term commitments:

1

Provide high quality, safe drinkable water

2

Provide an adequate, reliable, long-term supply of drinkable water

3

Provide efficient, effective and innovative operations of our water system infrastructure

Engagement & Implementation

A key part of the development of the Strategic Plan is to engage with the public to share the plan, answer questions you may have on our system and gather your feedback on your priorities related to your drinking water.

The current draft strategic plan is available for feedback on our engagement platform and we are hosting a virtual information session in early March. The feedback deadline is March 31, 2025. The revised final Strategic Plan incorporating feedback from our public engagement will be presented to the Regional Water Supply Commission for approval in Spring of 2025.

Don't take your drinking water for granted, have your say!
Visit getinvolved.crd.bc.ca/regional-water-supply-strategic-plan for more information.


Figure 3: Public Engagement Display Board

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Planning for Our Ongoing Drinking Water Needs

The Capital Regional District (CRD) is updating its long-range Strategic Plan to ensure the delivery of safe, reliable and high quality water to the region for generations to come.


More than 430,000 people in the region rely on clean, drinkable water every day. A key part of the development of the Strategic Plan is to engage with the public to share the plan, answer questions, and gather feedback on your priorities related to your drinking water.

The current draft Strategic Plan is available for feedback on our engagement platform. We are also hosting a virtual information session in early March.

Don't take drinking water for granted. Have your say!

Give your feedback on the proposed strategic plan using the link or code below. Please provide your comments by **March 31, 2025**.

getinvolved.crd.bc.ca/regional-water-supply-strategic-plan



Scan to learn more!




Figure 4: Black Press Newspaper Ad

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Don't take drinking water for granted. Have your say!

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getinvolved.crd.bc.ca/regional-water-supply-strategic-plan



Scan to learn more!



Figure 5: Times Colonist Newspaper Ad

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Appendix B: Regional Water Strategic Plan Survey Summary

Prepared by: Catapult Strategy for the Capital Regional District - April 2025

A total of 452 online surveys were completed between February 18, 2025, and March 31, 2025. Below is a summary of the online survey responses.

Section 1: Demographics

Q1: Where do you live?

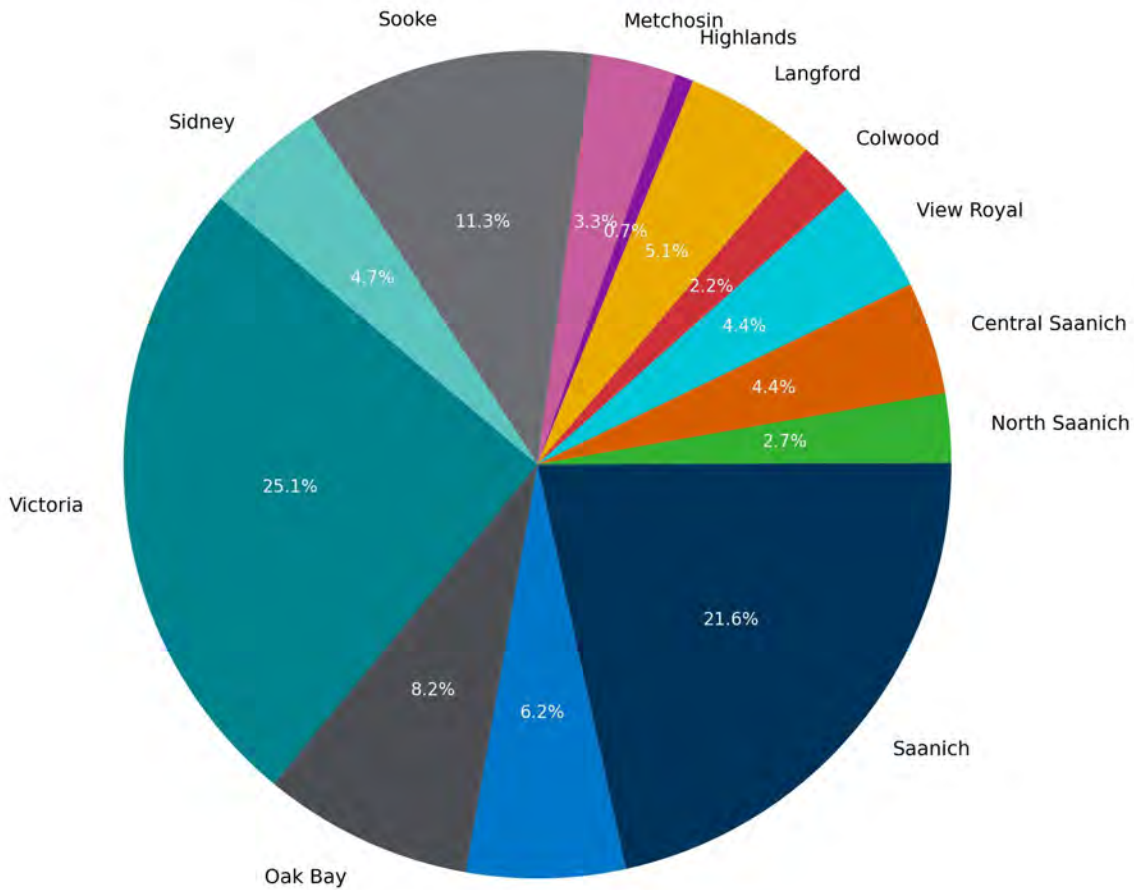
The survey reached residents across the region, with strong participation from Victoria at 25.1% and Saanich at 21.6%. The respondent distribution suggests a well-rounded geographic representation although Sooke at 11.3% and Oak Bay at 8.2% are slightly overrepresented and Langford at 5.1% are slightly underrepresented relative to their population.

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Community	# Responses	% Responses
Central Saanich	20	4.4%
Colwood	10	2.2%
Esquimalt	28	6.2%
Langford	23	5.1%
Metchosin	15	3.3%
North Saanich	12	2.7%
Oak Bay	37	8.2%
Saanich	97	21.6%
Sidney	21	4.7%
Sooke	51	11.3%
Victoria	113	25.1%
View Royal	20	4.4%
Highlands	3	0.7%

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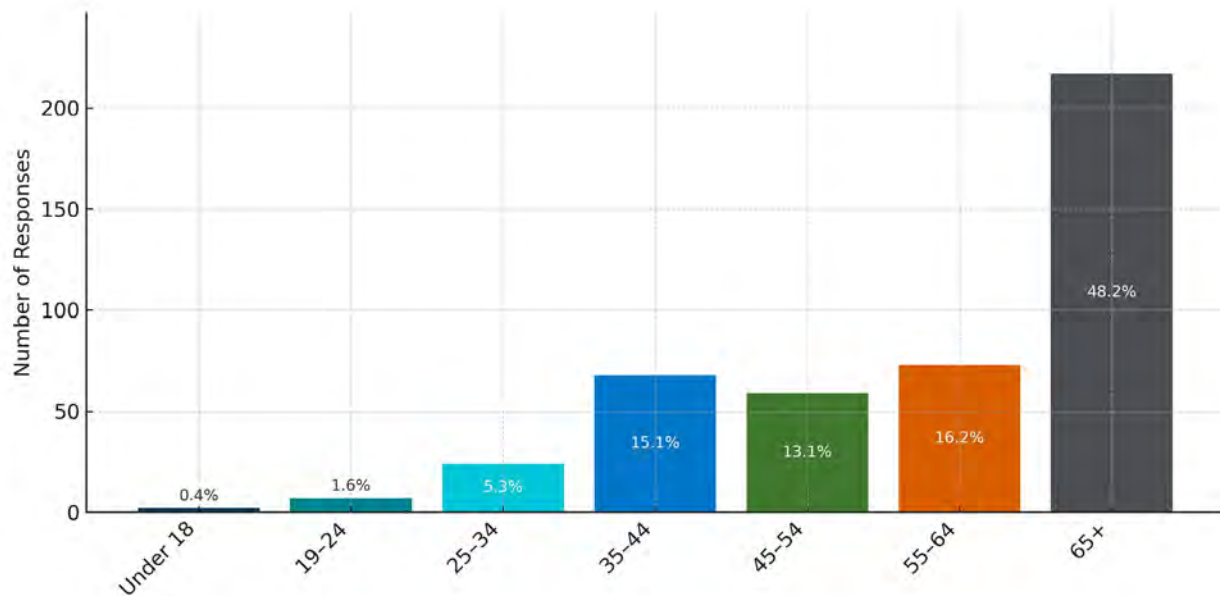
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Q2: What is your age range?

Survey respondents skewed older, with nearly half 48.2% of respondents being aged 65+, followed by 55–64 years at 16.2% and 35–44 years at 15.1%. This strong engagement from older residents likely reflects a high level of interest in infrastructure, planning and regional services among retirees and long-term community members as well as availability of time to complete the survey.



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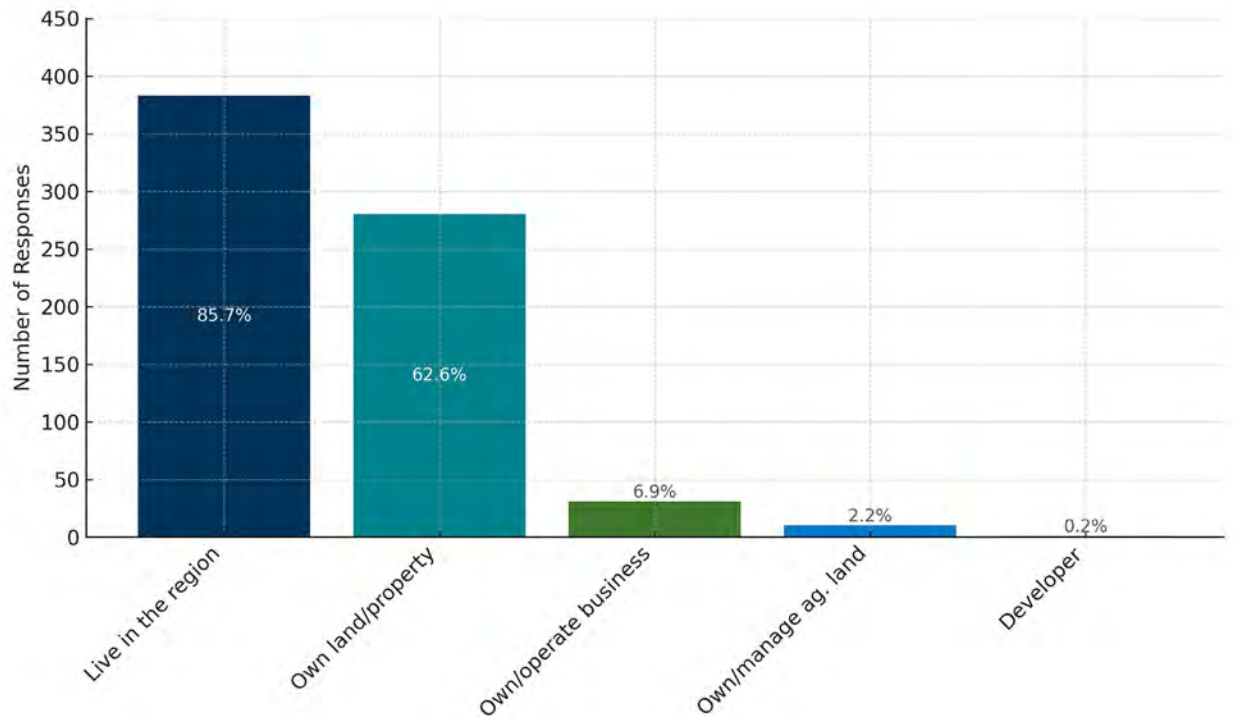
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Q3: How would you best describe your connection(s) to the Regional Water Supply Service?
(Respondents checked all responses that were applicable to them).

The vast majority of survey respondents (85.7%) indicated they live in the region, with 62.6% stating they also own land or property.

Smaller segments of the population reported owning or operating a business (6.9%) or managing agricultural land (2.2%). Less than 1% identified as developers.

These results suggest the feedback largely reflects residential perspectives, with business and agricultural viewpoints comparatively underrepresented.



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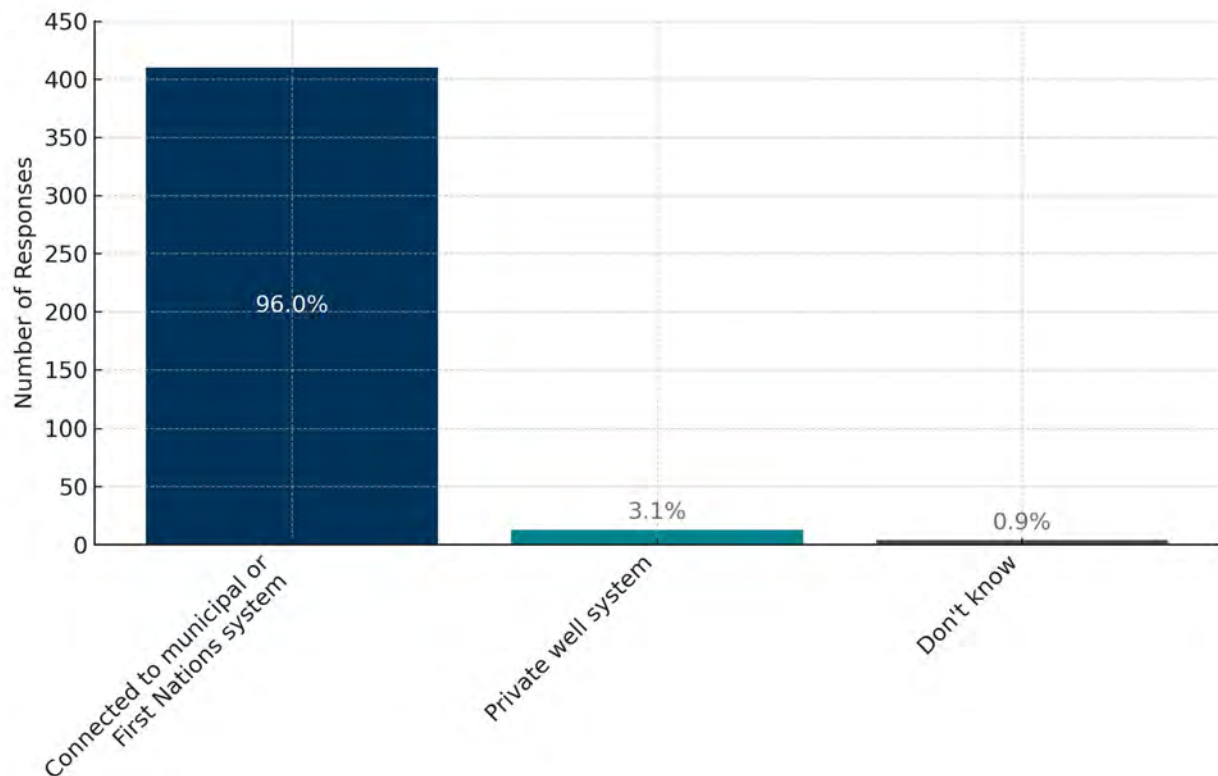
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Q4: What is your current drinking water source?

The vast majority of respondents 96% report being connected to a municipal or First Nations drinking water system. A smaller portion 3.1% use a private well system, while 0.9% indicated they were unsure of their source. This suggests most respondents have consistent access to regulated systems, although private well users may face different challenges around supply and safety.



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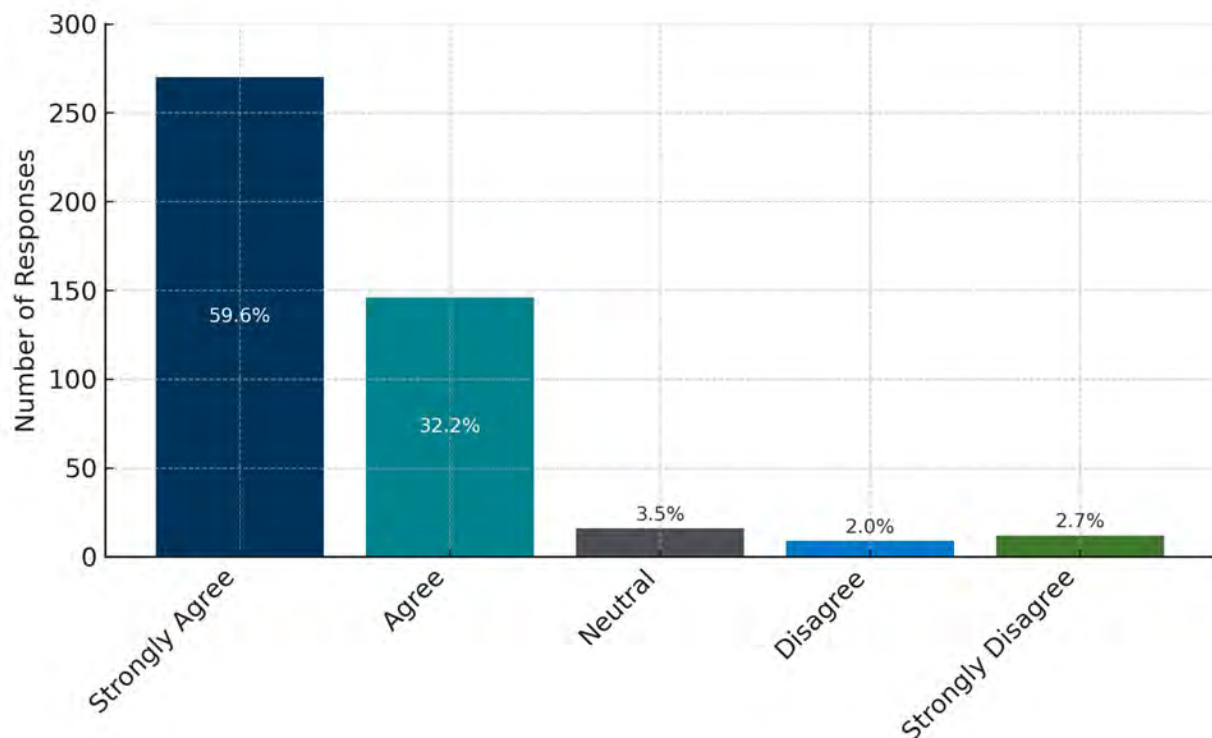
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Q5. Rate your level of agreement or disagreement: "Historically, the Regional Water Supply Service has met my expectations."

A strong majority of participants expressed confidence in the historical performance of the Regional Water Supply Service, with 91.8% either strongly or somewhat agreeing that it met their expectations. An additional 3.5% were neutral, suggesting a relatively modest portion of uncertainty or disengagement. Very few respondents indicated dissatisfaction, with only 4.7% expressing disagreement. These results reflect a generally positive perception of the service's historical delivery.



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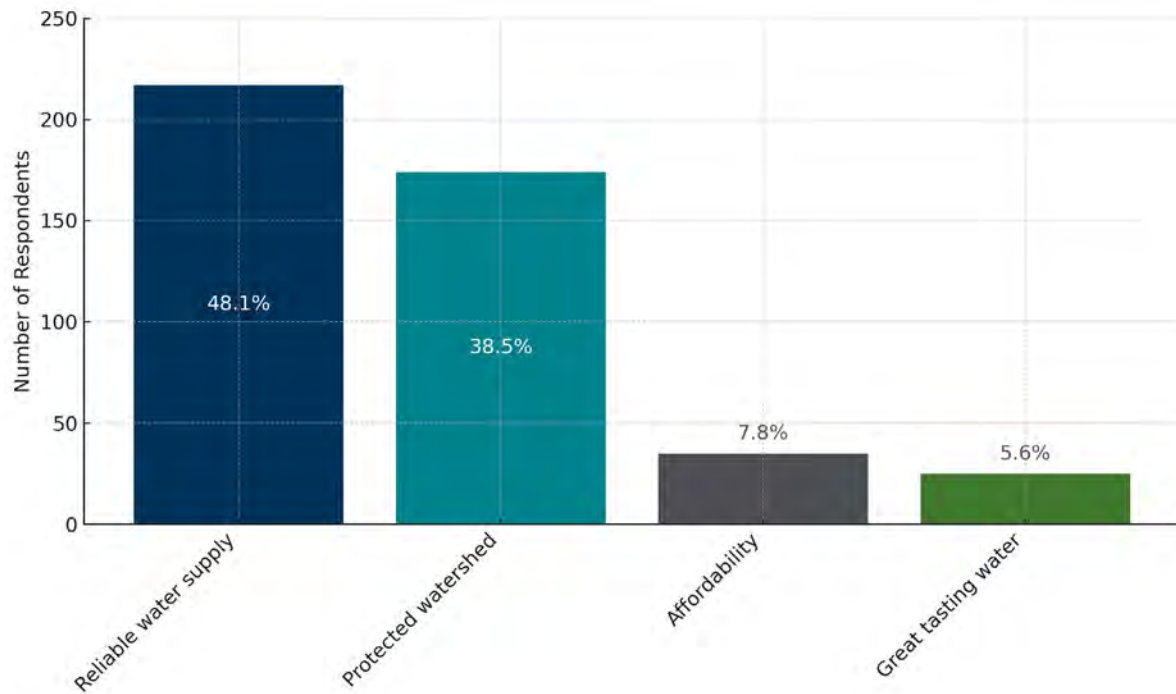


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Q6. Rank what aspect of the Regional Water Supply Service you value the most.

(Respondents ranked from 1-5 with 1 being most valued).

A clear majority of respondents 48.1% selected a reliable water supply as their top priority followed by a protected watershed at 38.5%. Fewer respondents ranked affordability and great tasting water as their top priorities. The results highlight a strong focus on core services and environmental protection.



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Q7. Are there other aspects of the Regional Water Supply Service you value that were not mentioned in the previous question? If yes, please explain.

Responses were grouped in the common themes noted below.

- **Water Quality Testing and Monitoring**

Some respondents mentioned their appreciation for regular water quality testing and real-time data sharing, reinforcing their trust in the system.

- **Emergency Preparedness**

A few respondents emphasized the importance of robust planning and system redundancy to handle emergencies like earthquakes, wildfires, or system failures.

- **Equity in Access and Planning for Growth**

There were remarks related to ensuring equitable access across communities (urban and rural) and incorporating future population growth into infrastructure planning.

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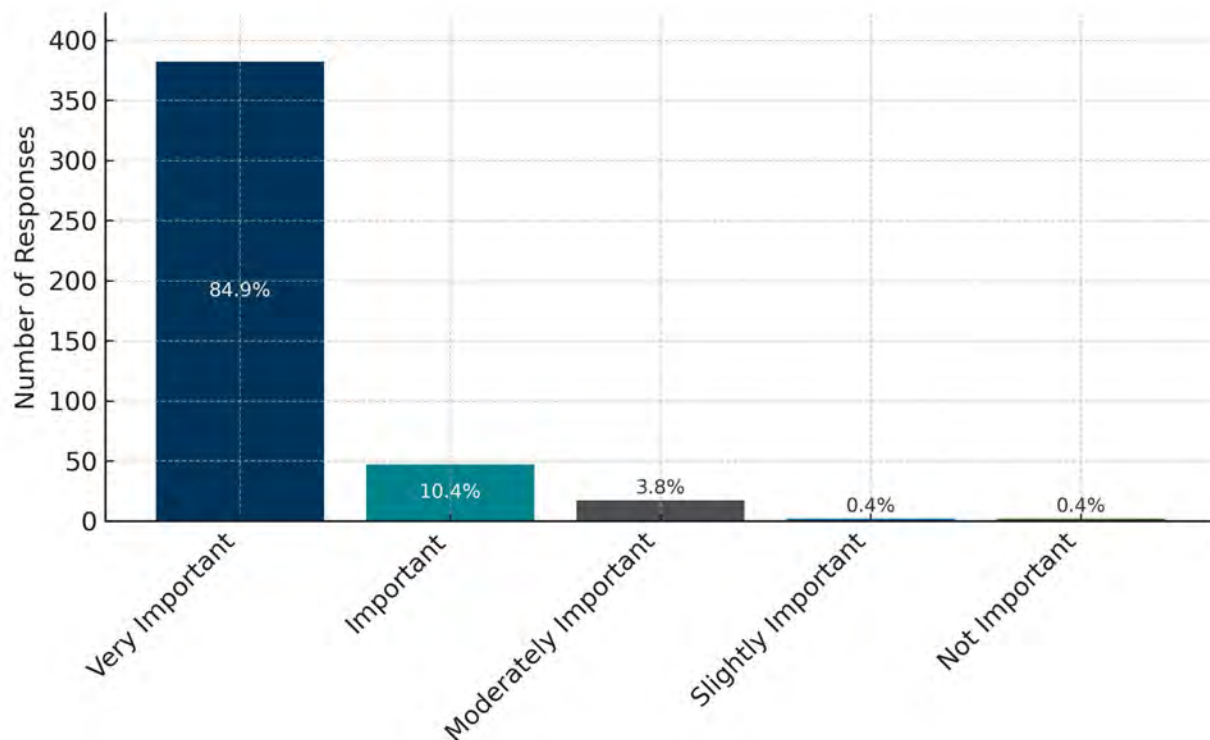


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Section 2: Priorities

Q8: Reflecting on our current water supply and future water needs, how important is it that the CRD continues to invest in high quality, safe and reliable drinkable water?

There is near-universal agreement on the importance of continuing investment in safe and reliable drinking water. An overwhelming 95.3% of respondents said it is either very important or important for the CRD to continue investing in safe and reliable drinking water. This confirms exceptionally strong regional support for core infrastructure maintenance and renewal.



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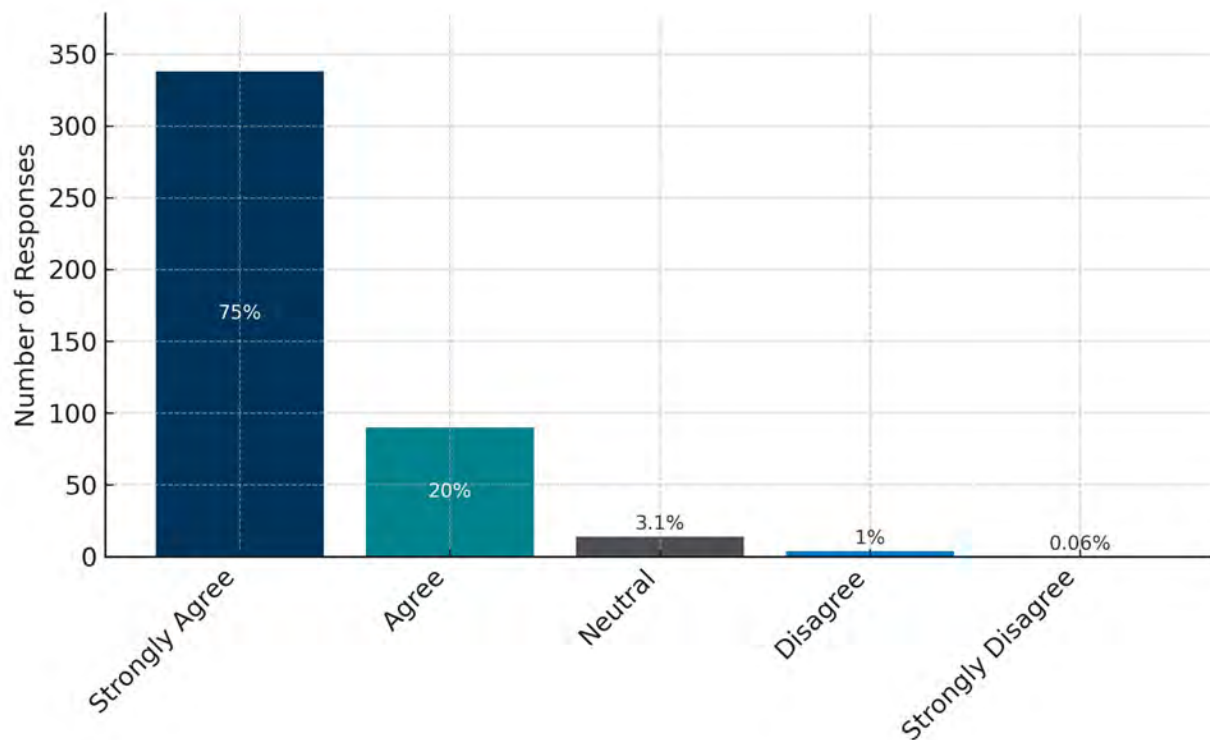
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Q9: Ensuring clean, safe and reliable water is a complex process involving investments in watershed management, reservoirs, underground infrastructure, treatment, safety protocols and more. Do you believe the above long-term investments are good for the region?

The vast majority 95% of participants strongly agree or agree that long-term investments in water systems are beneficial. This reinforces public support for strategic planning and budgeting that takes future needs into account.



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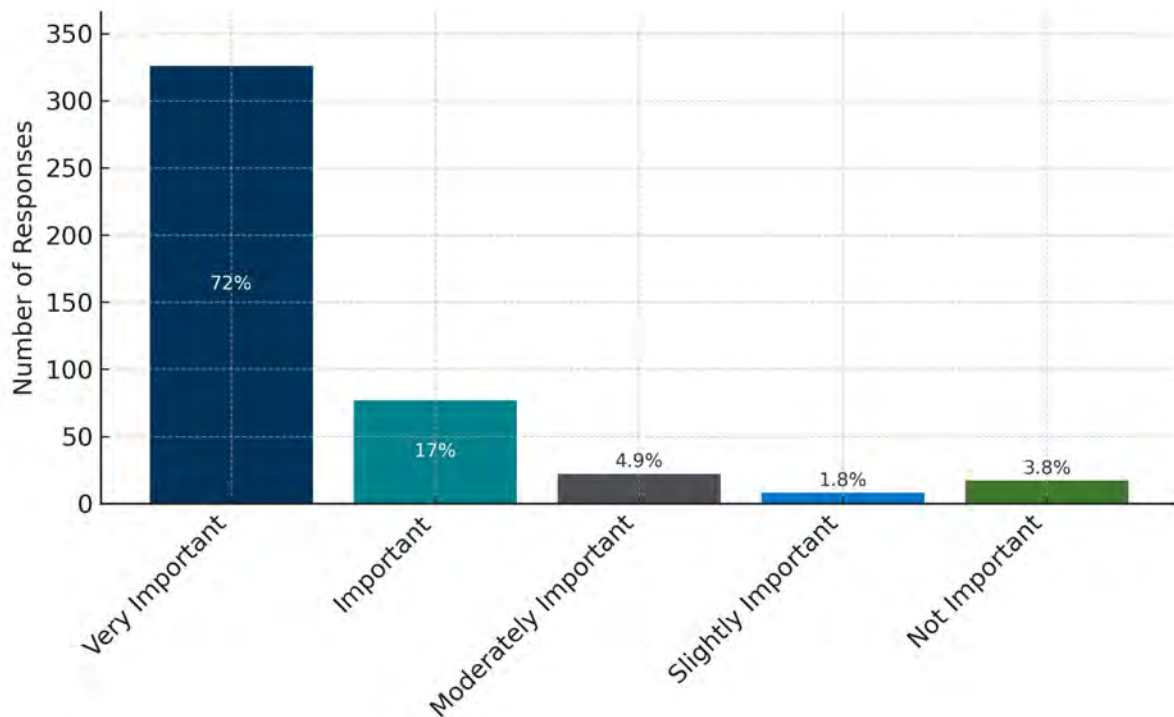
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Q10: Changing weather patterns, warming temperatures and a growing population are changing the supply, demand and usage of water. How important is it to you that the CRD adapts to climate change and prioritizes investments in long-term strategies to ensure a reliable water supply for future generations?

The vast majority 93.9% of respondents consider climate adaptation very important, important, or moderately important with only 3.8% rating it as not important. This indicates broad awareness of how climate impacts may affect water security and strong endorsement of future-focused strategies.



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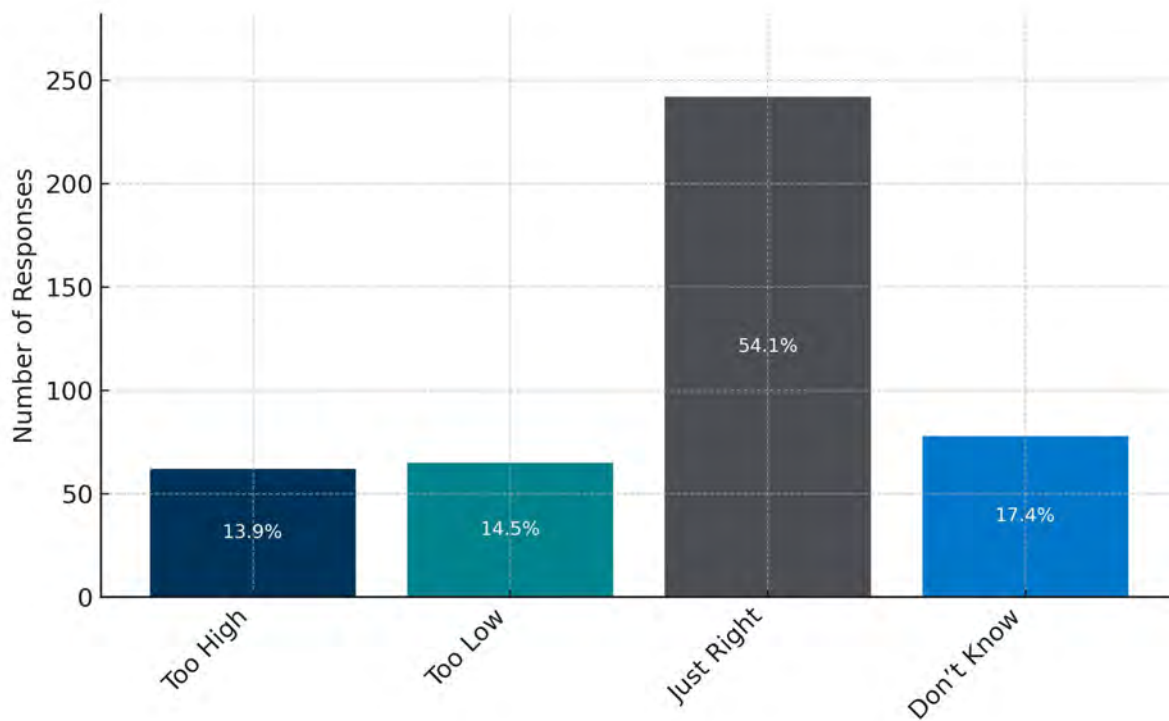
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Q11: To keep costs affordable, the draft Strategic Plan balances infrastructure investments and continuous innovation with fiscal responsibility and efficiency. When you consider the value, importance and benefit of clean, drinkable water, would you say the current costs for your home or business are:

A majority of respondents 54.1% felt that current costs were just right, while a smaller share viewed rates as either too high or too low. Notable 17.4% were unsure, suggesting some uncertainty or lack of awareness around pricing. Overall, affordability does not appear to be a major barrier to support for continued investment.



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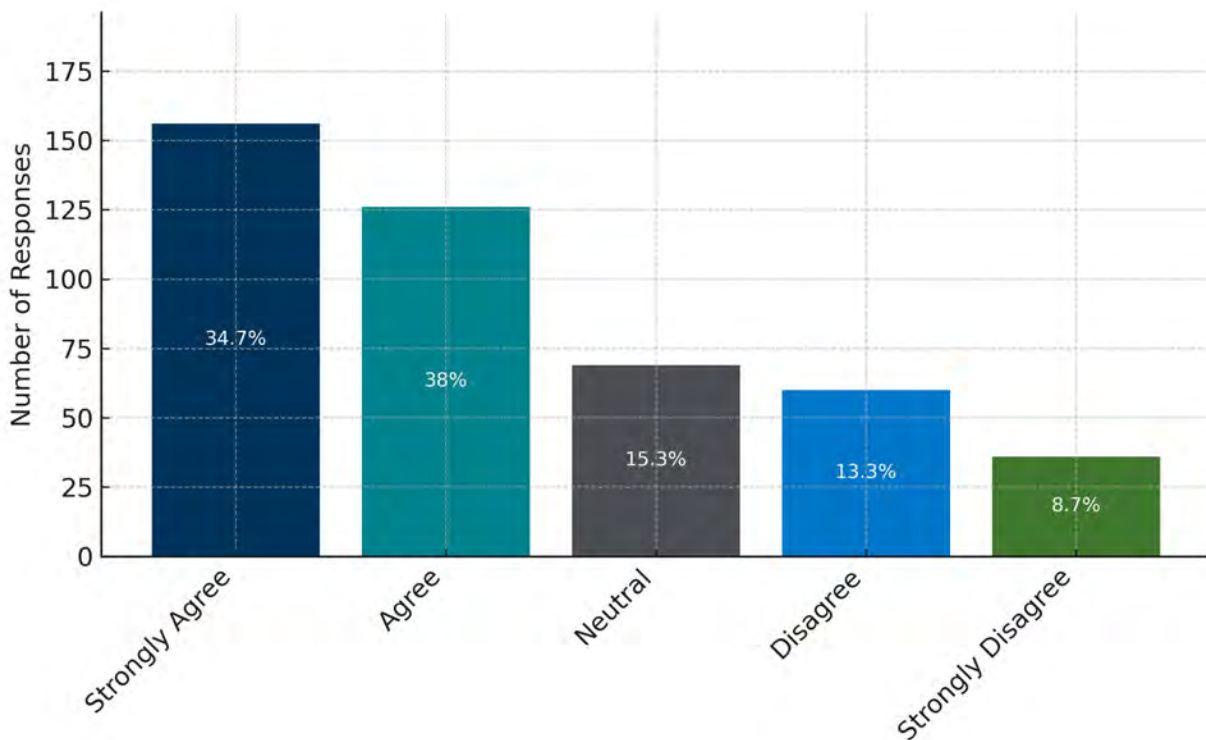
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Q12: Please rate your level of agreement or disagreement: "The CRD should promote and enforce year-round water conservation, even when water shortages are not expected."

Support for conservation is generally strong, with 72.7% of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing with the initiative. A smaller share 15.3% were neutral, while 22% expressed some level of disagreement. While overall support is high, the level of consensus is somewhat lower than seen in other areas, indicating room for continued public education or engagement.



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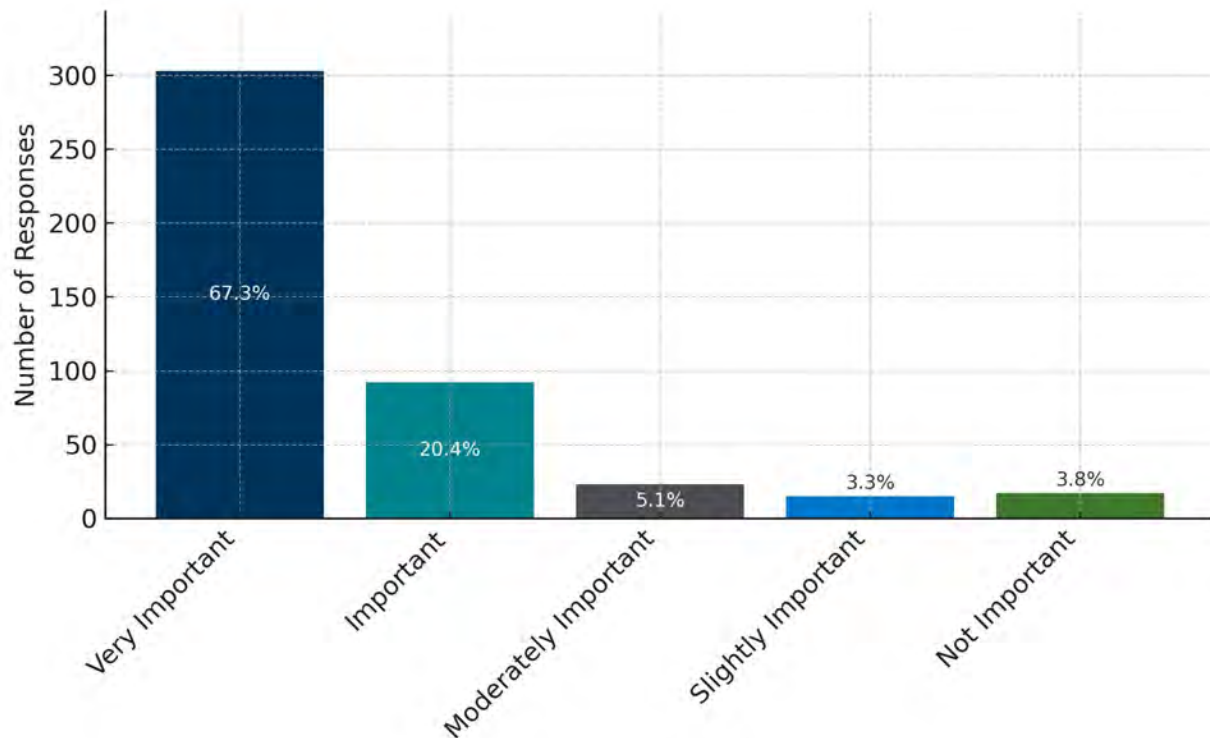
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Q13: For years, the CRD has been investing in measures to safeguard the region from potential water shortages or water supply interruptions resulting from natural disasters and impacts from climate change. How important is this to you?

Investment in emergency preparedness is widely supported. Residents recognize the value in proactively mitigating future risks and ensuring resilience to climate events or infrastructure failure. Most respondents 92.8% feel that emergency preparedness is very important, important or moderately important. These results suggest high public support for proactive planning to handle risks related to climate and infrastructure failure.



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Q14: If there were something you could improve about the Regional Water Supply Service, what would it be?

When asked what could be improved, respondents most frequently pointed to a need for clearer communication and greater transparency, particularly regarding water quality and decision-making. Others suggested enhancing rural service equity, investing in leak detection and infrastructure renewal, and doing more to protect watersheds and prepare for future climate challenges. A few also expressed confusion over water taste and chlorine use, asking for more public education.

A. Planning for Growth & Future Demand

Several respondents called for more clarity on how the CRD is planning for population growth and future water demand:

"Is the service able to meet future water demands in light of urban expansion and climate change?"

B. Emergency Preparedness & Resilience

There is strong interest in knowing how the CRD will provide water in emergencies or during major infrastructure failure:

"Yes, how do you provide water in the event of a critical pipe break or disaster?"

C. Accountability & Oversight of Development Impacts

Some residents expressed concern about how new developments are affecting water supply and infrastructure resilience.

"I've been hearing a lot about how development is straining infrastructure. Is anyone measuring that?"

D. Transparency & Public Communication

Many respondents asked for better access to information about forecasts, planning metrics and rationale for infrastructure priorities. Billing was a recurring concern, with several asking for more transparency in how water bills are calculated and what the charges represent.

"Better clarity on water billing. The charges are confusing and not well explained?"

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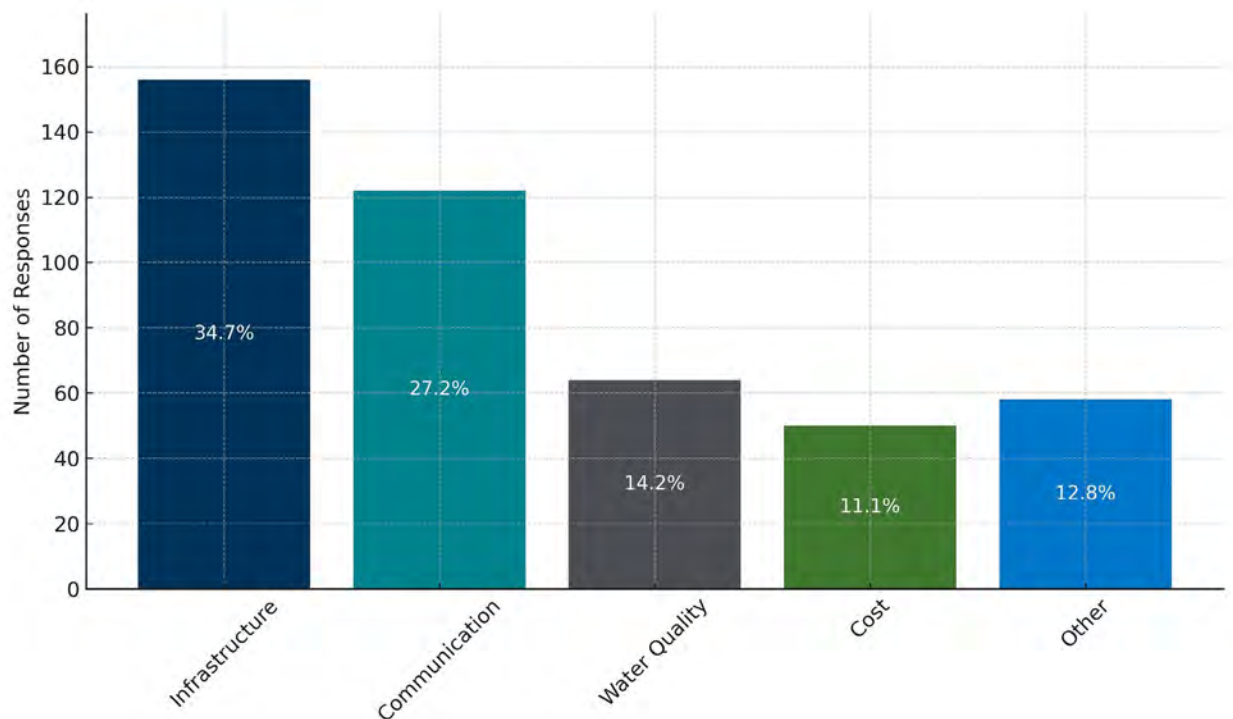


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E. Innovation and Infrastructure Investment

A smaller but vocal group called for more innovative thinking, including alternative sources like desalination or upgrades to aging systems:

"Are there any plans for constructing a desalination plant or better storage reservoirs?"



This chart above summarizes key themes that emerged from respondents' written comments. Responses were coded based on recurring topics such as cost, communication, water quality, transparency and infrastructure needs.

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Q15: Is there any other feedback you would like to provide about the Regional Water Supply Service, the draft Regional Water Supply Strategic Plan or this engagement?

Overall, respondents echoed many of the themes found throughout the survey, including a shared commitment to resilience, good governance and sustainable planning. A consistent message was the desire for continued engagement and transparent communication as planning moves forward.

Several respondents praised the quality of the water system and CRD's foresight:

"Overall, the quality and supply of water in Greater Victoria is very well done. Keep it up."

"We very much appreciate the CRD's past and present foresight regarding our regional water supply."

Others emphasized the need for future-focused investment and infrastructure resilience:

"Install a second main from the reservoir to prevent shortages like Calgary experienced in 2024."

"In the next 50 years, water is going to be the new oil/gold. We need to spend the money to invest in our supply."

There were also suggestions for increased public education, clearer communication and alternative engagement methods:

"Communicate more proactively. I only hear about water issues when something goes wrong."

"We need a regional approach to water supply and less fragmentation between jurisdictions."

A few voices urged spending caution or budget transparency, reflecting a desire for balance between ambition and fiscal prudence:

"The CRD needs to be more transparent about where water-related funds are going."

"Before raising costs, show us how current budgets are being used to improve service."

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16. What additional information or ongoing communication would help you better understand and support the CRD's decisions related to water?

A. Transparency on Water Bills & Costs

Respondents want clearer explanations of how their water rates are calculated and how funds are being used. There is interest in understanding what influences their bills and how they relate to infrastructure investments.

"More clarity on water billing. The charges are confusing and not well explained."

"Break down of what's included in our water costs and how they're determined."

B. Communication About Planning & Future Projects

Several participants requested ongoing updates about infrastructure upgrades, water demand forecasts and long-term strategic planning.

"Updates on where the CRD plans to expand or improve the system."

"Better communication about how climate change is factored into planning."

C. Real-Time or Frequent Water Usage & Quality Data

There was repeated mention of wanting more immediate or routine updates on water quality and consumption trends.

"A dashboard showing daily water use or system status would be helpful."

"Share water quality testing results more regularly."

D. Education & Engagement Opportunities

Some respondents asked for more public education, including explanations of CRD priorities, conservation tips and how residents can participate in decision-making.

"Workshops or online sessions explaining water systems and plans."

"Simple guides on what people can do to support conservation."

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E. Coordination with Local Municipalities

A few expressed confusion about whether communication should come from CRD or their local municipality, suggesting room for clarification and collaboration.

"Sometimes hard to tell what's municipal vs CRD. Make it clearer who does what."

Key Survey Themes

Insight: Strong Support for Investment in Safe, Reliable Water

Nearly all respondents view continued investment in safe and reliable drinkable water as critically important. Over 95% rated it as very important or important.

Quote: *"Grateful that the CRD is engaging citizens! The groundwork laid by earlier generations needs to be maintained and improved."*

Demographic Note: This sentiment is consistently high across all age groups and locations, showing strong regional consensus.

Insight: Clear Consensus on Adapting to Climate Change

A large portion of respondents 93.9% emphasized the importance of the CRD adapting to climate change and planning for long-term water supply needs.

Quote: *"We've inherited an incredible legacy from previous generations. Let's make sure we leave future generations with the same security."*

Demographic Note: Support for climate adaptation is strong across all age ranges with all age categories having an average rating of 4.4 or higher on a 5-point Likert scale.

Insight: Most Believe Water Costs Are Reasonable

A majority of respondents 68.6% felt that current water rates are either just right or too low, indicating that most people believe they're receiving good value for the cost.

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Quote: *"I think our water is priced fairly given the quality and security. I'm ok with paying for the Infrastructure that keeps it that way."*

Demographic Note: Younger respondents under 35 were slightly more price sensitive, but even among this age group, affordability concerns were relatively low.

Insight: Year-Round Water Conservation Garner's Moderate Support

While many agree with the idea of year-round water conservation, enthusiasm is more mixed. Responses show a wider range, with 34.7% strongly agreeing and 27.3% rating as neutral, disagree or strongly disagree reflecting a range of comfort levels with permanent restrictions.

Quotes:

- *"I strongly agree with year-round restrictions — we can't assume the water will always be there." (High Support)*
- *"I support conservation but don't think heavy restrictions make sense when reservoirs are full. Education is a better first step." (Moderate Support)*
- *"Neutral — I think it depends on whether there's actually a drought." (Mixed/Neutral)*
- *"It feels performative when there's clearly no shortage." (Critical View)*

Demographic Note: Support for year-round conservation was consistent overall. Younger respondents under 35 (4.0 average rating) were slightly more likely to strongly agree, while older age groups expressed a broader mix of views (65+ average rating 3.67).

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Insight: High Value Placed on Disaster Preparedness

Most respondents see value in CRD's investments to mitigate risks from disasters and climate events. It's seen as a responsible and future-facing strategy.

Quote: *"A clear indicator to users of how much water they're using daily would help. People are more likely to prepare if they understand their own usage."*

Demographic Note: This priority was expressed across all age ranges.

Demographic Insights

Insight: Perspectives by Age Group

While all age groups find water cost reasonable, younger residents aged 25-34 years and older respondents aged 65+ tend to be slightly more critical of costs but the difference across age groups is relatively minor. However, they still support water safety investment.

- Ages 65+: Cost rating = 1.99
- Ages 25-34: Cost rating = 2.11

Insight: Location Matters — But Mostly Reinforces Broader Themes

No single municipality dramatically departs from the regional averages on investment, conservation, or climate priorities. Saanich, Victoria and Oak Bay respondents show nearly identical support for investment in water safety and climate readiness, this indicates broad regional alignment, which is useful for the CRD in justifying a cohesive approach to water planning.

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NOTE: Understanding Average Scores

Average scores such as '2.15' or '2.53' represent the mean response on a 5-point Likert scale (or in select questions a 4-point scale). For example, when respondents were asked how they would describe the current cost of water for their home or business, the response scale was:

Likert Scale

- 1 = Too high
- 2 = Just right
- 3 = Too low
- 4 = Don't know

So, an average of 1.99 indicates that most respondents selected between *too high* and *just right*.