

2008 Town of Avon Community Survey: Executive Summary Report, July 2008

Purpose and Methodology

Purpose

The Town of Avon requested a survey be conducted to gather input from town residents and second homeowners.

The key issues identified for community input included the following:

- Most important issues facing the town
- Shopping Patterns
- Communications
- Growth Strategies
- Recreation
- Town services
- Town Improvements
- Values
- Town Assessment
- Demographics

Methodology

In 2008, the Town of Avon contracted with Venturoni Surveys & Research, Inc. (VSR) to perform the survey analysis.

Two groups were identified that would be key for obtaining input:

1. Local Town of Avon residents
2. Town of Avon second homeowners

The Town of Avon voter registration list was used to sample local residents. The second homeowners were obtained using the County Assessor list. Town of Avon homeowners were part of the sample and a question in the survey was used to have survey respondents designate themselves as local or second homeowner. Survey results from the County Assessor list sample were then cross-tabbed to present separate results for the two groups.

A mail/internet survey was designed for use by the two sample frames (Voter and Assessor). Random sampling techniques were employed to select the samples. Letters were sent to potential respondents directing them to go to the internet to fill out the survey. All respondents were assigned identification numbers (IDN) to assure that no duplicate responses were counted. After two weeks, if the potential respondent had not filled out the internet survey, they were sent a reminder letter, paper copy of the survey and postage paid return envelope.

The chart below details the size of the original sample frames, the number of surveys that were mailed, the number of surveys delivered (surveys not delivered were returned by the post office as “undeliverable”), the number of surveys completed and the number of surveys returned, % response, and resulting margin of error for each sample frame.

2008 Town of Avon Community Survey

Samples:	Sample Frame	Mailed	Delivered	Returned	%	*Standard Error
County Assessor	2,294	1,044	1,006	234	23%	6.09%
Voter Registration	2,632	1,171	962	145	15%	7.94%
Total		2,215	1,968	379	19%	

* 95% Confidence Level

The internet/mail surveys were conducted in May and June 2008.

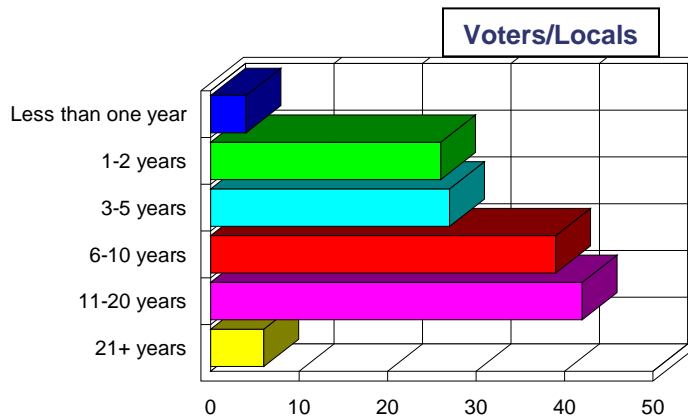
Highlights of Survey Results

6. How long have you lived and/or owned property in Avon?

The Town of Avon was incorporated in 1978. The population in 1980 was 640. The 1990 census recorded 1,798 residents and the 2000 census was 5,561. The 2006 estimate is 6,774 residents.

Survey respondents reflected this more recent population growth, with about 40% of survey respondents indicating they have lived in Avon less than 6 years.

The 6-10 year category represents 27% of respondents, the 11-20 category is 29% and the 21+ years is only 4%.



Length of residency can be a key indicator of how a community is changing. New residents may have different values and expectations than those displayed by the longer term residents. These differences can be very important for planning purposes.

Please note that a full tabulation of all of the survey questions cross-tabbed by length of residency is available in the survey results notebooks and the web-based application. There is also an interactive slide that allows viewers to select specific questions and view the responses in a graphic representation.

8. What are the most important issues that will be facing the Town of Avon in the next five years?

2008 Town of Avon Community Survey Most Important Issues

	Assessor List		
	Full-time Homeowner	Second Homeowner	Voter List
	n=89	n=128	n=145
Development of East and West Town Center Core	53.4%	43.8%	49.7%
Affordable housing	43.2%	33.6%	46.9%
Open space acquisition or preservation	34.1%	47.7%	34.5%
Preservation of small town character	27.3%	36.7%	30.3%
Schools	27.3%	8.6%	27.6%
Crime prevention	28.4%	21.1%	27.6%
Public transportation	29.6%	28.9%	26.2%
Recreation	25.0%	12.5%	20.7%
Town/ski area relations	23.9%	32.8%	17.9%
Renewable energy initiatives	19.3%	15.6%	16.6%
Other:	11.4%	13.3%	11.7%
Child care/early childhood education programs	10.2%	2.3%	6.2%
Preservation/enhancement of historic or cultural sites and structures	5.7%	10.2%	3.5%

Numbers reflect frequency responses

	50-100%
	40-49%
	30-39%

In the table above, the Assessor List respondents are separated into Full-time Homeowners and Second Homeowners. The Voter List responses are displayed in the column on the right.

In this question, respondents were asked to check their top three choices. The numbers reflect how frequently each issue was checked.

“Development of East and West Town Center Core”, “Affordable housing”, and “Open space acquisition or preservation” received the highest levels of agreement from all three respondent groups.

“Preservation of small town character” was noted more strongly by the Second Homeowners and Voters. The “Town/ski area relations” issue was indicated more frequently by the Second Homeowners.

Certain issues tend to be of greater concern for locals, i.e. “Schools” and “Child care/early childhood education programs”.

Respondents could write-in their own issues in the “Other” category. These responses can be found in the write-in comments sections of the notebooks and on the web-based application.

70. Imagine you are in charge of allocating resources for Town projects and services. With \$100 to budget, how would you divide the money, over and above the current level of services, among the following:

**2008 Town of Avon Community Survey
\$100**

	Assessor List		
	Full-time Homeowner <i>n=89</i>	Second Homeowner <i>n=128</i>	Voter List <i>n=145</i>
Stimulate local economy	17.01	15.31	15.64
Local affordable housing opportunities	17.88	16.10	21.67
Enhance and expand parks and trails	19.14	18.67	16.47
Acquire open space areas	14.91	19.84	13.77
Police protection	14.84	17.27	18.04
Recreation Center expansion	15.87	11.77	14.26
TOTAL	\$99.65	\$98.96	\$99.85

	1st choice
	2nd Choice
	3rd Choice

This question displayed some similar trends to those identified in “The Most Important Issues” question. The economy, affordable and open space were popular choices.

71. Please indicate your preferred growth strategy for the Town, from the choices below:

**2008 Town of Avon Community Survey
Growth Strategy**

	Assessor List		
	Full-time Homeowner <i>n=89</i>	Second Homeowner <i>n=128</i>	Voter List <i>n=145</i>
About the same rate of growth as at the present	34.5%	38.6%	35.5%
Less growth than at present	27.4%	26.0%	24.1%
More growth but some controls	22.6%	22.8%	24.1%
Other:	8.3%	4.7%	8.5%
Zero growth	4.8%	6.3%	4.3%
No growth controls	2.4%	1.6%	3.6%

Numbers reflect frequency responses

	1st
	2nd
	3rd

Survey respondents from all three groups seem comfortable with “About the same rate of growth as at the present”. The less growth and more growth camps are about equal in strength. The “No growth control” and “Zero growth” camps are both extremely small.

72. Listed below are some suggestions for Town improvements. Recognizing that the Town budget and staff resources are limited, please rate to what extent you support or oppose the Town spending resources to fund the following:

**2008 Town of Avon Community Survey
Town Improvements**

	Assessor List		
	Full-time Homeowner	Second Homeowner	Voter List
	n=89	n=128	n=145
Pedestrian Improvements	58.8%	70.6%	63.0%
Add Bike Trails	65.5%	59.2%	58.3%
Core Business Improvements	61.2%	68.3%	55.3%
Renewable Energy Initiatives	65.9%	48.7%	52.5%
Support Economic Development	52.4%	49.2%	52.2%
Maintain Town Facilities	38.6%	52.1%	51.8%
Affordable Housing	50.6%	34.8%	48.9%
Recreation Center Expansion	50.0%	40.0%	46.8%
Increase Public Transportation	51.2%	54.1%	46.8%
Add More Special Events	48.2%	39.8%	43.8%
Improve Traffic Flow	49.4%	48.3%	41.2%
Provide More Public Parking	47.1%	54.1%	38.1%

Numbers reflect the percent of respondents who rated the priority a 4 or 5 on a 5 point scale. (Oppose to Support)

	70-100%
	60-69%
	50-59%

The strongest consensus support for town improvements was measured for “Pedestrian Improvements”, “Add Bike Trails” and “Core Business Improvements”.

“Renewable Energy Initiatives” and “Support Economic Development” showed good support from Full-time Homeowners and Voters. “Affordable Housing” displayed more support from Full-time Homeowners and Voters than Second Homeowners. This pattern has been noted consistently throughout the survey.

Second Homeowners were more supportive of “Increase Public Transportation” and “Provide More Public Parking” than their local counterparts.

85. Public Works/Transportation: Please rate to what extent you support or oppose the following specific projects.

**2008 Town of Avon Community Survey
Public Works Improvements**

	Assessor List		Voter List <i>n=145</i>
	Full-time Homeowner <i>n=89</i>	Second Homeowner <i>n=128</i>	
Should the Town construct an elevated pedestrian bridge over Avon Road?	32.5%	39.7%	40.0%
Should Avon continue to buy hybrid buses even though they cost more?	74.4%	70.6%	70.7%
The Town of Avon does not have a dedicated revenue source to sustain operation of mass transit or expand the transit, pedestrian, and bike trail systems. Continued operation of the fare-free bus system on the current routes is projected to cost the Town's General Fund nearly \$1.8M per year. Approximately 2/3rds of the Town's sales tax is generated by non-residents. Would you support increasing the sales tax rate by 1% to fund mass transit and creation of new trails as a sustainable means to connect our community?	43.5%	63.3%	47.1%

Numbers reflect the percent of respondents who rated the priority a 4 or 5 on a 5 point scale.
(Oppose to Support)

	70-100%
	60-69%
	50-59%

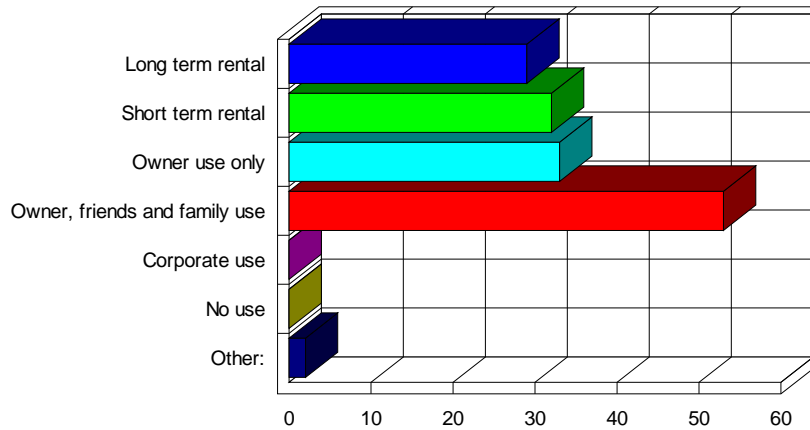
There is very good consensus support for the hybrid buses.

Second Homeowners (63%) are more supportive of increasing the sales tax rate for funding mass transit and creation of new trails than the locals, Homeowners (44%) and Voters (47%).

Support for the Town constructing an elevated pedestrian bridge over Avon Road is consistently low for all three groups.

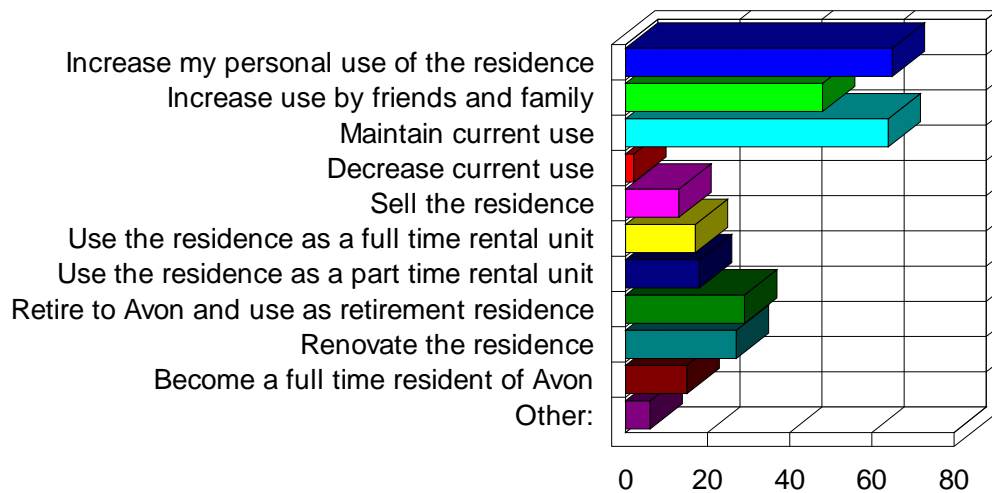
Second Homeowners:

120. What is the current use of your Avon property?



Second homeowners account for about one-half of the housing units in Avon. According to survey respondents, currently, 24% are being used as “Long term rentals”, 27% in “Short term rentals”, 28% “Owner use only”, and 45% “Owner, friends and family use”.

123. Which of the following statements most accurately reflects your intended future use of your Avon residence?



According to survey respondents, they are anticipating changes in the use of their Avon second homes in the future. Full-time rentals will decrease from the current 24% to 11%. Short term rentals will also follow this pattern, decreasing from the current 28% to 14%. 54% intend to "Increase my personal use of the residence".

Another important trend to note is that 22% of second homeowners intend to "Retire to Avon and use as retirement residence".

This Executive Summary is provided to give an overview of some of the survey findings. Please go to the town web page (www.avon.org) to obtain more findings from the Town of Avon Community Survey including the following:

- Detailed survey results for each of the 124 survey questions by sample frame
- PowerPoint presentation of the survey results
- Color-coded spreadsheets
- Cross-tab results by:
 - Length of Residency
- Over 60 pages of write-in comments
- Specific second homeowner questions
 - Why they bought their property in Avon
 - Current use of property
 - Future use of property
- Interactive slides